



ATTENDANCE

DOCUMENT HISTORY	
CREATED / REVISED:	January 2016/18
BY:	SLT
REVIEW DETAILS:	
REVIEW DATE:	September 2018
APPROVED BY GOVERNING BODY:	March 2016/18

1. Introduction and background

Crooksbar Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment.

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and this policy underpins our aims to promote children's welfare and safeguarding, ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled, ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school and ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the absence is unavoidable.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or later arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

2. 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 this we will:

Report to parents/carers annually on their child's attendance with the annual school report.

Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.

Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements.

Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events.

3. Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

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.

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 Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

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 after the close of registration

Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays

Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root problem. We can use our Parent Support Advisor to help with this or the School Nurse

4. Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and we will inform the parents/carers immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully; we also combine this with academic tracking.

PA and potential PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully and this is linked to academic tracking, due to the impact that absence is proven to have on academic attainment.

5. Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent the parent/carer must follow the following procedures:

Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence before 9.30 a.m., or call into school and report to reception.

If your child is absent we will:

Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you. If necessary we may invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer and/or PSA, or Headteacher if absences persist.

If your child's attendance falls below 90%, or if we have any specific concerns, we may invite you into school to discuss this with the PSA and/or Headteacher. If absences persist and attendance falls below 80%, we will consider making a referral to the Local Authority Attendance Officer.

6. The Attendance Officer

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 Attendance Officer from the Local Authority. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorized absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority. Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the LA themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone numbers are available from the school office.

7. Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a 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, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at 8.55 a.m. and we expect our children to be in the playground before this time ready to line up when the bell goes. Registers are marked by 9.00a.m. and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. At 9.15 a.m. the registers will be closed. 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. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a referral to the Attendance Officer and/or a Penalty Notice if the problem persists. If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time. We will encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and celebrate good class punctuality.

8. Holidays in Term Time:

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

School Responsibility - THE LAW and School Attendance

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 the governing body is responsible for making sure that admissions and attendance registers are kept. Unless stipulated, each regulation applies to all schools in England.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. **The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

The Local Authority decide on penalty notices (fines) if parents take their children out of school when the Headteacher has not authorised the absence. If the penalty notice is left unpaid, this could result in a prosecution through the courts. School reserve the right to arrange an appointment with the school's attendance officer should we believe it necessary.

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.

We will not agree leave during term time under the following circumstances:

- **When a pupil is just starting the school. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.**
- **Immediately before and during assessment periods (SATS) for year 6 pupils.**
- **When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.**
- **Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below the school's target of 90% for any individual or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.**
- **At any time during September, as this is a vital time of the year for all pupils.**

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice. The minimum level of attendance for any child at Crooksbar Primary School is 90% attendance. We will keep parents updated regularly on their child's progress.

Our target is to achieve better than this, however, because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling.

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

10. People responsible for this policy and its implementation

Headteacher, School Business Manager, Parent Support Advisor and the Governing Body

11. Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. 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.