

Attendance policy: coronavirus addendum

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1. Aims and scope

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Supporting parents/carers and pupils who are concerned about the return to school due to coronavirus

This addendum applies from the start of the autumn term 2020 until the end of the 2020/21 academic year. It sets out changes to our normal attendance policy, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal attendance policy continues to apply.

We may need to amend or add to this addendum as circumstances or official guidance changes. We will communicate any changes to staff, parents and pupils.

2. Guidance and definitions

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's (DfE's) [guidance](#) on school attendance during the 2020/21 academic year.

In section 4.2 of this addendum, where we refer to 'close contact', this means:

- Direct close contacts: face-to-face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face-to-face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- Proximity contacts: extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- Travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

This definition is from the DfE's [guidance on full reopening for schools](#) (see number 9 in 'the system of controls').

3. Attendance expectations

It is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age to attend school unless:

- They have been granted an authorised absence by the school in line with the normal attendance policy
- They cannot attend school due to specific circumstances related to coronavirus (see section 4, below)

4. Where 'non-attendance in relation to coronavirus' applies

We will only accept 'non-attendance in relation to coronavirus' in circumstances where a pupil's travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- Against guidance from Public Health England and/or the Department of Health and Social Care relating to the incidence of coronavirus or its transmission
- Prohibited by any legislation or statutory directions relating to the incidence of transmission of coronavirus

4.1 Pupil develops symptoms or lives with someone who does

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day that their child needs to self-isolate. The pupil will stay at home until they or the symptomatic person they live with receives their coronavirus test results.

If the pupil's test result is negative: the pupil will return to school when they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus. They should continue to stay at home if they remain unwell (i.e. with a different illness).

If the person the pupil lives with tests negative: the pupil will stop self-isolating and return to school

4.2 Pupil or a 'close contact' of theirs receives a positive test result

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school about the positive test result as soon as possible via the school office phone number: 01458 442979

Pupils who test positive must self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms, and must only return to school when they no longer have symptoms (other than a cough or a loss of sense of smell or taste).

If a member of the pupil's household or a 'close contact' tests positive, the pupil must self-isolate for 14 days. The pupil must do this from when the member of their household first had symptoms, or the day the pupil last met with the 'close contact' who received the positive result.

See the definition for 'close contact' in section 2 of this addendum.

4.3. Pupil has to quarantine after travel abroad

The parent/carer must notify the school if their child has to quarantine after travel to a country that is not on the government's [exemptions list](#).

The pupil must quarantine for 14 days on their arrival to the UK and return to school thereafter.

4.4 Pupil is required to shield during a local lockdown

The parent/carer will notify the school if they are advised by the government to stay at home and will provide proof of their shielding letter by sending a scan to office@elmhurst.somerset.sch.uk or a photocopy to the school address.

The pupil will stay at home until the shielding measures in the local area are paused. Once the shielding measures are lifted, we will contact the pupil's parent/carer to set the expectation that they can return to school.

4.5 Remote learning provision

If a pupil is not attending school because of circumstances related to coronavirus, but where the pupil is not ill, the school will provide the pupil access to remote education.

- Our approach and expectations regarding remote education are set out in our remote learning contingency plan which has been shared with parents via the newsletter.
- We will keep a record of, and monitor, pupil engagement with remote learning, but we will not track this information in the attendance register

5. Recording attendance

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to 'exceptional circumstances' (as defined in our normal attendance policy)
- Unable to attend for reasons related to coronavirus (see appendix 1 for the relevant absence codes and when we will use them)

Pupils must arrive in school at their designated time slot on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00 and will be kept open until 9.30am The register for the second session will be taken at 1.30pm.

6. Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent or carer by calling them in line with the normal policy.
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

If a pupil does not attend because they, and/or their parent/carers are concerned about returning to school because of coronavirus, we will arrange a phone call/video meeting/in-school appointment between the parent/carers and a member of the SLT to explain the protective measures the school is taking to keep pupils safe

6.1 Legal sanctions

Our normal rules on legal sanctions apply. Please refer to the school attendance policy.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum of every two months during term time by Tracy Edwards, Co-Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

Appendix 1: pupil absence codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's addendum to their school attendance guidance for the 2020/21 academic year. If not covered here, our normal attendance codes apply.

Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus

You must only use this new category where a pupil doesn't attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- Against guidance from Public Health England (PHE) and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) relating to the incidence of coronavirus or its transmission
- Prohibited by any legislation or statutory directions relating to coronavirus

In this case, you shouldn't penalise parents, and this category will not count as absence (either authorised or unauthorised) for data collection purposes.

Codes c and l: definitions for other codes you'll need to use

In addition to the new category for coronavirus above, you'll need to use other codes you used before the outbreak, such as:

- Code C - leave of absence authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances
- Code l - illness

