



Attendance Policy

Introduction

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs s/he may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them. Crown Wood Primary School takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its pupils. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

This policy applies equally to all children at Crown Wood Primary School including those who are not of compulsory school age (e.g. Nursery pupils).

Aims

This policy aims to promote regular attendance by all pupils, so that they all have equal access to learning and the development of social skills. It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and outlines the Schools commitment to attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

Objectives

- To ensure pupils are in school for the maximum number of days so that they have access to a full education.
- To meet our attendance targets.
- To ensure that Parents and Carers know about and understand the attendance procedure.

The policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued;
- raising the awareness of the importance of a differentiated and relevant curriculum;
- promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil's successes and achievements;
- raising awareness of the importance of good attendance;
- ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

School Responsibilities

Crown Wood Primary School will endeavour to provide an environment that is conducive to educating every individual pupil. School attendance will be positively supported wherever possible and the promotion of good communication and co-operation between all parties involved will be paramount. The school has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for

both the morning and afternoon sessions. A register of attendance has to be taken once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register has to record whether a pupil is present or absent. If a pupil is absent the register must record whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised. The Governing Body has appointed a governor to oversee attendance matters.

What is expected of the School:

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Have appropriate registration processes in place.
- To follow up absences and lateness if Parents/Carers have not communicated with the school.
- Inform Parents/Carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To have a systematic and consistent daily routine, which records absences and lateness.
- To report to the EWO and support her/his work with pupils as necessary.
- To report to the DCSF on attendance termly.
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure.
- To ensure the EWO contacts the Parent/Carer before interviewing the child regarding absence.

What is expected of the Governors:

- To ensure that a register of all admissions to the school is kept.
- To ensure that a register of attendance by all those registered at the school is kept.
- To set targets for attendance and submit them to the Local Authority.
- To make returns to the Local Authority of those not attending school regularly and those with unauthorised absences of more than 10 days.
- To receive reports from the Headteacher on overall attendance figures.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. They have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and stay in school for every lesson after they have registered. Parents should also make sure that the children arrive on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a fit state to benefit from the education offered to them. Parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. If a child is in the care of foster parents or in a residential home, it is important that the carers recognise their parenting role where attendance at school is concerned. They will be supported by close co-operation between the school, education welfare services and the social services where such a child's attendance is irregular.

What is expected of the Parents:

- To have children in school by the start of the school day at 8.50am.
- To keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum.
- To inform school on the first day of any absence.
- To send in a letter explaining absence when a child returns to school (unless initial contact is an email).
- To ensure that their child arrives at school on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a condition to learn. A reason should be offered for any lateness
- To work closely with the school and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance to improve lateness and attendance
- To take family holidays during school holiday periods and be aware that requests for holidays during term time will be refused except in special /exceptional circumstances ("special circumstances" is explained at the end of this policy).
- To be aware of curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant with regards to attendance during important academic times such as SATs.

Pupil Responsibilities

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the educational opportunities available.

What is expected of the pupils:

- To respect themselves and others
- To do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually
- To inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied
- To encourage friendship and a sense of belonging
- To be happy and encourage others to feel happy

The Procedure for Monitoring Attendance

Children are able to come into school from **8.50am**. The class teacher will take a register recording who is present and absent from school at **9.00am**. At **9.05am** the doors to the teaching areas are locked and registers are returned to the school office area. Any late pupils should then enter the school through the main entrance and report to the School Secretary. If any pupil arrives late the office staff record the lateness in a Late Book that records the name, class, time and reason for lateness. All staff need to be aware that any child arriving late **MUST** register at the office for purposes of fire regulations. The register officially closes at **9.15am** and any pupil arriving after this will be marked absent for the session. A reason for the lateness will need to be provided and a decision made by the school to mark it as an authorised or unauthorised absence.

During the morning the absences from that morning and the previous afternoon will be recorded onto the electronic registration system and all the present pupils marked present. The offered reasons for any lates from the previous day or any absences will be assessed and the appropriate code entered into the system. The register is returned back to the class teacher before the start of the afternoon session and the register is again taken at **1pm**.

Reasons for absence may be offered by e-mail or verbally by phone but **must** be followed by a letter on the child's return to school (unless included in the e-mail). The school may then decide if it wishes to authorise the absence or record it as an unauthorised absence. This decision will be made within the guidance set out in The Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006, which identifies the following reasons as acceptable reasons for an authorised absence:

- the child is ill or is prevented from attending by unavoidable cause;
- the child lives not within walking distance of the school and either the LA has failed to make suitable arrangements to register the child at a nearer school or the LA has failed to make suitable transport arrangements;
- the child is absent on days exclusively set apart for religious observance in their particular faith;
- the child is absent 'with leave'. This refers to leave being granted by the school, not by the parent, and would normally relate to no more than 10 school days in any 1 year.

A reason for a period of absence is always required. The school will contact parents who have not offered a reason and after a three week process will mark the absence as unauthorised if no reason is provided.

Absence Summary

Lateness

- Children are able to come into school from 8.50am.
- School starts at 9.00am.
- Doors to the teaching areas are closed at 9.05am.

- Entry to school from this time will only be via the Office.
- Any child arriving after 9.05am will be marked late.
- Any child arriving after the register is closed will be marked absent.

Sickness

- Parents/ Carers should notify the school on the first day of illness by telephone or email.
- On a child's return to school Parents/Carers should send a written, signed note for each period of absence (unless initial contact is an email).
- The school reserves the right to request a doctor's letter regarding recurring and frequent illness.

Holidays

- There is not a 10 day holiday allocation.
- Parents/carers can only take children out of school for a holiday during term time if it is authorised by the Head Teacher.
- The Head Teacher can only, **in special circumstances**, authorise up to 10 school days in one school year for a pupil to go away on holiday.
- Occasional days will be authorised for bereavement and the marriage of parents.
- Parents/Carers should contact the Head Teacher to request authorised absence for other special occasions.
- Appointments for routine health checks should be made out of school hours, wherever possible.

Special circumstances

The special circumstances under which the Headteacher may allow an authorised absence include:

- visiting close family in other countries;
- the serious/terminal illness of parent/carer when this is the last opportunity for a holiday;
- death or significant trauma and a holiday is deemed the best way for the child to deal with situation;
- one off, never to be repeated holiday that has to be taken at a specified time;
- where armed forces personnel are on leave from posting overseas;
- where there are employer restrictions (school may ask for employer evidence);
- where recovering from a long or chronic illness (holiday as a part of convalescence process); and
- a holiday as a winning prize (if taking it is time sensitive).

Where any doubt exists the Headteacher will consult the appointed Attendance Governor.

The school Attendance Manager will check registers weekly for absences/lateness. The Attendance Governor will check registers at least once per half term. Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality the school will send a letter home.

The EWO (Education Welfare Officer) will visit the school regularly, check the attendance and lateness records and highlight concerns for the school to address, initially. Should concerns persist the EWO will agree action and where necessary meet with the Parents/Carers. Should concerns continue to persist the school will make a referral to the EWO to deal with ongoing issues.

Note that no one has a right to any days out of school. All absences have to be authorised by the Head Teacher.

Approved July 2009

To be reviewed September 2010