

CRADLEY C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE, PUPIL REGISTRATION AND SCHOOL SESSION TIMES POLICY

Vision Statement: Enriching Lives
Policy written by: Mr A Greaves

<u>Dates</u>				
Written	April 2004			
Reviewed	March 2006		Jan 2011	Oct 2013
Amended	March 2006			
Next Review	Jan 2008	Jan 2011	Jan 2014	Jan 2017

CRADLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1, Statutory Duty of Schools

- 1.1, The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

2, Philosophy

- 2.1, At Cradley CE Primary School we promote a culture in which children enjoy coming to school, and do not want to miss out. We are committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embrace the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.
- 2.2 For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- 2.3, School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the DfE.
- 2.4, Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance targets. These will reflect both national and Herefordshire attendance targets.
- 2.5, The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.
- 2.6, This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

3, Objectives

- to encourage full attendance and punctuality
- to record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies
- to minimise the occurrence of poor attendance and absenteeism
- to acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance
- to ensure a consistent approach throughout the school

4, Principles

- 4.1, Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly. We will:
- Work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued.
 - Send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed.
 - Work with all members of the school community in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.
 - Encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance.
- 4.2, Regular information will be sent to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues.
- 4.3, Attendance will be an important feature of Cradley CE Primary School's priorities and will be regularly reported to the Governing Body. Consistent and vigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures will be in place.

5, The Registration System

- 5.1, The School will use a computerised system (SIMs) for keeping the school attendance records. The national codes given in appendix 1 will be used to record attendance information. Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.
- 5.2, In the event of computer failure paper registers will be kept. Entries in paper registers must be in ink. All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)
- 5.3, Registers are taken at the beginning of the morning session (8:45am) and the beginning of the afternoon session (13:00).
- 5.4, Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded using the correct code (APPENDIX 1). Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.
- 5.5, Unauthorised absences are those that the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "reason" has been given.

6, Lateness

- 6.1, Morning registration will take between the start of school at 8.45am and 8.55am. The registers close at the end of this period. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.
- 6.2, Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close. Pupils who arrive after registration closes will be coded as an unauthorised absence.

7, Absence

- 7.1, If a pupil is unfit for school, parents are asked to contact the school on the each day of absence as early as possible. If a pupil is absent at morning registration and the school has not received an explanation by the close of registration our office staff will contact the parent/carer as a matter of concern.

8, Absence notes

- 8.1, Notes received from parents explaining absence, and absence books kept by office staff, should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

9, A Welcome Back

- 9.1, At Cradley CE Primary School we promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence. It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

10, Unauthorised Absence

- 10.1, Each week attendance records are checked Parents will be contacted asking for a reason for the absence. If there is still no response, the absence is marked as unauthorised.
- 10.2, Requests for leave during term time are referred to in the 'planned leave' section at the end of this policy.

11, Promoting attendance

- 11.1, The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.
- 11.2, A weekly newsletter keeps parents in touch with school events and helps to foster the sense of a community.
- 11.3, Termly and annual attendance certificates are awarded to pupils achieving 100% throughout the term/year.

12, Monitoring attendance

- 12.1, Each term children's attendance rates are examined. If there is a problem with a child's attendance, either falling below acceptable rates or showing a regular pattern of absence or punctuality, then parents are informed of the school's concerns. The attendance of these children is monitored and if no improvement is noted a further letter is sent once again expressing concern and offering support. If attendance remains poor the situation is discussed with the school's Education Welfare Officer which may then lead to a referral being made to the Education Legal Officer for further action.

13, Attendance Target

- 13.1, The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work

Our schools target is **97%** for the year.

APPENDIX 1 – CODES FOR ABSENCE

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

APPENDIX 2 -ATTENDANCE LETTERS

Letter 1

Dear

After reviewing our attendance figure for last term, I was concerned to see that *(name)* missed *(number)* of sessions out of *(number)*. This equates to an attendance rate of *(percentage figure)* for the term.

There may be good reasons for such low attendance but any figure below 90% automatically triggers concern since there is a very strong link between high levels of attendance and high levels of achievement.

If there is difficulty with *(name's)* attendance which you feel is affecting the situation please contact me so that we can discuss and agree a way forward.

If you have already contacted the school, thank you for informing us of the reasons for the absences and we look forward to an improvement in *(name's)* attendance.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mr A Greaves.
Headteacher)

Letter 2

Dear

Further to my previous letter regarding *(name's)* attendance, I remain concerned to see that *(name)* has missed a further *(number)* sessions out of *(number)*. This equates to an attendance rate of *(percentage figure)* for the term.

I would like opportunity to speak to you regarding *(name's)* attendance and would be grateful if you could contact me at school to arrange a mutually convenient time. We are sufficiently concerned that if the situation persists we may well involve the Education Welfare officer in any further discussions.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mr A. Greaves
(Headteacher)

Letter 3

Dear

Despite my previous contact with you regarding *(name's)* poor attendance, I am concerned because there has not been any improvement. *(Name)* still missed *(number)* of sessions out of *(number)*.

I am writing to inform you that we will be making a formal referral to our Educational Welfare officer who will be in contact with you.

Yours sincerely

Mr A. Greaves.
(Deputy Headteacher)

APPENDIX 3 - THE LAW

1, The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

1.1, Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

2, Term-time holiday

2.1, The [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) currently allow headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in “special circumstances” of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers can also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

2.2, Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

3, The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

3.1, Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

3.2, The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children’s regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

3.3, Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

3.4, An alternative action available to schools, if issuing penalty notices is inappropriate, is to formally caution parents who fail to ensure their children’s regular attendance. This is an option that Cradley CE School would consider in certain situations.

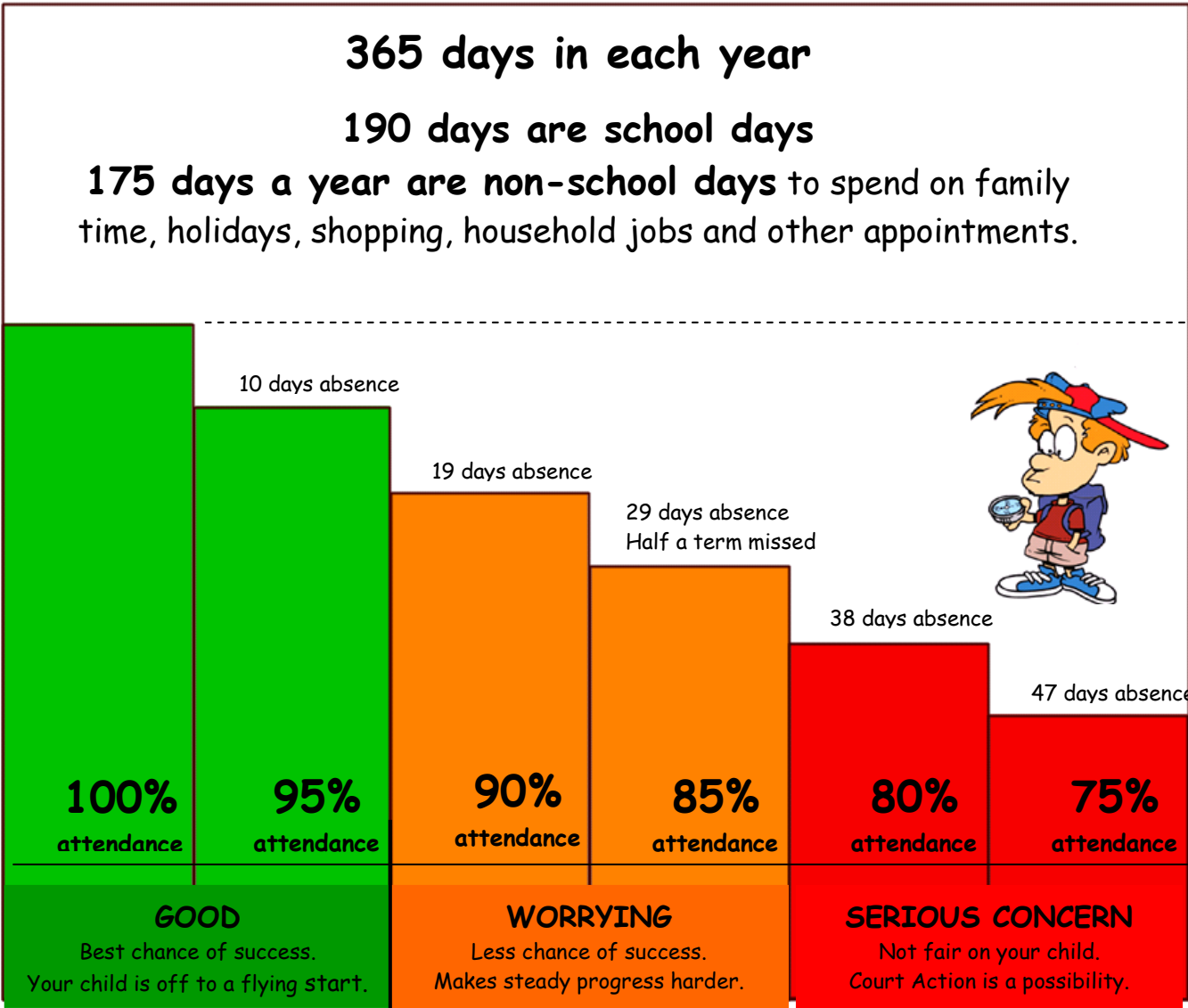
APPENDIX 3 – IMPACT OF LOW ATTENDANCE



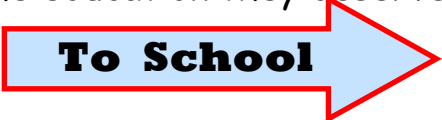
Every School Day Counts

Days off school add up to lost learning.

Did you know that an attendance of 85% each year means that 1 whole year of primary education is missed?



- Please don't let your child miss out on the education they deserve.
- Every school day counts.



CRADLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY REGARDING REQUESTS FOR LEAVE DURING TERM TIME – 2013-2014

1. PRINCIPLES

- 1.1, It is a legal requirement for children to attend school (The Education Act 1996, Section 444) . The school places great importance on attendance. High attendance leads to high achievement as well as social and emotional benefits. School holiday dates are published in advance. The government has recently made amendments to their guidance (The Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments state that:

Headteachers may NOT grant any leave of absence during term time unless in exceptional circumstances.

- 1.2, These amendments come into force on 1st September 2013.
- 1.3, **Therefore the school is not permitted to authorise any leave in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. There is no entitlement to any leave of absence for a holiday during term time.** Schools are in session for 38 weeks per year, so there are opportunities to take children on holiday during the remaining 14 weeks.
- 1.4, The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on:
- what might be defined as exceptional circumstances;
 - procedures for applying for leave during term time;
 - the consequences of taking unauthorised leave in term time

2. EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- 2.1, It is not possible to define exceptional circumstances, but examples of what might be considered as such are given in legislation as:
- Religious observance
 - Service families
 - Recent bereavement

- 2.2, Where there are other factors which the Headteacher may consider to be exceptional circumstances, this may be referred to the school's governing body.

3. PROCEDURES FOR APPLYING

- Applications for leave during term time should be made in writing to the Head teacher at least 6 weeks in advance of the planned leave on the **Leave of Absence request form** (available from the school office or website Appendix 4). The school office will provide assistance with the form if necessary.
- The exceptional circumstances to explain why leave during term time must be should be clearly stated.
- The Governors, in consultation with the Headteacher, will decide whether the leave during term time can be authorised and will write to the parent to inform them of the outcome

4. Unplanned Absences

- 4.1, When a child is absent from school and no request for leave has been received or if no reason has been given for the absence, the absence will be recorded by the school as 'unauthorised'.

4.2, Absences can only be authorised when the **Planned Absence Request** procedure has been followed. It cannot be granted retrospectively, even if the reasons for absence are good.

5. CONSEQUENCES OF TAKING AN UNAUTHORISED LEAVE DURING TERM TIME

5.1, Taking leave during term time without authorisation will have an impact on a child's learning. Parents who choose to take an unauthorised leave during term time must accept that this will have an adverse effect on their child's educational achievement.

5.2, In cases of unauthorised leave the school may refer the matter to the Local Authority who may issue parents with a fixed penalty notice. The fixed penalty fine is collected and kept by the Local Authority, not the school. Further information is below

6, The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

6.1, Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

6.2, The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

6.3, Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

APPENDIX 4 – Leave of Absence application form and guidance
APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR CHILD’S LEAVE OF ABSENCE
FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Before completing this application form please read the attached notes carefully and consider the ‘Every School Day Counts’ information.

Pupil’s Name Class

Home Address

.....

I wish to apply for my child(ren) to be absent from school during the following dates:

Date of Last day at School Date of Return to School

Total proposed number of school days to be missed

Reasons for leave of absence from school:

.....

.....

.....

.....
Continue overleaf if necessary

I apply for my child(ren) (named above) to have authorised absence from school for the reasons stated. I understand that if this is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice or a Summons for irregular school attendance.

Name of Parent/Carer making application

Signed

Date

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO THE SCHOOL
GIVING AT LEAST 6 WEEKS’ NOTICE OF INTENDED ABSENCE

In circumstances where a shorter period of notice is required, the parents should indicate clearly reasons why the short notice for the Leave of Absence was unavoidable. A decision will normally be made within 10 school days. If a longer consultation period is required you will be notified accordingly.

Guide to Planned Absences During Term Time

Thinking of taking your children out of school for a family holiday?

School is not permitted to authorise any leave in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. There is no entitlement to any leave of absence for a holiday during term time.

Schools are in session for 38 weeks per year, so there are opportunities to take children on holiday during the remaining 14 weeks.

WHAT ARE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

It is not possible to define exceptional circumstances, but examples of what might be considered as such are given in legislation as:

- Religious observance
- Service families
- Recent bereavement

Where there are other factors which the headteacher or the panel of Governors may consider to be exceptional circumstances, this may be referred to the school's full governing body.

How do I request a leave of absence for my child?

Your request must be made at least 6 weeks in advance, in line with school policy, using the school's application form. In exceptional circumstances a maximum of 10 days can be authorised by the school.

How is the decision made by the school?

Absences during term time are always disruptive to children's learning and children who are taken out of school can feel vulnerable and miss out on key work. When deciding whether to authorise leave, even if the circumstances for leave are deemed exceptional the Headteacher, and the Governing Body, will take into account such facts as:

- Your child's record of attendance to date
- Whether exams or tests are taking place
- Your child's progress and ability to make up the learning they have missed

In certain circumstances conditions may be attached to the granting of leave, and if these are not met the authorisation may subsequently be withdrawn.

What happens if the school refuses my application for a holiday?

The proposed leave may not be taken. If you take your child out of school without approval, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (truancy) and, after 5 days unauthorised absence, the Education Legal Officer will be informed. They may issue you with a penalty notice. This currently stands at £60 per child, per parent, if paid within 21 days. This doubles after this period.

Having read these notes, if you still wish to apply for a leave of absence for your child during term time then complete the application form. This form should be returned to your child's school at least 6 weeks before the holiday is planned.