

Revised and Adopted Autumn 2024 - This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body annually.

## Attendance Policy

### Introduction

This is a successful school, and parents/children play their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly, and all children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that parents make sure that their children attend regularly, and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

### Why Regular Attendance is so important

**Learning:** - Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Regular attendance promotes a pupils wider life chances and promotes well-being.

Ensuring your 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.

**Safeguarding:** - children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for children encompasses:-

Attendance

Behaviour Management

Health and Safety

Access to the Curriculum

Anti-bullying

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

### Statement of intent:

The school aims to work together with parents/Carers to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend both regularly and punctually. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

### School Attendance and the Law

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to full-time education suitable to their age, and aptitude. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to ensure that their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. When parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends regularly and on time. 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.

Our School Attendance Policy reflects the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance for maintained schools Working Together to Improve School Attendance '24 alongside other statutory guidance.

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- Work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.
- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- Ensure every pupil has access to the suitable, full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school.
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.

Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued.

- Raising and maintaining a whole school’s awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

### **Understanding Types of Absence**

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.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

For this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

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

“Regular” attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised

**Authorised absences** are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency or unavoidable cause

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no ‘leave’ has been granted such as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason e.g. because they had a late night or for a non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn
- Absences that have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays taken during term-time are not deemed ‘for exceptional purposes’ by the headteacher/principal, including any arranged by other family members or friends.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.
- Any other absence in term time which has not been agreed.

Unauthorised absences could lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents, and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse. In the first instance, please contact the school to seek support in the matter.

### **School responsibilities:**

The school will record and monitor attendance via an electronic register in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child’s educational progress and personal well-being.

Teachers will complete registers in accordance with guidance given by the School Office. The School Office will inspect registers daily to ensure that they are being satisfactorily maintained and to identify any potential attendance problems at an early stage.

Attendance data for all children is shared daily with Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and the Department for Education (DFE) as part of our statutory duties.

To help us all to focus on good attendance, the school will:

- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.

- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and promptly.
- Give parents/carers information about attendance in our newsletters.
- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to **all** pupils and their parents.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law.
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress.
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.
- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.

The Senior Leadership Team (including Senior Attendance Champion) will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach that reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with.
- Ensure that there is a named senior attendance champion to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time.
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governors and on a half-termly basis to the lead governor for attendance.
- Review attendance data termly with the Local Authority and identify patterns of attendance.
- Ensure that systems to report, record, and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.
- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance.
- Coordinating individual action plans for pupils causing concern including the instigation of an Early Help Assessment and Plan and/ or the implementation of an attendance contract.
- Ensuring first day calling procedures are adhered to if a child is absent from school without contact from parents.
- Making referrals to appropriate external agencies.

The Governing Board of Cranwell Primary School recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded from harm.
- Identifying a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior attendance champion.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

The role of the parent/ carer is:

- Parents/Carers have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life so that we can offer support at the earliest opportunity.
- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.

- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

Pupils will:

- Attend lessons ready to learn.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or home which may impact on their attendance.
- Follow the school registration procedures.

### **Reporting Absences**

Parents/Carers should ensure that, if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as illness, they should contact the school office on the morning of the first absence by 08:40am and on subsequent days of absence, stating a reason for absence. This must be done by telephone, (01400 659001) leaving a message on the absence line or in person. Verbal messages on the parent's behalf from an adult relative or representative such as a childminder or friend will not be accepted.

Parents may not authorise their child's absence – only the school can do this, based on the explanation provided by the parents. Should parents fail to provide a satisfactory reason; the school will record such absences as unauthorised. In some cases, this may be retrospective, and authorisation may be withdrawn should circumstances arise leading the school to decide that the reason given was not truthful. If this occurs, this will be discussed with the parent. For safeguarding purposes, any unexplained absences in the first instance will be followed up by the School Administration Team and may be escalated to the Safeguarding Team and/or Attendance Champion.

Parents should ensure that their child arrives on time for the start of registration (between 8:40 and 8.50am). The register opens at 8.50am and closes at 9.20am. The school day ends at 15.20pm.

At 8:50, the school gates will close. Children arriving to school after this point must be accompanied by a parent and will be required to enter through the school office where the parent will need to give a reason for lateness. Attendance of children who are persistently late for school will also be monitored and addressed by the Attendance Champion/s.

### **Attendance and Absence Codes**

A set of national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics through the School Census system. The data helps our school, the local authority and the government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reason for, absence and the delivery of education.

### **Granting leaves of absence**

Headteachers can only grant leave in exceptional circumstances. These will be considered on an individual basis, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant background context. If leave is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school. There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours.

Exceptional circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- Attending an interview for entry to another educational institution
- Study leave for public examinations
- An agreed and temporary, time-limited part time timetable

for Service children:

- Whose parents are preparing for or returning from operational tours
- when shift patterns only allow leave to be taken during term time
- injury/bereavement

Supporting evidence should be provided to support a request for absence.

### **Medical Appointments and absence due to illness**

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, we ask that parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. The pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at school for an appointment. If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must sign the pupil in and out of school. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation. Parents must provide proof of medical appointments at the point that the request is made.

In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we will speak to parents/carers regarding our concerns and look at what support can be put in place to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent/carer.

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)

### **Pupil Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance**

**Cranwell Primary School** acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

### **SEND- and health-related absences**

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult. The school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or Health Care Plans that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate. Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents may be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL, and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health as necessary.

### **Truancy**

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence. All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected contact will be made with the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school. Relevant support will be provided to the family. If any further truancy occurs, then the school may consider issuing a penalty notice.

### **At risk of persistent absence**

At risk of persistent absence is defined as pupils with attendance between 90-95%.

Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming, or becomes, problematic school may:

- Support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support pupil and parents to access support voluntarily. School may meet with parents and pupils to understand the barriers, agree on actions or interventions. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can offer support.

### **Persistent absentees**

Persistent absentees are defined as children whose attendance is below 90%. The procedures outlined below may be applied where there are concerns about deteriorating attendance or where patterns are emerging,

Where a child's attendance does not improve, the school may consider:

- completing an early help assessment if not in place
- using tools to support the EH assessment –V-SEND
- consider mental health interventions
- offer pastoral support
- consider parenting contract

For children with a Social Worker or Child in care:

- Attendance will be reviewed at all plan meetings, identifying new actions that may specifically improve attendance.

For children with special needs, medical needs or an EHCP:

- We will follow the graduated approach with increased focus on the needs behind non-attendance

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/ punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice for parentally condoned absence, consideration of an Education Supervision Order or prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

### **Severe absence**

Children who are severely absent are attending for less than 50% of the sessions. They are therefore at very high risk of further long-term absences and exposure to safeguarding situations unless a concerted effort is made across all partners. Children with severe absence will be discussed as a priority at the termly Targeting Support Meetings.

Where absence intensifies, the school will work in tandem with the local authority and relevant partners. This may include:

- Voluntary early help assessment
- Consideration of an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision
- Formal conversations with parents, leaders and the local authority school attendance support team.
- Escalating through the Emotional Based School Avoidance pathway
- Escalating with virtual school if child is Child in care or has a social worker
- Consultation with Early Help to discuss whole family plan
- A prosecution for non-attendance if absence is unauthorised (following consultation with Attendance team)
- A safeguarding referral

### **Attendance legal intervention**

Where other intervention is not successful, or it is not engaged with, the law protects a child's right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all of the avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents.

If a child of compulsory age fails to attend regularly, parents may be prosecuted by the local authority following the guidelines set out in [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK](#).

### **National Framework for Penalty Notices**

Penalty notices are issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends school.

<b>Penalty Notice</b>	<b>Details</b>
	If a pupil has 10 unauthorised sessions, which is equal to 5 school days, within a 10-week period, a penalty notice may be issued. This will come under three categories: First, Second, and Third offence.
<b>First Offence</b>	The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time leave or unauthorised absences the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
<b>Second Offence</b>	The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time leave or unauthorised absences that amount will be: £160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. No reduced rate will be offered.
<b>Third Offence (within three years)</b>	The third time an offence is committed for Term Time leave or unauthorised absences a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates Court.

	Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education.
Penalty notices may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The school will notify the parents of the days the pupil must not be present in public.	

### **Promoting good attendance**

#### **The school promotes good attendance by:**

- Setting high aspirations
- Regularly informing parents about their attendance and absence levels
- Good attendance letters- Green letter
- Promoting to parents the importance of good attendance via newsletters and Parentmail
- Certificates given at assembly at the end of the academic year by the Headteacher for attendees with 100% attendance
- Provide support for pupils who need it to improve their attendance.

### **Attendance Letters Home - TRAFFIC LIGHT MONITORING SYSTEM**

Parents receive a copy of their child's attendance figures every term (3 times per year).

- Attendance 95% or above. **GREEN LETTER**
- Below 90%- 95% letter warning outlining the need for them to improve their attendance. **AMBER LETTER**
- Below 90% This is classed as persistent absence and there is a requirement that parents aim to improve attendance. **RED LETTER**
- If attendance does not improve following a Red letter and children continue to be absent without valid reason or authorisation from the Headteacher a Penalty Notice will be issued.
- Schools will notify the Local Authority of children who are absent for ten consecutive days without authorisation and classed as Child Missing in Education.

### **Lateness monitoring system**

For children who are persistently late, parents will be notified via a letter that their child's attendance needs to improve, and a formal meeting may be requested. The school will work with parents to support them to improve their child's attendance. A Penalty Notice may be issued if an improvement is not seen, and attendance falls into the persistently late category.

#### Appendices:

Appendix 1	First Day Contact Guidelines
Appendix 2	Short Term Absenteeism procedure
Appendix 3	Lateness Warning Letter
Appendix 4	Green Letter
Appendix 5	Amber Letter
Appendix 6	Red Letter
Appendix 7	Persistent Absence Formal Warning
Appendix 8	Persistent Absence Final Warning
Appendix 9	Leave of Absence Penalty Notice Warning
Appendix 10	Requesting Leave of Absence Letter to Parents
Appendix 11	Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Request Form

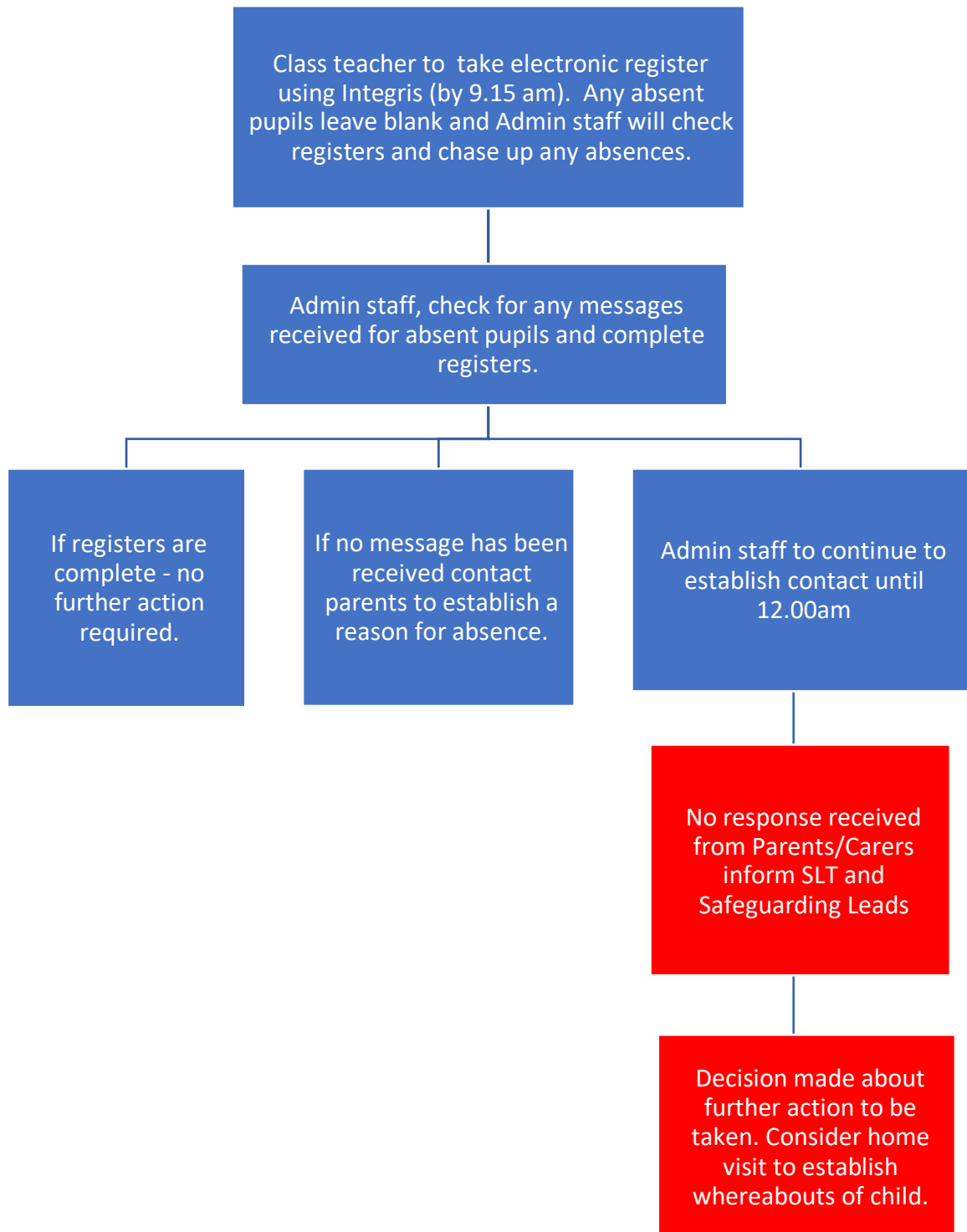
### **Appendix 1 – First Day Contact Guidelines**

First day contact is a widely used practice in schools and has been shown to improve attendance rates. The correct procedure at Cranwell Primary School is as follows:

1. Electronic Registers are taken in class by the teacher. Any unknown absence is kept blank to be completed by admin staff.
2. For pupils for whom no message has been received, the office staff will attempt to make contact with the parent at the earliest opportunity.
3. When contact is made, the parent will be asked for the reason for absence. In the event that no proper reason is supplied, the parent will be informed that the absence will not be authorised.
4. In the case of minor ailments, the parent will be encouraged to send the child in with an assurance that school will keep a close eye on them. *(NB – if there has been a spate of certain symptoms in the school or community, such minor illnesses may be treated as a valid reason for absence).*
5. Where no contact is made, a message should be left asking the parent to contact the school. Other emergency contacts/friends may be contacted to ascertain the whereabouts of the family. Where it is impossible to leave a message, a home visit may be conducted by two appropriate members of staff.
6. Reasons for absence are then added to the register.



Appendix 2 Short Term Absenteeism Procedure



Appendix 3-

Lateness Warning Letter

Dear

**PENALTY NOTICE FORMAL WARNING**

**NAME OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON:**

**DATE OF BIRTH:**

**PUPIL REGISTERED AT:** Cranwell Primary School

This letter is a **Penalty Notice Formal Warning** and is being sent to you because your child is persistently late for school.

\_\_\_\_\_ arrival to school will be reviewed from the date of this warning, with the expectation that him/her arrival to school increases to 100%. Failure to comply may result in a Penalty Notice being issued.

**Please note if your child's attendance has fallen below 90% due to illness or a medical condition you will be required to provide evidence showing that you have sought appropriate medical advice.**

The Local Authority issue Penalty Notices as a strategy to address the unacceptable levels of attendance of children attending their school under the following legal framework:

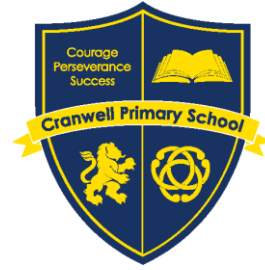
- **Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise**
- **Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act**
- **In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice of £160 reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. There is no option for a reduction for a second fine, and a third fine cannot be issued within 3 years, we must consider prosecution instead. If you do not pay a fine within 28 days, have received the maximum number of fines, or we feel that a fine would not be effective, we may prosecute you for non-attendance.  
After 28 days we may prosecute you.**

Should you wish to discuss this matter further please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Chris Wilson  
Head teacher

Appendix 4- Green Letter



Date

Childs name:

**ATTENDANCE LETTER**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Well done!

Your child has achieved over 95% attendance between \_\_\_\_September and \_\_\_\_January 20\_\_ which is at or above our minimum expectation.

GOOD attendance is very important so that children are given as much opportunity as possible academically and socially. When children are absent from school they often find it difficult to catch up on the work they have missed and can feel unsettled.

We are asking for the support of all parents in improving attendance levels as we believe this is one of the main ways in which our children will be happy at school and achieve their full potential.

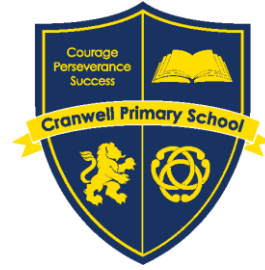
Want to know more about why you have been sent this letter? Read our Attendance Policy at <https://www.cranwell.lincs.sch.uk/policies.asp>

Thank- you for your support and well-done for achieving GOOD attendance!

Yours sincerely

Chris Wilson  
Head teacher

Appendix 5- Amber Letter



Date

Childs name:

**ATTENDANCE LETTER**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Your child has achieved **less than 95% attendance** this term which is below our minimum expectation.

GOOD attendance is very important so that children are given as much opportunity as possible academically and socially. When children are absent from school they often find it difficult to catch up on the work they have missed and can feel unsettled.

We are asking for the support of all parents in improving attendance levels as we believe this is one of the main ways in which our children will be happy at school and achieve their full potential.

Your child has had an above average amount of time off school this year. It may be that these absences have been due to illness, an authorised holiday or other exceptional circumstances.

Want to know more about why you have been sent this letter? Read our Attendance Policy at <https://www.cranwell.lincs.sch.uk/policies.asp>

Your child's attendance percentage will obviously improve moving forward if your child attends school regularly. We ask for your continued support with attendance and loo forward to seeing an improvement in your child's percentage next term.

Please see this as a supportive letter, trying to give your child the best education they can gain.

Yours sincerely

Chris Wilson  
Head teacher

Appendix 6- Red Letter



Dear

**ATTENDANCE LETTER**

Child's name:

Your child has achieved **less than 90% attendance** between \_\_\_\_September 20\_\_ and \_\_\_\_January 20\_\_ which is a cause for concern - your child is at risk of underachieving as a result.

We would ask for your support in ensuring that attendance improves over the coming weeks. Your child's attendance will now be monitored on a regular basis, and we may invite you into school to discuss this further.

Your child has had an above average amount of time off school this year. It may be that these absences have been due to illness, unauthorised holiday or other exceptional circumstances.

Your child's attendance percentage will obviously improve moving forward if your child attends school regularly. We ask for your continued support with attendance and look forward to seeing an improvement in your child's percentage next term.

If, following this letter, your child's attendance does not improve we will contact you again in order to discuss the situation further and Lincolnshire County Council may be contacted for assistance in this matter.

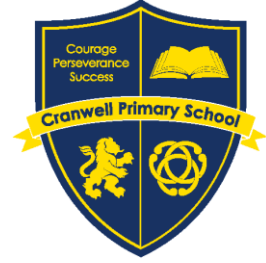
*GOOD* attendance is very important so that children are given as much opportunity as possible academically and socially. When children are absent from school they often find it difficult to catch up on the work they have missed and can feel unsettled.

Want to know more about why you have been sent this letter? Read our Attendance Policy at <https://www.cranwell.lincs.sch.uk/policies.asp>

We are asking for the support of all parents in improving attendance levels as we believe this is one of the main ways in which our children will be happy at school and achieve their full potential.

Yours sincerely

Chris Wilson  
Head teacher



CRANWELL, SLEAFORD,  
LINCOLNSHIRE NG34 8HH

HEADTEACHER  
Mr C Wilson

Dear

**IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: FORMAL WARNING**

**NAME :**

**DATE OF BIRTH:**

**REGISTERED PUPIL AT:**

I need to draw your attention to the fact that parents have a duty in law to ensure their child attends school regularly unless they are unable to do so by reason of ill-health or other legally acceptable reason.

During the period \_\_\_\_\_, was absent from school on \_\_\_\_\_ out of a possible \_\_\_\_\_ half-day sessions and no valid reasons/authorised absence have been provided.

This is an unacceptable rate of attendance and I attach for your information, a copy of the Pupil Absence Record Sheet.

**Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure their child receives suitable efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or education otherwise.**

**Section 444 (1)(a) of the same Act states that where a parent of a child who knowingly and without reasonable justification fails to ensure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school, the parent of the child shall be guilty of an offence against that Section.**

**The Local Education Authority may, where necessary, institute legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under this section of the Education Act 1996 against those parents concerned. Alternatively, Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Education to issue a Penalty of £160 reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. There is no option for a reduction for a second fine, and a third fine cannot be issued within 3 years, we must consider prosecution instead. If you do not pay a fine within 28 days, have received the maximum number of fines, or we feel that a fine would not be effective, we may prosecute you for non-attendance.**

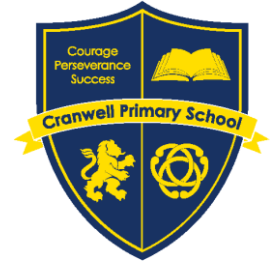
**After 28 days we may prosecute you.**

If, following this letter, your child's attendance does not improve we will issue you with a final warning letter.

Please contact the school to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mr Chris Wilson  
Head teacher



Dear

**IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: FINAL WARNING**

**NAME :**

**DATE OF BIRTH:**

**REGISTERED PUPIL AT:**

**Section 444 of the Education Act 1996** states that if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at the school fails to attend regularly thereat, the parent of the child shall be guilty of an offence against that section.

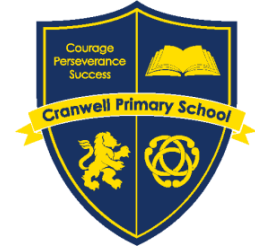
TAKE NOTICE that the Local Education Authority considers that you have been guilty of a breach of the law in that you have failed, despite this matter having been previously brought to your attention, to send your child regularly and punctually to school in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act 1996. In view of this you have made yourself liable to be summoned before a Magistrates Court for each alleged offence.

This warning is issued in the hope that there may be no necessity to take further steps to enforce the law. However, you are warned that if you do not cause your child to attend school regularly, proceedings will be taken against you. You do not have to answer this letter and may well wish to seek the advice of a solicitor.

Yours sincerely

Mr Chris Wilson  
Head teacher

## Appendix 9- Leave of Absence Penalty Notice Warning



HEADTEACHER  
Mr C Wilson

Dear

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE PENALTY WARNING

#### **NAME OF CHILD:**

This letter is a **Penalty Notice Formal Warning** and is being sent to you because you have requested a period of absence from school for your child during term time.

During the period you have requested from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, is not deemed to be exceptional circumstances and therefore will be coded as unauthorised absence. If you choose to ignore this warning, a Penalty Notice will be issued for the above period of absence.

A Penalty Notice is a strategy used by schools to address the unacceptable levels of attendance of children attending their school under the following legal framework:

- **Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise**
- **Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act**

In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty of £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. There is no option for a reduction for a second fine, and a third fine cannot be issued within 3 years, we must consider prosecution instead.

If you do not pay a fine within 28 days, have received the maximum number of fines, or we feel that a fine would not be effective, we may prosecute you for non-attendance.

After 28 days we may prosecute you.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me via the school office.

Yours sincerely

C. Wilson  
Head teacher





## Requesting leave of absence / Holidays in term time Local Authority and school attendance policy

Dear Parents

I am writing to remind you of the school's position regarding holiday or leave of absence in term time.

Authorising absence is a policy decision. I must work within the policy adopted by the Local authority and school. All school absence is a serious matter monitored by the LA, Education Welfare department and Ofsted and all school procedures are checked regularly.

I am delighted to confirm that the majority of our Parents support this policy, and their children attend school regularly.

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 still miss out on the teaching that their peers will receive during your holiday. Children returning from a term-time holiday may also be unprepared for the lessons which build on the teaching they have missed. Teachers then must give more time to help individual children catch up on missed work. This poses a potential risk of the underachievement of other students in the class. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

The Department of Education allows a Head Teacher the discretion to consider authorising a holiday in term time only in "exceptional circumstances". If you consider that your request for a holiday is exceptional you will need to complete the form found on the school website <https://www.cranwell.lincs.sch.uk/policies.asp>

A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If the holiday is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance, and you nevertheless take your child out of school for the holiday, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Failure to complete the form in the required timeframe, and taking your child on holiday without authorisation will be classed as unauthorised.

In the case of an unauthorised holiday, the Local Authority will be notified of the holiday taken and a Penalty Notice may be issued. Please note that such a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school.

**In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty of £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. There is no option for a reduction for a second fine, and a third fine cannot be issued within 3 years, we must consider prosecution instead.**

**If you do not pay a fine within 28 days, have received the maximum number of fines, or we feel that a fine would not be effective, we may prosecute you for non-attendance.**

**After 28 days we may prosecute you.**

In considering the decision whether to authorise, the following factors will be taken into account:

- Reasons given for the holiday
- The time of the year / term
- Whether your child will miss any preparation for tests / examinations
- Your child's previous attendance / punctuality record
- Whether your child is likely to fall behind with their work
- Whether the school has received any request for other leave of absence that year / previous years
- There is an acceptable exceptional reason for this request (which includes evidence)

In addition to holiday absence, we have a very small number of children who persistently have time off. The Local Authority monitor children whose attendance which falls below 95%, and those who fall below 90% who may be subject to a penalty fine. Holidays should be taken in holiday time of which we have 13 weeks available. These include 1 week Autumn half term, 2 weeks Christmas, 1 week Spring half term, 2 weeks Easter, 1 week Summer half term and 6 weeks in the summer.

I hope this explains how the school will deal with requests for leave and any holidays taken in term time.

Our Attendance Policy can be found on our website.

I hope you support our efforts to raise attendance and attainment at our school. Yours sincerely

Mr Chris Wilson  
Head teacher



## Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Request Form

Before reading this document please ensure you have read the school's attendance policy  
<https://www.cranwell.lincs.sch.uk/policies.asp>

It is important that we strive for 100% attendance for all children. However it is unrealistic to presume that children will not be ill nor will they need some time away during term time. Government instructions about taking time away from education should only be in extenuating circumstances. This is something we support and ask families to as well.

Head teachers cannot authorise school absence purely for a reason of a family holiday. If you feel you have exceptional circumstances, you must complete the following request form.

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their children receive education in accordance with Section 7 of the Education Act 1995 and that they regularly attend school.

We also have a statutory duty to ensure that children are in school and are held to account for this by both the Local Authority and Department for Education. This will be supported through the Home-School Agreement.

There is, however, a discretionary power held by the Head teacher to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances.

We do recognise the unique, exceptional needs of families at our school. Permission must be sought prior to leave being taken as a failure to do so may result in the leave being unauthorised.

Our school circumstances are quite unique and we appreciate that as our families can be separated for lengthy periods of time, and returning home leave entitlements do not always take into account school holidays. We are also aware that families can live a long way from their extended families who may either require support or are part of a support network for the family who are affected by detachment.

So that we may support you if you do have a request for your child to have time away during term time please include as much information regarding your exceptional circumstances as possible. **Supporting documents to aid decision making must be submitted at the time of your request for absence.** The Head teacher will not be able to consider your request without your supporting documents. An example of evidence may include verification from your employer / Unit Commanding Officer. (Please note : MODs Directorate Children and Young People have made Unit Commanding Officers aware of this endorsement requirement for Service Personnel).

Head teachers will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a child's education.

This will help support our audit trail and ensure that the Head Teacher is able to make an informed decision about authorised time away from school.

### Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices can be issued to Parents when absence has not been approved by the Head teacher. These are directly from Lincolnshire County Council and must be adhered to by all Lincolnshire Schools.

We are very understanding, and if you are unsure about any of the information above, please feel free to contact the school for further advice or support.

For more details please see [www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/overview](http://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/overview)

Your cooperation and support with these regulations is greatly appreciated.

Kind Regards,

Mr Chris Wilson

Headteacher

## Leave Request in Term Time



Only complete this form when you have read the Guidelines for 'Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances'. It is essential that this form is returned to the School Office two weeks before the requested period of absence. Completion of this form does not necessarily mean that permission will be granted. You will be notified in writing of any decision made. Any decision to go on holiday without getting permission may result in a Penalty Fine.

**No leave of absence will be granted during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

Student/ Pupil Details		
Name of Pupil/s	Class	Year Group
I request permission for my child to be absent from school between:-		
First day of absence from school	Date of return to school	Total of absent school days
Please detail below the reason for your request for absence from school during term time and provide any supporting documents. The Head teacher will not be able to consider your request without your supporting documents.		
(please attach supporting documents to this form)		
<b>Declaration</b>		
I have read the Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Information for Parents and understand I/we may receive a penalty notice if my/our child receives unauthorised school absence as a result of this request.		
Signed: (Parent/Carer)	Date:	

### **For Office Use Only**

Number of Days Requested	Number of Days already authorised this academic year	Current percentage attendance this academic year	Days requested and authorised last academic year

The school has considered your request for leave of absence and your child's absences will be recorded as follows:-		
Number of Authorised Days:	Number of Unauthorised Days:	Number of Unauthorised Days to date:
Signed: Headteacher		Date: