



Cramlington Village Primary School
Attendance Policy
Reviewed June 2022

“Empowering everyone to achieve”

Policy Title	Attendance Policy
Policies that interrelate	Home School Agreement Home Learning Policy
Legal and Statutory documents linked	<p>This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE’s statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.</p> <p> The Education Act 1996 The Education Act 2002 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 </p>
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Cramlington Village Primary School Attendance Policy

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1. Introduction



Cramlington Village Primary School seeks to encourage all children to attend school everyday, giving them the opportunity to achieve their full potential. We strive to ensure that our school is an inclusive and welcoming environment, where the children are provided with the very best opportunities to enable them to succeed. Excellent attendance promotes excellent learning.

At Cramlington Village Primary School, we value **all** children. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify at an early stage the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties. We also believe that attendance is a shared responsibility, involving the whole school community and local community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a thread that runs through all aspects of school improvement, and is supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning.

CVPS define our key levels of attendance as:

Attendance	Description
99%-100%	Outstanding
97%-98%	Good
95%-96%	National Average
90%-94%	Unsatisfactory
Less than 90%	Persistent Absence

2. Key Principles

It is vital that children arrive on time and attend every day in order to gain the greatest benefit from their education. If the reason for an absence is unavoidable, procedures are in place to notify the school, which ensures the safeguarding of children, and that school is aware of reasons for absence.

It is very important therefore that families make sure that their child attends regularly and the attendance policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

We believe that the following important principles underpin our approach to managing attendance:

- Pupils and parents/carers understand the issues and procedures for attendance and punctuality
- All school staff, including governors, administrative and support staff understand the issues and procedures for attendance and punctuality
- Clear procedures for enabling pupils to come to school



- Attendance issues are addressed in the curriculum
- Parents/carers and pupils having the opportunity to raise concerns and share in addressing those concerns
- Allocating resources e.g. time, people, space to support the policy
- Rewarding children who have good attendance and those who strive to improve their attendance
- Identifying patterns of absence and intervening early. Patterns of attendance are established early in a school career. Children who miss significant amounts of their education in primary schools are more likely to truant later on

Why is attendance important?

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and progress.

Any child's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Lateness and absence affects children's emotional security as they frequently feel that they miss events and activities, and feel less part of the school community.

3. Rights/roles/responsibilities

The Principal should:

- Ensure that legal requirements are being met with regard to attendance
- Be responsible for the operational management of the attendance policy
- Remind staff at the beginning of the academic year about the contents of this policy and correct procedures for completing registers.
- Meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to discuss any attendance issues which arise.
- Follow up individual children, classes or year groups and analyse attendance data to identify trends that can enable school to target its efforts.

The Trust Board should:

- Know about the attendance procedures at CVPS.
- Have a designated Trustee with responsibility for monitoring and supporting school attendance.
- Perform the roles of 'critical friend' at Trustee meetings.



The School should:

- Ensure that all children attending have access to exciting and inspiring learning experiences.
- Offer every child the opportunity to succeed in academic and non-academic activities.
- Ensure that all staff are welcoming.
- Understand the holistic nature of each child's individual needs.
- Be punctual at the beginning and end of each school day.
- Reward the best attendees who have been consistently punctual.
- Analyse authorised and unauthorised attendance, class by class.
- Provide information and guidance to parents if they need help with attendance.
- Work with external bodies such as the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), the School Nurse and Social Services to work with families experiencing regular problems with attendance.
- Inform parents of their child's attendance records and request meetings when regular absences become apparent.
- Contact parents when their child/ren misses 10% of the educational entitlement during the previous half term.

Class Teachers should:

- Complete the electronic register on time daily at 8.40am and again at 1pm.

The Family Support Worker should:

- Ensure monitoring of regular absences, prioritising vulnerable pupils first and starting to trace absentees by 8.45am daily.
- Discuss with the Principal any individuals who are not attending regularly.

Families should:

- Ensure children understand the importance of regular attendance.
- Support school by both getting children to school and collecting on time.
- Book holidays during the 13 weeks of school holidays that are available.
- Appreciate the legal framework within which attendance at school operates.
- Work in partnership with school when there are problems.
- Provide up to date contact numbers, emails and changes of address.
- Notify the school in person or by telephone when their child is unable to attend with a reason on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence.
- Provide a letter, copy of text or email indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician prior to the appointment, except in the case of emergencies.
- Advise the school if a child is going to be late.

Administrative staff should:

- Ensure daily attendance data is submitted onto the Integris system by 8.45am.
- Contact parents for any children who are absent by 9am if messages have not been received.
- Issue letters to promote improved attendance and timekeeping to parents/carers when there are persistent problems.
- Monitor every individual's attendance for irregular patterns and absences.
- Complete reports for the Principal on;
 - continuous absence,
 - persistent lateness trends,
 - four instances of absence
 - percentage attendance for below 90% and 80% at the end of every half term
 - pupil yearly attendance at the end of the first half of the summer term.

4. Definitions

The school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day.

The ultimate responsibility to authorise absence rest with the powers devolved to the Principal by the Trust Board.

Authorised absence

An absence is classed as authorised when a child is not in school for a legitimate reason and the school has been notified of this by a parent or guardian.

Only the school can authorise an absence.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classed as unauthorised when a child is not in school without the permission of both the school and a parent/carer.

An absence can be classed as unauthorised when:

- A child is kept off school because a parent is ill
- A child is absent because a sibling is ill
- The parent cannot get the child to school
- A child is taken on a shopping trip
- The child is absent due to a birthday treat/family treat
- The child is absent due to family work patterns
- The child refuses to come to school or wants to stay at home
- A child is more than 10 minutes late without authorisation from the Principal

If a member of staff is concerned that an absence, or pattern of absences are not justified this should be reported to the Principal/Vice Principal, who may request the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to visit the family. Before making a referral, the class teacher should try to establish why the pupil is absent. Even if a reason is



given, the class teacher may feel that this is unacceptable and refer the matter to the Principal. Similarly, when a pupil is missing school regularly through illness it may be appropriate to refer the matter to the EWO before the absence is authorised. The EWO may decide to make a visit on welfare grounds to discuss the levels of attendance.

All children's unauthorised absences are recorded (including unauthorised holiday absences) on an annual report to parents.

An investigation into the reasons for any causes of concern, i.e. when attendance is below 90% in any half term, will be undertaken and where appropriate discussed with the EWO. It is a legal requirement for a school to report percentages of authorised and unauthorised absence to the Department for Education.

Categorising absence

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation and or evidence for the pupil's absence has been received.

Absences will be categorised as follows:

Illness

In most cases a telephone call, voicemail or a note from the parent/carer informing the school that their child is ill will be acceptable. Where there are repeated absences due to reported illness parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents/carers are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to school.

Other Authorised Circumstances

This relates to occasions where there is a cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement, visiting a parent in prison or part time table agreed as part of a reintegration package.

Excluded (No alternative provision made)

Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's class teacher will make arrangements for work to be sent home.



5. Action in event of absence

When a child is absent, parents/carers **must** contact the school office and provide a reason. The office can be contacted by telephone, voicemail message, text message or email.

If a child is absent and no reason has been provided, the school office will contact a parent or guardian to obtain a reason.

Notification of absence may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, for example, if a child has a medical appointment. Parents/carers are encouraged to avoid any absence from school and arrange appointments around school where possible.

Attendance letters

Attendance letters will be sent to all parents/carers of children with attendance less than 95%. If the attendance does not improve, a second letter will be sent advising that a referral to the EWO may be made.

6. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

Parents will be informed of the powers of the EWO and the penalty notices that they can issue because of repeated unauthorised absence which are legally enforceable.

Parents will also be informed of the support network that is available to target families who struggle with the everyday demands of parenting.

School will have a senior member of the staff team who will take responsibility for monitoring the attendance records and ensuring that children are given appropriate pastoral care during times of turbulence at home. For the next two years the persons designated with responsibility is the Vice Principal and Admin and Marketing Manager.

7. Legal framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.



Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. This responsibility is undertaken by Education Welfare.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, expect schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- present;
- absent;
- present at approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school has a legal duty to publish its attendance figures to both parents and to the Secretary of State for Education. All staff and trustees are committed to ensuring that the profile of attendance at our school remains high. We respectfully ask that parents support this and promote high attendance by following the aims of CVPS.

8. Legal sanctions

Prosecution

Where intervention by school and the Education Welfare Officer fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide Education Welfare/Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are; Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices will be considered in accordance with Northumberland County Council's Protocols.



A Penalty Notice gives the parent the opportunity to discharge themselves of their legal responsibility if a £60 fine is paid within 22 days or £120 if paid within 28 days of the date the Notice was issued. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

9. Leave of absence during term time

Our term dates allow families to take time off during school holidays that will facilitate annual 2 week holidays to take place at lower costs on a more regular basis throughout the year. School urges parents to take advantage of this time during designated school holidays as there will be very few situations that will attract authorised holidays outside of this period. Any other planned time off during school term time must be requested beforehand and at least with 14 days' notice.

In some circumstances authorised time off school will not be granted:

- at the start of a new school year
- during Standard Assessment Tasks (SATS) for Year 6 and Year 2
- during Standard Multiplication Tables Check for Year 4
- during Phonics Screening Check for Year 1
- for pupils whose attendance is already below 90% or would fall below 90% because of the requested time off
- **It is school policy that any holidays requested during school term time are not classed as authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

Amendments to the 2006 pupil regulations remove references to family holiday, extended leave and the statutory threshold of ten school days. (Authorised at the discretion of the Principal) The amendments make clear that:

The Principal may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Principal should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Leave of absence during term time is entirely at the discretion of the Principal and is not a parental right.

It is at the Principal's discretion to request the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

All decisions in relation to whether leave of absence is granted (authorised) or not (unauthorised) should be applied consistently and equitably.



10. Religious observance

We acknowledge the multi-faith nature of British society and our school population and we recognise that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

It is reasonable for a parent/carer to request their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's/carer's religious body.

Parents/carers are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent.

However, in the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of the school and limiting the authorised absence rate of the school, it is identified as reasonable that no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance/festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

11. Punctuality and lateness

School starts promptly at 8.30am daily for Nursery, Year 1 - Year 6. The school gates open at 8.20am and will close at 8.30am for those classes. School starts at 8.40 for Reception and the gate will be open from 8.30am until 8.40am. Parents should ensure children are at school for this time so they can take part in the activities and general introduction to the day that maps out the planned learning. This helps the children to feel included in what is happening and to feel part of the discussion so they can direct the nature of the planned learning for the day.

Children arriving after the gate has closed will be marked as late (L) and will have to sign in at the school office. The registers will close 10 minutes after the start time. If a child who has been identified as persistently absent arrives once the registers have closed, the morning session will be marked as an unauthorised absence (U).

If a child is persistently late, lateness letters will be sent home. If this does not improve, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting to discuss reasons for lateness and to see how families can be supported to improve this.

Class	Start time	Time register closes
Reception Nursery Year 1 Year 2 Year 3	8.30am	8.40am

Year 4 Year 5 Year 6		
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12. Rewards for good attendance

Our focus will centre on activities that promote regular attendance and punctuality such as:

- Weekly attendance and punctuality updates in our achievement assemblies
- Weekly class attendance award
- Weekly class punctuality award
- Weekly updates through the school newsletter
- Certificates at the end of term for good attendance and punctuality
- Special awards for children with 100% for the whole year

13. Monitoring and review

We will analyse and monitor attendance, and use our management information data to compare our attendance with national averages, focusing on:

- Attendance of different groups of children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from ethnic minority groups.
- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent (if any).
- Patterns of absence relating to times of year, days of the week and particular class or year groups.
- Weather patterns and effect on attendance rates.

Pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern. Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

14. Support systems

CVPS recognises that poor attendance is often a sign that there are more serious issues going on in a child's life. This may be linked to problems at home and or in school. Parents/carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school. They may contact the Family Support Worker or Class Teacher to discuss this and identify any additional support that may be required.



CVPS also recognises that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.

The school will implement strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Referrals to support agencies
- PSHE
- Reward systems
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support

15. COVID-19

Government guidance changed in September 2021 and if a child has a confirmed case of Covid their absence is marked as I (Illness) from the date of the positive PCR or LFT result.

Children that have tested positive for Covid will receive home learning from their class teacher (see Home Learning Policy) and there is an expectation that their home learning will be completed if they are well enough so that they could be coded as 'Educated offsite'.

Appendix 1

Code register: ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances



I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



Appendix 2 - First attendance letter

Dear Parent / Carer of _____,



School attendance

At CVPS, we have high expectations for the attendance of all children in school. We recognise that any absence can be potentially detrimental to a child's education. Missing school can impact children's achievements, disrupt the school's routines and affect other children's learning. It is important to remember that every lesson counts. The attendance target set by the government for Primary Schools is **96.5%**.

_____'s attendance currently stands at ____%. We understand there may be unavoidable and/or genuine reasons for _____'s absences.

Irregular school attendance may have a serious impact on your child's academic progress. For this reason we ask that you:

- Where possible make medical appointments outside of school hours
- Only allow your child to stay at home in response to genuine illness
- Avoid taking holidays during term time.

Support from school to promote good attendance

We do recognise that many factors (in school and externally) can influence a pupil's attendance and we would like to work in partnership with parents/carers and other relevant agencies to resolve any issues. If you feel like you would benefit from any support from school to help with your child's attendance then please let us know. We can help with routines, issues with sleeping and can also request support from the School Nurse regarding medical issues. It is really important that we are made aware of any absences as soon as possible so that we are able to provide assistance in any way that we can.

If you wish to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact me on 01670 735177.

Please complete and return the slip overleaf to the school office to acknowledge that you have read and understood the content of this letter.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Child's Name

Class



I acknowledge receipt of the letter regarding my child's attendance which is currently at xx.xx%

Signed _____

Name _____

Please return this form to the school office no later than [Date]

Appendix 3 - Second attendance letter

Dear Parent/Carer of _____,



School attendance

In [date] we wrote to you regarding _____'s attendance. At CVPS, we have high expectations for the attendance of all children in school. We recognise that any absence can be potentially detrimental to a child's education. Missing school can impact children's achievements, disrupt the school's routines and affect other children's learning. It is important to remember that every lesson counts. The attendance target set by the government for Primary Schools is **96.5%**.

_____ 's attendance currently stands at _____%. Irregular school attendance may have a serious impact on your child's academic progress if it continues.

Due to the nature and frequency of the absences the Principal requests that you start to provide medical evidence for any absences due to ill health. This could be in the form of an appointment card or letter, proof of medication given by a doctor or other medical professional, or other relevant information.

Failure to provide this evidence will result in absences being recorded as unauthorised and a referral will be made to the Local Authority, Education Welfare Service.

If you require support with attendance or wish to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact me on 01670 735177.

Please complete and return the slip to the School Office to acknowledge that you have read and understood the content of this letter.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Child's Name

Class



I acknowledge receipt of the letter regarding my child's attendance which is currently at ____%

Signed _____

Name _____

Please return this form to the school office no later than _____



Appendix 4 - Lateness Letter 1

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

We are aware that.....has been regularly arriving late to school (please see attached attendance printout).

Attendance and punctuality is a very high priority at Cramlington Village Primary School. It is vital that your child arrives in good time for school. Regularly arriving late not only disrupts the teacher and pupils, it also causes embarrassment for your child.

Please ensure that your child arrives at school for 08.30am so that their class teacher can register them and receive an attendance mark when the register is taken at 08.40am. If your child continues to arrive after the register has closed, you may be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

We would like to work in partnership with parents to resolve any issues regarding punctuality. If you would like any support with getting your child to school then please speak to our Family Support Worker, Amy or your child's class teacher.

We will be closely monitoring the punctuality of your child over the next 4 weeks and reviewing the situation at the end of this period.

Please complete and return this slip to the School Office to acknowledge that you have read and understood its content.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

.....

Name of child.....Class.....

I acknowledge receipt of the letter regarding my child's punctuality.

Signedparent/carer

Date



Appendix 5 - Lateness Letter 2

Dear Parent/Carer,

With reference to my letter dated..... I am writing to you once again regardingcontinual lateness.

The Education Act 1996 states that it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so results in you, the parent/carer, committing an offence.

To datehas been late onsessions in which.....sessions have been recorded as unauthorised absences. (Please see attached copy of your child's attendance printout). This amounts to x days of time lost in school.

As there has been no significant improvement, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is now aware of this. Haley Hansom is the school's EWO.

Please complete and return this slip to the School Office to acknowledge that you have read and understood its content.

Yours sincerely

.....

Name of child.....Class.....

I acknowledge receipt of the letter regarding my child's punctuality.

Signedparent/carer

Date