



WEST CROFT SCHOOL
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Safeguarding Induction Pack for New Parents

Welcome to West Croft School.

We very much hope that you and your child enjoy your time in our school. At West Croft School, children discover their legacy through an exciting range of experiences and curriculum. We want all of our children to leave West Croft with great memories of the first phase of their education with strong foundations on which to achieve fulfilment in later life.

A key part of ensuring that children enjoy full access to all we offer comes through the effectiveness of our ability to keep our children safe.

At West Croft School, we take our duty of care to your children very seriously. This Safeguarding Pack is designed to provide key information on the school's practice. The pack includes:

- West Croft School Safeguarding statement
- Key Safeguarding personnel
- Policy for Pupil Drop-off and Collection
- Mobile Phone Policy
- How we manage pupils' attendance
- Access to school
- Medicines

We hope this proves useful and gives you an overall picture of some of the work that we do as part of our commitment to delivering a good, safe learning environment for all of our children and families.

Please let us know if you would like this information pack in a different language or would like to discuss any aspect of our approach to safeguarding with a member of staff.

Mrs L Johnston
Acting Headteacher



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SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

West Croft School is committed to upholding its statutory safeguarding duty as set out in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE September 2021) and works closely with partner agencies including Health, Social Services and the police.

All schools have a duty to act:

'Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect that child. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk... When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.'

All staff at West Croft School are trained and expected to fulfil this professional responsibility.

We believe that:

- children have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect
- safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility
- it is better to help children as early as possible, before issues escalate and become more damaging
- children and families are best supported and protected when there is a coordinated response from all relevant agencies

For further information on our approach to safeguarding and related statutory documents, please visit our website at www.westcroft.devon.sch.uk under 'Key Information' then 'Safeguarding'.



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KEY SAFEGUARDING PERSONS AT WEST CROFT SCHOOL

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Lisa Johnston - SENDCo & Acting Headteacher

Deputy Safeguarding Leads

Katie Ebsworthy

Kyle Paine

Christina Baldock

Other Group 3 trained staff are:

Yvonne Beams – Assistant to SENDCo

The Safeguarding Governor is:

Martha Mills



Phone Number 03451 551 071



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POLICY FOR PUPIL DROP-OFF AND COLLECTION

Rationale

This policy is intended to clarify arrangements for the school and parents/carers about arrangements for the start and end of the school day/nursery session.

Lower School

All pupils attending the Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 must be brought to school by a responsible person. Parents must make the class teacher aware who will be collecting their child routinely. They must also inform the class teacher on the day if their child is to be collected by someone else at the end of the day. If you become aware of changes to the person collecting your child later in the day you may call the school, a password will be provided for the person collecting your child to use to confirm their identity.

Upper School

From Years 3 to 6, there is no 'handing-over' to school/parents/carers at the start and end of the day unless this is expressly wished by the parent/carer.

Children arriving and/or leaving school by taxi

In the majority of cases this is an arrangement made between the parent/carer and the taxi company. Please be aware that there is no vehicular access to the school grounds between 8.40 and 9.00 am and 3.00 and 3.30 pm. ***If your child is going to be delivered or collected between these times you must therefore arrange between yourself and the taxi company who will accompany your child between the taxi and the school.*** You should ensure that the school is made aware of any drop off and collection arrangements and any changes to these.

Un-collected children at the end of the school day

If you know that you will be unable to collect your child regularly at the end of the school day then you must register your child with a child-minder or other provision. The school provides an after school and breakfast club on-site which should be booked in advanced wherever possible. If you need care in an emergency, please contact the school office and your child may be able to attend if spaces allow. There is a charge for this facility which must be paid at the time of booking.

In the event of any child being left un-collected at the end of the day beyond 3.45 pm without notification, the school may contact social services and the police to arrange collection of your child as part of its safeguarding duty.



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West Croft School – Mobile Phone Policy for Pupils, Parents, Carers and Visitors

In the interest of pupil safety, as West Croft School we take a clear stance on the possession and use of mobile phones while on the school premises.

Use of mobile phones by pupils

Pupils who choose to bring their mobile phone into school must take them directly to the school office for safekeeping upon arrival. The phones will be securely stored and a sealed envelope with the child's name. They can be collected at the end of the school day as the pupils transition to go home.

Sanctions

If a mobile phone is found to be on the pupil's person or within their belongings, they will be asked to take them to the office for safekeeping until the end of the school day. If this happens on repeated occasions, the pupil will be told they are no longer to bring the phone into school and it must remain at home.

Our staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). This DfE guidance allows school staff to search a pupil's phone if we have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.

If staff should find inappropriate content on a phone, or if they suspect inappropriate behaviour, they must speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to raise their concerns immediately.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers (including governors and contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day. This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of pupils, unless it's a public event (such as a school fair), or of their own child
- Using any photographs or recordings for personal use only, and not posting on social media without consent
- Not using phones in the school setting, or when working with pupils

Parents, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out above.

Parents must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

The full mobile phone policy is available on our website – www.westcroft.devon.sch.uk under Key Information - Policies



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How We Manage Attendance

Attending school is critical to your child's future prospects.

Previous Government research has shown that of pupils who missed between 10 - 20% of school, only 35% managed to achieve 5 or more A* to C grades at GCSE (including English and Maths). Of those who missed 5% or less, 73% achieved 5 or more A* to C grades (including English and Maths).

A child whose attendance is below 80% throughout primary school will have missed over a year of education by the time they take their Year 6 SATs; *they will never make up this lost time.*

We appreciate that as parents, we do not sit calculating our children's attendance at the end of each week therefore, for the stark reasons shown above, West Croft is vigilant regarding attendance in order to help parents and families to fulfil their statutory obligation to ensure their children attend school regularly and consistently.

- Once a child's attendance falls to 95% or below, you will be contacted by the school to bring this to your attention. If the attendance does not improve over the next half-term, there will be further correspondence and you will be requested to attend a meeting with the Headteacher and possibly the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)
- Any absence for which no reason is provided will be recorded as unauthorised. 10 unauthorised absences will result in the EWO monitoring your child's attendance.
- Once a child has had 20 authorised absences (i.e. absence with a reason provided) the school will require medical confirmation of attendance at a doctor's or hospital.
- Attendance below 80% will trigger a legal meeting with the EWO and a possible fine.
- In line with Devon County Council Guidance, West Croft will not authorise any holiday in term time except in the most exceptional circumstances



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West Croft School ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Revised by Lisa Johnston May 2023
Agreed by Governors 12th September 2023**

As a school we aim to:

- maintain an attendance rate of a *minimum* of 95.2%
- maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance
- reward and celebrate outstanding attendance

Good attendance is important because:

- statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance

Children who attend regularly:

- make better progress, both socially and academically
- find school routines and school learning easier to cope with
- find learning more satisfying
- have an easier transfer to the next phase of their education
- become part of the reward system, which recognises classes which have the highest percentage of attendance each week

As a parent you can help us by:

- ringing us 01237 473548 on the first morning of all absences with the reason and saying when your child will return. Parents should inform the school by telephone or email (admin@westcroft.devon.sch.uk) before 9.30am on the first day of absence
- arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks. This includes appointments for yourself and other family members which mean your child's school day will be affected.
- sending in a note explaining the reason for absence on your child's return to school after an illness. The class teacher will make initial enquiries regarding unexplained absences. Where no explanation is forthcoming, Admin staff will contact parents, involving the Head Teacher and Education Welfare Officer where necessary.
- keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness

We shall:

- follow up unexplained absences as soon as possible. If a reason has not been received by 10.00am on the first day of absence, school staff will contact parents by text message, email and/or phone call to ensure they are aware of their child's absence and to request a reason for their non-attendance. Verbal reasons given by the pupil or sibling in the same school will not be accepted
- remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters and the Parents' Information booklet.
- publish our attendance rate in the Parents' Information Booklet and on the School Website
- publish your child's attendance rate on his/her annual school report
- let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance
- if we continue to have concerns, make a referral to Education Welfare Officer, who visits the school regularly to review and support attendance matters

Escalation procedure for low attendance:

- First attendance concern letter sent home at 95% informing you that your child's attendance has fallen
- Second letter after 2 weeks if attendance continues to fall requesting further evidence to support authorisation of absences (for example medical evidence)
- Third letter after a further 2 weeks if attendance continues to fall. This will also invite you to a meeting with the inclusion team to discuss any support you can be given to improve your child's attendance
- Following this, referrals to the Education Welfare Officer will be made and may result in legal proceedings

Please refer to appendix

Authorised Absence

Absences will be authorised at the discretion of the Head Teacher or when parents provide supporting information.

We realise there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Attendance and SEN

Being aware of the reason for absence or lateness of pupils with special educational needs is particularly important as there is a greater likelihood of the school needing to adapt its support in response to the reason for absence or lateness on the child's return to school. For example, a child who has been ill due to the effects of a change in medication or physiotherapy may need flexibility in the curriculum or timetable to accommodate their changed needs; without this information the school may not be able to provide the most appropriate support.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons which are **not** permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- waiting on a delivery
- going for a family day out
- sleeping in after a late night

- going shopping or for a hair cut
- because it is your child's birthday
- holidays
- where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory

Unexplained absences will be marked as unauthorised and these are reported to the Local Authority. The Education Welfare Service may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.

Punctuality

- Morning registration is between 8.40am and 8.55 am. This is the time your child **must** be in the classroom, so you need to ensure your child is coming through the school gate by 8.50am at the latest.
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise learning for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their learning for the whole date may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only **late parents**.
- Afternoon registration is at 12.45pm for Reception and 12.50pm for all other year groups.
- Arrival after the close of registration may be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DfES guidance. Registers will be closed at 9:10am and 1:05pm.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.
- Children who remain uncollected at the end of the school day will be referred to a place of safety if the school is not contacted by 3.30pm.

Lateness

In order to reduce the impact of lateness on learning, lateness will be recorded and monitored. If your child has a late arrival before the register has closed, they will receive a L code. If they are a late arrival after registration closed, they will receive a U code. A U code represents an unauthorised absence and as such will affect your child's overall attendance percentage. As a school we will look for patterns of lateness and if these become frequent we will send home a letter informing you of the lateness we have identified and invite you to make an appointment to discuss any difficulties you have with the class teacher or a member of the inclusion team.

Term Time Leave of Absence

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils' miss as a result of family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off in term time. Leave of absence is allowed only at the discretion of the Head Teacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the Governing Body.

Our policy is as follows:

- requests for term holidays **will not** be authorised apart from in the most exceptional of circumstances. Where pupils are found to have taken an unauthorised holiday the school will request that the Education Welfare Service issue a Penalty Notice. All planned absences should be agreed in advance; the application should be made using a Request for Absence form

in all cases (available from the School Office or downloadable from the school website).

- please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their learning. Valuable learning time is lost. A **good** understanding of the learning can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom.

Leavers

If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6, parents are asked to:

- give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, new school and start date when known, and reasons for moving.
- confirm the school has your current mobile phone number
- take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily contact us and records be transferred
- let us know when you move

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and you have not given us the above information, and we cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a **Child Missing Education**. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Services (formerly Social Services) the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child.

By giving us this information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

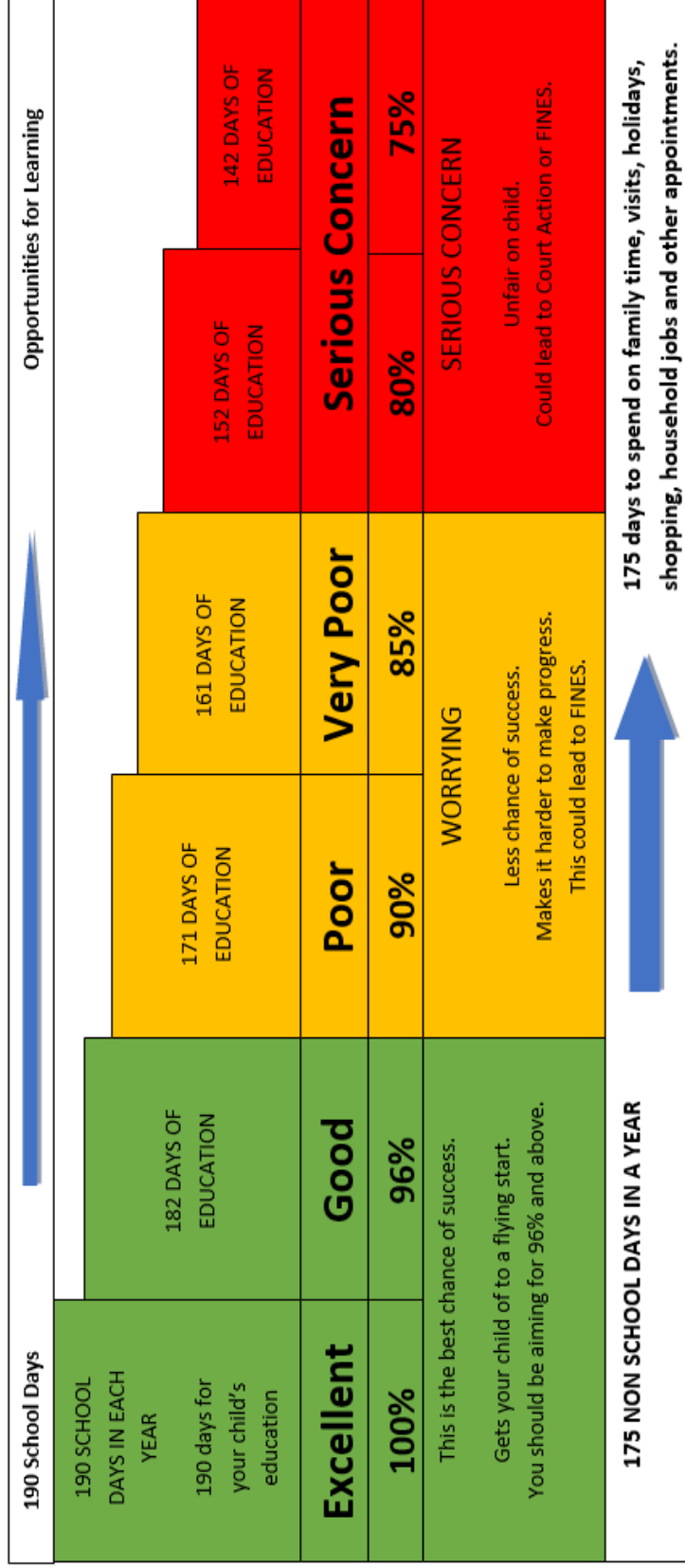
Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills and the Local Authority. The Education Welfare Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However, in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a **Fixed Penalty** (fine) if unauthorised absences continue. There will be regular meetings with the EWO to monitor the attendance of those children falling below 95%, whatever the reason for absence. Action will be taken by the Devon LA against parents on behalf of the school where there is persistent poor attendance.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.



West Croft School School Absence



Unavoidable absences

Will be recorded as:

- C - other authorised absence
- E – excluded
- I – illness
- M - medical/dental appointment (where possible these appointments should be made for outside of school hours)
- R - religious observation

Available absences

Will be recorded as:

- H – family holiday
- G – family holiday (NOT agreed)
- O – unauthorised absence