

Attendance and Punctuality Policy: Covid-19 Addendum



Approved by:	CFC Committee	Date:	
Last reviewed on:	October 2020		
Next review date:			

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1. Aims and scope

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

- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Supporting parents/carers and students 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 students.

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.

This addendum reflects the latest advice from the Local Authority.

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 students of compulsory school age to attend school unless:

- They have been granted an authorised absence by the school in line with section 3.6 of our 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 student'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 Student develops symptoms or lives with someone who does

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

If the student's test result is negative: the student 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 student lives with tests negative: the student will stop self-isolating and return to school

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

The student's parent/carer must notify the school about the positive test result as soon as possible. In the event of a positive test result, the school will need to take action immediately. Please email the following addresses immediately:

Emma Wijnberg - Deputy Headteacher (e.wijnberg@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk)

Deborah Gostling - Deputy Headteacher (d.gostling@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk)

Jennifer Skinner - Attendance and Welfare (j.skinner@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk)

Between the hours of 8-5pm on Monday to Friday, please also phone our main reception and ask for them to get a member of the senior leadership team to speak with you directly about a positive Covid case. Please do not leave a message on a voicemail, instead please ask for Reception to get someone in person.

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

See the definition for 'close contact' in section 2 of this addendum. See Appendix 2 for a Covid 19 Absence Guide.

4.3. Student 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 student must quarantine for 14 days on their arrival to the UK and return to school thereafter.

4.4 Student 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 j.skinner@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk or a photocopy to the school address.

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

4.5 Remote learning provision

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

- › Our approach and expectations regarding remote education are set out in our remote learning contingency plan and the remote learning policy
- › We will keep a record of, and monitor, student 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 student is:

- › Present
- › Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- › Absent
- › Unable to attend due to 'exceptional circumstances' (as defined in section 3.9 of 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)

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

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 and plan appropriate support for the child and family
- › Notify their social worker, where they have one

If a student does not attend because they, and/or their parent/carer are concerned about returning to school because of coronavirus, we will arrange a phone call/video meeting with the family to explain the protective measures the school is taking to keep students safe.

6.1 Legal sanctions

Normal rules on legal sanctions apply and can be found in section 3.7 of the usual Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum termly by Emma Quartey, Assistant Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

Appendix 1: student 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	Definition	Scenario
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student has to self-isolate because they have symptoms or live with someone who does, and are waiting for their test results
I	Illness	Student remains unwell following a negative test result (i.e. with a different illness)
I	Illness	Student has to continue to self-isolate because they tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student has to self-isolate (for 14 days) because someone they live with tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student has to self-isolate (for 14 days) because they are a close contact of someone who tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student has to quarantine (for 14 days) after a trip to a non-exempt country
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student is required to shield in the case of a local lockdown, or lives with someone who is required to shield
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student is asked not to attend in the case of local lockdown

Appendix 2: Covid 19 Absence Guide

Covid-19 related staff/student absence

A quick reference guide for families/staff

What to do if...	Action needed	Return to school when...
<p>My child has Covid-19 symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIGH TEMPERATURE – this means they feel hot to touch on chest or back • A NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24hrs • A LOSS OR CHANGE TO YOUR SENSE OF SMELL OR TASTE – this means they've noticed they cannot smell or taste anything. 	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</p> <p>Contact school to inform us.</p> <p>Self-isolate the WHOLE household while getting the symptomatic person tested.</p> <p>Get a test.</p> <p>INFORM SCHOOL OF THE TEST RESULT</p>	<p>The test comes back negative and if the fever is gone.</p> <p>Children can return with a cough after a negative test as this can last for some time.</p>
My child tests positive for Covid-19	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</p> <p>Contact school to inform us.</p> <p>Quarantine the household for 14 days and the patient for a minimum of ten days.</p>	<p>Ten days has passed and they feel better but as the household has to quarantine for 14 days they possibly can't return until someone is able to bring them.</p> <p>Can return with a cough after minimum of 10 days as this symptom can last for several weeks.</p>
My child tests negative for Covid-19	<p>CONTACT THE SCHOOL</p> <p>Discuss when your child can come back to school (same day/next day).</p>	The test comes back negative.
My child is ill with symptoms not linked to Covid-19	FOLLOW USUAL SCHOOL ABSENCE POLICY PROCEDURE	For sickness/diarrhoea MUST be clear for 48 hours before returning to school.
Someone in my household has Covid-19 symptoms	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</p> <p>Contact school.</p> <p>Self-isolate the whole household until person with symptoms tests negative.</p>	When person with symptom gets a negative test.
Someone in my household tests positive for Covid-19	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</p> <p>Contact school.</p> <p>Student isolates at home for 14 days.</p>	The child has completed 14 days isolation at home.
NHS test & trace has identified my child has been in close contact of someone with a confirmed case of Covid-19	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</p> <p>Contact school.</p> <p>Student isolates at home for 14 days.</p>	The child has completed 14 days isolation at home.
We/my child has travelled and has to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine	<p>Please do not travel if quarantine requirements will mean a child missing school as an unauthorised absence.</p> <p>Student isolates for 14 days from return date. Unauthorised absence fine</p>	The quarantine period of 14 days has been completed.

	may be issued.	
We have received medical advice that my child must resume shielding	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</p> <p>Contact school.</p> <p>Shield until you are informed that restrictions are lifted and shielding is paused again.</p> <p>Liaise with school re: home learning.</p>	You are informed that shielding advice has been lifted and your child can return to school.
My child's bubble is closed due to a confirmed case of Covid-19 in school.	<p>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</p> <p>Support your child at home with remote learning for 14 days.</p> <p>Siblings can come to school if their bubbles remain open. Family members do not need to isolate.</p>	School will inform you when the bubble will be reopened.