



CRABTREE JUNIOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

TABLE OF CONTENTS		
Section	Title	Page
1	Review Record	1
2	Purpose and Policy	2
3	Monitoring and Review	3
4	Appendix1: Absence Procedure	5-6
	Appendix 2: Notification of Leave Of Absence	7

REVIEW RECORD

Name of Policy	Date of Review (term and year)
Attendance	Spring 2013
Staff Responsible for Review (e.g. Headteacher, Subject Leader)	Date discussed at Staff Meeting
Headteacher	
Date of Adoption in Curriculum Committee Minutes	Date of Next Review
03 May 2013	2015/16

COPY OF POLICY KEPT IN POLICIES FOLDER IN HEADTEACHER'S OFFICE

RECORD OF AMENDMENTS	
Page/Clause Amended	Brief Details of Changes

Purpose

Promoting regular school attendance is a key component in the Government's strategy to raise educational standards. The DfE view is that unnecessary absence from school is unacceptable and must be prevented and tackled by schools.

The law requires that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. Parents of children registered at this school have a legal duty to make sure that their child attends regularly.

The school is required to call attendance registers at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and to record whether pupils are present, on an approved educational activity, absent, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Policy

The quality of teaching and learning delivered at this school does not benefit pupils if they are not present. The governors of Crabtree Junior School believe that if children attend school regularly and punctually they will be best able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and establish a commitment to work which will be carried forward into adulthood.

At Crabtree Junior School there is an expectation that the whole school community – governors, staff, parents and pupils – will share a commitment to high standards of attendance and punctuality.

The governors give a high priority to good attendance and the importance of school attendance will be emphasised to parents in the 'new joiner' information pack and reiterated during the school year.

The taking of family holidays during term time is strongly discouraged and the Headteacher's discretion to authorise such absences will not be exercised in the case of holidays. Authorisation for leave of absence for other reasons will only be granted if there are exceptional extenuating circumstances.

Where children are absent from school, the school will follow up to:

- ascertain the reason;
- ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken; and
- identify whether the absence is approved or not.

Excellent attendance will be celebrated through the award of Herts County Council certificates for 100% attendance at the end of the school year.

Responsibilities of school, parents and pupils

School

School staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality.

The school will:

- ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation;
- encourage good attendance and will investigate all unexplained and unjustified absence;
- follow up all instances where attendance and punctuality give cause for concern;
- support parents in ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of pupils and promptly respond to any issue which may lead to non-attendance;

SECTION 2

- be sensitive to the needs of individual parents in the way in which attendance issues are addressed;
- inform parents of their children's attendance/punctuality record via the end of year school report;
- communicate this attendance policy and procedures to all parents, pupils and staff.

Parents

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance and should:

- ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and ready to learn;
- instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly;
- take an active interest in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parents' evenings and other relevant meetings;
- work in partnership with the school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance;
- ensure that they are aware of Crabtree Junior School's attendance procedures and follow the school's procedures to notify the school if their children are absent;
- avoid arranging routine medical/dental appointments during school hours;
- avoid booking holidays during term time.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to be ready to learn and must remember to hand any note giving reasons for absence to their class teacher.

SECTION 3

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance at the school.

The marking of class registers must comply with the DfE Advice on School Attendance. A guide to register marks is attached to the inside cover of every register: it is the teachers' responsibility to ensure they are familiar with the requirements and that they adhere to them. The School Office will monitor and advise if incorrect markings are used. The School Secretary performs a weekly register audit.

If there has been any absence for which a written explanation has not been received, the admin assistant will send a form to the child's parents via pupil post. If no response is received a reminder will be sent by email. In some circumstances, the absence of a written explanation may mean the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

Where children are persistently absent or late, the School Office staff will inform the Headteacher. On a monthly basis, a report showing children with attendance below 90% in

SECTION 3

the year to date, and a second report showing children who have been late on two or more occasions in the previous calendar month, will be prepared for the Headteacher, who will decide whether or not it is necessary to contact parents. In the case of persistent absence or punctuality issues, the Headteacher may involve the Attendance Improvement Officer. Absence figures for the year to date, differentiating between authorised and unauthorised absences, will be reported to governors in the termly Headteacher's Report.

Annual attendance statistics are provided in the School Prospectus which is published on the school's website.

This policy shall be reviewed at least once every four years in accordance with the Governing Body Year Planner. The Headteacher is responsible for advising the governors if new guidance is issued by Hertfordshire County Council or the DfE.

Next scheduled date for review: 2015/16

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

1. The School Day

- 1.1 Doors to the classrooms open at 8.50am and the school day formally begins at 8.55am. Pupils must not be on the school premises before 8.45am (unless attending Jousters Breakfast Club).
- 1.2 The class registers are closed at 9.05 am.

2. Late arrival

- 2.1 Any child arriving after the registers close must enter the school via the main entrance and be signed in by an accompanying adult.

Unless there is an acceptable/exceptional reason for the lateness, late arrivals count as unauthorised absence and School Office staff will insert the appropriate mark in the register. The Headteacher will be consulted if there is any doubt as to which mark should be applied.

3. Absence Procedure

3.1 First day of absence due to illness

Parents are asked to telephone/email on the first day of absence to inform the school why their child is not in school – preferably before the start of the school day. This information is passed to the class teacher.

In the case of Year 5 and 6 pupils (who may travel to school on their own), the school office will make every attempt to speak to the child's parents to ensure the child is safe and absent for a reason.

For pupils in the lower phase, should no explanation for a child's absence be received by 9.30am, the school office will attempt to contact the parents for an explanation.

3.2 Procedure for continuation of absence due to illness

For absences of three days or less due to illness, parents are not expected to telephone other than on the first day of absence.

For longer absences (over three days) the school expects parents to maintain reasonable communication during the absence of the child

3.3 Return to school

On return to school the parent/carer should send a letter indicating the reason for the child's absence and any information the school needs to support the pupil on their return.

Should no letter be received, the admin assistant will send a form to the parent/carer to complete and return. If not response is forthcoming, a reminder email will be sent.

3.4 Prolonged absence due to illness

Should the absence become prolonged, the school would expect that a doctor or hospital would become involved and for any absence of over two weeks, unless the child has been hospitalised, the school will require a letter from the child's GP indicating the reason for the absence.

3.5 Authorisation of absence for reasons other than illness

In any instance where a child is absent from school for reasons other than illness, a written communication (letter or Email) must be sent to the school *before* the event.

For medical appointments, the note should be addressed to the class teacher and it is sufficient to hand it in on the morning of the absence (although notice should be given where possible). However, it should be noted that it is expected that routine dental appointments and non-urgent medical appointments will normally be made outside school hours. Unless the appointment is unavoidable, it will be marked as unauthorised in the class register.

For all other absences, the parent should write to the Headteacher at least one week in advance (if possible), using either the Notification of Absence Form (Appendix 2) or sending in a letter explaining the circumstances.

It should be noted that a letter or message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence: only if the Headteacher is satisfied with the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised.

Absence will be authorised if:

- the pupil is absent with permission previously granted by the school;
- the pupil is ill or is attending an unavoidable medical/dental appointment (routine appointments will be marked as unauthorised);
- the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong;
- the child is a registered pupil at the school not within walking distance of their home, and has no suitable travel arrangements identified by Local Authority;
- there is a family bereavement;
- the pupil is taking part in public performances or music examinations;
- the pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion (In authorising such absences the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's overall pattern of attendance should be considered.)
- the pupil is attending an approved off-site educational activity.

Any absence that does not comply with these criteria will not be authorised and will be marked as such on the class register.

3.6 Family holidays during term time

Although headteachers have discretion to authorise leave of absence of up to ten school days for annual family holidays, the governors of Crabtree Junior School have decided that all leave of absence for the purpose of holidays will be marked as **unauthorised** on the pupil's record. Where parents nevertheless choose to take their children out of school during term time, they should notify the Headteacher a minimum of two weeks before the holiday using the form shown in Appendix 2.



NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Please complete this form if your child will be absent from school for reasons other than medical appointments.

Absences during term time are discouraged and the governors' decision is that all leave of absence for the purpose of family holidays will be marked as **unauthorised** on the pupil's record.

After completing the form, please return it to the Headteacher no less than one week before the date when you intend the period of absence to start (two weeks in the case of holidays).

I wish to inform the school that

Name of child: _____ **Class:** _____

will be absent from Crabtree Junior School

from _____ **to** _____

[Total number of days absent from school: _____]

***(a) in order to take part in an annual holiday.**

***(b) for the following (non-medical) reason** _____

I understand that absence for reasons of holiday will be marked as unauthorised on my child's record of attendance and that other absences will only be authorised at the Headteacher's discretion if there are extraordinary extenuating circumstances, e.g. on compassionate grounds.

(Signature of Parent Carer)

(Date)