



Attendance Policy and Procedures

| DOCUMENT ORIGINS | | | |
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| Organisation | Crabtree Farm Primary School | Version date | 2 nd August 2024 |
| Owner (s) | Craig Nicholson | Approved by | Full Governing Body |
| Senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance | | | Lorna Haskey, Headteacher |
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| DOCUMENT VERSION HISTORY | | |
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| Revision date | Author of changes | Summary of changes |
| 29 th August 2023 | Craig Nicholson and Jodie Round | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New attendance officer • Updated date for KCSiE • Working together to improve attendance colour percentages changed, to tie in with school's colour system. • Illness and legitimate reasons procedure added further information to tie into website. • Added a day by day timeframe to responding to non-attendance. • Persistent Absentees – additional bullet point about school's action at 95%. |
| 27 th Feb 2024 | DSL Team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update to time frames and actions regarding vulnerable children. |
| 2 nd August 2024 | Craig Nicholson and Jodie Round | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated date for KCSiE • Changed subsection title to 'Aims of the Policy' • Added the subsection 'The law relating to attendance and safeguarding' • Added additional bullet points within roles and responsibilities. • Added additional information to definitions. • Working together to improve attendance bullet points updated and days adjusted to align with percentages. • Updated subsection title 'Holidays in term time' to 'Requests for term time leave', and information regarding fines. • Added a subsection about unauthorised absences and 10 unauthorised sessions in 10 weeks. • Added in a statement around headteacher authorising absences. • Added severely absent children to persistent absentee subsection • Removed only authorising one day in the Religious observation subsection. • Added section 10 – other policies and procedures |

Statement of intent

School attendance is everyone's responsibility. Crabtree Farm Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance and punctuality is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents/carers.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

Aims of the Policy

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Clear procedures encouraging pupils to achieve their maximum potential by maintaining good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents/carers.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents/carers follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'

The law relating to attendance and safeguarding

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) to age, ability, and aptitude and
- (b) to any special educational needs, he/ she may have either at school or otherwise

A child is of compulsory school age from the beginning of the next term after their 5th birthday until the last Friday of June in the academic year of their 16th birthday.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

The issue of a penalty notice under section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act may be considered in cases where a student is absent from the school and the absence is unauthorised.

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be the most appropriate tool. Therefore, from the autumn term 2024, only two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same child within a three year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent/carer will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same child within three years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those three years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers, pupils, all members of school staff and governing bodies.

The governing body has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school, to ensure statutory duties are fulfilled. Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Identify a named governor with responsibility for attendance.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data. Discussing attendance at half termly full governing body meetings.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Considering every request for leave of absence on its individual merits. Ultimately the Headteacher will be the final arbiter of the authorisation of any leave.
- Overseeing the collection and reporting of attendance data and the publication of statistics and reports on attendance to parents/carers, pupils, governors and to Nottingham City Council. Data used to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohort who need it most. Data will also inform the annual review of school's attendance policy and practice.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day. This is a legal document and must be completed accurately.
- Monitoring attendance of children in their class and liaising with the attendance officer to highlight any emerging patterns.
- Form positive relationships with families and build trust between school and home.
- Rewarding good attendance.
- Ensuring that children feel safe and happy to attend school. Following absence or poor punctuality, welcome children into the class using positive language.

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Ensure attendance data is accurate and up to date.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to all stakeholders.

- Communicating with pupils and parents/carers with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.
- Assisting parents/carers and pupils with problems which may affect school attendance.
- Working with school staff to tackle persistent absence and to follow up absences.
- Knowing those pupils the school is most concerned about for example looked after children, children subject to safeguarding procedures, children with EHCPs or other vulnerable children.
- Rewarding good attendance.
- Referring to other agencies where there are specific needs and concerns.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Recognising they have to attend school regularly on time and ready to learn.
- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Reporting to the office should they arrive after registration time.
- Telling a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Fulfilling their legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly, on time and prepared for the day
- Reporting their child's absence and providing any evidence they may have to explain the absence.
- To arrange medical and dental appointments out of school times wherever possible.
- To arrange holidays out of school term time.
- Promoting good attendance with their child/ren.
- Speaking to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem, which may prevent their child from attending school.
- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.

Education Welfare Service are responsible for:

- Providing a communication link between school and the Local Authority (LA).
- Helping parents/carers to understand their legal responsibilities and rights within the education system.
- Advising parents/carers who to contact within the LA for specialised assistance.
- Liaising with identified school staff.
- Undertaking home visits, either pre-arranged or without notice as considered necessary on receipt of a detailed referral.
- Instigating legal proceedings on behalf of the LA including parental prosecutions in the Magistrates' Court and if deemed appropriate, apply for Education Supervision Orders through the Family Court.
- Planning and reviewing casework.
- Providing feedback to schools.
- Working together with schools in the management and promotion of improving school attendance.
- Advise and support schools in the use of penalty notices and parenting contracts within the provisions of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.
- Hold termly targeted support meetings.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

An authorised absence is where the school has either given permission in advance for the child to be absent or where an explanation offered is accepted as satisfactory justification for absence.

Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- An absence for sickness or illness.
- Medical or dental appointments, which unavoidably fall during school time.
- Religious or cultural observances.
- An absence due to a family emergency (evidence will be required).
- Traveller child travelling for the purposes of parents/carers' employment.

Unauthorised absence:

An unauthorised absence is where either no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is not considered acceptable by the school.

Unauthorised absences may include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily and/or without an authorised reason.
- Absences which have never been explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed (U code).
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays etc.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

Severely Absent:

- Missing 50% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

4. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents/carers and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day or full session if attending morning/afternoon nursery.

The school day starts at **9am**, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by **8:50am**.

Afternoon nursery starts at **12.25pm**, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by **12:15pm**.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by **9am**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark (L code).

- Pupils arriving after **9.30am** will receive a late mark after register closes mark (U code), which denotes as an unauthorised absence.
- The register for afternoon nursery will be marked by **12.25pm**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark (L code).
- Afternoon nursery pupils arriving after **12.55pm** will receive a late mark after register closes mark (U code), which denotes as an unauthorised absence.
- The afternoon register in F2 (Reception) to Year 2 will be taken at **1pm**.
- The afternoon register in Year 3 to Year 6 will be taken at **1:15pm**.

WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0 – 2 DAYS OFF | 99-100% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge consistent weeks and 100% weeks • Discuss overall class attendance and offer praise to improvers • Teacher to discuss 96% attendees with Attendance Officer • Request notes for unauthorised absences and update relevant systems |
| 3 – 8 DAYS OFF | 96-98% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk with parents/carers and pupils regarding attendance levels dropping • Trigger first attendance warning email for pupils falling within 95-97% attendance category • School to complete home visit for consecutive days absence |
| 9 – 14 DAYS OFF | 93-95% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge improvement in attendance for the pupils who have moved into this category from the below categories • School staff to have weekly check ins • School to complete home visit for consecutive days absence • School to consider Early Help assessment to highlight barriers to learning and offer support (<i>requirement for LA</i>) • School to develop an attendance plan with parent/carer at a parent/carer meeting (<i>requirement for LA – letter to be sent</i>) |
| 15 – 19 DAYS OFF | 90-92% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge improvement in attendance for the pupils who have moved into this category from the below categories • At Targeted Support Meeting discuss individual students; agree Attendance Panels. • School to complete EWS referral for suitable cases. Education Welfare Specialist to approve referrals. • School to maintain contact with the family and continue with their attendance procedures; telephone calls, home visits etc |
| 20 + DAYS OFF | Under 89% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge improvements in attendance • Letter to parents/carers informing them that a referral has been made to EWS • EWS procedure begins • Attendance Panel. Education Welfare Officer to attend. • School to maintain contact with the family and continue with their attendance procedures; telephone calls, home visits etc. |

5. Absence procedures

Illness and other legitimate reasons.

Parents/carers will be required to contact the school office via telephone, Arbor or text message on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one

school day. All absences should be reported every day the child is off school, unless it is a serious injury or a long-term illness that the school has received proof of.

Any child, who is absent for more than three days, is required to bring in medical evidence as proof of illness. Failure to inform the school of a child's reason of absence may result in a home visit from a member of our attendance team.

The headteacher will decide in all cases whether to authorise an absence on the basis of the evidence available.

Requests for term time leave (including family holidays)

All schools can grant a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances at their discretion. Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024) states "the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance."

If families, choose to take their child out of school during term time for an unauthorised holiday/leave of absence they will be referred to Education Welfare for a penalty notice to be issued.

- First penalty notices are issued per parent/carer per child. They are £80 if paid within 21 days rising to £160 if paid after 21 days, but before 28 days.
- Second penalty notices, for an additional absence within a three year rolling period, will be issued per parent/carer per child. They are £160 if paid before 28 days.
- If a penalty notice remains unpaid then the Local Authority may instigate legal proceedings against you under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of this offence you could be fined up to £2500 per parent/carer per child.
- If a third term time leave of absence occurs within the three year rolling period, a penalty notice will not be issued, a parenting order may be put in place or the case will be presented straight to the magistrate's court.
- A referral will be made for a penalty notice to be issued if the school is informed or suspect that a family has been on holiday, whilst suggesting to the school another reason of absence. It will be up to the family to prove that they have not taken a family holiday.
- Children taken out of school for a holiday will have the non-attendance recorded as an unauthorised absence 'G' code.
- A child who does not return to school at the end of the recorded unauthorised holiday date, will initially be subject to enquiries being made by the school.
- If after ten days of the expected return date, the child has still not returned to school, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service for further enquiries to be made.
- Following the above information, if a parent/carer still intends to take their child on holiday during term time, they have a duty to inform the school of this action and give at least six weeks' notice of the event.
- Parents/carers must complete a Leave of Absence form, obtained from the school office. Completion of the form does not grant permission for the leave.
- Only the headteacher can decide whether to grant exceptional leave. If exceptional leave is agreed, you will receive a letter from the school. If you do not get a letter do not, assume that permission has been granted.

Responding to non-attendance

The following action will be taken on the days a child is absent from school:

| Day | Action |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ A 'School Comms' text will be sent out.➤ A telephone call is made if contact is not made by the parent/carer.➤ If it is a vulnerable child, a home visit will be carried out. |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ A 'School Comms' text will be sent out.➤ A telephone call is made if contact is not made by the parent/carer. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Additional emergency contacts listed for the child will be contacted. ➤ If no contact is made by afternoon registration, a home visit may be carried out. If no contact is made at the home property, a calling card will be left asking the parent/carer to contact school. ➤ If the child is known to social care, and no contact is made by afternoon registration, their allocated worker or MASH duty will be informed. ➤ If the child is known to social care and parents/carers have reported the absence, their allocated worker will be informed. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A 'School Comms' text will be sent out. ➤ A telephone call is made if contact is not made by the parent/carer. ➤ Additional emergency contacts listed for the child will be contacted. ➤ If siblings attend another school/secondary school, we contact them to ascertain their attendance. ➤ A home visit will be carried out. If no contact is made at the home property, a calling card will be left asking the parent/carer to contact school. ➤ If the child is known to social care, and no contact is made by afternoon registration, their allocated worker or MASH duty will be informed. ➤ If it is a vulnerable child and contact by the parent/carer has been made, but the child has not been seen or spoken to, a welfare home visit/phone conversation with the child will be carried out. |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A 'School Comms' text will be sent out. ➤ A telephone call is made if contact is not made by the parent/carer. ➤ Additional emergency contacts listed for the child will be contacted. ➤ Follow up all communication attempts with other agencies e.g. social care/MASH or another school. ➤ A home visit will be carried out. If no contact is made at the home property, a calling card will be left asking the parent/carer to contact school. ➤ If the child is known to social care and parents/carers have reported the absence, their allocated worker will be informed. |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A 'School Comms' text will be sent out. ➤ A telephone call is made if contact is not made by the parent/carer. ➤ Additional emergency contacts listed for the child will be contacted. ➤ Follow up all communication attempts with other agencies e.g. social care/MASH or another school. ➤ A home visit will be carried out. If no contact is made at the home property, a calling card will be left asking the parent/carer to contact school. ➤ If no contact has been made in 5 days and there is no reason for absence from parent/carer or any other source, consider contacting the police. |
| 6-9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If not already under social care with an allocated worker who has been informed, submit a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF). ➤ Continue making contact with the parent/carer through text, phone and home visit. ➤ Continue working with other agencies e.g. MASH duty. ➤ Contact EWO to inform and discuss the non-attendance. |
| 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Complete a referral to Children Missing Education (CME) at the Local Authority (see CME below). |

The following actions may be applied when addressing concerns around non-attendance to all pupils:

- If at any point the school believe the child may be at imminent risk, a call to the Police or MASH duty will be made outside of the above timeframes.
- Failure to inform the school of reasons of absence will result in an unauthorised absence being recorded.
- Pupil attendance is reviewed every week.
- For reported absences, school staff e.g. class teacher or phase leader, may contact the family to carry out a welfare check or explore any support.

Unauthorised absences

If an absence is recorded as unauthorised the school may refer this to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Service. The Local Authority can use various sanctions to promote regular attendance, such as issuing a penalty notice fine or initiate court proceedings.

From autumn 2024 penalty notice fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period. The morning counts as one session and the afternoon as one session e.g. 1 day = 2 sessions.

Penalty notice fines for 10 unauthorised sessions in a 10 week period, will be referred to Education Welfare for a penalty notice to be issued.

- First penalty notices are issued per parent/carer per child. They are £80 if paid within 21 days rising to £160 if paid after 21 days, but before 28 days.
- Second penalty notices, for an additional absence within a three year rolling period, will be issued per parent/carer per child. They are £160 if paid before 28 days.
- If a penalty notice remains unpaid then the Local Authority may instigate legal proceedings against you under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of this offence you could be fined up to £2500 per parent/carer per child.
- If a third term time leave of absence occurs within the three year rolling period, a penalty notice will not be issued, a parenting order may be put in place or the case will be presented straight to the magistrate's court.

If your child is reluctant to attend school, please speak to relevant school staff who can discuss the individual case and look at any necessary support required to re-engage your child in school.

Persistent and severely absent pupils

All pupils with an attendance rate of **90%** and below are considered as persistent absentees and will be closely monitored. All pupils with an attendance of **50%** and below are considered as severely absent. The following actions are highly probable for such cases:

- At 95% attendance, an email will have been sent out to inform parents/carers that their child's attendance needs to improve and offer a meeting at school to explore any support. During the support meeting the threshold for persistent absenteeism will have been discussed, and what will happen should they fall below 90%.
- A letter will be sent out to inform parents/carers that their child's attendance is below 90% and of the actions school will take if their child's attendance remains or continues to fall below 90%.
- Further absences will be unauthorised unless one of the following is shown to school: a medical certificate, a letter from a medical practitioner, dated prescribed medication or an appointment slip/text message.
- Parents/carers will be invited to attend an attendance meeting in school if there is little or no improvement in their child's attendance. This may require parents/carers to work alongside our team to improve their child's attendance and routines.
- An Attendance Improvement Plan will be put in place and reviewed. A copy will be given to parents/carers.
- Parents/carers will be invited to attend a formal review with our Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer if attendance shows no improvement.
- Removal of nursery placement will be considered.
- A formal request for intervention will be made to the Education Welfare Service for legal action to be considered.
- For any child whose attendance falls below 60% - agencies will take full account of all that is known about the child and consider completing a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) for additional support from Children's Social Care.
- Whenever possible, the school's Attendance Officer will offer support and guidance to avoid poor attendance levels. Looking at alternative support to help avoid those external barriers preventing a parent/carer from bringing a child to school.

Lateness

Registrations are taken promptly at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Any pupil arriving after the start time, but within the thirty minutes will be recorded as an 'L' code which signifies late.

In a morning from 9am until 9.15am any child arriving is greeted by the Attendance Officer, logged as late and issued with a late pass and sent to their classroom doors via the playground. After 9.15am, all pupils arriving must enter through the main reception, where they will also be marked with an 'L' code.

Any pupil arriving after the 30 minutes will be recorded as 'U' code, which signifies that they arrived after the official close of the register, which denotes an unauthorised absence.

Issues relating to punctuality will initially be addressed with the parents/carers in the following ways:

- If late marks become a regular occurrence, a call will be made to parents/carers to discuss.
- If no improvement is made, parents/carers will be informed that we will monitor lateness with U codes.
- If there is still no improvement, formal meetings in school will be arranged, where attendance targets will be agreed.
- The Local Authority will be asked to issue a Penalty Notice on the school's behalf for any pupil registered late (recorded as U) 10 sessions or more in a six-week period.
- The school may request that a Penalty Notice is issued where there has been persistently lateness that results in unauthorised absences being recorded.

Safeguarding/leave of absence in term time/extended leave of absence

Any safeguarding issues pertaining to a child being taken out of school in circumstances that cause concern will be addressed directly to the Social Care Duty Team via a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF).

Any child absent from school for more than 10 consecutive days will be referred to the Children Missing Education (CME) team after all relevant checks made by school.

Children Missing Education (CME)

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures and Attendance Policy:

- Parents/carers are expected to contact school on the first day of absence.
- School will contact parents/carers if no reason of absence has been given to school, initially by School Comms text, if there are attendance, welfare or safeguarding concerns this will also include a telephone call.
- School Comms text and phone call if no contact has been made, on the previous day, additional emergency contact numbers will also be called.
- Potential home visit if no contact is made, and contact made with any additional agencies who are working with the family (who may be in a better position to visit the family).
- Referral to CME if information is gained that the family have moved out of area.
- Referral to CME if child has not returned after 10 days with no contact from the family after efforts made by school, if we believe the child should or may be removed from roll whether the onward school is known or not.
- The Children Missing Education (CME) Officer within the Education Welfare Service will work closely with the school to try to identify the child's current whereabouts/destination.
- Both parties will then agree an appropriate time and category to remove the child from the school roll. This includes those children and young people who are expected

to move swiftly into appropriate provision; this is in line with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

- After 20 school days of absence and efforts by both the school and CME to find the child prove unsuccessful, the CME Officer will consult the school to discuss whether to remove their name from the school roll. The final decision about removal from a school roll remains with the headteacher following consultation with the Local Authority via CME.
- It is the duty of both the Education Welfare Service and school to collaborate in finding the pupil before deleting them from the register.
- For further information please contact the CME Officers directly - cme.educationwelfare@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

6. Attendance register

The school uses Arbor to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved educational visit
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

| Code | Explanation | Code | Explanation |
|------|---------------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| / | Present in the morning | U | Arrived after registration closed |
| \ | Present in the afternoon | N | Reason not yet provided |
| L | Late arrival before the register has closed | X | Not required to be in school |
| C | Other authorised circumstances | T | Traveller absence |
| E | Excluded | V | Educational visit or trip |
| H | Authorised holiday | P | Participating in a supervised sporting activity |
| I | Illness | | |
| M | Medical or dental appointment | D | Dual registered – at another educational establishment |
| R | Religious observance | | |
| B | Educated off site | Y | Exceptional circumstances |
| G | Unauthorised holiday | Z | Pupil not on admission register |
| O | Unauthorised absence | # | School closed to pupils |

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

7. Authorising absence (including parental absence requests)

Only the headteacher may authorise absence. Even when a parent/carer provides an explanation of absence the headteacher will decide whether to accept the explanation and authorise the absence.

Leave of absence

At Crabtree Farm Primary School we request that all applications for leave of absence must be made 6 weeks in advance by the parents/carers that the pupil normally resides with. We request that a Leave of Absence form and a conversation with the attendance team be completed. Then, a written response will be provided.

Any leave of absence granted by the school is recorded as an authorised absence using the appropriate national code. Periods that are refused are recorded as unauthorised absences.

At Crabtree Farm Primary School, when considering such requests, we take into account the following:

- Circumstances of the request.
- Purpose of the leave.
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record over the last twelve months.
- The amount of time requested.
- Length of the proposed leave.
- The proximity to SATs.
- General welfare of the pupil.

As mentioned, such requests receive a response in writing that addresses the following points:

- The expected date of return.
- That the parents/carers are expected to contact the school if anything delays the pupil returning to school when expected.
- What action will be taken if the pupil fails to return when expected.

A letter will be sent out should a request be refused. This will state what action will be taken if the parents/carers ignore the refusal and keep their child away; with a follow up letter after their return stating that a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service for a request for service and/or a penalty notice to be issued.

Healthcare appointments

Parents/carers will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible and appointments need to be made during school hours, parents/carers will be expected to provide proof of appointments (appointment cards, letters, texts, emails etc.) to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointment. Parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Religious observance

Parents/carers will be expected to request absence for religious observance in advance.

The Pupil Regulations 2006 state that absence for religious observance should be treated as authorised (absence) *'on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs'*. Additional days off for shopping or for extended celebrations should be treated as unauthorised absence.

In respect of pilgrimages, school may request to see copies of visas. Dates of return should also be agreed prior to the period of leave.

8. SEND and health-related absences

At Crabtree Farm Primary School we recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

The school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents/carers will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's policies.

Managing absences of pupils with health care needs

- Parents/carers are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness.
- Absences of pupils with health care needs will not be authorised unless the family has had prior discussion with school staff about the challenges and difficulties presented by their child's needs; this will enable school to understand the context and complexity of their child's additional health care needs. Crabtree Farm Primary School is committed to supporting all children regardless of their needs and is very much interested in offering support, guidance and referral to the relevant agencies.
- Absences of known pupils due to health needs will be authorised (using the relevant codes) unless the school has genuine cause for concern, which will trigger attendance and/or safeguarding procedures.
- The school will continue to provide support to pupils who are absent from school because of health needs by liaising with the pupil's parents/carers to arrange school work as soon as the pupil is able to cope with it and if available facilitate online access to the curriculum from home.
- To help ensure a pupil with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, a personalised or part-time timetable will be considered. Agreed periods of absence due to a part-time education timetable will be recorded with a C code for pupils of compulsory school age and an X code for non-compulsory school aged pupils.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Early Help Assessment
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable for a limited time.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and break times.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs, including implementing care plans.

9. Working with parents/carers to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents/carers and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents/carers are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents/carers will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, except for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents/carers are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance team will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents/carers to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches. Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance team will work with the Headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance team will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents/carers to access support that they may need.

10. Other Policies and Procedures

Other policies and procedures that may need to be taken into account are:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Looked After Children Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy
- Intimate care
- E-safety Policy
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education
- Remote Learning Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints Procedure