



## Attendance Policy

Status: Approved

Date: March 2022

Review Date: March 2024

Governor Leadership:

Executive Leadership: Head

Key Manager: Welfare Manager

Consultation group for next review: Ethos.

What the students need to know:

- It is important to come to school every day.
- Pupils will be rewarded for their high attendance at school.

What every member of staff needs to know:

- Attendance is monitored by the Welfare Manager and Receptionist
- It is everyone's responsibility to support pupils to attend school every day.
- Registers must be completed by 9am for the main school and 9.30am for Sixth Form to support the safeguarding of pupils, via SIMs with relevant notes being sent to the main office.

What every adult needs to know:

- Attendance is monitored by the Welfare Manager and Receptionist.
- The Welfare Manager is available to offer support to pupils or families who find attending school regularly difficult.
- Cromwell High School will unfortunately use legal sanctions when all other support or offers of support have not resulted in improvements in attendance. (Each case will be treated on an individual basis, considering the complex and challenging circumstances that some families are going through.)





# Cromwell High School Attendance Policy

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## **1. Aims**

Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential.

The target for Pupil Attendance for the academic year 2021/2022 is set at 96%.

Cromwell school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

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

Cromwell school values all pupils. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties. Maintaining regular school attendance for many of our pupils is a challenge due to the variety of individual needs they have. This may range from a pupil coping with physical impairments, emotional needs and chronic medical conditions. The governors, headteacher, Head of school, leadership team and all staff hope this policy will provide guidance to pupils, parents and carers striving to achieve the best possible attendance and educational outcomes.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding and child protection, behaviour management and supporting pupils with medical conditions policy.





This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Act 2000.

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance 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:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5) 11.
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 12.
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010.
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

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

## **3. School procedures**

### **3.1 Attendance register**

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:


- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

*See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.*





Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Main School pupils must arrive in school by **8.55am** on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at **9.00am** and will be kept open until **9.15am**. The register for the second session will be taken at **1.00pm** and will be kept open until **1.15pm**.

Sixth Form pupils must arrive by **9.25am on each college day**. The register for the first session will be taken at **9.30am and kept open until 9.45am**. The register for the second session will be taken at **1.30pm and kept open until 1.45pm**.

Sims is to be used and it is the responsibility of the teacher taking the session to ensure it is completed fully.

### **3.2 Unplanned absence**

Parents/Carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by **9.00am** or as soon as practically possible (see also section 5).

Parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence to allow the Head teacher to authorise absence where appropriate. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription, etc.

### **3.3 Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage 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. If the school think an unreasonable amount of time has been taken to attend an appointment (before and after the appointment), then the session will be unauthorised in the DR.

Parents/carers can write in the child's home/school book or ring into school to inform school of a medical/dental appointment. Parents must show the appointment card/letters to school.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in Section 4.





### **3.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late, but before the register has closed, will be marked as late, using the appropriate code. A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

On arrival after the close of register, pupils must immediately report to the school office to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school.

The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment.

The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry. In some cases, lateness is agreed with families, in such situations where children have complex medical issues, such as seizures that are provoked by being woken and other conditions.

The school also recognizes that in some lateness is due to the late of arrive of transport which the children and parents have no control over. In such cases the school will work closely with the transport to reduce any future occurrences from taking place.

### **3.5 Following up absence**

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

A member of the welfare and attendance team (or an office administrator) will telephone the parents/carers of any pupil who has not arrived by 9.30am for the main school and no reason for the absence has been given to school. The first phone calls will be made to parents/carers of independent travellers to ensure they are safe. The same will apply for Sixth Form students who have not arrived by 10am

For the main school, If no contact can be made with parents, carers or the pupil and they are an independent traveller by 10.00, then school will follow safeguarding procedures and make a decision to either, keep trying to make contact via telephone, conduct a home visit (Home visits must be completed by two members of staff) or contact the police. The same will apply for Sixth Form students who we have not heard from by 10.30am.

### **3.6 Reporting to parents**

You will be given a copy of your child's attendance at both parent's evenings and the EHCP review. Your child's attendance for the year will be included on the end of year report.





## **4. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.


The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Parents applying for a leave of absence must send a written request to the head teacher before the leave is arranged using a leave of absence form. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. Each request will be considered individually and will take the following factors into account:

- Length of the proposed leave
- Age of the pupil
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record
- Proximity of public examinations
- Pupil's ability to catch up the work missed
- Pupil's educational needs
- General welfare of the pupil
- Circumstances of the request
- Purpose of the leave
- Previous term time absences taken
- When the request was made

#### **Valid reasons for authorised absence include:**

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils 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. Where Traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are





not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil.

### Unauthorised absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Having their hair cut
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- "Couldn't get up"
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of school

## **5. Attendance monitoring**

The attendance team monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

Parents should phone every day to inform school of the continued illness, unless a doctor has suggested a length of time before returning to school.

Parents will be sent letters in the following pattern:


- Pupil's attendance falls below 95% attendance, reminding them of the importance of attending school.
- Pupil's attendance falls below 90%, inviting them to a meeting to discuss how we can help.
- Pupil's attendance falls below 85%, inviting them to a meeting to discuss how we can help and informing them of the process of fining. The school will support families and children by conducting home visits.


If after contacting parents and a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will follow the Tameside absence code of conduct and consider issuing a penalty notice or prosecution.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The



*Please note that CCTV operates on our site and that all telephone calls to and from school are recorded for training and monitoring purposes.*





underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

Cromwell High school will collect attendance information via online registers and then store this information on an internal server. This information will be used to track the attendance of individual pupils, identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

All data will be stored in accordance with the GDPR 2018.

## **6. School support systems**

School recognise that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents/carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example: bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Cromwell High School also recognises that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example: those pupils with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.


The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Parenting contracts
- Referrals to support agencies
- Support from the Family Team
- Pupil Voice Activities
- PSHCE
- Family learning
- Reward systems
- Time limited/part-time time-tables as part of a wider support plan
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Reintegration support packages

Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.







Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, Cromwell School will consider the use of legal sanctions.

## **7. Legal sanctions**

### **7.1 Penalty notices**

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the head teacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

### **7.2 Parenting Contracts/Home school agreements (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)**

A Parenting contract or Home school agreement is a voluntary agreement between school and the parent. It can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance.


The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly.

The contract can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents fail to carry out agreed actions.

### **7.3 Prosecution**

Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under





Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and, most importantly, about returning children to education.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and/or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

## **8. Roles and responsibilities**

### **8.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Head teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### **8.2 The Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Head Teacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### **8.3 The Welfare and Attendance Team**

The attendance team:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Make first day absence calls to parents and/or pupils.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the head teacher
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Works with parents and pupils to find solutions to barriers to consistent attendance to school
- Advises the head teacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices





## **8.4 Form tutors/teams**

Form tutors/teams are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. They are also responsible for promoting attending school every day.

## **8.5 Office staff**

Office staff are expected to:

- take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system
- Provide Welfare Manager and Head Teacher with reports on attendance as and when required, collate data and track attendance patterns.
- have phone contact with families and record the discussion on CPOMS.
- Discuss urgent messages or information with the Welfare Manager and / or Head of Department and / or Head Teacher.
- Keep a centralised database of children with concerning absence

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed March 2023 by the Head Teacher and/or Welfare Manager. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## **10. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy



## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
I	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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances



<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>⊘</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day





## ***CROMWELL HIGH SCHOOL***

### **Pupils absent from education protocol - 2018**

Protocol for persistent absence – either intermittent or continuous- is as per LA guidelines that apply to all schools.

Protocol for parents declining to send their children to school on the basis of an allegation about school or dispute with the Local Authority regarding placement.

#### **Due to an allegation:**

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- Whilst the allegation is investigated absence will be authorised (clearly the LADO is informed) as parents have a right to have full confidence in sending their child to school to be safe and well cared for. When the allegation is resolved and, if necessary, additional safeguards put in place, a letter will be sent to parents explaining the expectation of a re-induction to school within a week.
- Any absence after the allegation is resolved (whether parents are following the school's complaints procedure or not) due to failure to support a re-induction plan will be marked as unauthorised and the Local Authority Educational Welfare department informed after sessions and after every subsequent 10 sessions. A letter will be sent to parents explaining the situation including their duty to ensure that their child attends school and reassuring parents that the pupil will be welcomed and well cared for. This letter will be reissued on a monthly basis if necessary.

#### **Due to challenge to the placement with our school:**

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- Where parents challenge the placement at our school the Local Authority SEN department will be informed immediately. A letter will be sent to parents arranging an emergency review of EHCP with LA SEN involvement but reminding them that it is their duty as parents to ensure their child's attendance at Cromwell during this process and reassuring parents that their child will be welcomed and well cared for.
- Whilst there is an ongoing appeal against the placement at Cromwell but the pupil remains on roll, school will send monthly 'reminder and reassurance' letters to parents and monthly contact and update' LA SEN and LAEWO.
- In the absence of any prior safeguarding concerns: Where there is no other





regular contact with the pupil (e.g. school nursing team, social care, VI team, SALT, attending a college link place...) school will make monthly referrals to Social Care for a Welfare Visit to ensure safeguarding (regardless of the response of social care)- this can be waived if an incidental visit (e.g. attendance by an LA SEN officer or medical can be confirmed as having occurred). Where there is regular contact by another agency school will ensure on a monthly basis to that agency that there are no safeguarding concerns at that time.

- Where there are existing safeguarding concerns school will either contribute fully to ongoing social care interventions or, in the case of no ongoing social care support, will re-refer to social care and, if declined, re-refer on at least a fortnightly basis. During this process we will make ongoing enquires regarding the safety of the pupil including attempting a home visit at least once a fortnight.

