Pupil Attendance Policy

Audience:	School and academy staff, particularly Headteachers and administrative staff Local Governance Committees
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Other related policies / procedures	Medical Needs Policy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy SEN Policy
Owner	Director of Education Crofty Attendance Lead Headteacher Attendance Champions Attendance Support Officers
Policy / procedure model	MAT Policy
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Who to report absence to by 8.50am on day of absence	School Office 01735 753472

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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 considered in isolation. It is part of the bigger picture and is intertwined with the whole ethos and culture of the school. Improving attendance is linked to curriculum, behaviour, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing. At the heart of what we do is helping children to feel that they belong in school, through helping them to 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 fulfill 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 Failing to attend school on a regular basis is considered a safeguarding matter. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, we will adhere to:

1.7.1 Protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
1.7.2 Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
1.7.3 Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

1.7.4 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

1.7.5 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, 2023)

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. The Trust's attendance targets are for all children to achieve above 96% with attendance over 97% seen as excellent attendance. A level of attendance under 95% is not considered to be regular attendance with any child who has attendance under 90% classified as a "persistent absentee" (PA).

1.10 The school monitors the number of 'broken weeks' a child has due to absence. Children with more than 5 in a term are monitored. Where a child's attendance falls below 95%, their attendance record is reviewed and action may be taken including referral to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer, contact home by a member of staff, invitation to parents to attend a support meeting or request for medical evidence. These actions will be considered for all children and activated 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 which became statutory in August 2024 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
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

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

3.1.1 The board of trustees

The Board of Trustees are responsible for:

- Recognising the importance of school attendance and promoting it across the Trust's ethos and policies.
- Ensuring leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing Trust attendance data, discussing, and challenging trends
- Ensuring an attendance lead is appointed, 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.

3.1.2 The local governance committee

Governors are responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school, on behalf of the Trust Board on at least a termly basis.
- Monitoring the implementation and impact of this policy, reporting anything of note to the Trust Board.
- 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:

- 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.
- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Establishing and maintaining an effective culture of attendance at the academy
- Whole school absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supervising staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Providing evidence for prosecution to Cornwall Council
- Providing evidence for fixed-penalty notices to Cornwall Council
- Monitoring of attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Working with education welfare officers to reduce absence across the whole school population
- Ensuring the correct use of the school system used to record and monitor attendance
- Agreeing any part-time timetables within the school

3.3 The attendance champion

Please note in some schools the headteacher may undertake this role or some of these tasks maybe delegated to a designated attendance support officer or administrator.

The attendance champion is responsible for:

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Maintaining effective systems for tackling absence
- 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
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Working with external agencies including education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

- Advising the Senior Leadership Team when pupil absence crosses thresholds that require action (eg. Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices)
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Regular attendance at Crofty Attendance Lead meetings

3.4 Class teachers

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

Designated staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record any explanations provided on the school system.
Any unexplained absences are promptly followed up by the designated office staff or attendance support officer with a 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:

- Make sure their child attends every session on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.50am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence unless a doctor's note has been provided), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with at least 2 emergency contact numbers for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Who is considered a parent in education law?
'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

4.1.1 We keep an attendance register using an MIS and place all pupils onto this register.

4.1.2 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.

4.1.3 The office staff will make any notes on the register with details of the reason for the absence.

4.1.4 At School, pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

4.1.5 The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50am and will be kept open until 9.10 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15pm and will be kept open until 1.35pm.

4.2 Lateness and punctuality

4.2.1 A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed, children will be marked as unauthorised late, using the appropriate code. This means that children arriving after this time will receive a mark that shows them to be on-site, but this will not count as a present mark. It will mean that they have an unauthorised absence unless the explanation for the late arrival is accepted by the headteacher, in which case they will be marked as late using the appropriate code.

4.2.2 If a child has a persistent late record, the parent will be asked to meet with a member of the school staff and/or the Education Welfare Officer to resolve the problem. Parents are encouraged to approach the school if they are having problems getting their child to school. If the school and parents, working together, are unable to resolve any ongoing lateness issues, the school reserves the right to bring forward the close of the register. This means that the child's lateness will be recorded as unauthorised, which could result in the Education Welfare Service considering enforcement proceedings against the parent. The school will inform the parent in writing should this action be necessary.

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 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:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained or where supporting evidence has not been received
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time.

5.4 Where the absence is longer than a few days, the child's attendance is below 93% or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school may ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this .

5.5 Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents, and the child. Some children may be reluctant or anxious about attending school. It is important that parents are open with the school about reasons for absence.

5.6 Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.

5.7 Following up absence

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

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

5.7.2 Ensure schools safeguarding protocol and process is followed

5.7.3 Identify whether the absence is authorised or not

5.7.4 Identify the correct attendance code to use

5.7.5 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.

5.8 Reporting to parents

Attendance is reported regularly to parents/carers and they may request attendance figures for their child from the office.

5.8.1 Letters are sent out regularly to parents/carers of children whose attendance is a concern and when appropriate the letter will give a visual comparison between their child and their peers to help them understand the impact of the absence.

5.8.2 Please note: 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 is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. PA pupils and pupils with more than 5 broken weeks in a term are tracked and monitored carefully. The school looks at ways to support the family with improving attendance and may involve support meetings.

5.9 Reporting to the local authority

Schools are required to notify the local authority if a child has 10 unauthorised absences (equivalent to 5 days) within a 10-week rolling period. In Cornwall, this is through an online form unless the school has already made Cornwall Council aware of the absences because:

5.9.1 A CME referral has been made

5.9.2 A penalty notice submission has been made

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

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

5.10 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.

5.10.1 Please see below the legal information from Cornwall County 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.
5.10.2 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.

5.10.3 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.

5.11 Leave of absence in term time

All schools can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 . Some possible reasons for **authorised absence** include:

5.11.1 *A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable:* where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parents who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable (coded as C2). The use of a part-time timetable is considered an exceptional measure and are used rarely. Crofty has clear procedures in place for recording and monitoring any part-time timetables

5.11.2 *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).
5.11.3 *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).
5.11.4 *If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school* and no alternative provision has been made (coded as E).
5.11.5 *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).
5.11.6 *Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes* – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision (coded as T).

5.12 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.

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

5.12.2 *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.

5.12.3 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 or children present in a public place whilst excluded from school. 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:

- A home visit may be undertaken by the school.
- Parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence to support the reason for absence.

- The school may ask for evidence for things such as flight tickets or accommodation

5.13 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:
5.13.1 Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
5.13.2 Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
5.13.3 Attending provision arranged by the local authority
5.13.4 Attending work experience
5.13.5 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. A Healthcare Plan should be agreed with health services on how to ensure the pupil is able to access their full potential and attend school.

6.2 In some cases, a child can be educated at home whereby the school environment is detrimental to either condition or causes a risk (of infection etc.) to said pupil.

6.3 Pupils should not be penalised if their absence from school is related to their medical condition, such as attending hospital appointments. To avoid being fined for non-attendance, parents must obtain permission from the school in advance of the appointment, so that the absence can be treated as authorised. An absence can also be authorised if the child is too ill to attend school and the school is notified of that as soon as possible.

6.4 A school should not encourage non-attendance, such as sending a pupil with medical conditions home frequently or preventing a pupil from staying for normal school activities, including lunch. This will only be justified if it is in accordance with the pupil's individual healthcare plan and is necessary. If a child is regularly sent home at lunch or placed on a part-time timetable which has not been fully agreed to, these absences may amount to unofficial exclusions.

6.5 The Equality Act 2010 states that the school's governing bodies or proprietors must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that children and young people with disability are not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to other students. Therefore, some pupils may be exempt from the consequences of poor attendance due to their medical conditions, but only if their poor attendance is supported with medical evidence from medical practitioners.

6.6 The Children and Families Act 2014 includes a duty on schools to support children with medical conditions. This is inclusive of children with conditions such as diabetes. Schools must make arrangements for supporting pupils at schools with medical conditions and in meeting that duty they must have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

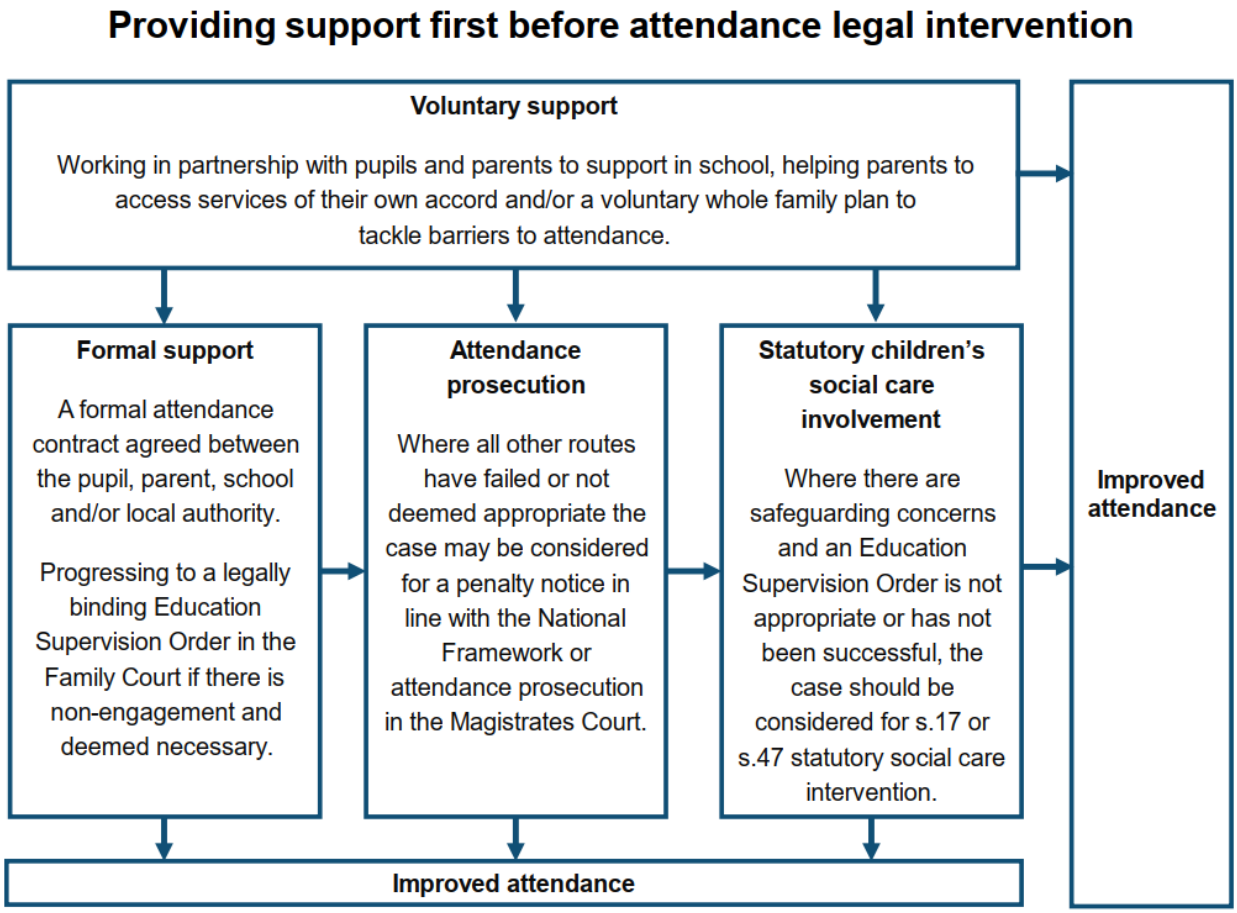
6.7 Schools are legally required to notify the local authority where pupils are coded 'I' (illness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe they will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively, due to sickness. This applies to both short-term and long-term absences. Only one sickness return is needed for a continuous period of sickness in a school year. This process helps schools and the local authority coordinate and agree

on any educational provisions required to ensure continuity of education for pupils unable to attend due to health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on arranging education for children who, due to medical needs, cannot attend school.

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 is reviewed at least every half term.

8.2 Attendance and absence data is analysed regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and the school uses this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.

8.3 The school looks at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develops strategies to address these patterns.

8.4 Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

8.5 Schools have to report to Cornwall Council if a child has 10 days unauthorised leave or 15 days of illness.

8.6 Reducing persistent and severe absence

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If it is greater than 50% the pupil is considered to be severely absent. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to our strategies for improving attendance
The school will:

8.6.1 Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
8.6.2 Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
8.6.3 Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
8.6.4 Send letters to parents of those children who are at risk of becoming persistently absent
8.6.5 Closer monitoring of identified children

8.7 Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support. Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the Cornwall Council code of conduct. These include:

8.7.1 Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
8.7.2 The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
8.7.3 Details of the support provided so far
8.7.4 Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
8.7.5 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
8.7.6 A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
8.7.7 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	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are:

		• In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2

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

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

The Department for Education no longer allows Headteachers to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. 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 session (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 *understand 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)

Below to be completed by the school: FAO – Headteacher

% current	% last year	Comments

Student Name: .....

☐ **AUTHORISED:** ☐ **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** __ / __ / __