



Star

NURTURING TODAY'S **YOUNG PEOPLE**,
INSPIRING TOMORROW'S **LEADERS**

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Addendum





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Introduction

1. This addendum has been updated to reflect government guidance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) and the full reopening of schools in September 2020.
2. It should be read in conjunction with Star's Attendance and Punctuality Policy.
3. The Department for Education will collect the attendance data recorded from the start of the autumn term and may use it as a school performance measure. It is important that schools follow the guidance closely.
4. Identified groups of pupils will not be expected to attend due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19). Parents, pupils, and schools should not be penalised under these circumstances. The Department for Education has extended the use of the X code for pupils of statutory age into the new academic year, for this purpose. The X code is discounted in all statistical analyses.

Guiding principles

5. **School attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term.**
 - All pupils are expected to attend school each day and be punctual unless there is a good reason for their absence.
 - Parents' legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly has been reinstated.
 - Sanctions, including penalty notices and prosecution, in line with the local authorities' code of conduct, can be used again to encourage improved attendance.
6. **Schools should continue to provide reassurance regarding the protective measures taken in schools.** Leaders and governors will ensure that appropriate and effective measures are in place for communicating with parents regarding arrangements for full reopening. If start times differ from the regular school day, they should be clearly communicated and attendance processes adapted.
7. **Schools may need to persuade parents to send their child to school.** It is no longer permissible for parents to choose to keep their children at home due to concerns related to coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools should respond to parental concerns sensitively but must inform parents of their legal duty and explain the protective measures, which have been implemented in school to keep their child safe.
8. **The use of new attendance category 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'. During the academic year 2020-2021, the X code should be used for pupils who cannot 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).
9. **Welfare calls for non-attendance.** Where pupils are not attending, daily welfare calls should be made alongside extensive efforts to re-engage the pupil in full-time on-site education. In the interim, provision for remote learning can be made, but it should be made explicitly clear to parents that this is not a substitute for on-site provision and that the absence is unauthorised.



Key priorities

10. Leaders and governors must:

- support pupils and parents in adapting to a *new normal* post-national lockdown and allow a successful return to regular attendance and punctuality for the whole school.
- maintain a high level of confidence amongst parents and pupils that the school is a safe place to attend. Articulate clearly the measures put in place to secure the health and safety of pupils.
- complete the attendance registers using any revised attendance codes outlined in the addendum for the academic year 2020 -2021.
- consider staggered arrival times when recording lates (both before and after registers have closed).
- seek assistance of social workers and other external agencies when dealing with children from the vulnerable groups who are not attending.
- meticulously follow the guidance from Public Health England and the Department for Education.
- ensure where pupils are self-isolating, liaison with families is prioritised and highly effective. It is essential that schools ask parents to inform them immediately about the outcome of a test so that schools can record absence accurately and advise parents on next steps related to school attendance. Schools should not require evidence of test results before welcoming children back to school.
- If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19), schools should immediately offer them access to remote education. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement in this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

Recording attendance in SIMS

11. The attendance register should be taken in SIMS using the full range of established attendance codes in the established [non-statutory guidance](#) in addition to the advice outlined below.
12. **Code O (unauthorised absence) should be used if the Principal decides that the reason for absence is not acceptable.** This should include parents who are choosing to keep their children at home because they are anxious about their child contracting coronavirus (COVID-19). By recording unauthorised absence, legal interventions become a consideration for the school, in partnership with the local authority.
13. **Code X** should be recorded for pupils who are not attending because of circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19);
 - **pupils who are self-isolating due to a member of their household having symptoms or confirmed as having COVID-19.** 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 until the time of the test result when the pupil should return to school. If the member of the household tests positive, the pupil should continue to self-isolate for the full 14 days from when the member of the household first developed symptoms.
 - **pupils who have symptoms and are self-isolating before receiving test results.** If a pupil tests negative, feels well and no longer has the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), the pupil can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following a negative test from this date, s/he should be coded as an I code (illness). Any X codes used



before the test result should not be changed retrospectively. If a pupil tests positive, s/he should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of the symptoms. The pupil should only return to school if s/he does not have symptoms other than a cough or loss 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, s/he should be recorded as code I (illness) until s/he is able to return to school.

- **pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or have been confirmed as having coronavirus (COVID-19).** Pupils may not have symptoms themselves but may be required to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with COVID-19. The NHS track 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 COVID-19. In the event of a confirmed 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. The X code should be used for the entirety of this self-isolation unless at some stage the pupil develops symptoms (see guidance above).
 - **pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine following foreign travel.** As usual, parents should plan their holidays outside of term time. Schools should remind parents of the requirement to quarantine following trips overseas to countries not exempt from quarantine protocols. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on their return to the UK, the X code should be used for the quarantine period of 14 days unless at some stage the pupil develops symptoms (see guidance above).
 - **pupils who are still deemed to be clinically extremely vulnerable by their doctor who are advised not to attend school despite general shielding advice being paused on the 1 August 2020.** In these circumstances the X code should be used until the medical advice changes.
 - **pupils who are deemed to be clinically extremely vulnerable in the circumstances of a local lockdown scenario may be advised not to attend school.** Shielding advice paused on 1 August 2020. This means that all pupils can return to school unless a medical professional continues to advise against it. Pupils no longer need to self-isolate to protect family members. However, if in the future, rates of the disease rise in local areas, pupils still on the shielding list (or family members still on the shielding list) living in that area, may be contacted and advised to stay at home and shield. Families will receive a letter if they are required to shield again which parents can share with school. Schools should contact parents of pupils who are shielding when measures in the local area are lifted and shielding is paused again. Schools should set out the expectation that they can return to school. The X code should not be used for any sessions after the pupil has been advised to return to school.
 - **pupils who have been asked to stay at home as part of a local lockdown.** If rates of disease rise locally, schools should follow PHE or DHSC guidance on the necessary measures in the event of a local lockdown. Any pupils asked not to attend school should be X coded.
14. **Code L and U** should be recorded when a pupil arrives late both before and after the registers have closed but considering any staggered arrival times.

Reporting to the Department for Education and the Trust

15. Schools are required to submit a daily educational settings status online form to the Department for Education. In addition, school data will be collected via the January 2021



census for the autumn term. This will include attendance codes as well as absence codes for the first time.

16. The Trust will download data directly from SIMS following the closure of registers each day. Schools should ensure that there is a protocol in place to ensure that any missing marks are processed daily prior to this download.

Review and adaptation

17. Leaders will keep the arrangements detailed in this addendum under review in line with any further government updates.