

Castlecroft Primary School

Policy for Attendance and Truancy

POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

At Castlecroft we believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly. It is important too, that children arrive and leave school on time. It is equally important that children should not be at school if they are unwell.

Castlecroft is a happy school. Children learn best when they are happy and relaxed. All staff show concern and care about each child's welfare.

As attendance is crucial to effective learning and the continuity of learning experiences school places great emphasis on this in its communication with parents.

Communication

Information on lateness, illness and absence is given to parents in the School Prospectus. This highlights the importance of being at school on time and notifying school if their child is absent for any reason.

At the pre-school induction meetings held each year for children about to enter the reception class the importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained. This talk also includes parents and children arriving at school on time so that each child can be given the best possible start to each school day. Being picked up on time is also stressed, especially for young children who can be very upset if they are the only ones left.

Parents are asked to share any worries their child might have in school. Sometimes little things upset children which means they become unhappy, and may not want to come to school. Parents need to be aware of this.

Again at this initial meeting parents are asked to try to arrange their family holidays within the school holidays, rather than in term time so that their child's education is not disrupted. The Headteacher talks to those parents who persistently take their holidays in term time, reminding parents of the disruption to their child's education.

Children are also admitted to school at various times of the year, and into various year groups. All parents requesting a place are asked to make an appointment with the Headteacher. At this meeting the importance of regular attendance is always highlighted along with other school routines.

Authorised and unauthorised absences are explained to parents. All parents are asked to contact school if their child is absent. This can be done by telephoning. A book is kept by the telephone to record any messages. This information is recorded under the headings: date, child, class, and reason for absence. Parents can alternatively send a letter to school when their child returns explaining the absence. Parents can also call into school to see the class teacher to explain an absence. (These records are kept by the class teacher.) All information is used to inform teachers when filling in their registers. If no notification is received about a child's absence the teacher contacts the parent/guardian.

Concerns

If a child is regularly late for school or is often absent then the class teacher contacts the parent concerned to have an informal discussion about this. If this persists then the teacher registers their concern in the attendance book which is kept <office in which book is kept>. If there is an urgent concern then the class teacher talks to the Headteacher immediately.

The attendance book is looked at regularly, patterns of absence worked out and the Educational Welfare Officer for the school is contacted. Contact may be made by phoning if the situation needs discussing before a visit, or by filling in EWS 1 form which shows the patterns of absences and lates.

The Educational Welfare Officer meets with the Headteacher each term to discuss attendance issues, and offers advice and support.

Truancy

All the staff at Castlecroft are concerned about children's regular attendance, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning. They are also concerned about each child's safety, welfare and happiness. Although it a very rare occurrence for a child to truant, if there is a concern that a child might be truanting then action is taken straight away.

If truancy is suspected, the Headteacher is notified, who then contacts the parent, either by phone, or by home visiting if possible, and the Educational Welfare Officer. Parents are encouraged to bring their child to school so that reasons for the child not wanting to attend can be discussed and hopefully resolved. In the event of not being able to talk to the parent then the Headteacher talks to the child concerned to find out if there are any worries or problems in school that might make that child not want to attend. If there are, then these are discussed with the class teacher and appropriate action is taken.