

Addendum to Attendance Policy September 2020

Information regarding attendance at school from September 2020

From September, all schools should revert to using the attendance codes that were in place prior to the outbreak as detailed in the attendance guidance. This sets out clear expectations in relation to pupils returning to school in September 2020 and emphasises that a return to school is mandatory.

This means that the usual expectations on attendance will apply:

- Parents still have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where they are registered
- Schools continue to have responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- Still have the ability to issue sanctions, including issuing fines or prosecution, in line with local authority codes of conduct.

Please see the link below for more information

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907535/School_attendance_guidance_for_2020_to_2021_academic_year.pdf

The Department for Education have also published an addendum to the attendance advice issued on 6th August 2020.

A further code has been added to the recording of attendance for pupils not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>

This means that for the following pupils, they can be recorded in the attendance register using the code X.

- Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine
- Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a future local lockdown scenario only.

Shielding

In Blackburn with Darwen, shielding advice has been extended until 7th September 2020. Children still on the shielding list (or family members still on the shielding list) may be contacted by the government and advised to stay at home. Families will receive a letter if they are required to shield again or for an extended period of time. Parents will be able to

share that letter with school. Non-attendance in these circumstances should be recorded as code X.

Schools should contact parents of pupils who are shielding when measures in the local area are lifted and shielding is paused again, to set out the expectation that they can return to school. Code X should **not** be used for sessions after the pupil has been advised to return to school.

Pupils and families who are anxious about returning to school

Schools should bear in mind the potential concerns of pupils, parents and households who may be reluctant or anxious about returning to school and support should be put in place to address this. Schools should discuss any concerns raised by parents and provide reassurance of the measures they are putting in place to reduce the risk in school. However, schools still need to make it clear to parents that pupils of compulsory school age must be in school.

Schools should keep a record of the actions they have taken to reassure families and support a return to school.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#section-1-public-health-advice-to-minimise-coronavirus-covid-19-risks>

If a pupil remains absent from school and none of the statutory reasons for absence apply the school should record the absence as unauthorised and schools should contact their named Inclusion Officer to agree next steps.