



Cranborne Middle School

Attendance Policy

Good attendance means that children can make good, consistent progress in their school work.

Philosophy

Cranborne Middle School is committed to maximising attendance for all pupils to enable them to benefit fully from their education and to make the most of the opportunities that the school has to offer.

We rely on our partnership with parents and give high priority to conveying to them, and our pupils, the importance of maintaining regular and punctual attendance.

We will identify and address any problems affecting attendance and adopt, at all times, a clearly focused approach aimed at returning any pupil to full attendance.

General principles

The school will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. It will promote positive staff attitudes to those pupils returning from absences.

Staff will be made aware of the importance of the registration process and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law.

Registers will be completed accurately at the beginning of each day and each educational sessions (7 times a day) and attendance regularly monitored by middle and senior leaders.

Parents will be required to contact school early on each day of absence and, should they fail to do so, a member of the office staff with responsibility for attendance administration will make contact with parents to establish a reason for the pupil's absence.

Attendance procedures will be regularly evaluated by the leadership team and school governors.

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Ratified by the Full Governing Body December 2020

Procedures will allow returned absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other pupils in the class (if necessary).

Consultation will take place with staff and the Attendance Support Officer to develop and maintain the school attendance policy.

Procedure

Rights and Responsibilities

- Improving attendance at Cranborne Middle School is the responsibility of everyone in the school community; pupils, parents and school staff.
- Pupils are expected to attend school and lessons regularly and punctually. Pupils who do experience difficulties attending school will be offered support.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually, dressed appropriately and in a fit condition to learn.
- If a pupil is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are required to notify the school of the reason. Any absence should be covered by a note on the pupil's return to school.
- A pupil's absence from school will remain unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is given by the parent.
- Any absence, which is known in advance, such as dental or doctor appointments, should be notified to the school in writing beforehand.
- Parents will be promptly informed of any concerns regarding their child's attendance.
- Staff should encourage and convey high expectations to pupils regarding attendance and punctuality. Staff will promptly investigate all absenteeism, liaising closely with parents.
- Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.
- Parents whose first language is not English or have literacy problems, will be offered support from school in matters of communication.
- In accordance with the Pan-Dorset Multi-Agency Safeguarding Policies and Procedures Manual, any child who has not attended for 10 consecutive school days without provision of a reasonable explanation is considered missing from education. In such circumstances and following exhaustive enquiries of the child's family and known carers (which may, as necessary, have previously resulted in a referral to the Police and/or the Dorset Inclusion/CME officer), a 'Missing from Education' referral will be made to the Dorset Inclusion/CME officer. In certain circumstances, a referral to Children's Services or the police should be made.

Registration

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- Our school day starts at 8.25am.
- Registers will be taken promptly at 8.30am and at the start of each lesson, with the last register being taken at 2.00pm.
- Registers officially close at 8.40 am and ten minutes after the lesson starts for the remaining 6.
- Pupils who are not present for registration will be marked as absent. However, if they arrive before the close of register they will be marked as present but late.
- Parents will be required to provide any pupil arriving after the first registration with an adequate explanation.
- Any pupil arriving after morning registration without adequate explanation will be marked as late but it will be counted as an unauthorised absence.
- If registration is missed but an acceptable explanation is provided, e.g. medical/dental appointment, the absence will be marked as authorised for that session.

Lateness

- Lateness is actively discouraged and challenged.
- Pupils who arrive late should report to the School Office and be signed in via the Entry Sign system.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The law requires that all schools must now show the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence. Authorised and unauthorised absences are reported annually as is the total attendance figure.

Authorised absence can be:

- Sickness
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be arranged outside school hours
- Days of religious observance
- Compassionate grounds

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Truancy
- Staying at home to look after younger children or sick relatives
- A birthday treat, going shopping, travel etc
- Any absence which the school has not been informed about, either by letter or telephone

Parents of pupils with persistent unauthorised absence will be invited to a meeting where their statutory responsibilities and reasons for the absence will be discussed. All absences will be unauthorised unless supported with a medical certificate.

Annual Holidays taken during Term Time.

In line with Government legislation, the school will not authorise family holiday during term time.

However, the Headteacher has the ability to authorise requests for term time absence due to exceptional circumstances and applications should be made, in writing, to the Headteacher for consideration.

The Headteacher will consider each request on an individual basis. If the request is not granted, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Recording Absence

- The register is taken on SIMs using the agreed symbols.
- All absences will be recorded as authorised or unauthorised.
- Absences, where an explanation has not been received from parents, will be followed up by a member of the school's administrative staff.

Monitoring attendance

- Attendance is closely monitored by the middle and senior leadership of the school.
- The weekly percentage figures for each class will be noted.
- The average percentage attendance for the whole school will be noted.
- A designated member of staff is responsible for this monitoring, in close liaison with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher.
- Teachers will note both authorised and unauthorised absences in the registers.
- Concerns will be brought to the attention of the Attendance Support Officer when thresholds are met.

Conclusion

Maintaining and improving attendance at Cranborne Middle School requires all members of staff to be vigilant at all times.