



## **Attendance Policy** **November 2020**

### Introduction

All three schools are caring schools, enabling children to reach their full potential. They are committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The schools believe sincerely that all pupils benefit from the education they provide and therefore promote regular school attendance. Regular school attendance is crucial when ensuring that pupils achieve their potential. To this end the Schools will do as much as they can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that may impede full attendance are acted upon as quickly as possible.

### Aims

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with National Curriculum regulations.
- No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is responsibility of pupils and their parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Many parents and their pupils will need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Situations may exist beyond the control of pupil's and/ parents, which the school needs to address in partnership with external agencies.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer groups and prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

### Expectations

#### **We expect the following from all our pupils:**

- That they attend school regularly.
- That they will arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will inform a member of staff of any problem or reason that may hinder them from attending school.

#### **We expect the following from parents:**

- To encourage your children to attend school.
- To ensure that you contact school as soon as possible as is reasonably practical whenever your child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that your children arrive at school well prepared for the day and to check that they have done their homework.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.





**Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:**

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to school. (Confidential means that the member of staff notified will not disclose that information to anybody without the consent of the pupil or their parent).
- Take steps through rewards to encourage good attendance.
- A quality education.

**Encouraging Attendance Through Rewards:**

We encourage attendance in all or some of the following ways:

- Accurate completion of the registers at the beginning of each session and within 10 minutes of the start of session.
- Attendance checks at appropriate times.
- A certificate for 100% class attendance as achieved termly.
- A certificate for 100% attendance for individuals yearly.
- All awards to be presented by the Headteacher/Governors/Guests as appropriate.
- A child attending school every day will receive a currency reward that they can spend in the shop weekly.
- Identifying and supporting pupils who have attendance problems in advance of the transition between KS2 and KS3. This will include the sharing of relevant information with the destination school.
- Establishing a mechanism for working with those parents who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty in attending school, which will be via our Family Support Worker.

**Persistent Absence In England**

- Good attendance at school is 96.3%+ for the academic year. Lincolnshire County Council class persistent absence as 10% of a term and then also of the academic year (19 days/38 sessions), including both authorised and unauthorised absences combined.
- If a child's absence is a cause for concern and falls close to or below 90% in any half term, a meeting will initially be requested with the parent and then a School Attendance Panel will be called to ensure that the school and the family are actively working together to address the issue.
- An action plan will be drawn up and agreed by both parties and a timescale for improvement will be set. If attendance does not improve and attendance falls further warning notices will be issued and further action will be taken, possibly resulting in court action being taken.





### **Medical Issues**

- Pupils with on-going long-term medical issues will also have their attendance monitored, but their absence for medical appointments will be taken into account.
- The school may request the support from the Children and Young Person's Nursing Team.
- The school will require evidence from a child's doctor or medical specialist, along with copies of appointment letters etc.
- The school may request permission to contact these professionals for more information about a child's health and medical needs, in order that absence can be minimized.
- If there is a hospital appointment booked for a morning or afternoon we will expect you to attend school for the other sessions, having a hospital appointment does not enable you to automatically have a whole day off school.
- If the school or the Nursing Team request that referrals are made to specialists, a timescale of actions will need to be agreed. Authorised absence for medical matters are normally granted for pupil illnesses.
- Medical appointments are to see: specialists, paediatricians, therapists (e.g Physiotherapists/Speech and Language) & hospital professionals.
- Please note that this DOES NOT include optician and dental appointments under routine procedures and check-ups - these must be made out of normal school hours.

### **Absence during term time/ holiday requests**

- Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days.
- The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.' 'Exceptional' in this context is being of unique and significant emotional or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time.
- This interpretation will have different parameters from one case to another, and whilst it will be important to look at the whole situation in making decisions about any individual request, the normality will be that requests will be refused.
- If Parents wish to make a holiday request then they must write a letter to the Headteacher, at least one month prior to the date of departure. A meeting will then be arranged, which you will need to attend. You will be informed of the final decision both verbally and in writing.
- Only in exceptional circumstances, agreed by the Headteacher, will the absence be authorised. If the decision by the parents is to still intend to take their child/ren on holiday, a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning letter/ notice will be issued.





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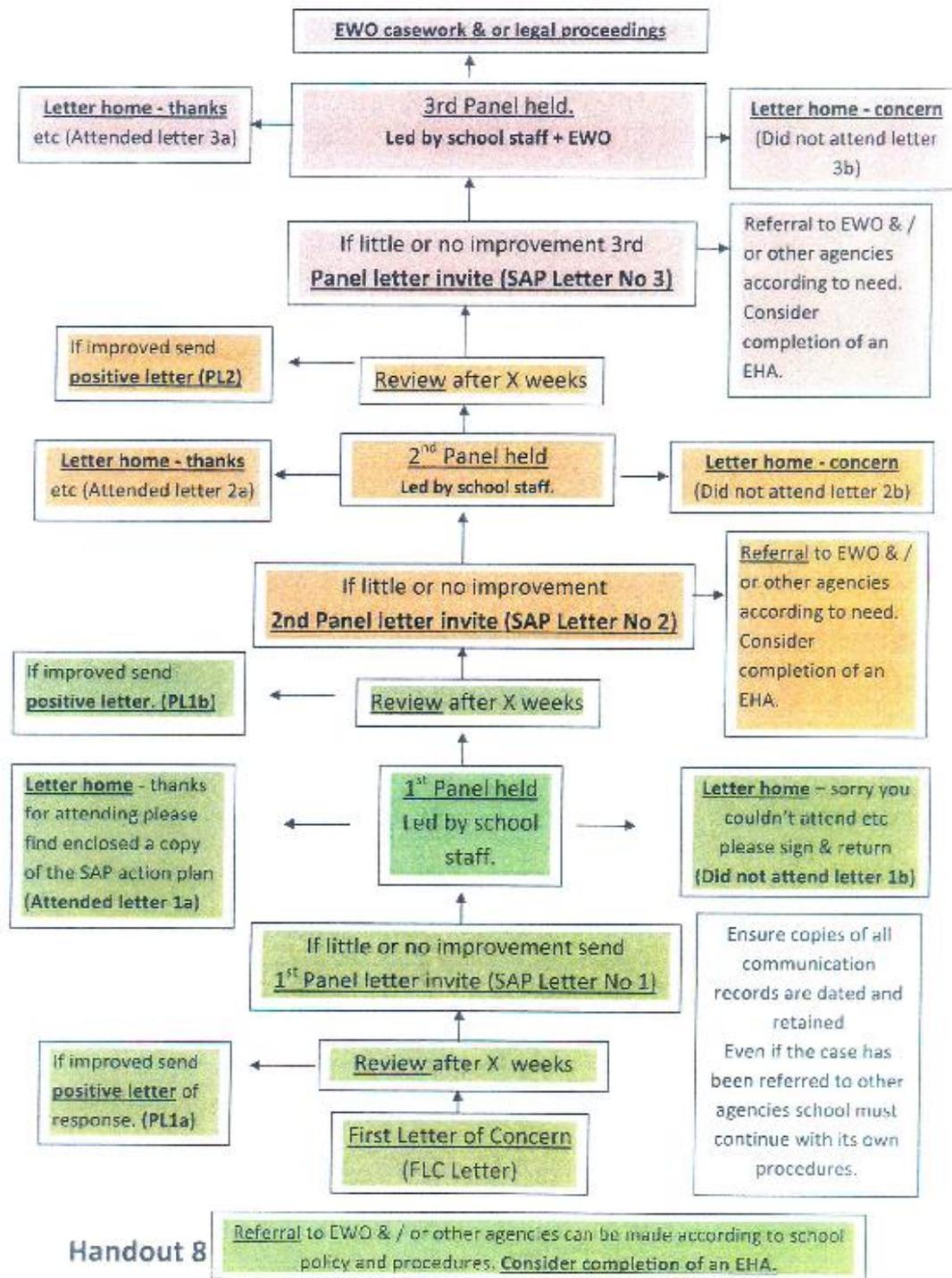
- If a pupil is removed from school for an unauthorised holiday for more than 4.5 days, the School and the Local Authority will issue a Fixed Penalty Notice, under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, which carries a fine. Non-payment of this fine can result in prosecution on the grounds that the parent is failing to secure their child's school attendance.

**When a pupil does not attend school, the school will respond as follows:**

- If a note or telephone call is not received from parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone.
- If a note or telephone call is not received from parents on the second day school will carry out home visits to establish the safety of the child.
- Where there is no response, a letter will be sent after three days of unexplained non-attendance. The Educational Welfare Officer (EWO), through the Inclusion and Attendance Team, may be contacted if deemed appropriate or there are causes for concern. If deemed necessary the PCSO or CSC will be also contacted.
- Where necessary and in line with close monitoring of attendance the School Attendance Panel Procedures will be implemented by the Executive Headteacher. These procedures follow the structure below.



## School Attendance Panel Procedures





### **Reintegration**

- The return to school for a pupil after long term absence may require special planning. E.g. it may be appropriate to establish a Pastoral Support Programme (PSP)
- The class teacher with guidance from the SENCO will be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and the management of that programme.
- All staff need to be aware that this is a difficult process that will require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the Headteacher as soon as possible.
- Programmes may need to be tailored to meet individual need and may involve phased, part-time re-entry with support in class as appropriate. Support from the SENCO may be required.

The success of the PSP will require the involvement of appropriate school staff, other agencies, the pupil and parents. Programmes should be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

Staff will be notified of the return of a pupil who has been on long-term absence via email or through staff briefing.

### **Responsibilities**

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff will make attendance a high priority, and will convey to pupils the importance and value of education.

### **The Executive Headteacher will:**

- Oversee the whole policy.
- Report to governors on attendance figures.
- Oversee the work of administrative staff.
- To look into suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence.
- Produce attendance profile for the whole school.
- Liaise with Inclusion and attendance team at the LA
- Liaise with the FSW

### **Class Teacher:**

- To complete registers accurately and on time.
- Inform Admin to follow-up immediately any unexplained non-attendance by contacting parents.
- To record all reasons for absence in the register.
- To speak with the Headteacher over any attendance concerns.





**Parents:**

- Contact with school on first day of absence or as soon as possible.
- Absence notes if longer than initially indicated.
- Support for general attendance.

**Inclusion and Attendance Team:**

- Liaise with Headteacher.
- Home visits, either pre-arranged or without notice as considered necessary.
- Group work with identified pupils.
- Undertake Legal proceedings on behalf of the LEA where appropriate.
- Accept referrals, initiate contact with parents of carers and undertake assessments.
- Plan and review casework.
- Provide feedback for schools.
- Strategic/policy advice and support in relation to matters of attendance, the employment of young people involved in performing.
- Support the school in the establishment and management of a school attendance panel if required.
- Support the school in the use of penalty notices and parenting contracts within the provisions of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.

**Admin**

- Collate and enter data base attendance figures.
- Contact parents/legal guardian for information re unexplained absences, and report findings to the Headteacher.
- Advise Class Teachers of details of phone calls re absenteeism.

**Family Support Worker**

- Review attendance weekly/termly
- Attend panel meetings
- Undertake parenting support
- Visit family homes

**Governors**

- Request regular attendance updates via the Headteachers Report to Governors at full meetings of the Board.
- Representation of the school on the required committees when attendance issues arise, this includes governors attending panel meetings.





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## Liaising with external agencies

Research has shown that schools in partnership with the full range of support services have a greater impact on school attendance than when they act alone or when the support services are uncoordinated or disjointed.

Poor school attendance may be symptom of a wide range of institutional, community, family or individual circumstances. Many of these circumstances will demand expert support beyond the remit of the school or the EWS. It is therefore vital that strong partnerships are established with all agencies that work with children and young people. The EWS may be able to help the school establish multi-agency meetings or may be able to advise on how schools can become involved in existing local arrangements.

### **Other Agencies** to be used as required: -

- Behaviour Outreach Support Service (BOSS)
- Educational Psychologist
- Special Educational Needs Service
- Social Services
- Youth Service
- Local Police.
- Family Support Workers
- School nurse
- Pilgrim School

### GDPR

GDPR places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. The school will have full regard for the requirements of the Act. Nothing in the legislation prevents the school sharing information with the police or social services where they believe that a pupil under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or is in need of safeguarding.





## Appendix 1

### GUIDANCE FOR CLASS TEACHERS

#### Good Practice

Under Section 7 of the Education act 1996, it is the legal responsibility of parents to see that their child/children receive(s) regular education suitable to their age, aptitude and abilities...

#### The Importance of Registration:

- A manual class attendance register, will be kept on which, at the **BEGINNING** of each morning and afternoon session, pupils are marked present or absent. Registers will be collected from and returned to the school office, within 10 minutes of the start of session.
- Manual registers must be kept in ink and corrections must be made in such a way that the original entry and correction are both clearly distinguishable.
- Authorised absences should be entered in red initially with the symbol for categorising the absence in blue or black.
- Attendance Registers, must be kept for a minimum of 3 years from the date that the last entry was made.
- **Only the school**, in the context of the law **can approve absence**, not parents. If a class teacher does not except the explanation offered for absence, as a valid reason then the matter must be referred to the Headteacher.
- Emerging patterns of authorised absence will be reported to the Administrator, who then discusses with the Headteacher.
- Reasons for absence should be entered in the register by the appropriate code.
  - / Present am - please mark in black
  - \ Present pm - please mark in black

The following codes to be marked in black inside a **RED CIRCLE**

- N No reason yet provided for Absence (please mark this code in pencil or leave red circle blank)
- B Education Off-site - e.g. pupils at other school at the time registration would normally take place
- C Other Authorised Circumstances
- E Excluded
- F Extended Family Holiday Agreed
- G Family Holiday Not Agreed or days in Excess of Agreement
- H Family Holiday Agreed
- I Illness
- M Medical - Doctor's, Dentist, Optician or Hospital Appointment
- O Unauthorised Absence





T	Travellers Absence
V	Educational Visit or Trip E.g.Hilltop
X	Non-Compulsory School Age Absence
L	Late before Register closes
U	Late after Register closes

Class teachers, who experience difficulty in receiving a parental note, will inform the Administrator.

#### **Authorised or Unauthorised Absence:**

**Authorised absence** is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence.

All other absences must be regarded as **unauthorised**.

The following are acceptable reasons for authorising absences.

- Illness.
- Family bereavements - (time limited).
- Medical and dental appointments where proof is available.
- Days of religious observance.
- Fixed term exclusion.
- Permanent exclusion until removed from school or re-instated.
- **Family Holidays:** Parents should not normally take pupils on holiday during school term time.. If a request is not granted and the parent takes the child on holiday, the absence will not be authorised and will lead to a fine.

The following are classed as present for statistical information and must be code marked.

- Field trips and educational visits both in this country and overseas.
- Pupils receiving approved education off site e.g. those receiving specialist support or those in receipt of home tuition but remaining on the roll of the school.

Absences will not be authorised under the following circumstances.

- Shopping trips
- Holiday trips in term time where permission of the school has not been given
- Minding the house or looking after siblings
- Lateness if registration is missed without explanation.
- Medical appointments that cannot be verified.
- No reason given.
- School staff feels the note is not genuine or valid.





Unusual circumstances may arise that lead to a young person being absent from school. It is for the Headteacher to decide whether the explanation offered is reasonable. In such situations, the individual circumstances, previous attendance pattern and frequency of such incidents should be considered.

**Lateness:**

- Schools should actively discourage late arrival by challenging parents of children who are persistently late or arrive late without reasonable explanation.
- Where a pupil arrives after register closure without good reason, they should be marked with an unauthorised absence in red and the letter L in blue or black to indicate that they are on site.

**Removal from the school roll**

**Removal from the school roll under circumstances other than detailed below is illegal:**

- Where the school has been notified that a pupil has been registered as a pupil at another school.
- Where a pupil has ceased to attend school and the parent(s) have satisfied the LA that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than by attendance at school.
- Where the school has been notified by the doctor that a pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state school before becoming legally exempt from the obligation to attend school.
- Where a pupil has been absent without reasonable cause for four academic weeks and the Headteacher has failed, after reasonable enquiry and consultation with the CME team.
- Where the Headteacher has been notified that a pupil has died.
- A pupil has ceased to attend school and no longer lives at a place, which is a reasonable distance from the school.
- If a pupil has not returned to school within ten school days of the agreed return date after a family holiday in term time.
- Where a pupil has been permanently excluded and the Pupil Discipline Committee has confirmed this decision.

**Ensuring pupil information is regularly updated**

It is the responsibility of the School administrator to ensure that the school's electronic information is kept as up to date as possible. This will help to ensure that contact with families is productive and that referrals to other agencies can be actioned effectively.

**Pupils who are missing**

Where it is believed that a pupil has left the area and enquiries have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil, the school will ensure they notify the LA through the CME process.





## **COVID- 19 - Interim Attendance Guidance**

Addendum to the Attendance Policy for Academic Year 2020-21

This document has been developed to reflect changes in practice as a result of the COVID -19 (Coronavirus) outbreak.

It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware of the new policy and are kept up to date as it is revised. The revised policy should continue to be made available publicly.

### Background

This addendum has been produced in line with Department of Education (DfE) guidance Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year August 2020.

It replaces temporary guidance documents on recording attendance during the COVID-19 outbreak.

This Addendum outlines:

- Attendance Expectations
- Attendance Coding
- Circumstances for non-attendance related to COVID-19 during academic year 2020-21
- Further Key Information

The addendum should also be read in line with DfE guidance School Attendance: main guidance August 2020 and the Griffin Federation's Attendance Policy. It should also be read in conjunction with the wider guidance document which gives advice on other usual attendance duties and processes that remain in force.

### Attendance Expectations

From the beginning of the Academic Year 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
- schools' 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. Penalty notices should only be considered when all other options to improve attendance have been exhausted

### Attendance Coding

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).

A new category of non-attendance - 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' has been created and 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)<sup>3</sup>
- 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.

The Griffin Federation will be using the attendance and absence codes in use before the outbreak (See Appendix A) in addition to the new category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' as detailed below:

- pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' should be recorded using code X4
- schools should 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

Circumstances for non-attendance related to COVID-19 during academic year 2020-21

Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'





The Griffin Federation will follow the procedures detailed below when pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19):

- 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.

The Griffin Federation will follow the procedures detailed below when 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, we will ask parents to inform them immediately about the outcome of a test. However evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence will not be requested before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

To support decision making reference should be made to relevant government guidance available [here](#).

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

Our schools will follow the procedures detailed below when 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.

To support decision making reference should be made to the relevant government guidance available [here](#).

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

- 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.
- 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.





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

- 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. The New Lockdown of 5th November will mean CEV adults will need to isolate but children should still attend school.
- 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 us.
- Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from PHE or the DHSC should be recorded as code X.
- We 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 will not be used for sessions after the pupil has been advised to return to our schools

To support decision making reference should be made to the relevant government guidance available [here](#).

#### Further Key Information

##### Local lockdown

- If rates of the disease rise locally, our schools may need to prevent some pupils from attending.
- Our schools will follow PHE or DHSC 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.





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## Remote Education

- If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19), we will offer them access to remote education (this may be online or via other means. We will keep a record of, and monitor engagement with this activity, however this will not need to be tracked in the attendance register. School staff will phone isolating children daily to ensure they are engaging in work.

## 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

Contents of Attendance Register in line with Department for Education Guidance available here

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent;
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances; or,
- Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)<sup>11</sup> The school should follow up any absences to:
  - Ascertain the reason;
  - Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
  - Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
  - Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

### Boarding Schools

Boarding schools without day-pupils are not required to keep an attendance register. Schools with a mixture of day-pupils and boarders must keep an attendance register for the day-pupils.

### Absence and Attendance Codes

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:





## Present at School

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm

Present in school during registration.

Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

## Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.





**Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment**

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the *School Census*. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

**Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment**

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

**Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity**

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

**Code V: Educational visit or trip**

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

**Code W: Work experience**

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.





## Authorised Absence from School

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

**Code C:** Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

**Code E:** Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

**Code H:** Holiday authorised by the school

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

**Code I:** Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.





Code M: Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller - Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these 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 a school.





## Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Absence codes are as follows:

**Code G:** Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

**Code N:** Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

**Code O:** Absent from school without authorisation

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

**Code U:** Arrived in school after registration closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

**Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)**

For the school year 2020 to 2021, a new category has been added to record instances when a pupil is 'not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)'. See this addendum for further information, including advice on the application of code X.





Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)

(This code is not counted as an absence in the school census)

This code is used to record sessions where the pupil's travel to or presence at school would conflict with:

guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England or the Department of Health and Social Care or

- any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).
- And their equivalents in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland if a pupil attending a school in England resides there.

Schools should also continue to use code X to record when a pupil not of compulsory school age is not expected to attend as detailed below.

#### Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census.

Code X: Not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.





This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

