

Costessey Infant School

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Costessey Infant School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

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.

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 Department for Children, Families and Schools.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Norfolk attendance targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. 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.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.50 am. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. 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 authorized absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1 PM.
The registers will close at 1.15 PM.

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.

First Day Absence

Parents are expected to contact the school to inform the class teacher of the absence. The secretary has an absence log which is completed as parents ring in. The secretary will text or phone the parents of any absent child if they have not contacted us by 9.30am. If no message or response is received, the child is marked absent and the register coded a 'No reason given'. Any unexplained absence by any pupil on the second day will be followed up by a phone call from the school. Absences without explanation will then be marked as 'Unauthorised'

Third Day and Continuing Absence

If there has still been no contact from parents, the secretary will telephone again and enquire about the absence. If contact cannot be made, a standard letter is sent asking parents to contact the school. The school will endeavour to make contact over the period between 3 and 10 days. For vulnerable pupils the Headteacher will be immediately informed and they will endeavour to make contact via other known agencies.

Ten Day's Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Team. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the Secretary and class teachers to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Health Adviser if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO). The Headteacher meets half termly with the designated governor to agree any actions. The Headteacher will contact the Attendance Improvement officer with any emerging concerns that cannot be dealt with internally. The school operates the Fast Track Attendance Review system.

A Welcome Back

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.

Absence notes/ records of telephone calls

Notes or information received from parents explaining absence 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.

Promoting attendance

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. This will be achieved through assemblies and incentives such as stickers and certificates and good role models from adults within the school. Additional support will be sought from the Attendance Team whenever necessary to promote good attendance.

The school will reward pupils who have good or improving attendance. At the end of each half term, children achieving a full attendance will be rewarded with a certificate at Celebration Assembly. Those who have an attendance of 95% or above each term also receive certificates.

Regular reminders about punctuality and attendance are placed in the school newsletter. A display is maintained in the Crush Hall emphasizing attendance, the school targets and school progress towards this.

The Home/School agreement reinforces this responsibility.

The governing body has adopted the Fast Track Attendance Scheme in conjunction with the cluster schools.

Holidays in term time

Costessey Schools Cluster have produced their own leaflet and guidelines in order that schools in the locality have a consistent approach to holiday requests. Each request for holiday absence will be considered individually. All requests must be discussed with the Headteacher or a senior member of staff in his absence.

In doing so the Headteacher will consider the following which has been agreed by the Costessey Cluster of Schools before deciding whether to authorise the leave.

Holiday Information

“Schools can only agree to absence for a family holiday if they believe there are special circumstances which warrant it.” Department for Children Schools and Families, Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities, May 2008.

All parents/carers must complete a holiday form before taking any holiday.

All requests will need to be discussed with a senior member of staff or the Headteacher.

If a child has less than 95% attendance, over the previous 12 months, holidays will not be authorised.

No holidays will be authorised in September.

No holidays will be authorised in the first half of Summer Term (SAT's) or any other testing period. Parents are fully informed of this through the School Brochure, the Attendance leaflet and reminders in school newsletters.

Where the school and the parents fail to reach an agreement and the child is then absent from school the absence will be marked as unauthorised. Where the parents keep a child away for longer than agreed then the extra time will also be marked as unauthorised.

Requests for leave of absence of more than two weeks must be seen as exceptional and are not usually authorized. The school will carefully explore with parents why such leave of absence is necessary. Where such leave is sanctioned it constitutes authorized absence.

Where holidays of more than two weeks duration are planned to visit family members living overseas, school may find it helpful to discuss with parents the most appropriate time of year and point in the pupils educational career for the visit. This could be timed to minimise the effects on the continuity of the pupil's education. In cases where approval is given for such a holiday, schools will suggest appropriate tasks for the pupil concerned, to complete while he or she is away.

Holidays during term time are discouraged – they are not an entitlement. The Costessey Cluster has an agreed leaflet with common goals and an agreed holiday form with specified criteria.

Attendance Targets

The school sets attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets has been established and the Headteacher is responsible for overseeing this work.

Our schools targets are:

2012/13 95.6%

The registration system

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years. Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes.

Alternatively electronic back-ups or micro-fiche copies may be made. These also need preserving for at least three year.

Register Security

Computer access is password protected. Monthly print outs are filed in a locked office. The School will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

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 <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. 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

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Policy agreed by the Governing Body: _____ Date: _____

Appendices

1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and
 - [b] To any special needs he may have.
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site

- Most types of dual registration