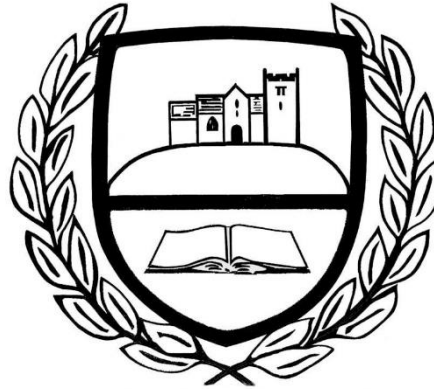


# CHOSEN HILL SCHOOL



## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

**Group Assigned:** Community & People

**Type of Policy:** Statutory

**Date approved:** September 2020

**Date for review:** October 2021

**SLT Author:** JB

# **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

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## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Chosen Hill School aims for a learning environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly.

*Each student should be at school, on time, everyday the school is open unless the reason for absence is completely unavoidable.*

It is very important therefore, that parents/carers ensure their child attends regularly (*“regularly” means in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school*) and this policy sets out how this can be achieved through school and parents/carers working in partnership.

### 2. AIMS

- To comply with the Education Act 1996, which lays out the Statutory duty of Schools with regard to attendance.
- To comply with the Gloucestershire County Council Penalty Notice Protocol\* which under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LEA officers, Head Teachers (Deputies and Assistants authorised by them) and the Police to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school (as from February 2004). This takes due regard to all the requirements of the Human Rights Act and all Equal Opportunities legislation.
- Information about penalty notices is available from the school website: “Parent Portal/ “Your Child”/ Attendance Policy Documents”
- To encourage students to attend school regularly and to be punctual to lessons and Learning Mentor Groups, so that they will be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available.
- To ensure parents/carers are aware of their responsibilities under the above act and to seek their co-operation in the implementation of the Act.
- To work with the Attendance Administrator and Education Welfare Officer who will assist the school and parents/carers of children who have difficulties complying.
- To promote punctuality to Learning Mentor sessions and lessons.

**Why regular attendance is so important:**

***Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student’s absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.***

***Any adult who lives with and looks after a child is considered to be a parent in Education Law. The fact that a parent does not live with the child is not a defence. Any person who is listed as having parental responsibility is liable to a penalty notice / fine. Working within a code of conduct the Local Authority can issue a Penalty Notice to parents or carers if the child has missed 10 or more sessions over the previous 10 weeks without permission from the school.***

***The current fine is £60.00 per parent per child, if paid within 21 days. If paid after 21 days, but within 28 days, the fine is £120.00 per parent per child. The Local Authority will not accept payment after 28 days and may proceed to prosecution if the fine is unpaid, unless there are grounds not to do so.***

### **3. TYPES OF ABSENCE**

Every half-day(session) absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents/carers of the student), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. For this reason, information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason e.g. illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- Arriving after registration is closed during the school day;
- Absences which have never been properly explained;
- Students who arrive too late at school to get a mark;
- Inappropriate absence from school, for example, shopping, looking after other children or birthdays;
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed in advance.

### **4. ILLNESS**

Whilst any student may be off school because they are ill, sometimes a student may be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best addressed early through prompt contact between the parents/carers, the Learning Mentor and the EWO at the school.

### **5. PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM**

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss a number of sessions within a term or cumulatively over a number of terms, for whatever reason. The Department for Education has changed the definition of "persistent absence" to deal with the reality of pupil absenteeism in schools and its impact on their learning. The Department has reduced the threshold at which a pupil is defined as "persistently absent" to 10 per cent, up from 15 per cent (85% - 90% threshold)

The current figures are Term 1: 7 or more sessions; Terms 1-2: 14 or more sessions; Terms 1-3: 20 or more sessions; Term 1-4: 25 or more sessions; Term 1-5: 31 or more sessions; Terms 1-6: 38 or more sessions. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and the school needs parents/carers' fullest support and cooperation to tackle this.

The school monitors all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the Persistent Absence mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority for action by the school's EWO and parents/carers will be informed of this promptly.

Persistent Absence students are tracked and monitored carefully through the school's pastoral system and the Persistent Absence School Procedures and this is combined with academic mentoring by the Learning Mentor and EWO where absence affects attainment.

All Persistently absent students and their parents/carers are subject to an Individual Attendance Plan (IAP). If there is a problem with a student's regular attendance or showing a regular pattern of unauthorised absence or punctuality, the Attendance Administrator, EWO or Year Lead will contact parents/carers and establish an Individual Attendance Plan. Decisions about requesting a Penalty Notice will be made only after a thorough investigation by the Attendance Administrator and EWO. The trigger for an investigation will be the 10 unauthorised absences within 10 calendar weeks.

## **5.1 Individual Attendance Plans**

An IAP is designed to help parents track their children's attendance and work with the school to set appropriate targets. The purpose of an IAP is:

- To review the interventions that have been implemented prior to the IAP and the impact these have had.
- To explore through a formal meeting with the student and/or parent/carer the reasons for non-attendance.
- To ensure effective communication has been made with home regarding any attendance concern.
- To set a target to improve attendance and a review date.

## **5.2 AIM Meetings**

The school will have explored a range of strategies to try and improve attendance as part of the IAP process including completing at least one home visit. If the targets set through the IAP process have not been met, the school will implement a formal warning in writing that there is a risk of prosecution and instigate an Attendance Improvement Meeting in liaison with the Local Authority.

The AIM should be attended by parent(s)/carer(s), the student (where appropriate), and sometimes where appropriate agencies working with the family (Social worker, CYPS). Two members of school staff should attend – usually the person who has been working with the family e.g. Attendance Administrator, EWO, Year Lead along with the Senior Pastoral Lead. This is so that any decisions regarding altered timetables or curriculum can be made at the time.

Parents will be invited to the AIM by letter (together with a reference link to the Attendance Policy on the VLE). The invitation to the meeting must make it clear that the meeting will go ahead even if the parents do not attend; unless the school is contacted and a new meeting time is agreed. A copy of the AIM should be sent to the parent(s)/carer(s) if they do not attend the meeting. The AIM document can be used as evidence in Court.

The purpose of the meeting is to explore how best to improve attendance by means of support and/or intervention to prevent legal proceedings being initiated. It is an opportunity to share ideas about anything that might help including new strategies or interventions that may be worth trying. At the end of the meeting, all attendees will have a clear plan of the way forward. A realistic target for the period of attendance between the AIM and the review meeting will be set, to help the student feel that it is achievable.

A 4-week review period is allocated. This allows time to monitor the impact of any new interventions or strategies that have been tried during the AIM process and make a decision regarding further steps

## **6. EDUCATION INCLUSION SERVICE**

Parents/carers are expected to contact school at an early stage if an attendance issue arises and to work with school staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties persist, the school may refer the child to The Education Inclusion Service (EIS).

The EIS team on behalf of the Local Authority has the power to prosecute parents/carers who fail to secure their child's regular attendance at school. Schools can complete a:

- **Request to Initiate Legal Proceedings form** for any pupil who has had at least 20 continuous sessions of unauthorised absence within the last six months or at least 28 sessions of unauthorised absence within the current academic year.
  - **Request to Issue a Penalty Notice form** when a pupil has missed at least 10 sessions within a 10 week period due to unauthorised holiday or lateness
- Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority (LA).

Alternatively, parents/carers or students may wish to contact the EIS Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the LA.

## 7. ABSENCE PROCEDURES

### If a student is going to be absent from school, parents/carers should:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence using the 'Absence Call' direct line number: **01452 713488 (pupil absence line)**, and on each subsequent day to report your child's absence
- Send a note in on the first day the student returns with an explanation of the absence – parents/carers should do this even if the school has already been telephoned.

### If a student is absent, school will:

- Telephone or text home on the first day of absence if the school has not heard from a parent/carer explaining the absence;
- Invite parents/carers to discuss the situation with the Attendance Administrator of EWO if absences persist;
- The EWO will undertake a home visit if poor attendance continues;
- Request a Penalty Notice for persistent non-attendance/unauthorised holidays
- Refer the matter to the Education Inclusion Service if Legal procedures are to be initiated.

### Telephone Numbers:

There are times when the school needs to contact parents/carers about a range of areas, including absence. It is important the school has current numbers at all times. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

## 8. PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

### 8.1 School Systems Implementation

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers, students, all members of the school staff.

The school will:

- Register the students in all lessons and once at the start of the day in a Learning Mentor base using SIMS and notify the reception if truancy is suspected.
- Undertake first day absence calling/texting of parents/carers of all students where the reason for absence is unknown / where pupil's absence is a cause for concern.
- Send notification letters home to request an explanation if reasons for absence are not forthcoming.
- Register students' attendance in lessons during the day using SIMS.
- Require students who are late to school, to sign in at Reception. Details from this 'late register' will be transferred to SIMS by the Attendance Administrator who will notify the Year Lead of any emerging patterns of persistent absence.
- The Attendance Administrator will:

- Monitor the Learning Mentor input of registration data, and follow up omissions for students within the school, ensuring the attendance voicemail is regularly checked and appropriately acted upon.
- Monitor attendance data to identify internal truancy.
- Respond to parents and queries with regard to attendance.
- Record reasons for absence and liaise with Year Leads, Senior Progress Coordinators and EWO to keep them fully informed where attendance is a concern.
- Undertake weekly and monthly procedures in respect of attendance and absence recording and reporting.
- Organise and run efficiently the late desk.
- Support giving parents/carers' details on attendance in the regular school newsletter and official publications.
- Support publicising the annual target for attendance (2016-17 96%) This target will be reviewed annually in line with DFE (Department for Education) and Local Authority protocols.
- Proactively support the EWO in implementation of the attendance compliance section of the school's home-school agreement.
- Administrate rewards for good or improving attendance through the House Points structure, through Learning Mentor group competitions and certificates.
- Support school promotional events when parents/carers, students and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.
- The EWO will:
  - Work with the Attendance Administrator and Year Leads to supply accurate student attendance data.
  - Monitor and track data around attendance and attainment and use this data to support identified groups of vulnerable young people to show an improvement in attendance for students in these areas.
  - Monitor and evaluate attendance and punctuality data so as to review the success of the school policies and initiatives to improve the attendance and punctuality of PA students where this is of concern.
  - Take supportive/remedial action in respect of individual absentees to secure their regular attendance at school or other education provision.
  - In cases of poor school attendance and / or welfare issues be proactive in assessing the situation and liaising with the appropriate professionals when pupils may be in need of additional support.
  - Offer general advice to parents and schools on education matters.
  - Maintain regular contact and establish constructive relationships with families/carers of children in need of extra support, to keep them informed of the child's needs and progress and to encourage positive family support and involvement.
  - Support families in Attendance Improvement Meetings (AIM), monitoring targets to prevent or reduce further escalation

## **9. PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE**

### **9.1 Year Group Activity to Encourage Student Attendance**

- Attendance Administrator will meet on a fortnightly basis with the EWO and Year Lead to discuss attendance issues that have been identified with specific students
- Pastoral staff use target setting to encourage high standards of attendance and punctuality.
- Learning Mentors encourage students to monitor their own attendance by using their planners and by setting personal targets.

- Learning Mentor groups will set their own targets (in negotiation with the Year Lead). Their performance against these targets will be monitored regularly by the Year Lead at the end of each school term. These targets will be reviewed annually.
- End of full term rewards are issued in Year Celebration assemblies to encourage group responsibility and recognise good attendance.
- A weekly merit is awarded to any student who attends for 100%. This is called the 100 club. Attendance certificates are issued for 100% attendance at Year Celebration Assemblies.
- Parents/carers will be kept up to date with their obligations with flyers as and when they are made available from the DFE, or via the HT Bulletin or school newsletters

Parents/carers will:

- Encourage regular attendance
- Inform the school on the first day of non-attendance – tel. 01452 713488, or the parent portal “Report Your Child’s Absence” and on each subsequent day.
- Be encouraged NOT to take their children out of school during term time. The Headteacher is only able to grant authorised absence in very exceptional circumstances.

## **10. PROMOTING PUNCTUALITY**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a student misses the start of the day, s/he can miss work and s/he does not spend time with their Learning Mentor getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons and can also encourage absence.

The school day starts at 8.25 am and every student is expected to be in Learning Mentor Group at that time.

Registers are marked by 8.30 am and a student will receive a late mark if they are not registered by that time.

At 9.45 am the registers will be closed. In accordance with Regulations, a student who arrives after that time will receive a ‘u’ (unauthorised) mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. If the problem persists, parents/carers could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice, if there are 10 ‘u’ codes within a ten week period.

If a student has a persistent late record either to school or lessons, parents/carers will be contacted by the Attendance Administrator, Learning Mentor or Year Lead to resolve the problem, but parents/carers can approach the school at any time if they are having problems getting their son or daughter to school on time.

- Learning Mentors will code all students who are late to Learning Mentor Groups appropriately including the number of minutes late. The names of all late pupils are recorded and same day 15-minute detention slips are issued every lunch-time.
- Year Leads monitor and review with the Learning Mentor reasons for lateness and use targets to improve.
- Teachers register students to include a record of the minutes late and inform reception if internal truancy is suspected.



## **11. SCHOOL TARGETS, PROJECTS AND SPECIAL INITIATIVES**

The School has targets to improve both attendance and punctuality. Each student has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The level of attendance expected for this school is 100% attendance and there should be no unauthorised absence. The school will regularly update parents/carers about progress to this level and how each student's attendance compares to this target.

The school recognises that regular attendance is the key to successful schooling. Regular attendance is defined as 100%.

Through the school year the school monitors absences and punctuality to identify where improvements need to be made.

Information on any projects or initiatives that focus on these areas will be provided in the school newsletter or the Headteacher's bulletin to parents/carers.

### **11.1 Attendance Meetings**

The Attendance Administrator will meet and provide attendance data on a fortnightly basis to Year Leads. The Year Leads will prioritise Level 1 or Level 2 students whose attendance is a concern across the previous fortnight. Appropriate targets and interventions are set and monitored by the Learning Mentors or Year Leads.

### **11.2 Hierarchy of Attendance Concerns**

Our emphasis is on promoting and rewarding regular attendance. Where attendance is a concern the school follows procedures outlined in the Hierarchy of Attendance Concerns (Appendix A). The school where applicable will make reasonable adjustments to these procedures as outlined in *The Equality Act 2010*.

## **12. STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE SCHOOL**

Learning Mentors

Attendance Administrator

Education Welfare Officer

Year 7 Lead

Year 8 Lead

Year 9 Lead

Year 10 Lead

Year 11 Lead

Year 12 Lead

Year 13 Lead

Senior Progress Coordinator

Assistant Headteacher - Director of Sixth Form

Deputy Headteacher, Pastoral – Support & Wellbeing

Headteacher

For 2020-21 a specific Strategic Attendance and Punctuality Project Lead and Assistant Project Lead will oversee the promotion of improved Attendance and Punctuality across the Foundation, Pathways and Post-16 phases of education in the school.

## **13. SUMMARY**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents/carers and students as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

## **14. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY (SIXTH FORM)**

### **14.1 Sixth Form Attendance**

Attendance in the Sixth Form is expected to be exemplary in registration, Learning Mentor groups and lessons. Attendance figures are often requested and provided in references for employment and university. All Year 12 & 13 students are expected to be on site from 8.25-3.05 including morning registration period, all lessons and study periods. They may sign in for study and work in a suitable location within school.

### **14.2 Registration**

Students register with their Learning Mentors in their Learning Mentor base at 8.30 am each morning and in all lessons. For afternoon registration, students register in lessons and in directed study times and if they have no afternoon lesson or directed study time then they sign in using the biometric scanner to study in the Lower Study Room. If a student leaves the site for any reason during the day they need to sign out. They can do this using the biometric registration system, and this is for emergency safety reasons. Signing out is authorised at lunch and for appointments or illness only. It is the student's responsibility to inform their Learning Mentor of the reason for signing out and for known appointments in advance. For any other absences, reasons should be given as soon as feasible when they return, usually the following day's registration.

### **14.3 Late Arrival**

Students who arrive late are required to sign in using the Sixth Form biometric registration system to ensure their presence on site is recorded for Health and Safety purposes. The student will remain recorded as absent, however, until a valid reason for absence has been submitted to the student's Learning Mentor.

### **14.4 Absence**

Students (or parents) should phone in on first day of absence and bring a note in planner for any absence on return. Any N in register will be checked with students regularly and then become unauthorised if a student hasn't produced a reason within a week. Planned absences should be notified to Learning Mentors and subject teachers well in advance and in no fewer than 3 days before the planned absence.

Acceptable Absences – notified in advance:

- Medical appointment which cannot be arranged outside school hours
- Occasional care for a person if student has definite caring responsibilities
- A religious holiday
- Appointment with Connections Advisor
- Unwaged work experience placement relevant to a course
- Occasional extra-curricular activity giving significant personal achievement, including field trips and visits related to areas of study; sports fixtures and expeditions.
- Attendance at a funeral
- Severe disruption to transport
- A driving test
- A school representative's meeting
- University Interview
- Study leave

In the event of an unplanned absence, parents/carers, or the student should ring the School Office on 01452 713488 on the morning of the first day of absence. When returning to school

after an absence, the student should complete an absence form which should be requested from the student's Learning Mentor.

#### **14.5 Acceptable Unforeseen Absences – notified on the day**

- An emergency family situation
- Transport problems with no alternative solution
- Isolated short periods of genuine illness (up to 3 days with details provided by parent or student)

Where attendance rates are low, parents/carers will be contacted in writing to inform them of their son or daughter's attendance record and clarification will be sought regarding attendance at Chosen Hill School Sixth Form. Students with poor attendance may be placed on a Sixth Form Report.

#### **14.6 Absences which will be recorded as unauthorised**

- Holidays
- Part or full time work which is not part of the student's programme of study
- Leisure activities
- Birthdays or similar celebrations
- Babysitting for younger siblings
- Shopping
- Driving lessons

#### **14.7 Leaving the School Site during the School Day**

Where a student needs to leave the school site for any reason during the school day, s/he must sign out and back in again at the Sixth Form biometric registration system. This includes leaving the site at break and lunchtime.

### **15. QUALITY ASSURANCE**

Overall statistics will be monitored against targets regularly. Attendance and punctuality data will be reviewed each half term as part of the senior team review and respond data schedule.

Pastoral staff will liaise regularly with the Attendance Administrator and EWO.

Year Leads will discuss alternate attendance and punctuality data with their team as a fortnightly standing item at every other weekly Pastoral meeting.

The Deputy Headteacher, Pastoral – Support & Wellbeing will undertake an annual review of Attendance and Punctuality policy and procedures which will take place in the summer term after the annual return to the DfE. In addition, the policy will be reviewed by the LA Education Inclusion team in term 1 of the new academic year. This ensures that the LA are confident that the policy is robust enough as a legal document where necessary. Recommendations for amendments will be made to the Community & People Committee.

Success will be measured by whether we meet our targets at all levels. If there is slippage, then this will be investigated to see if the problem is one over which we can exert some influence, or whether it was as a result of circumstances beyond our control.

### **16. HEALTH NEEDS GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS UNABLE TO ATTEND**

Support for students unable to attend school due to their health needs complies with [“Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs: Statutory guidance for local authorities: January 2013”](#) which lays out the statutory guidance for schools.

The school's intention is that all students, regardless of circumstance or setting should receive a good education to enable them to shape their own futures. Therefore, alternative provision and the framework surrounding it should offer good quality education on par with that of mainstream schooling, along with the support students need to overcome barriers to attainment. This support should meet a pupil's individual needs, including social and emotional needs, and enable them to thrive and prosper in the education system.

The school understands there will be a wide range of circumstances where a student has a health need but will receive suitable education that meets their needs for example, where the student can still attend school with some support; where the school has made arrangements to deliver suitable education outside of school for the student; or where arrangements have been made for the student to be educated by *Gloucester Hospital Education Service (GHES)*.

## **17. TRAVELLERS**

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Irish, Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people. The Education Act 1996 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make statutory provision for all of these groups.

Children of Traveller groups, whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at school.

Many Traveller families will travel for work purposes. The school will be proactive and supportive about communicating with families about their travelling patterns, encouraging maximum attendance. Parents are asked to inform the school, in advance, of their travelling plans and to inform the school when they are likely to return. The school may use the 't' code if it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision elsewhere. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller pupils it is expected that, wherever possible, the pupil should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school, whilst remaining on the register of the base school.

On days when Traveller pupils are absent for other reasons (whether travelling for the purposes of work or not), the school will use the appropriate code to record that absence. If the reason for a pupil's absence is not known, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

## **18. ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION**

Further information concerning Elective Home Education can be found on the school website. In addition, the Education Inclusion Service offer support and guidance to schools and families and all relevant agencies on issues relating to this - <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolsnet/your-pupils/elective-home-education/>

Parents applying for Elective Home Education are required to complete a proforma and discussion with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher – Pastoral, which will be signed by both parties. The process is to ensure that there is a clear and shared understanding of what is being agreed to when parents choose to educate their child at home and the significance of what they are undertaking to do.

## 19. COVID-19 ANNEX

This annex should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Chosen Hill School Attendance Policy, September 2020
- [DfE: Actions for Schools During the Coronavirus Outbreak](#)
- [DfE: School attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities: August 2020](#)
- [DfE: Guidance Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus \(COVID-19\) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year: August 2020](#)
- [PHE: Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection: August 2020](#)
- [DHSC: NHS test and trace guidance: July 2020](#)
- [DHSC: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): how to self-isolate when you travel to the UK: August 2020](#)
- [PHE: Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19: August 2020](#)
- [DfE: Recording Attendance in the School Attendance Register during COVID-19](#) (withdrawn 6 August 2020)

### 19.1 Introduction

This guidance explains and illustrates changes made to regulations governing school attendance registers in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) from 24 August 2020 for use in the 2020 to 2021 academic year. It should be read in conjunction with [the wider guidance document](#) which gives advice on other usual attendance duties and processes that remain in force.

### 19.2 Attendance expectations

From the start of the Autumn Term (September) 2020 pupil attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil;
- the school's responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence;
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct.

### 19.3 Pupils not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the Autumn Term, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

To make sure the school records this accurately and consistently, the DfE have made changes to the regulations governing school attendance registers to add a new category of non-attendance – 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'.

This category must only be used to record sessions that take place in the 2020 to 2021 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England (PHE) and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC);
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

In line with the Secretary of State's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend a given session, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

#### **19.4 Attendance codes**

From the beginning of the new academic year, the school will return to using the attendance and absence codes in use before the outbreak (set out on page 9 of the [attendance guidance](#)), in addition to the new category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)':

- pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' should be recorded using code X;
- the school will continue to use code X for non-compulsory school aged pupils who are not expected to attend a session, as they did before the outbreak.

#### **Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' could apply**

In line with current legislation, and current guidance from PHE and DHSC, examples are as follows.

##### **19.4.1 Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19).**

View [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

Pupils who have symptoms should self-isolate and get a test.

If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I – illness, as would usually be the case. Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.

If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. They should only return to school if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

If someone in the pupil's household has symptoms, the household should self-isolate and the member of their household should get a test.

If the member of the household tests negative, the pupil can stop self-isolating and can return to school. Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result when the pupil can return to school.

If the household member tests positive, the pupil should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days from when the member of their household first had symptoms. Code X should be used during this period.

In all cases of self-isolation, the school will ask parents to inform them immediately about the outcome of a test. The schools will not require evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

#### **19.4.2 Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)**

View [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and [NHS test and trace](#) guidance.

Pupils may not have symptoms themselves but may be required to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with coronavirus (COVID-19).

The [NHS test and trace](#) guidance states that a person should self-isolate for 14 days if they have had recent close contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). In the event of a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) case in the school community, the local health protection team will provide advice on who this applies to, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with the person that has tested positive when they were infectious. Code X should be used for these pupils during this period.

#### **19.4.3 Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine**

View guidance on [how to self-isolate when you travel to the UK](#).

As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine<sup>5</sup>. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, code X should be used in the register.

#### **19.4.4 Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a future local lockdown scenario only**

View [guidance on shielding and protecting extremely vulnerable persons from Covid-19](#).

Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August 2020. This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding.

If in future, rates of the disease rise in local areas, children still on the shielding list (or family members still on the shielding list) from that area, and that area only, may be contacted by the government and advised to stay at home and shield during the period where rates remain high.

Families will receive a letter if they are required to shield again that parents will be able to share with the school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from PHE or the DHSC should be recorded as code X.

The school will contact parents of pupils who are shielding when measures in the local area are lifted and shielding is paused again, to set out the expectation that they can return to school. Code X should not be used for sessions after the pupil has been advised to return to school.

### **19.4 Local lockdown**

If rates of the disease rise locally, the school may need to close the school to some pupils. The school will follow PHE or DHSC or DfE guidance on what measures are necessary in the event of local lockdown. Where attendance is to be limited to certain groups, 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' - code X - will be used for pupils who are asked not to attend.

### **19.5 Remote education**

If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the school will immediately offer them access to remote education. The school will keep a record of, and monitor engagement with this activity, but this will not be tracked in the attendance register.

## 19.6 Data collection

Collection of school attendance data as part of the school census will resume in January 2021, collecting data for the Autumn Term 2020. Subject to the necessary legislation being made, from January 2021, the census will collect attendance codes in addition to absence codes.

Further information will follow on what, if any, additional attendance data will be required during the 2020 to 2021 academic year to monitor the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) and support the Government's planning.

## Appendix A

### Hierarchy of Attendance Concerns

Attendance	Range of Interventions – all interventions logged on SIMS	Staff member responsible for applying intervention
UNIVERSAL - Learning Mentor		
96-100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promoting and rewarding regular attendance</li> <li>- Whole school attendance promotion letter</li> <li>• Change in percentage               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Call Home</li> <li>- Actions logged</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Continued lack of improvement               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Referral to LEVEL 1</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Attendance Administrator – weekly attendance data for Learning Mentor  Learning Mentor

Attendance Concern	Range of Interventions – all interventions logged on SIMS	Staff member responsible for applying intervention
LEVEL 1 – Learning Mentor		
90-95%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student focused               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structured Conversation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• No improvement               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Call Home</li> <li>- Target setting and monitoring (2 week min)</li> <li>- Actions logged</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Continued lack of improvement               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Referral to Year Lead</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Attendance Administrator – weekly attendance data for Learning Mentor  Learning Mentor

LEVEL 2 – Year Lead		
85-89%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with Parent               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actions noted from Learning Mentor</li> <li>- Target setting agreed</li> <li>- Attendance report to Learning Mentor (2 week min)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Attendance Administrator – weekly attendance data for Learning Mentor  Year Lead Learning Mentor



