

Covid-19 Addendum to Attendance Policy (Sept 2020)

The school will work within guidance set out by the DfE. This should be read in conjunction with the DfE document “Guidance for full opening; Schools” issued 7th August 2020.

The full guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

The excerpt below is taken from the full guidance document. At the end of this document is a quick guide reference to Coronavirus related absence expectations.

Attendance expectations

In March when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, we made clear no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child’s non-attendance at school.

Now the circumstances have changed and it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children’s education, wellbeing and wider development.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. **School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term.** This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents’ duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools’ responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities’ codes of conduct

Pupils who are shielding or self-isolating

We now know much more about coronavirus (COVID-19) and so in future there will be far fewer children and young people advised to shield whenever community

transmission rates are high. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. You should note however that:

- a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)
- shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. Read the [current advice on shielding](#)
- if rates of the disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent (see below).
- some pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school (usually at their next planned clinical appointment). You can find more advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health at [COVID-19 - 'shielding' guidance for children and young people](#)

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we expect schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. Schools should monitor engagement with this activity.

Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.

Pupils and families who are anxious about return to school

All other pupils must attend school. Schools should bear in mind the potential concerns of pupils, parents and households who may be reluctant or anxious about returning and put the right support in place to address this. This may include pupils who have themselves been shielding previously but have been advised that this is no longer necessary, those living in households where someone is clinically vulnerable, or those concerned about the comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19), including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds or who have certain conditions such as obesity and diabetes.

If parents of pupils with significant risk factors are concerned, we recommend schools discuss their concerns and provide reassurance of the measures they are putting in place to reduce the risk in school. Schools should be clear with parents that pupils of compulsory school age must be in school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is absent for a necessary religious observance etc).

Actions the DfE are asking us to do:

- communicate clear and consistent expectations around school attendance to families (and any other professionals who work with the family where appropriate)
- identify pupils who are reluctant or anxious about returning or who are at risk of disengagement and develop plans for re-engaging them. This should include disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people, especially those who were persistently absent prior to the pandemic or who have not engaged with school regularly during the pandemic
- use the additional catch-up funding, as well as existing pastoral and support services, attendance staff and resources and pupil premium funding to put measures in place for those families who will need additional support to secure pupils' regular attendance
- work closely with other professionals as appropriate to support the return to school, including continuing to notify the child's social worker, if they have one, of non-attendance

Coronavirus related absence – quick reference guide –August 2020

What to do if ...	Action needed	Code	Return to school when ...
... my child has coronavirus symptoms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new, continuous cough • a high temperature (37.8 degrees Celsius or above) • a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come into school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate • Get a test • Inform school of the test outcome 	x	... the test comes back negative
....my child tests positive for coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come into school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for at least 10 days • Inform school immediately of the test result 	l when the 10 days are up the pupil can return to school when they feel better. This can be even if they still have a cough or loss of smell/taste as these symptoms can last for several weeks after the infection is gone
.... someone in our house have coronavirus symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come into school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate • Household member to get a test • Inform school of the test result immediately 	x	... the household member has a negative test result

...someone in our household has tested positive for coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come into school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 14 days • 	x	...the child has completed 14 days of self-isolation
...NHS test and trace have identified my child as a 'close contact' of somebody with symptoms or confirmed coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come into school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 14 days 	x	...the child has completed 14 days of self-isolation
...we/my child are about to travel/has travelled and has to self isolate as part of a period of quarantine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not take unauthorised leave during term time • Consider quarantine requirements and FCO office advice when booking travel • Provide information to school in line with attendance policy • Do not come into school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 14 days 	x	...the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed
...we have received medical advice that my child should resume shielding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come into school • Contact school to inform them to discuss the situation • Shield until you are informed that restrictions are lifted and that shielding is paused again 	x	...school, medical advice or government inform you that the restrictions have been lifted.