

Attendance & Punctuality and Registration of Pupils Policies: Temporary Covid-19 Addendum

Scope and duration

This addendum provides additional information in respect of how the current Attendance & Punctuality Policy and the Registration of Pupils Policy for [name of the school] will be applied from 1 June 2020 and it will continue in operation until further guidance is issued by the Department for Education.

Which pupils can attend school?

Primary schools

From the week commencing 1 June, the Government asked primary schools to welcome back children in nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, alongside priority groups where it is possible and safe to do so.

Secondary schools

From the week commencing 15 June, the Government has asked secondary schools to offer some face-to-face support for a quarter of the year 10 and 12 cohort at any one time, alongside the full-time provision they are offering to priority groups, where it is safe and possible to do so.

Pupil attendance

As per Government guidance, the requirement for pupils to attend school every day has ceased to be compulsory. Parents currently may choose whether to send their children.

However, eligible children – including priority groups (children of critical workers and vulnerable children) – are strongly encouraged to attend their education setting, unless they:

- have symptoms of coronavirus or are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household, or
- they have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions which put them at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus and have been advised by their clinician or through a letter. They should continue to shield.

Families should notify the school as normal if their child is unable to attend so that staff can explore the reason with them and address barriers together.

Clinically vulnerable

Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. A small minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.

If a child or young person lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, they can attend their education setting.

If someone in their household is clinically extremely vulnerable, children should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to, and the child is able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to

the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, those individuals are not expected to attend. They will be supported to learn or work at home.

EHC plans

For those with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, the school will work with the Local Authority, families and the child or young person to carry out a risk assessment to judge whether the child or young person's needs cannot be met safely at home. Where the risk assessment determines a child or young person with an EHC plan will be safer at home, the DfE's recommendation is that they stay at home. Where it determines a child or young person with an EHC plan will be as safe or safer at an education setting, the DfE's recommendation is that they attend the education setting.

Addressing non-attendance

For those pupils eligible to attend, the school will address absence by sensitively exploring parents' and pupils' concerns and what is preventing attendance and work with them to re-engage pupils where appropriate. The school will also inform social workers where children with a social worker do not attend. The school will work together with the Local Authority and other relevant partners to support parents and children in their return to regular attendance.

Under the Coronavirus Act 2020, the current legislation around school attendance has been relaxed, so that the parent of a child of compulsory school age is not guilty of an offence on account of the child's failure to attend regularly at the school at which the child is registered (section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

The school will not be held to account for attendance levels at this time.

Attendance register

Between 23 March and 1 June, schools did not need to take an attendance register. For administrative purposes, Code # (planned whole or partial closure) was used.

From 1 June 2020 the school has resumed taking an attendance register as more groups of pupils begin to return to school. We will use the codes suggested in the Government guidance to record attendance and absence in the attendance register.

Pupils who are not eligible to attend a session

This includes any pupil who is not in an eligible year group or priority group (children of critical workers and vulnerable children). This may also include children who are in an eligible year group but are not required in school for a specific session. These children will be recorded as code **X** (not required to be in school). Temporarily, code X will be used for compulsory school age children – usually it is only used where non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

If a pupil cannot attend primary school due to site capacity constraints, the DfE has confirmed that code X should be used.

Pupils who are eligible to attend a session but do not

This includes children in eligible year groups, children of critical workers and vulnerable children, such as:

- where a pupil is shielding, self-isolating, or the pupil has an EHCP and their risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school, they will be recorded as code **Y** (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances). Temporarily, code **Y** can be used where a pupil is prevented from attending school due to following government guidance on coronavirus.
- where a pupil cannot attend school due to illness, as would normally be the case, the pupil will be recorded as code **I** (illness).
- where a pupil does not attend school - despite being eligible and is not shielding, self-isolating, unable to attend due to illness, nor has an EHCP risk assessment saying their needs cannot be safely met at school, the pupil will be recorded as code **C** (leave of absence authorised by the school) where no other authorised absence code is appropriate.

At this time, all absence will be classed as authorised until further notice.

Using other authorised absence and attendance codes

Where other specific authorised absence and attendance codes are more appropriate, we may use these as usual, such as code **M** (medical appointment).

Pupils who are attending other schools

Where a pupil is attending:

- another school at which they are registered (for example, a pupil referral unit (PRU)), as would normally be the case, code **D** (dual registered) will be used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question as they are attending the other school at which they are registered
- a host school on a temporary basis because their home school cannot accommodate them, the pupil will not be registered at the host school. The home school should record the pupil as attending an approved education activity using code **B** (off-site educational activity) - the host school does not need to add this child to their attendance register but should keep a record of their attendance for safeguarding purposes and include the child in their daily totals for the educational setting status form - schools should put in place arrangements whereby the host school notifies the home school of any absences.

Registration time

- The school day begins at **[insert time]** and ends at **[insert time]**
- Morning registration is at **[insert time]** and it closes at **[insert time]**
- Afternoon registration is at **[insert time]** and it closes at **[insert time]**

Educational setting status form

We will submit daily attendance figures to the DfE using the educational setting status form by midday every day.

Children who aren't on roll at the school will be included in the daily attendance figures returned to the DfE.

If the school is closed, the form will be completed and submitted once so the DfE is aware of the closure. If the school reopens, the form will be completed again daily from the date of reopening.

If pupils attend for half a school day, the school will resubmit the form in the afternoon to account for these pupils. The data may not be included in the Department's daily figures, but it will help them to better monitor the national coronavirus response.

Review

Anthem Schools Trust will review the content of this addendum in line with Government guidelines as and when necessary.