Attendance Covid-19 addendum

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Target Audience	Administrative and Teaching Staff
Related Documents	DFE Guidance
Referenced	SOL Attendance

Introduction

1. Academies need to subsume this document into their own policy document as an appendix
2. The Academy should resume taking an attendance register.
3. The Academy should use the codes in this addendum in the attendance register.
4. There's further guidance on school attendance policy at [Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

Attendance Expectations

From the start of the autumn term 2020 and again following the return on 8th March, 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

Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Although school attendance is mandatory, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

To make sure schools record this accurately and consistently, we have made changes to the regulations[2] 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)[3]
- 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.

Use the codes below in addition to the usual attendance codes you used before the coronavirus outbreak.

Definitions

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

Note: you should still use code X for pupils of non-compulsory school age who aren't expected to attend a session, like you did before the outbreak.

Where pupils are not able to attend school, as they are following clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the absence will not be penalised. You should use code X if a child is self-isolating or quarantining because of coronavirus (COVID-19) in accordance with relevant legislation or guidance published by PHE or the DHSC.

Code	Scenario
X	Pupils who have to self-isolate because they have symptoms or live with someone who does, and are waiting for their test results *Note: use this code only until they get their test results*
I	Pupils who remain unwell following a negative test result (i.e. with a different illness)
I	Pupils who have to continue to self-isolate because they tested positive *Note: they should self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms, and should only return to school if they don't have symptoms other than a cough or a loss of sense of smell or taste*
X	Pupils who have to self-isolate (for 14 days) because someone they live with tested positive
X	Pupils who have to self-isolate (for 14 days) because they are a close contact of someone who tested positive
X	Pupils who have to quarantine (for 14 days) after a trip to a non-exempt country
X	Pupils who are required to shield in the case of a local lockdown, or live with someone who is required to shield *Note: you can ask to see the family's shielding letter. Use this code until shielding is paused and you've contacted the pupil's parents to set the expectation that the child needs to return to school*
X	Pupils who are asked not to attend in the case of local lockdown *Note: follow PHE or DHSC guidance on whether you need to prevent some pupils from attending.*

Key Points

Code	Use
D	Dual registration for those educated at another institution
B	This should only be used if you are accommodating a student that is normally home educated. You do not need to add them to your register

Clarification

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) should 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.

Using other authorised absence and attendance codes

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

Staggered start times

Academies should update their own policy on how long the register should be kept open but where a school implements staggered start times, they may wish to consider temporarily extending this period, or reopening the register.