

# CROWLEES J&I SCHOOL

## Attendance policy



**Approved by:** Crowlees Governors

**Last reviewed on:** September 2020

**Next review due by:** September 2021

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### 1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

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](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [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](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

### **3. School procedures**

#### **3.1 Attendance register**

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08:50am on each school day.\*

The register for the first session will be taken at 9:00am and will be kept open until 9:05am. The register for the second session will be taken at 13:05 (KS2) 13:15 (KS1) and will be kept open until 13:30.

\*During the COVID-19 pandemic alternative staggered start times have been put in place: 08:40am arrival for non-sibling children; 9:00am arrival for siblings.

#### **3.2 Unplanned absence**

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 09:00am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6)- by ringing the school office on 01924 494970 and leaving a message on the absence line, or speaking to someone in the office.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

#### **3.3 Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Parents should bring the appointment notice to the office in advance.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

### **3.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. Persistent lateness will be followed up by contact from the head teacher to ensure the welfare of the child and family, discuss any issues and a plan out in place to ensure punctuality.

### **3.5 Following up absence**

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use. Persistent absence will be followed up by contact from the head teacher to ensure the welfare of the child and family, discuss any issues and a plan out in place to ensure future attendance.

### **3.6 Reporting to parents**

Attendance and punctuality will be reported to parents on the end of year annual report.

## **4. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as an unavoidable absence; appointments that cannot be taken at another time.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

This is an absence not known about by the school in advance or is for an inappropriate reason. Examples are as follows:

- Shopping or haircut

- Sleeping in
- Visiting relatives or trips to the airport
- Extended leave which has not been authorised

The law states that a child may only miss school due to an unavoidable cause to the child. These are detailed out in s444 Education Act 1996 as:

- The child is too sick to attend
- Authorisation was granted by the school
- The day is set aside exclusively for religious observance
- The LA has a duty to make travel arrangements
- The child is of no fixed abode
- The child is a boarder
- The child has been excluded

Outside of these reasons, the expectation is that if a parent is unable to take their child to school, they will ensure an alternative method is secured.

Guidance issued by the DCSF states that, as a general rule, children should not be taken out of school for the purposes of a holiday. The guidance from Kirklees states that time off school for family holidays **is not a right**. Schools have discretion to allow up to 10 days absence in a school year in special circumstances. For example:

- For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

Guidance states that holidays taken for the following reasons should not be authorised:

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

Permission for extended leave will be denied if the child's attendance pattern is considered by the Head teacher to fall below acceptable levels.

Permission cannot be given for holidays taken during assessment periods: the key Stage 2 SATs week in May and the Key Stage 1 phonics test in June.

It is for the Head teacher to determine if the request is reasonable. Each request will be judged on a case-by-case basis. The Head teacher will consider the following:

- The reasons for the holiday
- The wishes of the parent
- The age & educational stage of the child
- The time of year of the proposed holiday
- The child's overall attendance record

## 4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

## **5. Strategies for promoting attendance**

At Crowlees J&I School we expect children to attend school every day. We reward good attendance with praise and acknowledgment.

To help parents and families with attendance we aim to communicate promptly and efficiently through our School Ping and text messaging service to give parents adequate notice about school arrangements.

Any parent with concerns or issues around attendance or punctuality should make an appointment to speak directly with the head teacher who will work with them to resolve any issues.

## **6. Attendance monitoring**

The school monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2) and should continue to ring school each day their child is unwell.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 school days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

The school collects and stores attendance data through our Integris system, and uses for internal purposes, to track the attendance of individual pupils, identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

## **7. Roles and responsibilities**

### **7.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

## **7.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

## **7.3 The attendance officer**

An attendance officer (who may be employed from the LA):

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

## **7.4 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

## **7.5 Office/reception staff**

Office/reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the the headteacher and governors.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to:

If you wish to find any more information on domestic violence click here:

[Emergency Contact and First-day Calling Procedures](#)

Crowlees Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (see school website)

Crowlees Child Missing in Education (see school website)

West Yorkshire Police Truancy Policy:

<https://kirkleesbusinesssolutions.uk/Page/14663#:~:text=DOCX%20%7C%20West%20Yorkshire%20Police%20Truant%20Policy%20partner%20expectations%20and%20recording%20document>

<https://kirkleesbusinesssolutions.uk/Page/14663#:~:text=DOCX%20%7C%20West%20Yorkshire%20Police%20Truant%20Policy%20Letter>

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

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
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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



<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day