



## CROPREDY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Attendance Policy

#### **Introduction**

Cropredy CE Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. In all that we do, we will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. Children should be in school on time, each day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Working in partnership with parents, we will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for every child in school

This policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

#### **Why Regular Attendance is so important:**

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Children are best safeguarded from exploitation and other risks in the wider community by attending school regularly where they are supervised by qualified and caring professionals.

Ensuring that your child's regular attendance at school is a parent's your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. This policy works to meet the mandatory requirements laid out in [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

#### **Promoting Regular Attendance**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

#### **To help us all to focus on promotion of attendance, we will:**

- Give you details on attendance in our regular School Newsletter
- Report to you at least half-termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Celebrate good attendance.

## **Responsibilities to Support Attendance**

### **The school will:**

- Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.
- Have robust daily processes to follow up absence (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> day contact with parents when a child fails to attend)
- Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for working to improve attendance.
- Refer to external support agencies to gain advice as required (e.g. Local Authority Attendance and Engagement Team)

### **Governors will:**

- Take an active role in attendance monitoring and improvement;
- Support the school to prioritise attendance;
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties;
- Ensure school staff receive training on attendance;
- Communicate with parents and other agencies as appropriate.

### **Parents are expected to:**

- Ensure that their child is in school every day the school is open, except when a statutory reason applies;
- Ensure that their child arrives in school in good time and well prepared for the school day;
- Inform the school if the child is unavoidably late in the morning;
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness) and contact the school on subsequent days if the child is still unable to attend school;
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance;
- Try to book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- To contact the school, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school

## **Understanding Types of Absence**

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in written form.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. If this occurs, school will require evidence of the appointment to be able to authorise the absence.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority (County Attendance Team) using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

Examples of unauthorisable absence may include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed
- Excessive illness without medical evidence

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes there may be occasions when a child may be reluctant to attend school. In this case, parents should contact the school at the earliest opportunity, so that they can meet with the Headteacher to discuss strategies that can be put in place to help support the child.

### **Severe Absenteeism (SA)**

A pupil becomes a 'severe absentee' when they miss 50% or more schooling across the school year for any reason. Absence at this level is doing significant damage to any child's academic and social progress which can have lifelong consequences. All SA pupils at our school will have an Individual Attendance Plan which will incorporate multi-agency input. You will be expected to engage with all partners to improve your child's attendance to 95+%. SA pupils are our highest priority at our school.

### **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any child that is seen to have reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that threshold is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. All our PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral and academic systems.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include allocation of additional support through teaching assistant time, use of circle time and participation in group activities centered around raising attendance.

All PA cases are also automatically made known to the County Attendance team. If your child becomes a PA pupil, we will seek your consent to complete an Early Help Assessment with you and consider convening a Team Around the Family group, to provide support.

### **Absence Procedures**

#### **If your child is absent from school, parents need to:**

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence by phone and/or email. Contact should also be made on subsequent days, if absence continues.
- Letters or emails from parents regarding absences will be dated on receipt and put in the relevant registers.

#### **If your child is absent, the school will:**

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Text and email if we are not able to get in contact over the phone (the school office team may also try to contact through other identified contacts)
- Visit you at home if we have not heard from you by day 3 of absence;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Headteacher if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the County Attendance Team, if attendance moves below 90%.

### **Parent Contact Details**

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so it is vital that we have current contact numbers and email addresses at all times.

Please can we ask that that you make sure that we always have an up to date number and email address. There will be regular checks on contact details throughout the year.

Please ensure we have both parents and at least a third emergency contact person's contact details.

### **The County Attendance Team**

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful.

If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the County Attendance Team at Oxfordshire County Council. At the school's request, they may issue a Penalty Notice per parent/carer, per child (currently £60 rising to £120 if unpaid after 21 days. If unpaid after 28 days a summons to Court will be issued for each unpaid Penalty Notice for prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. This can result in a criminal record and a fine of up to £2,500, a Community Order, Parenting Order or ultimately a custodial sentence). The legislation is the Education Act 1996 sec. 444(1) and 444(1A).

The County Attendance Team, with the school, will encourage you to engage with an Early Help Assessment. Education Supervision Orders may be discussed with you to support rapidly improved attendance.

Parents that have previously been issued with Penalty Notices for their children's unauthorised absences, in the event of further unauthorised absences may receive summonses to Court.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the County Attendance Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is 01865 323513 or email: [attendance@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:attendance@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

### **Lateness**

Punctuality at school is essential for children. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day.

Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

If your child is going to be unavoidably late on a particular morning, please contact the school office to inform them.

If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher to help support in resolving the problem; however all parents are very welcome to approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

### **Timekeeping**

The school day starts at **8.25a.m.** and all children are expected to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked by **8.35a.m.** and if a child is not present, they will receive a late mark.

Registers close at **8.45a.m.** In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

Whilst there is no mandatory time for the afternoon registration, the school will seek to take the register directly following the lunchtime period at:

- Cygnets Class: 12.15p.m.

- Year 1 and 2: 12.30p.m.
- Year 3, 4, 5 and 6: 12.45p.m.

This routine is in place to support safeguarding procedures in school.

### **Holidays in Term Time**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we ask that parents help us by not taking children away in school time.

Parents should be aware that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

Parents should also be aware that there is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

### **Exceptional Circumstances for Absence**

The school does appreciate that there may be exceptional circumstances that may result in a request for a child's absence from school.

Examples of what might be considered exceptional circumstances as such are:

- 1 Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specified time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in school holidays. This must be supported by documentary evidence from the organisation.
- 2 Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
- 3 Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. Evidence must be provided, from qualified professionals, such as a doctor.
- 4 Where it may be a unique/last opportunity to spend time with a relative or leave for bereavement of a family member or attending a funeral.
- 5 Where there are other factors which the headteacher may consider to be exceptional circumstances, this may be referred to the Local Authority for advice.

Parents/Carers should seek permission from the Headteacher prior to the leave of absence period in question. This request must be received by the Headteacher at least 14 days before the absence (except in the case of bereavement).

Parents must use the **Exceptional Circumstances Application Form for Leave of Absence (See Appendix 1; forms also available from the school office on request)**; supplying additional written evidence if available when requesting absence leave for their child. The decision regarding the absence request will be made based on this information provided.

The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school **if** the leave is granted.

Parents/carers who remove their children from school without authorisation or do not return their child to school on the agreed date following an authorised period of leave of absence, may face a Penalty Notice Warning which could lead to a fine/prosecution (see below).

The Local Authority Attendance Team can issue Penalty Notices for any unauthorised 'Exceptional Leave'. Penalty Notices can be issued to each parent/carer concerned. Please note that it will be per parent per child. Payment within 21 days of receipt of notice is £60 and £120 if paid after this period but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid after 28 days you will each receive a summons to Oxford Magistrates Court. If unauthorised leave is repeated the County Attendance Team may summons each parent to Court without a Penalty Notice being issued.

## **School Targets and Projects**

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

Targets for the school and for classes are displayed in the school and you should take time to study them.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is 95% attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in Oxfordshire.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be included in our School Newsletter and we ask for your full support and help with these

We analyse all absence carefully and draw trends based on pupils' characteristics, vulnerabilities, days of the week, subjects missed and repeat illnesses. We focus our attention on addressing these trends of absence.

## **Staff responsible for Attendance matters in the school are:**

Mr P Goldsworthy – Headteacher  
Mrs Y Haynes – Office Administration Staff  
Mrs A Alfandary – Office Administration Staff  
Tbc – Governor with responsibility for attendance

## **Summary**

The school has a legal duty to report and publish its absence figures & its attendance policy to parents and to promote attendance. School attendance data must be available to Oxfordshire County Council and the Department for Education.

Our school is obliged to share all attendance data daily with our Oxfordshire County Council and the Department for Education. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly and on time.

We have a lead Governor who scrutinises our attendance arrangements on behalf of all our pupils.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Regular attendance supports optimising your child's attainment, mental health and social wellbeing.

## **Key Contact Details:**

**School Telephone Number:** 01295 750210

**School Email Address:** [office.3000@croppedy.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.3000@croppedy.oxon.sch.uk)

**Oxfordshire Local Authority Attendance and Engagement Officer Telephone Number:** 01865 323513

<b>Date of Policy Document</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2022
<b>Date Approved by Full Governing Body</b>	11.10.22
<b>Date of Review</b>	September 2023

## Appendix 1

### APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A SCHOOL PUPIL IN TERM TIME IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 only allow Head Teacher to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in **exceptional circumstances**
- **If** the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head Teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for Leave of Absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements confirmed or money committed
- If Leave of Absence is granted, please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress
- This form **MUST** be completed by the resident parent(s) carer(s) before requests will be considered
- Please complete a Leave of Absence form for each child
- Failure to make a request for a Leave of Absence in advance will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised

Please note: **Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.**

I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child/Children: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Group/s: \_\_\_\_\_

First Date of Proposed Absence: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Date of Proposed Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected date of return to school: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Proposed Absence – please provide reasons to support the application including evidence (they can only be exceptional circumstances (please refer to policy before completing))

.....  
.....  
.....

Total number of school days requested on this occasion

Signature of resident  
Parent/Carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For school use only: NAME OF CHILD:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date received by school:** \_\_\_\_\_

First date of absence requested: \_\_\_\_\_ Last date of absence  
requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Absence Authorised: Yes / No if absence authorised, expected date of return to school:  
\_\_\_\_\_

The reasons for this decision  
are: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Leave Of Absence record sheet to be completed by school and submitted where verbal requests made/for other relevant information**

Head Teacher/Attendance Lead: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Copy of this completed section to be sent back to the parent with appropriate letter**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 state:

1. Head Teachers **shall not grant any** leave of absence during term time **unless:**
  - A) *An application has been made 14 days in advance of the requested absence, by the parent with whom the child normally resides (except in the case of bereavement)*

**AND**

- B) *They consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application for absence. For further detailing please refer to Attendance Policy (see school website or request a copy from the school office)*
2. The Head Teacher must be satisfied that exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of a leave of absence.
3. The Head Teacher can determine how long an absence should be and any additional absence will not be authorised.

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**Additional Information**

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (i.e. home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996)
- If a child who is of compulsory age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996).

Parents do need to be aware that children who have unauthorised absences from school may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution. Ref: The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013

- Any Fixed Penalty Notices issued and/or prosecution may apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend school.

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**Parents:**

1. The application must be made in advance by the parent(s) that the child normally resides with. In line with our attendance policy, this request must be received by the school at least 14 days prior to the requested absence (except in the case of bereavement)
2. Any leave of absence taken which has not been requested in advance will be recorded as unauthorised.
3. In line with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013, parents can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecuted for unauthorised absence including holidays.

**We have a shared responsibility to ensure that the law is upheld and that your child achieves to his/her full potential. We look forward to your co-operation.**