



CRANBOURNE

Safeguarding

Newsletter

April 2026

Attendance



Good attendance to school is one of the simplest ways we can support our children to thrive and make the most of the opportunities that Cranbourne can offer them.

Coming to school every day isn't just about lessons – it's about wellbeing, routine and giving students the structure, support and sense of belonging they need to feel safe and seen.

Regular attendance also helps us work in partnership with families to make sure every student reaches their full potential.

Our shared aim is for all pupils to achieve at least 96% attendance, and we're here to support our families every step of the way. Whether that means helping to remove barriers, offering guidance, or simply checking in, we want to make it as easy as possible for students to be in school, feel safe, and stay connected.

Who can I speak to if I am concerned about my child's attendance?

Our team are always really happy to offer support to our families. In the first instance please contact your CPP:



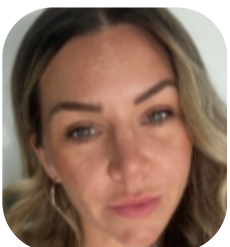
Austen House:

- CPP: Mrs Ball
- 01256 868643
- r.ball@cranbourne.hants.sch.uk



White House:

- CPP: Miss Wells
- 01256 868649
- j.wells@cranbourne.hants.sch.uk



Andrew Lloyd Webber House:

- CPP: Miss Williams
- 01256 868642
- n.williams@cranbourne.hants.sch.uk



Thomson House:

- CPP: Miss Skinner
- 01256 868650
- h.skinner@cranbourne.hants.sch.uk

Alternatively, you can speak to your HOH:



Austen House:

- HoH: Miss Alner
- r.alner@cranbourne.hants.sch.uk



White House:

- HoH: Mr Head
- a.head@cranbourne.hants.sch.uk



Andrew Lloyd Webber House:

- HoH: Mrs Simpson
- t.simpson@cranbourne.hants.sch.uk



Thomson House:

- HoH: Mrs Vaughan
- j.vaughan@cranbourne.hants.sch.uk



Mrs Geary, our Attendance Officer

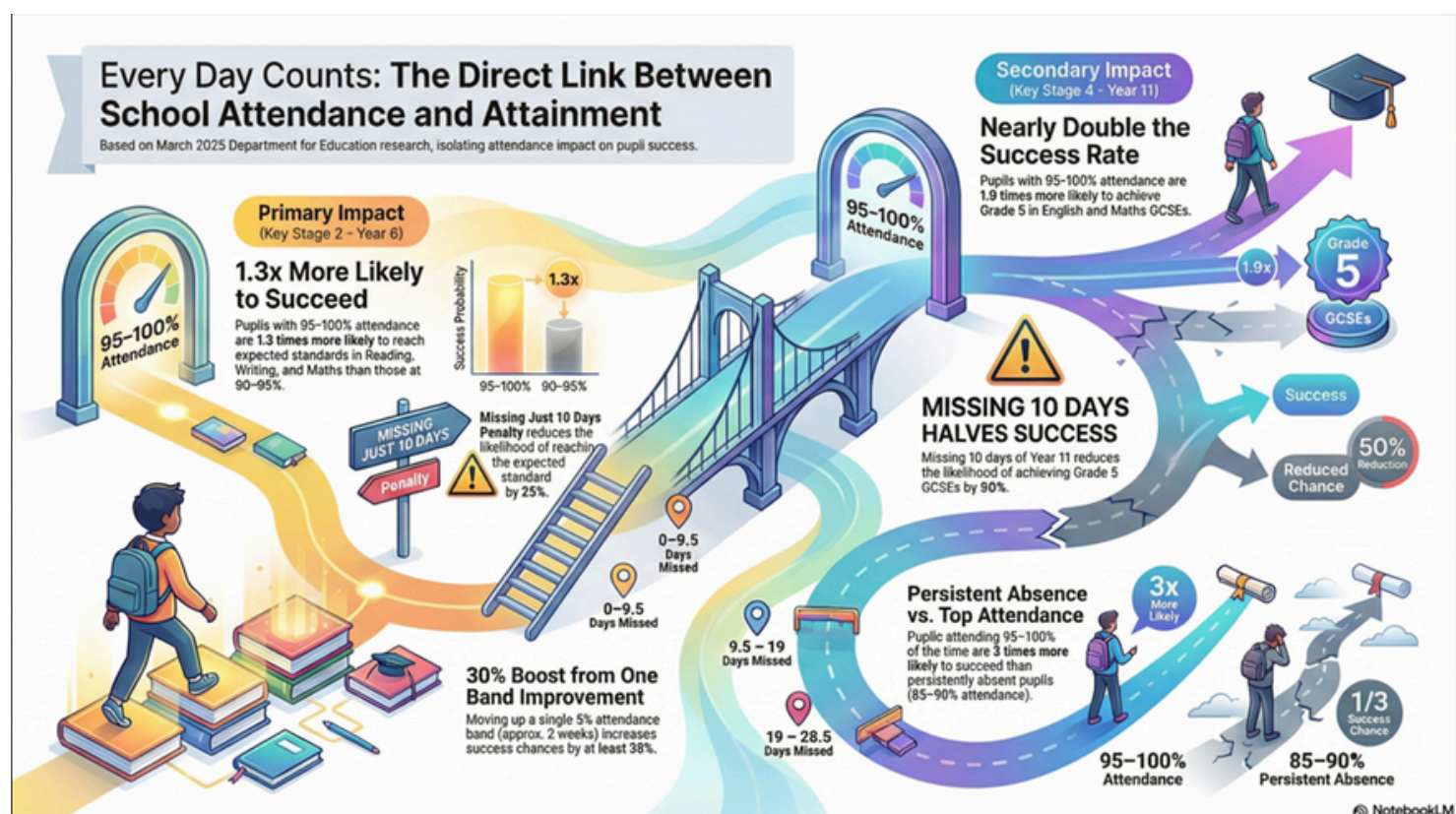
- k.geary@cranbourne.hants.sch.uk



Mrs Reddy, our Deputy Headteacher and Lead DSL

- k.reddy@cranbourne.hants.sch.uk

What do attendance percentages actually mean?



ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Your Attendance, Your Achievement, Your Future



95%

- 48 lessons missed each year
- 8 days in total
- 45 hours of learning missed

90%

- 96 lessons missed each year
- 16 days in total
- 90 hours of learning missed

85%

- 144 lessons missed each year
- 24 days in total
- 136 hours of learning missed

The hours add up... even one day absent here and there has a huge impact on your learning.



Aim to be in school, every day and on time

We expect at least **96%** attendance from our Cranbourne Community - keep your eyes peeled for our attendance streaks to earn your rewards!



Managing School Morning Anxiety: A guide for parents and carers

When your child is struggling with school attendance, mornings can feel impossible. This resource offers practical strategies you can use the night before and on the morning itself to help your child manage anxiety and make it through the door.

These approaches work because they reduce uncertainty, give your child a sense of control, and break overwhelming feelings into manageable steps. They won't eliminate anxiety overnight, but they create conditions where your child can cope better.

More information can be found on Pooky Knightsmith's website here:

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/download-morning-139999925>

Quick Reference: Your Morning Anxiety Toolkit

The Night Before:

- Pack bags and lay out clothes together
- Create a visual checklist they can tick off
- Keep evening routine predictable and calm
- End positively: "Tomorrow we'll take it one step at a time"
- Avoid lengthy worry conversations before bed

The Morning Of:

- Wake gently - connection before demands
- Break everything into tiny, achievable steps
- Build in one pressure-release moment (hot chocolate, stroking pet, music)
- Acknowledge anxiety briefly, then redirect to action
- Keep instructions simple and repetitive: "Shoes, coat, car"
- Stay calm and physically close - guide them through

1. Build the night before runway

The morning doesn't start when your child wakes up, it starts the evening before. Creating calm the night before gives anxiety less room to take hold. Pack bags together, lay out uniform or clothes, and prepare breakfast choices before bed. This isn't about being controlling - it's about removing decision points that feel enormous when anxiety is high. A Year 3 child who knows their PE kit is ready won't lie awake worrying about it. A Year 10 student who's chosen their clothes won't spiral about what to wear when they're already feeling shaky.

Keep the evening routine predictable and end it positively. If your child goes to bed after conflict about tomorrow, that anxiety marinates overnight. A simple "Tomorrow we'll take it one step at a time, and I'll be right there with you" gives them something steadier to hold onto.

- **What helps:** Creating a visual checklist they can tick off (bag packed ✓, uniform ready ✓, water bottle filled ✓)
- **What doesn't help:** Lengthy conversations about school worries right before bed - this activates anxiety when they need to wind down
- **Script to try:** "Let's get tomorrow ready now so morning-you has an easier time. What shall we sort first?"

2. Wake them with connection, not urgency

How the morning starts sets the tone for everything that follows. Anxious children are already braced for difficulty, waking them gently gives them a chance to regulate before demands begin.

Build in time for a calm wake-up. This might mean setting your alarm 15 minutes earlier. Sit on their bed, use a soft voice, perhaps a gentle hand on their shoulder. For younger children, you might bring a favourite teddy to "wake them up too." For teenagers, this might look like opening curtains quietly and giving them a few minutes before you come back.



Avoid launching straight into the morning timeline. "It's 7:15, you need to be dressed by 7:30" immediately cranks up pressure. Instead, help them transition into the day: "Morning love, I've put your clothes on the radiator so they're warm."

- **What helps:** Predictable wake-up routines (same time, same person if possible, same gentle approach)
- **What doesn't help:** Surprise wake-ups, bright lights suddenly on, or immediately listing everything they need to do
- **Script to try:** "Good morning. Take a minute to wake up properly, then come down when you're ready. No rush yet."

3. Offer small, manageable first steps



When anxiety is high, the whole morning feels like an insurmountable mountain. Break it down into the smallest possible steps and celebrate each one.

Don't think about getting them to school - think about getting them to the next achievable thing. Can they sit up? Brilliant. Can they put on one sock? Amazing. Can they come downstairs? You're doing it. Each tiny step completed is evidence they can cope, which makes the next step feel more possible.

This matters across all ages. A Year 1 child might need "Can you bring teddy downstairs?" A Year 7 student might need "Can you just sit at the table, even if you don't eat yet?" The principle is the same - make success achievable.

Acknowledge the difficulty without dwelling on it. "I know this is really hard right now, and you're doing it anyway" is more powerful than "Come on, it's not that bad."

- **What helps:** Breaking tasks into micro-steps ("Let's put our feet on the floor" rather than "Get dressed")
- **What doesn't help:** Focusing on the end point ("You've got to be in school by 8:45") when they're struggling with step one
- **Script to try:** "You don't have to think about school yet. Right now, we're just getting downstairs. That's all."

4. Create a pressure-release moment

Build in one predictable moment each morning where your child doesn't have to perform or push through - they can just exist for a few minutes.

This might be sitting together with a hot chocolate before anyone speaks about the day ahead. It might be five minutes stroking the dog. For older children, it might be listening to a particular song in the car before you set off. The specific activity matters less than the consistency - this becomes their anchor point, the bit of morning they can trust won't be hard.

This isn't avoidance or reward for anxiety - it's strategic regulation. You're giving their nervous system a chance to settle before asking them to do something difficult. A Year 4 child who's had five calm minutes colouring while you make toast has more capacity to face getting ready than one who's been hurried and pressured from the moment they opened their eyes.

Protect this time fiercely. Don't use it for negotiations about school or checking if they're "feeling better yet."

- **What helps:** The same activity in the same place at roughly the same time each morning
- **What doesn't help:** Skipping it when you're running late, or using it to talk about feelings and worries
- **Script to try:** "This is our calm-down time. We're not sorting anything out right now, we're just sitting together."



5. Name the anxiety without amplifying it



Acknowledging your child is anxious validates their experience. But asking repeatedly "Are you feeling anxious?" or "How anxious are you?" can accidentally make them focus more intensely on the feeling.

Use simple, matter-of-fact acknowledgment. "I can see this is tough right now" or "Your body is feeling a bit wobbly this morning" describes what you observe without requiring them to analyse or defend how they feel. For younger children, you might say "Your worry is being loud today." For teenagers, "I know this feels rubbish."

Then gently redirect toward action. Not "Don't worry" or "Calm down" - both are impossible when someone is anxious - but toward the next small thing they can do. Anxiety reduces through action, not through talking ourselves out of it.

If your child wants to talk about their worries, listen briefly but don't get pulled into problem-solving mode during the morning rush. "That sounds hard. Let's get through this morning, and we can talk about that properly after school when we have time to sort it."

- **What helps:** Brief validation followed by gentle redirection to action
- **What doesn't help:** Lengthy reassurance, repeated checking of anxiety levels, or trying to logic them out of feelings
- **Script to try:** "I hear you. And I know you can do hard things. What's one small thing we can do right now?"

6. Maintain the direction of travel



The hardest part of parenting an anxious child through difficult mornings is holding the boundary that school is where we're going, while being compassionate about how hard that is.

This doesn't mean dragging a screaming child out the door. It means maintaining a calm, consistent message: "I know this is horrible. And we're still going. I'm going to help you do this." Then you follow through by breaking it into smaller steps, offering the support they need, and staying alongside them.

Avoid getting into debates about whether school is necessary or fair. "I'm not going" needs a response like "I understand you feel that way. Let's get your shoes on" rather than reasons why they should go. Keep instructions simple and repeat them calmly: "Shoes, coat, car. That's all we're doing right now."

Be prepared that you might need to drive them while they're still upset, walk them in while they're still wobbly, or hand them over to staff while they're still resistant. That's not failing - that's helping them do something their anxiety is telling them they can't.

- **What helps:** Calm, repetitive instructions and staying physically close to guide them through
- **What doesn't help:** Reasoning, pleading, or getting emotionally activated yourself
- **Script to try:** "I can see how hard this is. I'm not going to make you do this alone, but we are doing it. Next step is [the smallest possible thing]."

You know your child best. Some of these strategies will fit your family, others won't. The goal isn't perfect mornings, it's manageable ones where your child gets through the door with their dignity intact and your relationship protected. Small improvements count.

NHS Guidance: Is my child too ill for school?



It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, nursery or playgroup when they're unwell. If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone or email your child's CPP on the first day. Let them know that your child won't be in and give them the reason.

The following table gives advice from the NHS about when a child can come to school and when they should stay at home:

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|----------------------------|---|
| Feeling anxious or worried | <p>It's normal for children to feel a little anxious sometimes. They may get a tummy ache or headache, or have problems eating or sleeping.</p> <p>Avoiding school can make a child's anxiety about going to school worse. It's good to talk about any worries they may have such as bullying, friendship problems, school work or sensory problems. You can also work with the school to find ways to help them.</p> <p>If your child is still struggling and it's affecting their everyday life, it might be good to talk to your GP or school nurse.</p> <p>Find information and advice about how to help children with anxiety.</p> |
| Coughs and colds | <p>It's fine to send your child to school with slight cough or common cold symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat or headache, as long as they're otherwise well and do not have a high temperature.</p> <p>Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.</p> |
| Chickenpox | <p>If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.</p> |
| Conjunctivitis | <p>You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis, unless they are feeling very unwell.</p> <p>Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.</p> |

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| <p>COVID-19</p> | <p>If your child has mild symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, and feels well enough, they can go to school. Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have symptoms of COVID-19 and they either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a high temperature • do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities <p>What to do if your child has tested positive</p> <p>Your child is no longer required to do a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test if they have symptoms. But if your child has tested positive for COVID-19, they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test.</p> |
| <p>Ear infection</p> | <p>If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.</p> |
| <p>Hand, foot and mouth disease</p> | <p>If your child has hand, foot and mouth disease but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off.</p> <p>Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.</p> |
| <p>Head lice and nits</p> | <p>There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice.</p> <p>You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP.</p> |
| <p>High temperature</p> | <p>If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away.</p> |
| <p>Impetigo</p> | <p>If your child has impetigo, they'll need treatment from a pharmacist or GP, often with antibiotics.</p> <p>Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment.</p> |

| | |
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| Measles | <p>If your child has measles, they'll need to see a GP. Call the GP surgery before you go in, as measles can spread to others easily.</p> <p>Keep your child off school for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears.</p> <p>They should also avoid close contact with babies and anyone who is pregnant or has a weakened immune system.</p> |
| Ringworm | <p>If your child has ringworm, see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP.</p> <p>It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.</p> |
| Scarlet fever | <p>If your child has scarlet fever, they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP, otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks.</p> <p>Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.</p> |
| Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease) | <p>You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious.</p> <p>But let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.</p> |
| Sore throat | <p>You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away.</p> <p>A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of tonsillitis.</p> |
| Threadworms | <p>You don't need to keep your child off school if they have threadworms.</p> <p>Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.</p> |
| Vomiting and diarrhoea | <p>Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours)</p> |