

# Crieff High School



## Attendance Strategy

### Overview

Crieff High School is one of the eleven secondary schools administered by Perth and Kinross Council. It is a six-year comprehensive, non-denominational, comprehensive secondary school offering a full range of courses leading to national certification from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The school roll as of August 2019 is 593.

Crieff High School promotes good attendance through our positive and welcoming ethos. Our school prides itself on being a happy school where each individual is valued and encouraged to do his or her best. The national policy landscape continues to increasingly emphasise the importance of wellbeing and relationships in shaping positive outcomes for young people. Improving wellbeing is key priority at Crieff High School. The ethos and culture of our school is such that it intrinsically supports positive attitudes towards attendance. The atmosphere is welcoming and relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Staff are committed to effective learning and teaching. All of this helps to maintain an environment where young people want to attend.

The Crieff High School Attendance Policy is derived from several sources:

- [Crieff High School's whole-school improvement priorities](#)
- [Perth & Kinross Attendance Policy](#)
- [Scottish Government Policy](#)
- [Legislation](#).

A strategic priority for Crieff High School is improving attendance. Our School Improvement Plan states that average attendance for the 2019-20 session across all year groups will be greater than or equal to 91%. The plan also identifies target groups who will benefit from enhanced monitoring and interventions designed to improve the attendance of young people in these groups.

### Strands of the Improving Attendance Strategy at Crieff High School

- Involving stakeholders
- Proactive measures to promote positive attendance
- Raising the importance of attendance and educating stakeholders about importance of attendance and impact of absence
- Responding quickly to issues which could possibly develop and impact on attendance
- Follow up on absence
- Support reintegration into learning on returning from absence.

# Crieff High School



## Stakeholders

Fundamental to the Attendance Strategy at Crieff High School is the principal of partnership working. All stakeholders have a role in working together to promote and achieve a regular pattern of attendance for the young people at Crieff High School.



Our approach to improving attendance is being developed in consultation with stakeholders and further reviews will be undertaken on an annual basis. The roles and responsibilities of every person involved in supporting a young person's attendance in school are clearly defined and shared with all stakeholders.

See APPENDIX 3.

## Proactive Measures to Promote Positive Attendance

Crieff High School recognises that good attendance occurs when young people enjoy and are excited about coming to school. School staff are committed to creating an environment that is conducive to high levels of attendance. Measures include:

- A positive ethos and culture
- Ensuring pupils are included and engaged
- Reviewing and improving anti-bullying measures
- Using nurturing approaches
- Addressing barriers to learning and participation, taking into account the needs of all young people
- Good learning and teaching
- Promoting positive relationships among young people
- Celebration of pupil contributions and accomplishments.

# Crieff High School



## Raising the Profile of Attendance

School staff contribute towards raising awareness of the importance of attendance and the impact of absence by:

- Raising the profile of attendance and absence within school communities and in school documents such as the school handbook and through platforms such as the school website and social media platforms.
- Displays within the school environment.
- Recognising a positive pattern of attendance in an appropriate and sensitive manner, such as through communication with home.
- Recognising improvements in attendance.

See APPENDIX 4.

## Communication Between School and Home

Crieff High School strives to communicate frequently with parents using a range of methods, such as Groupcall messaging, the school website and social media accounts, Twitter and Facebook. When parents wish to speak to a member of staff, about any aspect of their young person's education, including attendance, progress and engagement, this communication should usually go through their child's Head of House. Crieff High is a welcoming place and parents should feel encouraged to request a meeting with their young person's Head of House teacher should they wish.

- Head of Kelty House – Mr G Duncan
- Head of Barvick House – Mrs K Telford
- Head of Turret House – Miss K McEwan.

Parents have a key role to play in promoting and supporting regular attendance of their young person in school and Crieff High School staff are committed to working in partnership to ensure there is good communication about any issues relating to attendance. In the case of pupil absence from school, parents/carers are requested to contact the school by sending an email, text message or telephone call. Parents/carers are asked to provide a reason for this absence so that this can be accurately recorded.

If a young person does not attend school, the absence will be checked against details of contacts made by parents, including expected date of return to school. If a parent has not advised the school their young person will be absent, then it must be assumed that they are unaware of the absence and that the pupil is either missing or absent without parental awareness. This must be recorded as unauthorised absence until an explanation is received by the school.

If a young person returns to school, but a pattern of absence is noted, then school staff are committed to continuing to work alongside parents to resolve any issues, based on a positive and trusting relationships between the home and school.

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## Absence Procedures

- It is important that information about pupils' attendance and absence is recorded and that information is used to inform interventions to support pupils.
- Parents will be contacted when a young person has not arrived in school. This is usually done by Groupcall message and sometimes parents will receive a phone call from the Pupil Care and Welfare Officer or another member of staff.
- If attempts to contact the parent are not successful, then emergency contact numbers, such as those of other family members, will be used.
- If the parent cannot be contacted to confirm the whereabouts of the young person, the record of absence should be passed to their Guidance Teacher to consider the information in the light of known attendance issues, support needs or current concerns about the young person. This member of staff will be responsible for determining what further action is required, taking into account the age of the pupil; the implications for additional support to resolve any difficulties; and, if necessary, contacting the school's child protection co-ordinator.
- In the case of a care experienced young person, when the young person does not attend school this should always be followed up immediately. In the case of young people who are looked after at home, then the social worker should also be contacted.

See APPENDIX 1.

## Staged Intervention

Many issues relating to absence in school can be dealt with quickly and promptly by within school supports and by ensuring that there are positive relationships in place to support young people and their families. However, there may be occasions when absence from school becomes a more significant cause for concern. Staged intervention processes in Crieff High School include:

- High quality pastoral care systems for early response to absence and signs of difficulty
- Effective approaches for assessment and planning for additional support needs to address any barriers to learning that might be impacting on attendance
- Creating a Child's Plan which clearly outlines the supports and structures that require to be in place to support any wellbeing or additional support needs
- Flexible pathways and consideration of approaches to include and engage pupils in their learning
- Collaboration with a range of agencies through multi-agency planning groups
- Referral to the local authority attendance subcommittee
- Recourse to measures for compulsory compliance by parents of young people, through attendance orders or referral to the Children's Reporter.

See APPENDIX 2.

## Authorised Absence

Schools are permitted to authorise absence when satisfied by the reason provided. Requests for authorised absence are usually made by the parent (via a note, email or phone call), are self-certified or sometimes may be provided by another service provider.

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Reasons for authorised absence can include:

- Illness where no learning provision is made (including ongoing mental health concerns)
- Medical and dental appointments to be recorded in separate category
- Meetings prior to, and during court appearances and other legal processes
- Attendance at, or connections with, a Children's Hearing or Care Review or appointment with another service provider, e.g. social worker
- Religious observance
- Bereavement
- Weddings or funerals or close friends and family
- Arranged in relation to young people in Gypsy/Traveller families
- Participation in non-school debates, sports, musical or drama activities, agreed by the school
- Lack of transport – including due to bad weather
- Family recovery from exceptional domestic circumstances or trauma
- Period of exclusion to be recorded in separate category
- Extended leave with parental consent including some young carer activities

## Unauthorised Absence

Schools are required to record absence as unauthorised when it is perceived that there is no valid reason for the absence provided. Such absence can include:

- Absence with parental awareness in specific circumstances
- Family holiday during term time
- Occasional absence without parental awareness
- Long term absence – school related issues
- Longer term absence – home and wider community
- Absence relating to substance and alcohol misuse

## Reintegration to Learning and Returning from Absence

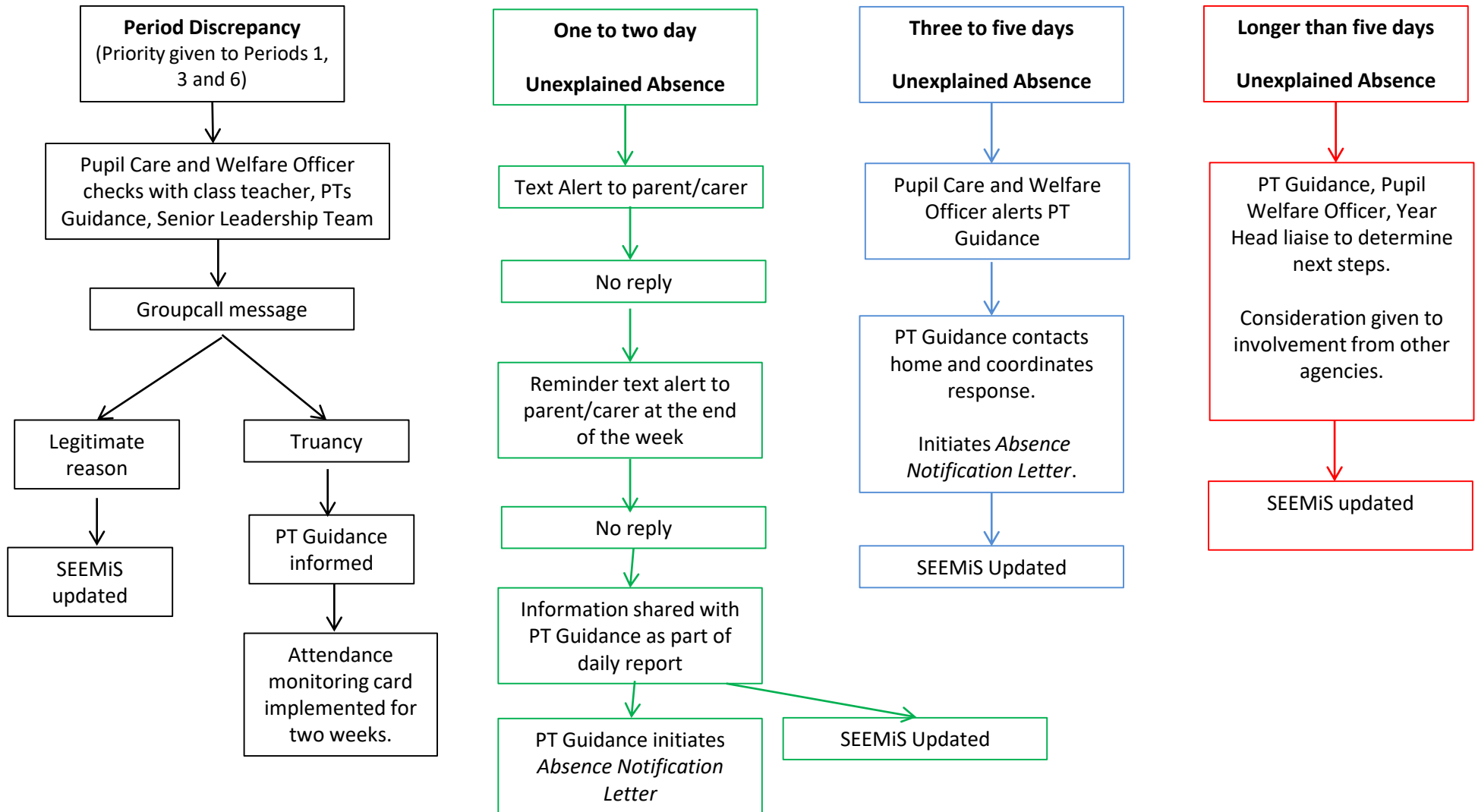
- Pastoral Support and Support for Pupils staff maintain contact with young people and families affected by long term absence
- Child-centred planning
- Phased return, by following a gradually increasing timetable.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed again in June 2020.

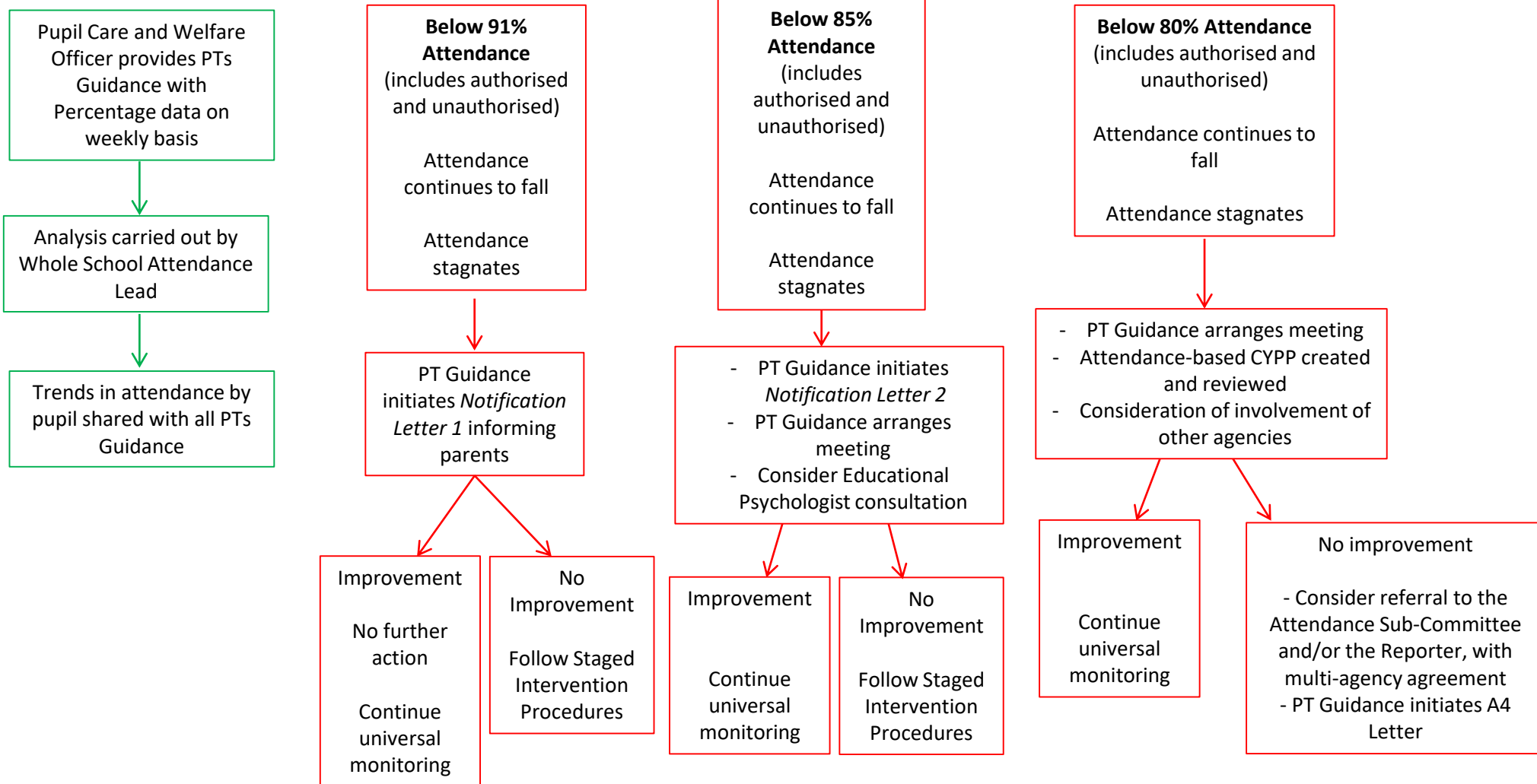
# APPENDIX 1

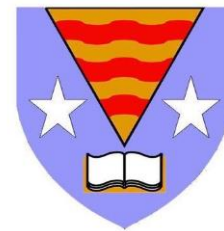
## Procedures for Period Discrepancies and Unexplained Absences



# APPENDIX 2

## Procedures for Improving Percentage Attendance





## APPENDIX 3

### Roles and Responsibilities

#### Campus Business Management Team

- Enter pupil appointments
- Pupils to sign out at school office.
- Inputting notes.
- Updating SEEMIS with amendments.
- Maintaining class lists.
- Inputting part-time timetables etc.
- Inputting college pupils/work experience/vocational courses etc.
- Amend attendance for in-house groups.
- Assist Pupil Care & Welfare Officer where appropriate.

#### Pupil Care and Welfare Officer (PCWO)

- Produce Attendance Notification Letter 1 on weekly basis.
- Liaise with PT
- Guidance regarding letters to be sent.
- Amend backdated TBCs as advised by Support for Pupils staff.
- Produce daily anomaly report.
- Update SEEMIS to reflect late arrivals.
- Following up incomplete registers: send Safeguarding email to teachers and PTs 15 minutes into a lesson.
- Follow up period discrepancies.
- Each Friday, send list of young people with outstanding unexplained absences to PTs Guidance.
- Update SEEMIS record of pupils attending a school trip.
- Enter pupil appointments.
- Inputting notes.

#### Class Teacher

- Lesson Registration – register to be completed after 5 minutes: any pupil not in class must be marked as TBC
- Any pupil late to class must be marked as late: Periods 1 and 6 mark as 'Lreg' (Late to Registration); all other periods mark as 'LTC' (Late to Class) on SEEMIS.
- For pupils with 'Priority TBC' flag, inform PCWO if message is displayed stating that a pupil has 'changed From Present to To Be Confirmed'.
- Ensure registers are updated by the end of the period with any changes.
- Provide list of pupils attending school trip day before; completed register on day of trip.

#### Principal Teacher

- Advising Admin staff of class changes.
- Discussion with class teachers regarding pupil attendance.
- Inform office of trips.
- Follow up incomplete registers within department.

#### Parent/Carer

- Contact the school to advise of any planned absences.
- Ensure contact details are up to date.
- Respond to attendance letters/text messages/ phone calls from school staff.
- Attend scheduled meetings to support attendance and engagement in school.

#### Child/Young Person

- Attend timetabled classes.
- Engage in learning tasks in school and at home.
- Commit to continuing learning during periods of unavoidable absence.

#### Whole School Attendance Lead

- Drive whole-school attendance strategy.
- Lead on attendance within Support Department.
- Review missing register information.
- Develop effective use of SEEMIS and tracking and monitoring procedures for recording and analysing attendance.
- Produce weekly attendance data to share with PTs Guidance and SMT.
- Produce overall attendance analyses.

#### Principal Teacher of Guidance / Head of House

- Attendance monitoring: less than 91%, 85%, 80%
- Enhanced monitoring of target group.
- Communicating part-time timetables to Admin staff.
- Inform office to amend TBCs.
- Advise re Letters to be sent with Admin staff.
- Monitor/ update attendance of pupils still on roll attending college.
- Discuss at Guidance meetings.
- Follow process of Staged Intervention, co-ordinating in-school supports and partner agencies where appropriate.
- Record interventions.
- Use professional judgement to communicate information about positive and improving attendance to parents/carers and pupils.
- Identify young people requiring monitoring – period absences.

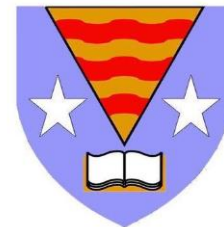
#### Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Receive referrals from PTs Guidance for support regarding issues with pupil attendance.
- Attendance monitored at pupil update meetings.
- Actions to improve attendance of young people, as part of Staged Intervention approach.
- Checking pupil late coming at key transitions in the school day (the beginning of the school day, end of break, end of lunch).



## APPENDIX 4

### Promoting Good Attendance



#### Promoting Good Attendance

##### Every Moment Matters – Know Your Score

An average school year comprises 190 days.  
Therefore...

##### 91% Attendance

Means your child will have missed 17 days – or nearly 3 ½ weeks – of school

##### 85% Attendance

Means your child will have missed 28 ½ days – over 5 ½ weeks – of school

##### 80% Attendance

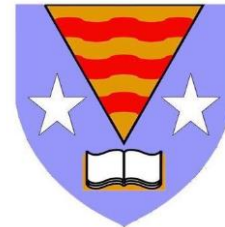
Means your child will have missed 38 days – or over 7 ½ weeks – of school

Good attendance gives every young person the best opportunity to:

- Learn new things
- Engage in physical exercise
- Increase their achievement
- Increase their confidence
- Develop and practise new skills
- Improve their self-esteem
- Achieve their full potential
- Learn how to be a leader
- Make friends and feel included
- Improve and develop social skills
- Learn skills for work
- Engage in digital learning
- Fulfil their ambitions
- Take responsibility for their learning
- Prepare for the world of work and future study

## APPENDIX 5

### Sample Letters



Dear

#### Attendance at School – Notification Letter 1

Ensuring the wellbeing of every young person is a priority in Creeff High School and this is at the centre of our school's attendance policy. We seek to support young people who have been absent from school, whether this is authorised or unauthorised absence.

Creeff High School has adopted the Perth and Kinross target of 91% attendance for all young people in secondary schools and there is an expectation that we will work with parents and pupils to achieve this.

I am writing to let you know that [pupil name] has been absent on a few occasions resulting in their attendance dropping below 91%. Their attendance is currently Attendance %.

Over the course of the school session, attendance of 91% equates to 17 days (or almost 3 ½ weeks) of missed learning.

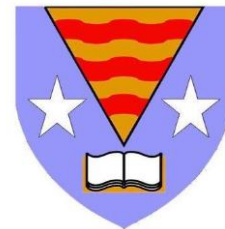
We would like to discuss how we can support you to achieve a more regular pattern of attendance for your child. Please contact the school so we can discuss any issues that may be affecting attendance and how we can overcome these.

Yours sincerely,

Head of House

## APPENDIX 5

### Sample Letters



Dear

#### Attendance at School – Notification Letter 2

Ensuring the wellbeing of every young person is a priority in Creeff High School and this is at the centre of our school's attendance policy. We seek to support young people who have been absent from school, whether this is authorised or unauthorised absence.

Creeff High School has adopted the Perth and Kinross target of 91% attendance for all young people in secondary schools and there is an expectation that we will work with parents and pupils to achieve this.

In line with policy, I am required to inform you if your child's attendance is causing a concern. I am writing to let you know that [pupil name] has been absent on several occasions resulting in their attendance dropping to below 85%. Their attendance is currently **Attendance %**.

Over the course of the school session, attendance of 85% equates to 28 ½ days (over 5 ½ weeks) of learning, which will have a significant impact on their attainment. It is therefore crucial that we work towards securing a more positive pattern of attendance, so that **[pupil name]** can reach their potential.

Please contact me at the school to arrange a meeting so that we can support **[pupil name]** to improve their attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Head of House

## APPENDIX 5

### Sample Letters



Dear

#### **Attendance at School - Absence Notification**

**Name** was absent from school on the following date(s):

#### **DATES**

It is necessary for us to have an accurate record of the reasons for all absences. Please fill in the undernoted information and return this to me as soon as possible.

If, on receipt of this letter, your young person is still absent, please complete the section requesting their expected date of return.

Yours sincerely,

Head of House

Reason for Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Date of Return: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please return to the school office)