



# **Craven Primary Academy**

## **Attendance Policy 2022-2023**



Issue Date: September 2022  
Review Date: September 2023

Parents can access this policy via the academy website or request a copy from the main office.

## Academy Commitment

At Craven Academy we are committed to the improvement and sustainability of excellent attendance, and therefore are proactive in tackling poor attendance. Our aim is to achieve and maintain a whole school target of at least 96% and to reduce persistent absence. The academy will work in partnership with parents and extended services in improving attendance and therefore raising achievement for all our children.

## Aims and Objectives

- To achieve and maintain a target of 96% whole school attendance.
- To reduce persistent absence.
- To ensure excellence and enjoyment for every child by providing a safe environment and a relevant curriculum that meets the needs and interests of all our pupils.
- To tackle poor attendance rigorously with a consistent and transparent approach to being firm and fair.
- To support families where attendance is poor by removing any barriers that may attribute to poor attendance.
- To raise aspirations and expectations for our children and their families so changing cultural attitudes in the long term.
- To stop all holidays in term time for the purposes of holidays including visiting relatives for whatever reason.
- To safeguard all our children where there are safety concerns such as a child missing in education by working positively with external agencies such as the Education Welfare Service and Children's Social Care.
- To support pupils and families in staying safe throughout Covid-19 while still ensuring that they access education.

## Partnership with Parents and Carers

As an academy, attendance is a high priority. We have an attendance officer who focuses on maintaining excellent attendance across the academy alongside the Head of Academy. The school works hard to provide a relevant and enjoyable curriculum including extracurricular activities. Despite this, children's attendance is usually dictated by their parents/carers. Therefore, our work with parents/carers is crucial in achieving outstanding attendance for all pupils. The academy sends out regular information and newsletters about attendance. This includes updates on holidays during term time and Fixed Penalty Notices. Where there are concerns about a child's attendance, parents/carers are involved from the very beginning in working to improve the situation. The academy has a positive approach to attendance that is constantly reviewed and shared with all staff.

## Parental Responsibilities

- To have children in school and ready for teaching at 8:50am
- To inform the front office on **every day** of **any** absence **before 9:30am** via phone call, email, text, on the app or in-person at the office.
- To work with the school to improve lateness and punctuality.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.
- If parents, guardians, or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should: talk to their child and teacher; it may be something simple that could need your help in resolving. Alternatively, you can speak with the attendance officer regarding any attendance concerns you or your child may have.
- To avoid holidays being taken in term time.

## Lateness

- Arriving to school on time is an important life skill that all children have to adhere to. Being late means missing large, important chunks of their learning and can result in children not making the progress with their work that they deserve.
- The academy day starts at 8:50am. The registers close at 9:00am. After this time, children will be marked as late and an 'L' code will be recorded on the register.
- If children arrive after 9:30am, their absence will be recorded as unauthorised for the morning session and a 'U' code will be given. Each 'U' code will have a negative effect and lower their overall attendance.

***U codes/unauthorised absences will be included within the prosecution process and will result in a fine once enough have accumulated.***

## Home Visits

- If a phone call or reason for absence has not been received before 9:30am, the attendance officer will ring home. If they are unable to speak to a parent/carer or get a satisfactory reason for the absence they may make an unannounced home visit without delay to ensure the child is safe.
- Home visits will also be made where there are general safeguarding concerns, queries about a persistently absent child, or just to confirm that a child is too unwell to attend.
- The Police and/or Children's Social Care may be contacted to carry out a welfare visit if school have a safeguarding concern and have not been able to speak with the family.
- If a child is absent for 3 consecutive days, we will conduct a home visit to see the child and offer support to the family.
- The school has the right to unauthorise any absence if the reason given is not valid.

## Sickness Absence During Term Time

- The academy school office **must** be notified of your child's absence **before 9:30am each day**. It is a parent's responsibility to notify the academy.
- If you let the academy know of the absence via text or email, then we may call you to clarify the illness further.
- Children should be brought to school with minor illnesses. If you are unsure, you should bring your child to school and if they deteriorate and are seriously unwell, we will call you without delay to collect them.
- If the academy is not informed of absence, we will call parents. At this point all absences will be marked as unauthorised.
- We reserve the right to request a doctor's/consultant's letter regarding recurring and frequent illness.
- If your child has the same illness more than once in a term, we will request a doctor's/consultant's letter. The absence will be listed as unauthorised until this letter is produced.
- Any child with absence below 90% will have their absence marked as unauthorised unless a doctor/medical note is produced as proof of absence.

***For minor illnesses that require medication, we are able to administer medication for you at school. There is a small form to fill out, but by doing so ensures that learning is not missed unnecessarily.***

## **Dentist and Medical Appointments**

Parents are asked not to take children out of school for dental and medical appointments, with the exception of emergency or consultant appointments. If children are taken out for these urgent appointments the main office will need to see a letter or an appointment card. ***The office team will contact the Attendance Officer or the Head of Academy immediately if a parent/carer asks to take their children out of school for non-urgent appointments. Non-urgent appointments made in school time will be unauthorised.***

Children should not be taken out of school due to appointments for parents/carers. If you are struggling to collect or drop children off at the normal times due to a personal appointment, school may be able to support the children to arrive in school earlier or stay in school later. Please note that children's attendance will be marked as unauthorised in these circumstances.

## **Persistent Absence**

Children who attend school for less than 90% of the time are known nationally as persistently absent pupils. Where a child becomes persistently absent (90% or below) then we can issue proceedings to support an improvement in attendance. This can include meetings and supportive strategies such as children attending breakfast club, or we can issue warning letters and fines.

If we feel that a child is at risk of becoming persistently absent, then the school will implement supportive strategies such as meetings to support families so they do not become persistently absent. We will begin implementing these strategies when a child falls below 95% attendance.

## **Term Time Holidays**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states:

*Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.*

It is the policy of Craven Primary Academy not to authorise any absence other than proven illness or exceptional circumstances. Unauthorised absences may result in prosecution proceedings including a Fixed Penalty Notice.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate notice would be issued to each separate child.

If a child has a planned absence, parents/carers must make the request in writing. The Head will consider whether the absence falls under exceptional circumstances or not before authorising the absence.

If no planned absence form is completed, the absence will automatically be unauthorised.

**As of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, the rate per child is £60 if paid within 21 days and rising to £120 per child is paid between 22 and 28 days.**

If the penalty notice is not paid, parents may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each parent may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £2,500 plus costs.

There are 190 school days (380 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. There are 13 weeks of school holidays per year. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period of school holidays.

## Religious Observance

The school may allow authorised absence for religious observance. This is at the Head of Academy's discretion, and a formal request for planned absence must be submitted prior to absence being taken.

## Partnership with Others

In order to safeguard all pupils and their families the school will be proactive in liaising openly and professionally with all external agencies with the aim of protecting a child and their family and improving attendance outcomes. These agencies include New Communities and Travellers Service, Admission Team, Education Social Work Service, Children's Social Care, Police Service, School Nursing Team and the Hospital and Home Teaching Service.

## Children Missing from Education

The statutory guidance Children Missing Education (DfE, September 2016) sets out the key principles to enable local authorities in England to implement their legal duty under Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 to make arrangements to identify, as far as it is possible to do so, children missing education (CME). Local authorities should be able to demonstrate that they have considered this statutory guidance and, where it is not followed, the local authority should have reasonable grounds for not doing so.

1. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have;
2. Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life;
3. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Local authorities should focus their resources effectively in intervening early in the lives of vulnerable children to help prevent poor outcomes.

## **Children not collected**

The following procedure is followed when children are not collected by an appropriate adult at the end of the school day or extra curricular activity.

- If not collected at the end of the day when the class door closes, children are kept safe with their Class teacher/Learning Support Assistant.
- The academy office staff will be alerted and will contact parents/carers to collect them as soon as possible. Other emergency contact numbers will be rung if parents/carers cannot be reached until an appropriate adult can collect them.
- If no contact is made, two members of staff will escort the child home, leave them with their parents/carers or another appropriate adult and ask for up to date contact numbers.
- If there is no suitable person at home the staff will return to the academy with the child and Children's Social Care/Police will be contacted so that appropriate actions can be taken.
- The same procedures will be followed if a child is not collected after a school visit or extra-curricular activity.
- Children who go home alone at the end of the school day must have written consent from a parent/carers. It is the responsibility of the parent/carers to update this permission if they wish to do so via the academy office.

## **Children Leaving Academy Premises without Permission**

Every effort is made to ensure that the academy site is as safe and secure as possible during the school day and that children are supervised appropriately at all times. In the event that a child is reported missing the following procedures will be followed.

- A thorough search of the academy site and immediate locality is made by all available staff.
- Admin staff to check if they have been signed out.
- A senior leader is informed.
- Admin staff will ring the child's contact numbers so they are fully informed and also to check whether or not the child is at home.
- If the child has not been located after these actions the police will be notified.

## The Fine and Prosecution Process

The school Attendance Officer will log instances of absence and lateness and discuss with the Head of Academy. Where issues persist, the following will be initiated:

**Stage 1:** Verbal communication with parents outlining concerns and followed by a letter confirming attendance percentage with a timeline to improve.

**Stage 2a:** After 20 unauthorised absences (O and/or U codes), a fixed penalty notice will be issued by the local authority to parents/carers for 15-day notice of improvement.

**Stage 2b:** If no improvement during the 15-day period, the fixed penalty will be issued.

**Stage 3:** After the fixed penalty notice, if no improvement made, parents invited into a meeting in school to set targets which last for four weeks.

**Stage 3:** If targets are not met, a further plan is in place for a further four weeks.

**Stage 4:** Formal prosecution proceedings will occur if the targets are not met from Stage 3 after the four weeks.

## Managing continuing patterns of absence

In order to ensure that children maintain high levels of attendance the academy constantly analyses all children's attendances on a weekly basis. We believe that by working in partnership with parents at the earliest opportunity, we can ensure that children's attendances remain high, and their education is not hindered.

The academy puts in place the following procedures:

Please note that 1 session is the equivalent of half a day; therefore a full day's absence is 2 sessions.

	When a child misses 5 sessions. (Two and a half days)	A child has missed 10 sessions. (Five Days)	A child misses 15 sessions (Seven and a half days)	A child misses 20 sessions (10 days)
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Parent	N/A	Parents/carers will be invited into school for a meeting with attendance officer and class teacher to discuss concerns regarding increasing number of unauthorised absences. Strategies put in place to support attendance (i.e attendance plan, regular meetings/check ins)	Parents/carers will be invited in for a meeting with Head of Academy and attendance officer to discuss increasing concerns regarding unauthorised attendance. Penalty process to be discussed.	Parents/carers invited in for a meeting with Head of academy and attendance officer. At this stage penalty notice paperwork will have been submitted. Discussions around improving school attendance and limiting any further impact on education and learning to be had.
Child	Child will be added to the academy's attendance tracker system which is reviewed on a weekly basis by attendance officer.	Child's unauthorised absences are highlighted to the class teacher who will monitor alongside attendance officer and ensure child is supported in school on their return. Weekly attendance plan put in place.	Childs unauthorised absences are tracked by attendance officer. Daily check ins with the child. Personalised attendance plan put in place. Weekly check ins with parents ensuring consistent attendance.	Unauthorised absences are monitored closely by the Head of Academy and attendance officer. Daily check ins with the attendance officer to continue and weekly check ins with the Head of Academy. More personalised attendance plan with daily/weekly attendance awards in place after discussion with the child.

## Managing Covid-19 absence:

The academy understand that this is a difficult time for all families. The communities safety is always our priority and we follow the most up-to-date government guidance on how to manage covid related attendance.

- We have returned to using attendance and absence codes in used before the outbreak.
- To make sure schools record accurately and consistently, the DfE regularly review their policies and send updates appropriately to schools to implement.
- The academy tracks Covid-19 related absences and records dates those children first became symptomatic/test positive and started self-isolating. We use this to accurately record our attendance and to allow us to know what dates children should be expected back in school.



The attendance team will make regular phone calls to parents, asking if they have been able to book a test and to check in with the family. The team will support parents and families in the best way to receive a test and get children back into school as quickly as possible.

## **The Role of the Education Welfare Service**

**The Education Welfare Service also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.**

Section 444 of the Education Act states, "If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents are guilty of an offence."

The Education Welfare Service, may issue a Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly.

**The academy will always pursue enforcement when a child has reached the triggers for penalty fines and/or prosecution.**

## **Pupil Information**

As in all aspects of school data and pupil information the Delta's Data Protection Policy is adhered to. Craven Academy will aim to keep up to date and accurate information in order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them. The school requires accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives
- Names and addresses of all persons with parental responsibility
- Emergency contact details
- Details of any persons authorised to collect the child from school
- Any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the child
- A child who is or has been on a Child Protection Plan/Family Support Plan.
- Name and contact detail of GP
- Any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child