CROFTY EDUCATION TRUST



# Pupil Attendance Policy

# Pupil Attendance Policy

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| **Audience:** | School and academy staff, particularly Headteachers and administrative staff<br>Local Governance Committees |
| **Reviewed**<br>**Approved**<br>**Effective From** | July 2026 – Inclusion Lead and Attendance Lead<br>24 September 2026 – SIG Committee<br>25 September 2026 |
| **Other related policies / procedures** | Medical Needs Policy<br>Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy<br>SEN Policy |
| **Owner** | Director of Education<br>Crofty Attendance Lead<br>Headteacher<br>Attendance Champions<br>Attendance Support Officers |
| **Policy / procedure model** | Trust policy: all Crofty schools use this policy |
| **Date of Next Review** | Summer 2027 |
| **Version Number** | 2026-27 V1 |
| **Name of School** | Sithney CP School |
| **Name and contact for Attendance Champion** | Helen Neil |
| **Name and contact of Designated Attendance Support Officer** | Elizabeth Ellis |
| **Who to report absence to by 8.50am on day of absence** | School Office<br>Elizabeth Ellis/Natasha Butcher |

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## Policy Change Log

| Date | Change | Version Updated | New Version Number |
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| 10/09/26 | Policy Title updated to clarify this is the Pupil Attendance Policy.<br>Paragraph 3.2.14 and 3.2.15 added to Headteacher responsibilities.<br>Other significant changes throughout the policy in line with DfE requirements. | Attendance Policy 2025-26 V1 | Pupil Attendance Policy 2026-27 V1 |

## 1. Introduction, aims and why regular attendance is important

1.1 As part of the Crofty Education Trust, our school is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all children. A key element of this is ensuring a child's attendance at school. Good attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. We believe that attendance should not be viewed in isolation. It is both a reflection and a product of the culture we create throughout the school. The same behaviours, routines, relationships, and expectations that support strong attendance are the building blocks of a positive school culture. Through explicit teaching, consistent modelling, and the continual refinement of these concrete behaviours, they become habits that help children feel safe, belong, take responsibility, and engage fully in learning. In this way, strong attendance is not simply an outcome we monitor; it is a natural consequence of a culture in which children want to be present, feel safe, welcome, celebrated and championed. In each school we want to provide an inclusive, calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where pupils are keen and ready to learn. In Crofty, schools are a place for children to connect, feel cared for and grow. We believe if children experience this, they will want to be in school.

1.2 Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. As an education trust, we recognise the importance of working in partnership with families to find supportive routes to improve attendance. Each school has an attendance champion who leads on attendance, but attendance involves all staff, governance and families. Everyone has an important role to play. It is very important, therefore, that parents/carers make sure that their child(ren) attends school regularly, and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this. Our school, as part of Crofty, is committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

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

1.3 For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential throughout the whole of their academic career. It is essential for children to attend school regularly in order to maximise the opportunities available to them. We will work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all of our children.

1.4 We will support parents to fulfil their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending school.

**1.5 Regular attendance is important because it positively affects learning.**
Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Pupils' absence disrupts teaching routines and will inevitably cause gaps in learning and limit progress.

1.6 Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is the parents'/carers' legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

1.7 Patterns of unexplained, persistent or severe absence can be an important indicator of safeguarding concerns. Attendance concerns will therefore be considered alongside other information about a child's welfare and responded to in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. We will adhere to:

- 1.7.1 Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.

1.7.2 Protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
1.7.3 Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
1.7.4 Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
1.7.5 Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.
1.7.6 Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2026) and KCSIE 2026.

1.8 However, we do accept that illness is inevitable on some occasions.

1.9 Every opportunity will be used to convey to children and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Regular attendance means attending all sessions for their full duration, except where there is a statutory reason for absence. The Trust's attendance target is for all children to achieve above 96%, with attendance over 97% seen as excellent attendance. Where a child's attendance falls below 95%, this will act as an early indicator that additional monitoring or support may be required. Any child who misses 10% or more of their possible sessions, for any reason, is classified as a persistent absentee (PA).

1.10 The school also monitors patterns of absence, including the number of 'broken weeks' a child has due to absence. Children with more than 5 broken weeks in a term will be monitored. Where a child's attendance falls below 95%, their attendance record will be reviewed and action may be taken, including contact with parents/carers, an invitation to attend a support meeting, liaison with relevant professionals or the Local Authority, and consideration of any additional support required. Medical evidence will only be requested where this is necessary and proportionate. These actions will be considered in light of the individual circumstances of the child and will be used where necessary to help and support the child and their family to improve attendance at school.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

2.1 Regular and punctual attendance of students at school is, under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

2.2 This policy meets the requirements of the updated Working Together to Improve School Attendance 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:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended

2.3 This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

2.4 All schools make the necessary statutory data returns to the local authority and Secretary of State.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

**3.1 Governance**

**The board of trustees**

The Board of Trustees are responsible for:

3.1.1 Recognising the importance of school attendance and promoting it across the Trust's ethos and policies.

3.1.2 Ensuring leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.

3.1.3 Regularly reviewing Trust attendance data, discussing, and challenging trends

3.1.4 Appointing a Trust attendance lead who helps school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and who shares effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.

**The local governance committee**

Governors are responsible for:

3.1.5 Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school, on behalf of the Trust Board on at least a termly basis.

3.1.6 Monitoring the implementation and impact of this policy, reporting anything of note to the Trust Board.

3.1.7 Monitor to check that all teachers and relevant office staff have undertaken training on strategies to support and encourage good school attendance.

**3.2 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

3.2.1 Making sure all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.

3.2.2 Implementation of this policy at the school

3.2.3 Establishing and maintaining an effective culture of attendance at the academy

3.2.4 Whole school absence data and reporting it to governors

3.2.5 Supervising staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

3.2.6 Providing evidence for prosecution to Cornwall Council

3.2.7 Providing evidence for fixed-penalty notices to Cornwall Council

3.2.8 Monitoring of attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level

3.2.9 Working with education welfare officers to reduce absence across the whole school population

3.2.10 Ensuring the correct use of the school system used to record and monitor attendance

3.2.11 Approving, overseeing and regularly reviewing temporary part-time timetable arrangements, ensuring that they are used only in exceptional circumstances, remain in the pupil's best interests, are time-limited, and support a timely return to full-time education.

3.2.12 Consider, approve and review any requests for flexi-schooling in accordance with the Trust's agreed procedures.
3.2.13 Making the required attendance and sickness returns to the Local Authority in accordance with statutory requirements.
3.2.14 In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, make a return to the local authority when a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register, for instance when parents choose to home-educate.
3.2.15 Where possible work together local authorities and other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers who have elected to home educate their child.

**3.3 The Attendance Champion**

3.3 The school's Attendance Champion is a designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance. In some schools this role may be undertaken by the Headteacher. Operational attendance tasks may be delegated to a designated Attendance Support Officer or administrator.

The attendance champion is responsible for:

3.3.1 Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
3.3.2 Maintaining effective systems for tackling absence
3.3.3 Having a strong grasp of absence data at the school and individual pupil level and benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
3.3.4 Reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
3.3.5 Working with external agencies including education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
3.3.6 Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
3.3.7 Advising the Senior Leadership Team when pupil absence crosses thresholds that require action (eg. Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices)
3.3.8 Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes
3.3.9 Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Headteacher
3.3.10 Regular attendance at Crofty Attendance Lead meetings

**3.4 Class teachers**

3.4.1 Class teachers are responsible for taking the class register twice a day and submitting this information to the school office. The register is taken electronically using Arbor. Class teachers positively promote good attendance and alert SLT to any concerns they have or any patterns they notice in regard to attendance.

**3.5 School office staff/designated attendance support officer**

3.5.1 Designated staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record any explanations provided on the school system.

3.5.2 Any unexplained absences are promptly followed up by the designated office staff or attendance support officer with an electronic message or telephone call home to the parents/carers to ascertain the reason for the non-attendance.

**3.6 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

3.6.1 Make sure their child attends every session on time

3.6.2 Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.50am on the day of the absence, and on each subsequent day of absence unless otherwise agreed with the school, and advise when they are expected to return.
3.6.3 Provide the school with at least 2 emergency contact numbers for their child
3.6.4 Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

**3.7 Who is considered a parent in education law?**
3.7.1 'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

## 4. Recording attendance

The school's admission register and daily attendance registers are kept in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

**4.1 Attendance register**
4.1 We keep an attendance register using an MIS and place all pupils onto this register.
4.2 The register is an accurate reflection of a pupil's attendance and a legal document which may be used as evidence in court. The decision on whether to authorise an absence rests with the Headteacher. A staff member takes the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they record whether each registered pupil is physically present in school or, if not, the reason they are not in school by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance Regulations 2024. See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

4.3 The office staff will make any notes on the register with details of the reason for the absence.
At School, pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.
The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 9:05 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm and will be kept open until 1.20pm.

**4.4 Lateness and punctuality**
A pupil who arrives late:
4.4.1 Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
4.4.2 After the register has closed, a pupil who arrives before the end of the session will be recorded as absent. Where the pupil was initially recorded using Code N because the reason for absence had not yet been established, the register will be amended on their arrival to Code U or another absence code that is more appropriate to the circumstances. Code U will be used where no reason for the lateness is established, or where the reason would not be recorded using a code classified as authorised absence. The Headteacher will make the final decision on whether the reason given meets the criteria for an authorised absence, and the appropriate statutory attendance code will be applied.

4.5 If a child has a persistent record of lateness, the parent/carer will be invited to meet with a member of school staff and/or the Education Welfare Officer to discuss the reasons for this and agree any support or action needed to improve punctuality. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school if they are experiencing difficulties getting their child to school on time. Where lateness continues despite support and

agreed actions, the school may consider further attendance intervention in line with this policy and local authority procedures.

## 5. Understanding types of absence

5.1 Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

5.2 Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for an unavoidable reason like illness/medical appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other unavoidable cause**.** However, the school encourages 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.

5.3 Parents / carers can seek further guidance on whether their child is well enough for class, by consulting the official NHS guidance 'Is my child too ill for school?'. If they have minor symptoms but are giving school a go, please fill out our online Under the Weather Form to notify us so we can monitor them and know who to contact if they feel worse.

5.4 Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Examples of this type of absence include:

5.4.1 Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
5.4.2 Truancy before or during the school day
5.4.3 Absences where no reason has been provided, or where the school is not satisfied that the reason given meets the criteria for an authorised absence
5.4.4 Children who arrive after the register has closed without an authorised reason for their absence
5.4.5 Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
5.4.6 Day trips and holidays in term time.

5.5 Medical evidence will only be requested in a minority of cases and where it is necessary and proportionate. This may include where a child's health needs are complex, long-term or frequently recurring, or where there are reasonable grounds to question the reason given for an absence. Evidence may include a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other relevant information. The school will consider the individual circumstances of the child and family, including the nature of the illness, the child's attendance history and any known medical needs, when determining whether evidence is required. Where the school has reasonable grounds not to accept the reason given for an absence, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be informed.

5.6 Any barriers to regular attendance are best discussed between the school, the parents, and the child. Some children may be reluctant about attending school. It is important that parents are open with the school about reasons for absence.

5.7 Many children will experience periods of anxiety or emotional distress that can make attending school feel difficult. These feelings may be linked to friendships, schoolwork, examinations, changes in routine, or other personal circumstances. We recognise that these emotions are real and can be challenging for both children and their families.

5.8 However, it is important to understand that avoiding school often provides only short-term relief and can unintentionally increase anxiety over time. Each day away from school can make returning feel more difficult, leading to a cycle in which worries become more entrenched and attendance becomes increasingly challenging.

5.9 For this reason, children experiencing anxiety are still expected to attend school wherever possible. In many cases, regular attendance, supported by appropriate adjustments and pastoral care, forms an important part of helping a child overcome their difficulties. We do not believe that children should wait until they feel completely confident or anxiety-free before returning to school; rather, attendance, alongside appropriate support, is often a key part of recovery.

5.10 The school will work closely with families to understand individual needs, put appropriate support in place, monitor progress carefully, and review arrangements regularly. Our aim is always to help children feel safe, supported, and successful in attending school consistently.

Where a child is absent from school but is receiving remote education, they will still be recorded as absent using the appropriate attendance code. Remote education will only be considered as a last resort, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, and should form part of a wider plan to support the child's reintegration and return to school.

**5.11 Following up absence**

If any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

5.11.1 Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason

5.11.2 Ensure schools safeguarding protocols and processes are followed

5.11.3 Identify whether the absence is authorised or not

5.11.4 Identify the correct attendance code to use

5.12 Message or telephone contacts on the first day of absence to follow up on unexplained absence. If the primary contact is not available, the school will telephone other contacts on the list. All pupils must have a minimum of two contacts on their records, and we encourage parents/carers to add additional contacts. If contact cannot be made a home visit is usually required. Where remote contact cannot be established, a school representative will conduct a home visit. In the event that the child is not present or cannot be seen during this visit, the school will immediately contact any multi-agency partners currently involved with the family. Furthermore, should the Headteacher hold significant concerns regarding the immediate welfare of the child or their family, the police will be notified to conduct a welfare check. Where a pupil has a social worker or is known to the Youth Offending Team, the school will inform the relevant professional of any unexplained absence in accordance with agreed arrangements.

**5.13 Reporting to parents**

Attendance is reported regularly to parents/carers and they may request attendance information for their child from the school office. Where attendance is a concern, the school will communicate clearly with parents/carers about the amount of school time missed and the impact this may have on their child's learning, relationships and wider school experience. Communication will focus on working with families to understand any barriers to attendance and the support that may help improve attendance.

<u>Persistent Absentee Reporting</u>

A pupil is classified as a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level means that a child has missed a significant proportion of their education and may be at increased risk of poorer academic, social, and emotional outcomes. We need

to work in partnership with parents / carers to tackle this through increased monitoring, target setting and communication that may involve Attendance Support Meetings.

**5.14 Cornwall Council notification and referral procedures**

Where a pupil reaches 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will follow Cornwall Council's current notification and referral procedures. This is the national threshold at which a penalty notice must be considered. A separate notification may not be required where Cornwall Council is already aware of the absence because:

5.14.1 A CME referral has been made

5.14.2 A penalty notice submission has been made

5.14.3 The absence has been discussed with the Cornwall Council Attendance Improvement Officer (within the same month of the absence)

5.14.4 Papers have been submitted to Cornwall Council for consideration of prosecution of the child's parent(s) for non-attendance

**5.15 Legal sanctions**

There is a National Framework for issuing penalty notices that reflects changes to the law introduced through the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. Where a child is absent from school without authorisation, the parent(s)will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. Schools must consider on a case-by-case basis whether to ask the local authority to issue a penalty notice to a parent when their child's absence is recorded as unauthorised after 10 school sessions within any 10-school week period. This will typically equate to 5 days of unauthorised absence from school. A school week is a week in which the school meets at least once.

Please see below the legal information from Cornwall Council:
If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. The school may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.

If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. The school may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.

Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Absence not authorised by the school may also result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

**5.16 Authorised absence and leave of absence in term time**

Schools may grant leave of absence where a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. Leave of absence will only be granted in the specific circumstances permitted by regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Requests for leave in exceptional circumstances will be considered individually by the Headteacher. Some possible reasons for authorised absence include:

*5.16.1* A temporary part-time timetable: In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, a temporary part-time timetable may be agreed with the parent/carer. It must form part of a wider support, health or reintegration plan, have a clear purpose and end date, and be regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parent/carer. A part-time timetable must not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour. The aim should be for the pupil to return to full-time education as soon as possible. Sessions where the pupil is not expected to attend as part of the agreed timetable will be recorded using Code C2. Crofty has clear procedures in place for recording, monitoring and regularly reviewing all temporary part-time timetables.

*5.16.2* Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad: in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA) (coded as C1).

5.16.3 Attending an interview: for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (coded as J1).

5.16.4 If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made (coded as E).

5.16.5 Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart (coded as R).

5.16.6 Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – Code T may be used where the pupil is a mobile child of compulsory school age with no fixed abode and is travelling with parent(s) who are travelling in the course of their trade or business. Both statutory conditions must be met (coded as T).

**5.17 Exceptional circumstances for leave of absence**

All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. If you consider that your request for absence is exceptional you will need to complete the 'Leave of Absence Exceptional Circumstances' request form. Letters will not be accepted. This form should be returned to the school office at least 15 school days before the start of the absence. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.

The DfE does not allow leave of absence to be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

*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.* Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and parents are expected to help schools by not taking children away in term time. Any savings parents think they may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to a child's education. The headteachers in Crofty work together and seek advice to ensure consistency and fair implementation of the policy across the Trust. Where the decision is made not to authorise leave in term time, school will inform parent/carers in writing.

On any occasion that school refuses a request for leave in term time, should a parent/carer proceed with the leave it will be recorded as code (G) (family holiday not agreed or in excess of agreement), on the school's register. Where a leave of absence has been unauthorised, penalty notices will be considered in line with Cornwall Council's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices in respect of unauthorised absence. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days. In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. Please, see legal sanction section above. Cornwall Council has advised that there is an emerging pattern of children being reported as unwell immediately before or after a family holiday. This may be an attempt to avoid a penalty notice for unauthorised absence. In cases where the school has reason to believe that a child's reported illness may in fact be linked to a holiday, the following actions may be taken:

5.17.1 A home visit may be undertaken by the school.
5.17.2 Parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence to support the reason for absence.
5.17.3 The school may ask for evidence for things such as flight tickets or accommodation

5.18 Absent from school site but not classed as absent

There are reasons that the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, these include:

5.18.1 Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
5.18.2 Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
5.18.3 Attending provision arranged by the local authority
5.18.4 Attending work experience
5.18.5 If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

## 6. Pupils with Ongoing Medical Conditions

6.1 Parents/Carers should inform the school of any medical conditions that could impact on attendance and wellbeing. Where required, an individual healthcare plan should be developed in partnership with parents/carers, the pupil and relevant healthcare professionals to ensure that the pupil is properly supported to access education and participate fully in school life.

6.2 Where a pupil is unable to attend school because of health needs, the school will work with parents/carers, relevant healthcare professionals and the Local Authority, where required, to ensure that suitable educational provision and support are considered. This may include arrangements for education away from the school site where the pupil's health needs prevent them from attending school.

6.3 Pupils should not be penalised where absence is related to their medical condition, for example where they need to attend medical or hospital appointments. Parents/Carers should notify the school in advance of planned appointments wherever possible so that the appropriate attendance code can be applied.

6.4 An absence may also be authorised where a child is too ill to attend school and the school is notified as soon as possible.

6.5 A school should not encourage non-attendance, for example by routinely sending a pupil with medical conditions home or preventing them from taking part in normal school activities, including lunch. Any such arrangement should only be used where it is necessary and consistent with the pupil's individual healthcare plan or other agreed support plan. A pupil should not be placed on a part-time timetable or routinely sent home as a means of managing their medical needs without a properly agreed and reviewed plan.

6.6 Under the Equality Act 2010, schools must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with other pupils. Where a pupil has a medical condition or disability, the school will consider their individual circumstances and any support or reasonable adjustments required to enable them to attend and participate in school. Medical evidence for recording absence will only be requested where it is necessary and proportionate, for example where a pupil's health needs are complex, long-term or frequently recurring.

6.7 The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on schools to support pupils with medical conditions. Schools must make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions and, in meeting that duty, must have regard to statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

6.8 Schools are legally required to notify the Local Authority where pupils are recorded as absent due to illness and there are reasonable grounds to believe they will miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively due to sickness. This applies to both short-term and long-term absences. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year. This process helps schools and the Local Authority coordinate and agree any educational provision required to ensure continuity of education for pupils unable to attend because of health needs.

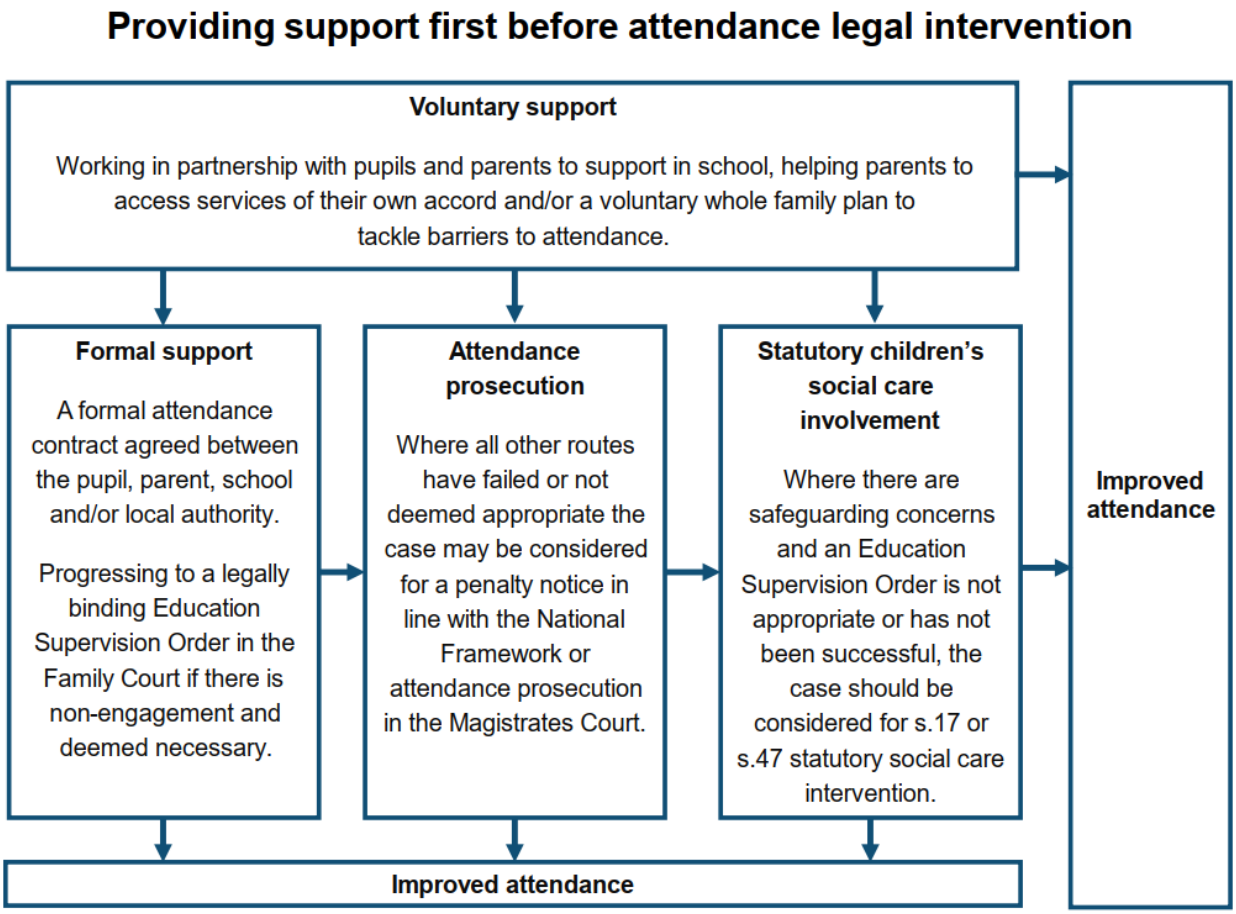
6.9 Crofty schools recognise that the reasons behind absence are often complex and differ from child to child. We will give particular consideration to children with SEND, medical needs, social workers, young carers, children experiencing disadvantage and those whose attendance is a concern. Rather than viewing attendance in isolation, we will seek to understand the wider context for the child, identify any barriers to attendance and work collaboratively with families and other professionals to develop supportive, proportionate and individualised responses. Our aim is always to help children feel safe, successful, connected and able to attend school regularly.

## 7. Strategies for promoting attendance

7.1 Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff. Schools will provide parents with details on attendance through regular correspondence and remind parents about the importance of good attendance on the newsletter. Schools talk to the children about the importance of good attendance and meet to discuss attendance issue with families, offering relevant support when needed.

7.2 Crofty schools follow the following government guidance:
**Expect** Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils
**Monitor** Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns
**Listen and understand** Discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance
**Facilitate support** Explore support that might overcome the barriers, this might include in school support and external agencies such as Early Help Hub.
**Formalise support** Where absence this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

**Enforce** Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.




## 8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 The school office/attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis. Attendance patterns and trends are monitored and analysed weekly, with more detailed analysis undertaken at least half-termly, termly and across the full academic year.

8.2 Attendance and absence data is analysed regularly at individual pupil, cohort and year-group level to identify pupils or groups that need additional support with their attendance. The school uses this analysis to provide targeted support to pupils and their families and to identify early indicators of declining attendance including, where relevant, pupils with SEND, pupils with a social worker or who are looked after, young carers, pupils eligible for free school meals and other cohorts with historically lower attendance.

8.3 The school looks at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, including punctuality, and develops strategies to address these patterns. Frequent individual-level analysis is undertaken to ensure pupils can be identified and supported before patterns of absence become entrenched.

8.4 The school will regularly benchmark its attendance data against comparable schools within the Trust and, where available, against local authority, regional, national and similar-school data. This

information will be used to identify areas of strength, emerging concerns and priorities for improvement, and will be shared with the governing board.

8.5 The school will make attendance returns to Cornwall Council for pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been continuously absent for 10 school days due to unauthorised absence. The school will also make a sickness return where a pupil has been recorded as absent due to illness and there are reasonable grounds to believe they will miss 15 school days, either consecutively or cumulatively.

These reporting requirements are separate from the national threshold for considering a penalty notice, which is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

**8.6 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

A pupil is considered persistently absent where they miss 10% or more of their possible school sessions. A pupil is considered severely absent where they miss 50% or more of their possible school sessions. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to our strategies for improving attendance. Where a pupil is persistently or severely absent, the school will:

8.6.1 Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

8.6.2 contact parents to discuss any barriers to attendance, review the support that may be required, and agree actions to improve attendance.

8.7 A pupil is considered Severely Absent under Department for Education (DfE) guidance when they attend school less than 50% of the time. Severe absence is a significant educational concern and may also be an indicator of safeguarding concerns and will result in an intensified response from the school, including regular attendance monitoring, meetings with parents, the development of a targeted support plan, involvement of relevant external agencies where appropriate, and referral to the Local Authority for further intervention if attendance does not improve.

**8.8 Notices to improve**

Where a pupil's attendance meets the above national threshold for intervention and appropriate support has been offered, but parents have not engaged with that support or attendance has not improved, the school may issue a Notice to Improve. A Notice to Improve is intended to provide parents with a final opportunity to engage with support and secure an improvement in their child's attendance before legal action is considered. Notices to Improve will be issued in accordance with the Cornwall Council Code of Conduct and will set out:

8.8.1 Details of the pupil’s attendance record and of the offences

8.8.2 The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996

8.8.3 Details of the support provided so far

8.8.4 Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with

8.8.5 A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn’t improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis

8.8.6 A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period

8.8.7 The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by the Trust Attendance Lead in consultation with the Trust Inclusion Team.

**Appendix 1. Attendance codes**

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

| Code | Description | Meaning / use |
|---|---|---|
| **Attending the school** | | |
| / | Present – morning | Pupil is present at morning registration. |
| \ | Present – afternoon | Pupil is present at afternoon registration. |
| **L** | Late arrival before the register closes | Pupil arrives after registration has begun but before the register closes. Counts as attending. |
| **Attending a place other than the school** | | |
| **K** | Attending education provision arranged by the local authority | Pupil attends education away from the school arranged by the LA. Approved educational activity. |
| **V** | Attending an educational visit or trip | Pupil attends a school-arranged educational visit or trip during the session. Approved educational activity. |
| **P** | Participating in a sporting activity | Pupil attends an approved, educational and appropriately supervised sporting activity. Approved educational activity. |
| **W** | Attending work experience | Pupil attends approved work experience arranged as part of their education. Approved educational activity. |
| **B** | Attending any other approved educational activity | Pupil attends an approved educational activity away from school that is not covered by K, V, P or W. Approved educational activity. |
| **Absent - leave of absence** | | |
| **C1** | Leave of absence for a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad | Authorised leave for a permitted regulated performance or employment. Authorised absence. |
| **M** | Leave of absence for a medical or dental appointment | Used where leave has been granted for a medical or dental appointment during the session. Authorised absence. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **J1** | Leave of absence to attend an interview | Used for an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution. Authorised absence. |
| **S** | Leave of absence for study leave | Used for agreed study leave for a public examination. Authorised absence. |
| **X** | Non-compulsory-school-age pupil not required to attend | Used where a pupil who is not of compulsory school age is not required to attend that session under their agreed timetable. Not a possible attendance. |
| **C2** | Leave of absence for a compulsory-school-age pupil on a part-time timetable | Used for agreed sessions not attended under a temporary part-time timetable. It must not be used simply because a pupil receives part of their full-time education elsewhere. Authorised absence. |
| **D** | Dual registered at another school | Used only where the pupil is registered at another school and is scheduled to attend that other school for the session. Not a possible attendance. |
| **C** | Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances | Used for authorised leave in exceptional circumstances where another leave code does not apply. It is also used for authorised home-education sessions under an agreed flexi-schooling arrangement. Authorised absence. |
| **Absent - other authorised reasons** | | |
| **T** | Parent travelling for occupational purposes | Used for a mobile child travelling with parent(s) who are required to travel in the course of their trade or business and the statutory conditions are met. Authorised absence. |
| **R** | Religious observance | Pupil is absent on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Authorised absence. |
| **I** | Illness – not a medical or dental appointment | Pupil is unable to attend because of physical or mental ill health. Authorised absence. |
| **E** | Suspended or permanently excluded | Pupil remains on the admission register but is suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision has been made for the session. Authorised absence. |
| **Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause** | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Q** | Unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements | Used only in the specific statutory circumstances where required home-to-school travel/access arrangements have not been made. Not a possible attendance. |
| **Y1** | Unable to attend because transport normally provided is unavailable | School is beyond walking distance and transport normally provided by the school or LA is unavailable. Not a possible attendance. |
| **Y2** | Unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel | Widespread disruption caused by a local, national or international emergency prevents attendance. Not a possible attendance. |
| **Y3** | Unable to attend because part of the school premises is closed | Part of the premises is unusable and the pupil cannot practicably be accommodated elsewhere on site. Not a possible attendance. |
| **Y4** | Unable to attend because the whole school site is unexpectedly closed | School was due to open but the whole site is unexpectedly closed, for example because of severe weather. Not a possible attendance. |
| **Y5** | Unable to attend because the pupil is in criminal justice detention | Pupil is in police detention, remanded to youth detention or detained under a sentence of detention. Not a possible attendance. |
| **Y6** | Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law | Pupil is well enough to attend but attendance would conflict with applicable public-health guidance or legislation. Not a possible attendance. |
| **Y7** | Unable to attend because of another unavoidable cause | Used only where an emergency affecting the pupil prevents attendance and no other unable-to-attend code applies. The nature of the cause must be recorded. Not a possible attendance. |
| **Absent - unauthorised absence** | | |
| **G** | Holiday not granted by the school | Pupil is absent for a holiday for which leave has not been granted. Unauthorised absence. |
| **N** | Reason for absence not yet established | Temporary code where the reason has not been established before the register closes. It must be replaced with the correct code as soon as possible and within 5 school days; if no reason is established it becomes O. Unauthorised absence. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **O** | Absent in other or unknown circumstances | No reason has been established, or the school is not satisfied that the reason meets the criteria for an authorised absence code. Unauthorised absence. |
| **U** | Arrived after registration closed | Pupil arrives after the register has closed but before the end of the session and either no reason for the lateness is established or the reason does not qualify for an authorised absence code. Unauthorised absence. |
| **Administrative codes** | | |
| **Z** | Prospective pupil not on the admission register | Administrative code used before the pupil has joined the school. Not collected for attendance statistics. |
| **#** | Planned whole-school closure | Used for planned whole-school closures, such as school holidays, bank holidays, INSET days or use of the whole school as a polling station. Not collected for attendance statistics. |

**Appendix 2**

There are 175 non-school days in a year and 190 school days each year.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 190 school days in each year<br><br>190 days for your child's education | 7 days absence<br>183 days in school | 10 days absence<br>180 days in school | 19 days absence<br>171 days in school and the equivalent of a month not in school that year | 28 days absence<br>162 days in school<br><br>If it is 85% each year, your child is missing the equivalent of a year of education over their time at primary school | 47 days absence<br>143 days in school |
| | 100% | 96% | 95% | 90% | 85% | 75% |
| | **Good**<br>-Best chance of success<br>-Gets your child off to a flying start<br>-Helps their confidence, social development as well as their academic progress<br>-Over 97% is considered excellent attendance | | **Some Concern**<br>-Harder for your child to make progress<br>-School starts tracking your child's attendance closely. -School will review attendance with parents/carers and consider whether any additional support is required. | **Worrying**<br>-Your child is now classified as 'persistently absent'<br><br>- Education Welfare Officer involvement is likely | **Serious Concern**<br>-Having a significant impact on your child's education and well-being<br><br>-Legal Action may be taken<br><br>-At 50% your child is classified as 'severely absent' | |

**Appendix 3**

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE / EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE LEAVE REQUEST FORM**

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. You may consider that a holiday will be educational, but your child will miss out on the teaching that their classmates will receive during your holiday. Attendance is vital to academic success and lost education poses a potential risk of underachievement. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

Leave of absence during term time may only be granted in the specific circumstances permitted by the school attendance regulations. Outside of these circumstances, Headteachers may only grant leave where they are satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist. 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 you consider that your request for absence is exceptional you will need to complete the form attached to this notification. A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If leave is not authorised and you nevertheless withdraw your child from school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

There is now a national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) for when a penalty notice must be considered. Under the new rules, taking your child out of school for a one-week holiday will now mean that a penalty notice must be considered.

*If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.*
*If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days. Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.*
*Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.*
*Absence not authorised by the school may also result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.*
*Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.*

'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

All requests must be completed on this form; letters will not be accepted. This form should be returned to the school office at least 15 school days before the start of the absence. I hope you will support our efforts in raising attendance and attainment at Crofty Education Trust.

***APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER***

If you consider an absence during term time to be an exceptional circumstance, please complete this form and return it to the school office at least 15 school days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

**Student Name:** _____**DOB:** _____-_____ **Class:** _____

**Home Address:** _____

**Post Code:** _____ **Name of Parent/Carer completing this form:** _____

**First day of absence**: _____ **Date of return to school**: _____

**If leaving your home address before the first day of absence, please provide the date on which you will leave:**

_____ **Total number of days missed**: _____ **days**

**Reason for absence:** _____

_____-
_____

---

I u*nderstand that if the absence request is unauthorised the school may request that Cornwall Council issue a Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty Notice is issued to* ***each*** *liable parent/carer of* ***each*** *child taken out of school and that this carries a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid within 28 days (or £160 with no option to pay the lower amount if it is the 2nd penalty notice within a rolling 3-year period). I understand that if I do not pay the fine, it may result in legal action being taken against me.* ***I understand that parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) and Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.***

Please note we expect all parents with parental responsibility to sign.

Print Name .....Signed.....Date.....

Print Name .....Signed.....Date.....

*(Please ensure you give at least 15 school days' notice of the proposed absence)*

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***Below to be completed by the school:*** FAO – Headteacher

| % current | % last year | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

Student Name: .....

**0 AUTHORISED:** **0 UNAUTHORISED:**

Request has been authorised for the following dates **only:** ___ / ___ / _____ to ___ / ___ /_____

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Letter sent / Phone Call / other | Signed: | Date: |
| Action: PN Request | Signed: | Date: |

**Signed ..... Headteacher** **Date ___ / ___ / ___**