



Attendance Policy

Version No	Date Ratified	Review Date
2020v1	September 2020	September 2021

Pupils need to attend school regularly and punctually to benefit from their education.

Good attendance and punctuality are central to raising standards and ensuring all pupils can fulfill their potential. Missing out on lessons and learning leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. **(DfE – Oct 2014)**

The school will strive to provide a welcoming and caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

Every day counts at Crofton Academy. The governing body holds firm the belief that children who miss school miss out. Lost learning through absence equates to lost progress through school.

The 1996 Education Act states, *'If a child is registered at a school, parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly'*. We therefore ask that children attend school regularly and punctually.

While some absences are inevitable, the school is committed to reducing absence down to the lowest possible levels. This can be achieved through a balance of rewarding good attendance and supporting families where attendance and punctuality is problematic. The school will be proactive in addressing poor attendance and will work collaboratively with the Education Welfare Service to sanction families where support systems have failed to make significant improvements.

AT CROFTON ACADEMY WE AIM TO HAVE AN ATTENDANCE FIGURE THAT IS ABOVE NATIONAL SECONDARY FIGURES FOR ALL GROUPS AND COHORTS.

Why attendance matters

If pupils are to achieve their potential, good attendance and punctuality are critical. The link between attendance and achievement is well documented. Figures from the DCSF demonstrate this very clearly. We want all our pupils to achieve the very best examination results that they can. Irregular attendance, can, however, have a significant impact on student achievement:

The Role of the Attendance Team

Miss Rowe (Associate Assistant Headteacher) is the lead on Attendance at Crofton Academy.

Mrs Wilmott (Attendance Officer) maintains the attendance system; ensuring that registers are accurately marked and absences followed up and reasons obtained. Mrs Richardson (Education Welfare Officer) works closely with the Attendance officer, Year Leaders and Pastoral Mentors to identify pupils whose attendance is below the expected level. Actions are then taken to secure an improvement in attendance.

QUALITY ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Education can only take place if the pupil attends school regularly. Crofton Academy aims to create an ethos of good attendance and punctuality in all its pupils, and we ask for parental co-operation in doing their best to ensure that pupils present themselves on time and prepared for the day ahead. **In the event of an absence we require that parent's telephone school on each day of absence, by 9am, and follow this with a note in the school planner to be presented to the pupil's group tutor on their return to school, with the relevant information.** The school is proactive in following up absent pupils and as a parent/carer you may be contacted either via phone call/text message or by email/parent mail, to ascertain the reason. It should be noted that only the school can authorise pupil absence, and should the authenticity of the absence be in doubt, Crofton Academy can request evidence from parents/carers to support this.

THE LEGAL POWERS AND DUTIES THAT GOVERN SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ARE CONTAINED IN:

- The Education Act 1996 – sections 434 (1)(3)(4) & (6) and 458 (4) & (5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act states that if a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly, the parent/carer is guilty of an offence. Parents therefore have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's school attendance. Failure can lead to legal action being taken by the Local Authority in the Magistrate's Court, or the need to issue Penalty Notices. Since March 2001, there has been a further offence, Section 444 (1A), where a parent **knowingly** allows their child to be absent from school. This offence can carry a custodial sentence.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 also allow the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices on behalf of schools and Academies for unauthorised pupil absence from school for children of compulsory school age.

COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE

Compulsory school age is set out in section 8 of the Education Act 1996 and The Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) Order 1998. A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his/her fifth birthday (or on his/her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August. The term 'summer born' is used to refer to children born from 1 April to 31 August. These children are not required to start school until a full school year after the point at which they could first have been admitted.

School admission authorities are required to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday, but flexibilities exist for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school before they reach compulsory school age.

THE SCHOOL DAY

The law states that children should arrive in school on time, every day. The following information describes the school day so that everyone is clear what is expected.

8.45 – Pupils wait in designated zones

8:50 – 9.10 - School begins – registration with your Group Tutor

9:10 – 10:10 - Period 1 Timetabled lessons

10:10 – 11.25 – Period 2 (**Timetabled lessons including staggered breaks**)

Breaks

10:10 - 10:25 – Year 10

10.25 - 10.40 – Year 8

10.40 - 10:55 – Year 7

10.55 - 11.10 – Year 9

11.10 - 11.25 – Year 11

11:10 – 11:25 – Period 3 Timetabled lessons

11.25 – 14.05 – Period 4 (**Timetabled lessons including staggered lunch**)

Lunch

13.00 – 13:30 – Year 7

12:25 – 13:00 – Year 8

13:30 – 14:05 – Year 9

12:25 – 13:00 – Year 10

13:30 – 14:05 – Year 11

Pupils remain on site during school time including break and lunch

15:05 - End of school day

Arrivals after 8.55am until 9.10am

Pupils are expected to be on time to the start of registration at 8.50am. The register is taken by Group Tutors at 8.55am. Pupils arriving after 8.55am will be recorded at the attendance window located in reception and issued with a 20 minute lunch time detention. These pupils will be marked in the register as late (L), exceptions to this include the late arrival of the school special buses and medical appointments where evidence has been received.

This is recorded on our system and may qualify as unauthorised absence. If lateness continues, a warning letter will be issued. This is notification that a Penalty Notice may be issued if persistent lateness, after the close of registration continues.

Punctuality Matters

Missed Minutes = Missed Learning = Missed Opportunities

As a school, we are aware lateness can severely affect achievement. We monitor punctuality closely and recognise that we need to be able to differentiate between pupils who are late and pupils who attend after the register closes at 9.30am. Registration begins at 8.50am and all pupils are expected to be in their form room at this time. Pupils arriving after 8.55am will be marked present but arriving late (L). The registers close at 9.30am and on arrival after this, pupils must immediately report to the attendance window located in reception to sign in to ensure we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school.

Pupils arriving after 9.30am will be marked in the register with a U code. This registration code reflects the pupil arriving after 9.30am and is classed as unauthorised absence.

In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, school may keep the register open for a longer period. However, if a pupil arrives late (after the registers have closed) for any other reason, the code U will be used.

If a pupil arrives late (after registers have been closed) due to a medical appointment, the code M would be used.

Pupil's non-attendance at school, when no reason has been reported by parents, is a safeguarding matter. School will follow up all unexplained absences by ringing parents/carers (where correct numbers are held on our system) by 11am each day.

Parents/carers will be asked to provide written clarification for the absence. If concerns arise, then the Headteacher or other designated safeguarding professional in school, may refer matters to the Education Welfare Officer or Social Care Direct.

The school register is a legal document and, as such, is checked regularly by the Education Welfare Officer. Checks ensure registers are being maintained accurately and assess the reasons and incidence of absence.

Minutes lost each day	Days lost per school year
5 minutes	3 days
10 minutes	6.5 days
15 minutes	10 days
20 minutes	13 days
30 minutes	19 days

DEFINITION OF ATTENDANCE

Attendance	Impact on Learning	Who is involved
Outstanding Attendance 98% - 100%	The best chance of success	Group Tutor
Good Attendance 95% - 97.9%		Group Tutor / Learning Mentor
Worrying Attendance 90% - 94.9%	Less chance of success because of periods of lost learning. Makes it harder to progress well. Falling behind peers	Group Tutor / Learning Mentor / Year Group Manager
Serious Concern Attendance (Persistent Absence) Below 90%	Significant lost learning time. Will have missed important learning milestones to aid progression	Group Tutor / Learning Mentor / Year Group Manager Educational Welfare Officer

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Any absence from school is detrimental to a child's education; it disrupts learning routines and progress and should be avoided wherever possible.

Responsibilities

When a child is not going to be attending school, parents/carers have to:

- Inform school before **9.00 am** by telephone that their child will not be attending, stating the reason for the absence and when they are expected to return.
- **Repeat this** each day the child is absent from school.

When the child returns to school, parents/carers are required to:

- Provide written confirmation of the absence showing dates and the reason for non-attendance. These letters will be recorded on the school system and maybe reviewed by the Education Welfare Officer.

The school will:

- Follow up unexplained absences by contacting parents/carers by telephone.
- Refer to the Education Welfare Officer.
- After 20 days' absence without contact, report the child as *Child Missing from Education (CME)* to the Local Authority.

The school may also:

- Ask for evidence to support any absence due to illness

- Write to parents/carers stating the concerns regarding attendance/punctuality.
- Ask parents/carers to meet with the Associate Assistant Headteacher and/ or Education Welfare Officer, to discuss attendance concerns.
- Refer the pupil to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) where there is a regular problem with attendance/punctuality.
- Conduct home visits.
- Contact the Police and ask them to carry out a welfare check on an absent pupil at any point during an absence, if there are any safeguarding concerns for the pupil.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Some absence is unavoidable, usually due to illness, bereavement or difficult family circumstances, and these can be classed as an Authorised absence. The decision as to whether an absence is authorised or not lies with the Headteacher.

- **Illness**

Children who are reported as absent through illness are marked with an 'I' code.

- **Medical appointments**

Wherever possible, we request that dental and medical appointments are made at the end of the school day or during the school holidays. Where this is not possible, parents are required to verify the appointments at the school office with an appointment card/letter. If verification is not provided, the absence will not be authorised. Children should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time for the appointment. Children who are reported as absent because they are attending a medical appointment are marked with an 'M' code.

- **Religious Observance**

Absence due to religious observance is authorised absence. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Children who are reported as absent due to religious observance are marked with an 'R' code.

Promoting attendance

Staff and pupils at Crofton Academy are fully aware of the Academy expectations surrounding attendance.

- Regular assemblies take place in school highlighting the importance of attendance
- Weekly attendance figures are given to each tutor group to be displayed on their tutor noticeboard.
- Rewards given for excellent attendance
- Rewards given to tutor groups for achieving the best attendance
- Informative displays regarding attendance in school

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Unauthorised absence is that which is not permissible in Law, e.g. birthdays, shopping trips, days out, term time holidays, and absences where no explanation has been received. The School will monitor and discuss unauthorised absence with the Education Welfare Officer and further action may be agreed.

If parents/carers wish their child to be absent for other reasons, such as compassionate leave, special family events, or to participate in sporting or musical competitions etc., application should be made in writing in advance, where possible, to the Head of Year.

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

A child's attendance at school is one of, if not the most important factor in achieving success both academically and socially. To maintain continuity in their studies not only develops understanding but maximises progress within subjects and ensures that pupils achieve their potential. The curriculum moves at a rapid pace, and children do miss out on new learning when absent from school.

In line with the Government's amendments to the Education Regulations 2006, the Headteacher will not grant leave of absence for family holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Over the past few years we have tried to work in partnership with parents/carers to strike a balance between holidays in term time and academic progress. However, more recently we are finding an increasing number of pupils are being taken out of school.

The DfE strongly advise schools NOT to authorise holidays during term time, especially in the following circumstances:

- Availability of cheap holidays;
- Availability of the desired accommodation;
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods; and
- Overlap with beginning or end of term.

Crofton Academy Governors wish to stress that any request for holiday absence will be considered very carefully. Applications for a holiday should be made to the Headteacher **not less than six weeks** before that absence is due to start. The application can only be made by the parent/carer that the child normally resides with.

A response will be sent within 14 days of the receipt of the request. If your request is refused but you still take your child on holiday, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised and this absence will be taken into account should your child's attendance drop below 90%. The Local Authority are informed of any unauthorised term time holiday taken and a penalty notice issued to each parent/carer for each child taken out of school for a term time holiday. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60.00 which increases to £120.00 if not paid within 21 days. Unpaid Penalties may result in Legal action.

52 weeks in a Calendar Year

39 weeks in a school year

13 weeks available for holidays

Please consider this matter very carefully before making a request for absence during term time.

Holidays will not be authorised under any circumstances at exam time.

(Department for Children, School and Families (DCSF) Keeping Pupil Registers June 2008)

PERSISTENT ABSENCE

Persistent absence is when a pupil misses 10% or more of school **for any reason** and has an attendance of below 90%. The school works with the Education Welfare Officer to ensure all pupil attendance data is monitored regularly and action taken to reduce persistent absence. Where a child's absence is due to known illness or exceptional circumstances, it will be monitored.

If absence is not for one of the reasons, a written warning will be issued. Parents/carers will be required to show improvement within the next four school weeks. If there is no improvement, then a second letter will be issued requesting the parent/carer to make an appointment with the Attendance Lead and/or the Education Welfare Officer. At this stage, support will be offered and targets set for improvement.

If there is still no improvement within the next two school weeks, parents/carers will be notified that the matter has been referred to the Education Welfare Officer who will then follow up the case; this leaves parents/carers at risk of legal action and/or a Penalty Notice.

Penalties under Section 444 Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure a child attends school regularly are as follows:-

A person found guilty of an offence under this section is liable, on summary conviction, to:

- A Fine not exceeding Level 3 on the Standard Scale (£1,000).

However, if in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1) above, the parent knows that his/her child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to do so, he/she is guilty of an offence. A person guilty of an offence under subsection 1A is liable on summary conviction to:

- A fine not exceeding Level 4 on the Standard Scale (£2,500)
- Imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months.
- Both of the above

Penalty Notice

Penalty Notices can be issued to address unauthorized absence, which may include term time holidays and poor punctuality. On 7 June 2018 Crofton Academy Governing Body agreed to the issuing of penalty notices by the Local Authority from 1 September 2018. A Penalty Notice will be issued by the Local Authority at the point which 10 sessions (half day is one session) are recorded as unauthorized absence within a school term. The cost of the penalty notice is £60 per child, per parent, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. This rises to £120 per child, per parent between 22 and 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty within 28 days will result in the matter being brought before the Magistrates Court and could result in a criminal conviction.

Evaluation and Review

The school will review this policy annually and update accordingly to include changes in the law and guidance on good practice. The policy will be promoted throughout the school community and shared with outside agencies and partners as required.

Policy reviewed September 2021

Attendance Policy – Whole School September 2020- September 2021

Crofton Academy Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID 19) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year.

This document is an addendum to the non-statutory school attendance: guidance for schools. It explains the changes made to school attendance registers in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) from 24 August 2020 for use in the 2020 to 2021 academic year.

It should be read in conjunction with the wider guidance document which gives advice on other usual attendance duties and processes that remain in force.

Attendance expectations

From the start of the autumn term 2020 pupil attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

School academic year 2020 – 2021

Not attending due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

A new category has therefore been added of non-attendance – 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'.

This category must only be used to record sessions that take place in the 2020 to 2021 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England (PHE) and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)³
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19)

In line with the Secretary of State's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend a given session, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

Attendance Codes

From the beginning of the new academic year, schools should return to using the attendance and absence codes in use before the outbreak (set out on page 9 of the [attendance guidance](#)), in addition to the new category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)':

- pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' should be recorded using code X⁴
- schools should continue to use code X for non-compulsory school aged pupils who are not expected to attend a session, as they did before the outbreak

Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' could apply:

- Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19).

Pupils who have symptoms should self-isolate and get a test

If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I – illness, as would usually be the case. Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.

If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. They should only return to school if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

If someone in the pupil's household has symptoms, the household should self-isolate and the member of their household should get a test.

If the member of the household tests negative, the pupil can stop self-isolating and can return to school. Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result when the pupil can return to school.

If the household member tests positive, the pupil should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days from when the member of their household first had symptoms. Code X should be used during this period.

In all cases of self-isolation, schools should ask parents to inform them immediately about the outcome of a test. Schools should not require evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)

Pupils may not have symptoms themselves but may be required to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with coronavirus (COVID-19).

The [NHS test and trace](#) guidance states that a person should self-isolate for 14 days if they have had recent close contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). In the event of a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) case in the school community, the local health protection team will provide advice on who this applies to, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with the person that has tested positive when they were infectious. Code X should be used for these pupils during this period.

Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, code X should be used in the register.

Remote education

If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19), we expect schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement with this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

Attendance Policy – Whole School September 2020- September 2021

Crofton Academy Addendum – Information for parents

All pupils will be expected to attend the academy, including those who have been previously shielding, and the academy has a responsibility to follow up any absences. Sanctions, including the use of fixed penalty notices, may be used for periods of unexplained absence in line with local authority guidance.

Absences which are caused as a result of Covid 19, for example self-isolation, the start of symptoms or a positive Covid 19 test these will be marked on the register in line with DfE guidance and therefore families will not be penalised as a result of this.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the academy of reason for absence. Where the reason is not related to Covid 19, the academy will use the DfE guidance on reporting absence and the policy will be implemented where absence causes concerns.

Where a child is following public health guidelines or the guidelines of a clinician, and has been told to stay at home, for example they are clinically vulnerable, we would work with medical practitioners to ensure that absence is recorded in line with DfE guidance and that pupils are provided with the opportunity for remote learning.

We understand that for some families (including those who have vulnerable members in the household or those concerned about increased risk) this will be a worrying time and we will work with these families to ensure that they are aware of the measures we have put into place to maintain social distancing giving them the confidence to send their children to school.

In the event of a local lockdown, we will follow public health guidance.

Attendance Policy – January 2021 Lockdown

Crofton Academy Addendum – Information for parents

Attendance recording in schools

While parents and carers who are critical workers should keep children at home if they can, children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school if required. The attendance team from Crofton Academy will speak to parents to identify children of critical workers who need to go to school; those that do not will be recorded as Code X.

Where parents of critical workers only need their child to attend school part-time, Code X will be used to record the sessions that the child is not expected to attend.

Where the child of a critical worker is expected to attend a session and does not do so, the school will record the absence as Code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

As usual, Code X will be used if the child is self-isolating or quarantining because of coronavirus (COVID-19).

As vulnerable children are still expected to attend school full time, and will be marked as Code X if they are not in school (except if they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining). If the parent of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent, the parent should let the school know. The Department expects schools to grant applications for leave of absence given the exceptional circumstances. This should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

Where schools grant a leave of absence to vulnerable children they should still speak to parents and social workers (where applicable) to explore the reasons for this and any concerns raised. The discussions should focus on the welfare of the child and ensuring the child is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home.

All pupils who are not eligible to be in school should be marked as Code X (not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID19)). They are not attending because they are following public health advice.

Fast track

Every ½ term 96% and above attendees receive an epraise point



Attendance drop below 96.5/3 broken weeks – **LETTER 1**
Follow up call from attendance officer



Further absence – **LETTER 2**
Leaflet about attendance included. Parents invited in to speak with attendance officer



Further absence/below 90% meeting with attendance officer
START OF FAST TRACK
Parents invited for meeting with attendance officer

