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Dear Parent/Carer

ATTENDANCE AT CROWDYS HILL SCHOOL

This letter is to provide you with a clear outline about absence procedures at Crowdys Hill school. The Governors support the Headteacher and Education Welfare Service in promoting high levels of attendance and acting where there are unsatisfactory reasons for absence.

Attendance at school is important for learning; and important for your child to develop social and communication skills. There will be times when absence is unavoidable and acceptable. This letter explains the approach we are following to manage attendance.

Types of Absence

Each absence is classed as authorised or unauthorised. Absences are coded as authorised where reasons given are considered by the headteacher to be valid.

The following reasons are not acceptable:

- shopping
- days out to theme parks or to attend concerts or shows
- parents' work commitments or business trips
- holidays taken in term time (including long weekends taken on Fridays and/or Mondays)
- parental/sibling illness.

[Unauthorised absences will be referred to the Swindon Education Welfare Service.](#)

Absence due to illness

- If your child is unable to attend school through illness you should inform us by telephone on the first day of absence before 9.00 am. You will then need to call in each day your child is ill.
- Where the child is absent through illness or medical appointments this will usually be counted as authorised.
- Where we have concerns over absence patterns or excessive absences through illness, we will discuss this with you to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support – for example by involving the School Health Service.

Emergency Occasions

There are some occasions e.g. bereavements, family problems, etc where it may be inappropriate for children to attend school; we will be sympathetic to such needs. You must discuss with your child's tutor, or a member of the leadership team.



Holidays

If you are planning to have a holiday in term time it would need to be an exceptional circumstance, such as a quiet time due to your child's autism, or a one-off family event such as a wedding. You will need to write a letter to the head teacher requesting a holiday and your reasons behind your request. This can be via email head@crowdyshill.swindon.sch.uk The head teacher will then decide if the holiday is authorised or unauthorised, and respond to you.

Where authorisation is not granted, then this holiday absence will be reported to the Education Welfare Service. Schools have a duty to do this.

Where parents wish to take their child(ren) out of school during term time for purposes other than holidays, they should email the pupils tutor and head teacher who will assess each request individually.

What is considered as poor attendance?

Anything below 94% is weak, under 90% is poor and if attendance dips below 85% we will have serious concerns. Below 85% is regarded as persistent absence by the Department for Education.

In this school we are aiming for every pupil to achieve attendance levels of at least 95%. We monitor attendance and provide termly reports on each pupil's attendance. Your child will receive an attendance certificate if their attendance has been above 95% for the term.

- Your child's tutor is the first point of contact for poor attendance. You must ensure that they know why your child has been absent, and allow them to offer support from the school if appropriate.
- The school will inform you of your child's attendance by text if it falls below 95%
- The school will identify pupils whose attendance has fallen below 90% and issue a courtesy letter and a meeting will be set up with the attendance lead, Gemma Watkins or a member of the leadership team. We would hope to be able to support you in improving your child's attendance.
- If the attendance continues to drop then parents/carers will be issued with a second letter, informing them that if attendance continues to fall then we will have to inform the Swindon Welfare Officer (EWO) - they will investigate the pupils' absences.

We have a duty of care, shared with the Local Authority, to challenge poor attendance. Where attendance levels are low and where there are invalid reasons, judged by the Education Welfare Service, for a pupil's frequent absence, or where parents condone absence, then parents render themselves liable to a fine. This is a statutory process, and stressful for all involved, so we would seek to support you to improve your child's attendance before we get to this situation.

I hope that these notes will help you to have a clear understanding about the school's expectations. Please respond and liaise with the school's representatives if you are contacting about your child's attendance.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Gemma Watkins (Attendance Lead), or a member of the leadership team, on the number above.

Yours sincerely



Kate Higham
Head teacher

