

CRAIGAVON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY

WRITTEN	RATIFIED	SIGNED CHAIR BOG	REVIEW DATE
June 26	17 September 2026	M. Allen	2029

Introduction:

Regular school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential.

Craigavon Senior High School will strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil feels valued and secure.

Our mission is to foster a supportive and challenging environment that empowers young people to achieve positive outcomes and become successful, responsible members of the wider community. Our core values of commitment, aspiration, respect and empathy support us to “value all our young people” to shape them positively for their future.

Aims:

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at Craigavon Senior High School.
2. To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.
3. To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.
4. To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

Role of the School:

The Principal has overall responsibility for school attendance; teachers/designated staff should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to her attention.

The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is a standing agenda item at each meeting.

Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded during each lesson.

To accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way, we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2025/09, which can be found at the following link: [Circular 2025/09 - Attendance Guidance & Absence Recording By Schools](#) .

Craigavon Senior High School is committed to working with parents/guardians to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

Role of Parent/Guardian

Parents/guardians have a legal duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age shall receive efficient full-time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular school attendance or otherwise.

If a child is registered in school, their parent/guardian has a legal duty to ensure that they regularly attend that school.

It is a parent's/guardian's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a pupil's absence on the first day of absence. Parents/Guardians can inform school about student absence via return text message, via telephone on 028 38352222 or via email to cshs_attendance@c2ken.net . This should be confirmed with a written note when the pupil returns to school. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.

Pupils are expected to be in school at 9.00am in the morning and to "arrive in 5" at the beginning of classes. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that your child is punctual. Lateness is recorded in registration and during each lesson, this will be followed up through the school's behaviour for learning policy.

Parents/Guardians should where possible organise appointments, medical or otherwise, outside the time of the school day.

If your child appears reluctant to attend school, please discuss the matter promptly with their form teacher or year head to ensure that both you and your child receive maximum support.

Role of Pupils

Each pupil at Craigavon Senior High School is expected to maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality. Students are expected to be in school at 9am each day and be prepared to learn. Students are expected to follow school procedures if late or requesting to leave school early.

Procedures / Routines

Punctuality

- Any student arriving late to school - after 9.05am without approval will be placed in a same day break time detention. If this is not attended further sanctions will be put in place.
- Students arriving late to school, but before 9.20am must ensure they are registered with their form teacher. If lateness is due to an appointment students must provide a note from parent/guardian to explain lateness.
- Students arriving late to school after 9.20am must get signed in at the general office. Sanctions as above will be put in place for unauthorised lateness.
- Students arriving late to class will have it recorded on SIMS as a behaviour issue and persistent lateness will receive a sanction.

Permission to leave school early

- Any appointments, medical or otherwise, should be organised outside the time of the school day.
- To request to leave school early, students should have a note signed by a parent/guardian. This should then be countersigned by their year head during registration. If their year head is not available, it can be countersigned by a member of SLT. This should be submitted to the general office when signing out of school.
- In the event of being unwell during the school day. The teacher currently responsible for the student should write a note to explain they are unwell and are requesting to go home. This note should be countersigned by their year head or a member of SLT before being presented to the general office to request they contact home. Students should not contact home directly.

Absence from school

- On the first day of absence parents/guardians should advise school on the reason for absence. This can be done via return text, phone call to 028 38352222 or email to cshs_attendance@c2ken.net.
- This should be confirmed with a written note when the pupil returns to school.
- If the absence is likely to be prolonged, this information should be provided to enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements which may be required.

Managing attendance / Non Attendance

- On the first day of an unnotified/unauthorised absence, parents/guardians will receive a text message from school to request an explanation for absence.
- On or after day 3 of absence, parents/guardians should receive a pastoral check in phone call from your child's form teacher.
- If your child's attendance falls into the "at risk attendance zone" (see appendix 1) you will receive a letter from school.
- If attendance does not improve or declines further, school will invite you in for a meeting with a member of the pastoral team.
- If attendance is in the "chronic or severe chronic attendance zones" (see appendix 1) you may be referred to external agencies for support, including the Education Welfare Service.

Family holidays during Term Time

Craigavon Senior High School strongly discourages holidays during term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning. Family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence.

The importance of attendance

Attending school regularly is important for all young people because there is a link between attendance and attainment. Regular attendance at school combined with good teaching and learning ensures that students get the best possible outcomes from their time in education. Poor attendance at school can have a negative impact on the absent pupil with potential negative consequences in terms of their future success.

Due to the positive correlation between attendance and achievement we expect all of our students to have high levels of attendance. If attendance is not at an appropriate level intervention/support strategies will be put in place to support improved attendance.

Appendix 1 shows how attendance at Craigavon Senior High School is categorised and possible interventions/supports at each stage. This list is not exhaustive, and some interventions/support strategies might span a number of categories. The school will take each student on an individual case basis when making any decision about which interventions/support strategies are appropriate.

Parents are also advised to read the information from the Department of Education in the link "[Miss School, Miss Out](#)".

Education Welfare Service

The Education Authority through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) has a legal duty to make sure that parents/guardians meet their responsibility towards their children's education.

If a pupil's absence causes concern, or if their attendance falls below 85% and there is also a concern, they will be referred to the EWS, if appropriate. EWS will support staff and parents in developing and implementing strategies to address or improve school attendance.

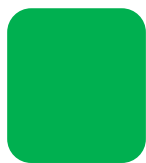
Signature – Principal

Signature – Chair of the Board of Governors

Date

Appendix 1

Attendance Zones and Potential Interventions / Support Strategies



100-95% Attendance
(**<1 day per month**)

REGULAR ATTENDANCE

- Daily absence text sent home for unauthorised absences.
- Weekly reminders re attendance
- Achievement points via SIMS for 100% monthly attendance.
- Communication with home if attendance starts to decline.
- Rewards events



94-90% Attendance
(**1-2 days per month**)

AT RISK ATTENDANCE

As above, plus:

- Letter advising parent/guardian re attendance levels.
- Target setting with students and parents/guardians – monitor progress.
- Celebrate improvements through achievement points on SIMS.
- Pastoral support offered through SENCO, counselling, mentoring, homework support.



89 - 80% Attendance
(**2-3 days per month**)

CHRONIC ATTENDANCE

As above plus:

- Meeting with year head
- Parent/Guardian and student meetings with SLT.
- Pre-referral meetings with EWS.
- Personalise timetable / support re-integration.
- Pastoral support offered through counselling, mentoring, homework support.
- Referral to Education Welfare Service.
- Referral to other external agencies as required – e.g. Exceptional Teaching, Social Services, Family Hub.
- Home visits to students causing concern.



Less than 80% Attendance
(**4 + days per month**)

SEVERE CHRONIC ATTENDANCE

As above plus:

- Investigate any outstanding support services.
- Parent meetings with SLT attendance and Vice Principal
- Regular meetings with EWS.
- Pastoral support offered through counselling, mentoring, homework support.
- Re-consider referrals to other agencies.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES / RESPONSIBILITIES

REGULAR ATTENDANCE

100-95% Attendance
(<1 day per month)

OFFICE STAFF

- *Unauthorised absence text sent home daily.
- *Contact vulnerable students on request.
- *Report any concerns or patterns noted to YH.

FORM TEACHER

- *Build positive relationships with students and parents.
- *Communicate weekly in registration the school's expectations with regard attendance and punctuality.
- *Set form class monthly targets.
- *Keep accurate records of attendance on SIMS including reasons for absence.
- *Discuss weekly attendance patterns with form class.
- *Record achievement points for monthly 100% attendance.
- *Complete 3rd day absence calls.
- *Complete information for audits and forward any concerns to YH.
- *Celebrate improvements through SIMS points (progress into zone).
- *Communicate with home if attendance starts to decline.

AT RISK ATTENDANCE

94-90% Attendance
(1-2 days per month)

OFFICE STAFF

- *As previous section.

FORM TEACHER

- *As previous section.

YEAR HEAD

- *Weekly monitoring of attendance via information from pastoral support co-ordinator.
- *Letter sent to parents as required (Pastoral Support Coordinator)
- *Meet with students and parents to discover barriers to attendance, set targets and signpost to support.
- *Monitor progress of at-risk students.
- *Contact vulnerable students/external agencies for unauthorised absences.
- *Celebrate improvements through SIMS achievement points (progress into zone).
- *Complete information for audits and forward any concerns to SLT.

CHRONIC ATTENDANCE

89 - 80% Attendance
(2-3 days per month)

OFFICE STAFF

- *As previous section.

FORM TEACHER

- *As previous section.

YEAR HEAD

- *As previous section

SLT

- *Monitor overall data - whole school, year group, specific groups, and individuals.
- *Offer appropriate support strategies / interventions.
- *Set targets and celebrate reaching of targets through SIMS.
- *Carry out audits and meet regularly with EWS, hold pre-referral meetings.
- *Make referrals to EWS for students of concern.
- *Make referrals to other agencies as required e.g., ETA, social services, family hub.
- *Complete home visits to students if safeguarding concern raised.
- *Keep attendance high profile with parents, students and staff.
- *Liaise with SLT positive behaviour to agree rewards events.

SEVERE CHRONIC ATTENDANCE

Less than 80% Attendance
(4+ days per month)

OFFICE STAFF

- *As previous section.

YEAR HEAD

- *As previous section

SLT

- *As previous section

VP

- *Monitor overall data including whole school, year group and subgroups and individuals.
- *Liaise with SLT attendance to develop further support strategies for young people.
- *Hold meetings with SLT attendance and parents to develop strategy for return to school.
- *Oversee referrals to external agencies.
- *Meet regularly with SLT attendance to monitor progress in attendance rates.