Attendance During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

All pupils are required to attend school. As such, the arrangements set out in the main body of this policy (above) will be adhered to. This appendix has been developed in line with the latest government guidance to set out the additional measures that have been put in place to support pupils' attendance at school.

The school will have due regard for the DfE's 'Recording attendance during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak' guidance when recording attendance during the pandemic.

1. Attendance expectations

Attendance is mandatory for all pupils. This means the usual rules on school attendance (as set out in the main body of this policy) apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly.
- The school's responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence, in line with the procedures in the main body of this policy.
- The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with the LA's code of conduct.

The school will ensure pupils do not attend the school site where they are displaying symptoms of, or have tested positive for, coronavirus, or are quarantining following travel abroad, or are in a household, childcare or support bubble with an individual who is displaying symptoms of, or has tested positive for, coronavirus.

2. Shielding or self-isolating pupils

The school will stay up-to-date with all relevant national and local public health advice regarding shielding and self-isolation, communicating any relevant changes to all stakeholders.

Absences relating to pupils following clinical and/or public health advice will not be penalised. Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, they will be immediately offered access to remote learning, in line with the Pupil Remote Learning Policy.

Absences due to shielding or self-isolation will be recorded with Code X. The school will request a copy of a shielding pupil's medical letter to confirm their status where necessary.

The school will follow the measures set out in the Infection Control Policy in all circumstances where self-isolation is required.

Where a vulnerable pupil is required to self-isolate, the school will notify their social worker (if they have one), ensure a method of maintaining contact with the pupil, and ensure the pupil has access to remote education.

3. Reluctance to return to school

The school will remind parents of their legal duty to ensure their child attends school, and parents will be advised to contact the school if they have concerns about their child returning to school.

If a parent raises a concern, a relevant staff member will hold a discussion with the parent to discuss their concerns and provide reassurance on the measures that are in place to reduce risk in the school.

4. Monitoring attendance

The SBM and Head officer will monitor the school's attendance rates once the school is open to all pupils in September. Any trends in non-attendance will be identified (e.g. due to anxiety) and measures will be put in place to reengage affected pupils with the school.

The school will place particular emphasis on supporting the attendance and re-engagement of vulnerable pupils, pupils at risk of PA, and pupils who have not engaged regularly with school during the coronavirus pandemic.

The SBM will complete the 'Educational setting status form' on a daily basis, based on the information on the attendance register.

The school will use the DfE's list of sub-codes in the management information system (MIS) to record non-attendance related to coronavirus.

5. Pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA)

The school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA), in conjunction with all relevant external authorities, where necessary.

The SBM and SENCo will:
- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
  - Sending letters to parents.
  - Having regular teacher reviews.

- Engaging with LA attendance teams.
- Consider using fixed penalty notices.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care.

Where a pupil becomes at risk of PA, the school will:
- Welcome pupils back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meet with pupils to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems.
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Lead **weekly** check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Make regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school attendance system will be used to give an accurate and informative view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns within groups, including:
- Children in need
- LAC
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND

6. Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence.

A **telephone call** will be made to the parent of any pupil who has not reported their child's absence on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:
- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the SBM/Head/SENCo. The school will inform the LA, on a **termly** basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below **85 percent**, the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.