

## The Croft Primary School Attendance Policy

### **Principles**

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open.

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting an absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either **AUTHORISED** or **UN AUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

### **Authorised Absence**

Authorised absences are when a child has been away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

A child can have an unauthorised absence even with the support of the parent.

## **Procedures**

The school applies to following procedures for dealing with attendance and absences:

1. Parents are encouraged to contact the school and inform them of any absence, before the registration period if possible.
2. The Office Services Manager will attempt to contact the family if a child is absent without notification, when the registers are closed between 9.10a.m. and 9.30 a.m.
3. If no reason for an absence can be obtained a reminder slip will be sent home asking the parents to give a reason for the absence.
4. Late arrivals, after 9.10 a.m. will be marked as late in the register and are counted as an unauthorised absence.
5. Attendance and absence will be tracked on a regular basis and school will contact the Education Welfare Officer for advice and support as appropriate.
6. When a child has an attendance of below 90%in any term without good reason, a referral to the Education Welfare Service will be made by the school.
7. When a child is absent due to medical reasons evidence may be requested - in the form of doctors notes, appointment cards or prescriptions
8. Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during the school term, except in exceptional circumstances - an annual family holiday or weekend away is not considered exceptional
9. If parents wish to take their child out of school a leave of absence request form needs to be filled in - this can be obtained from the school office.

## **School Attendance Targets**

*To have a whole school combined attendance target of 96.5%*

## **Personnel responsible for attendance matters**

- The Headteacher - Mrs J. Millett
- Deputy Headteacher - Mrs. K. Bartram
- Office Services Manager - Mrs. A. Bailey
- Class Teachers

## **Working With Parents**

The staff at The Croft Primary School are committed to working with parents to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

This will involve:

- Parents being made aware of the school's attendance policy and procedures
- The school reporting on attendance rates where appropriate
- Support and advice for parents who may be experiencing attendance difficulties
- Rewards will be issued to child who have 100% attendance in any term

## **Penalty Notices**

Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children go to school regularly. The local authority can now issue Penalty Notices if a parent fails to make sure that their children receive the education they deserve.

Circumstances where a penalty notice may be considered if one of the following criteria are met:

- There is an unauthorised persistent absence. Persistent means at least 20 sessions of unauthorised absence over a period of 12 school weeks. These absences do not need to be consecutive
- There is a period of absence not authorised by the Head Teacher or in excess of the period authorised by the Head teacher
- Persistent late arrival at school i.e. after the register has closed. Persistent means at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 weeks, excluding holidays - these late sessions do not need to be consecutive.

- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion.
- A penalty notice will not be issued in respect of children in the care of the LA with whom other interventions will be used

#### Other Conditions

- There will be no limit on the times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence (Holidays) can be used in an academic year
- In cases where there is more than one pupil in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child
- Use of a Penalty Notice or formal warning of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised persistent absence/lateness will be restricted to one notice/warning per parent of a pupil per academic year.

A Penalty Notice is £60 per parent per child. This will go up to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the fine within 22-28 days may lead to court proceedings.

#### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and attendance targets reported to Governors termly.

September 2018