

Attendance Policy Addendum – Attendance guidance from 8th March 2021

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Government Guidance states that all pupils in all year groups will return to school full time from week commencing March 8th.
- 1.2 This addendum to the Attendance Policy is for use by all Tudor Grange Academies Trust schools during the arrangements of pupils returning to school now the prevalence of COVID 19 has decreased. It is to be used in conjunction with, and read alongside, the Attendance & Punctuality Policy.
- 1.3 We will continue to promote good attendance; it is the responsibility of the whole of the Tudor Grange Academies Trust community, thus enabling and encouraging all pupils to achieve excellence. Attendance has a direct relationship with the attainment of individuals and groups of pupils and the standards thereby achieved by the school. Securing good attendance is a fundamental responsibility within our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in our schools.
- 1.4 Absence from school remains detrimental to a child's education. Any unexplained absence from school will be followed up in the normal manner as per the existing policy. This is in line with our safeguarding policy and practices.
- 1.5 The risk to children themselves becoming severely ill from COVID 19 is extremely low, there are however negative health impacts of not attending school.
- 1.6 Schools are to reinforce that it is the parents' duty to secure their child's regular attendance at school where the child is a registered pupil at school, and they are of compulsory school age.
- 1.7 It is the school's responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence.
- 1.8 Schools are able to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct, however The Trust would like to ensure we have exhausted every alternative option prior to issuing sanctions, including fixed penalty notices.

2. Prevention

- 2.1 Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have COVID19 symptoms or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school

3. How can schools within the Trust encourage pupils to attend and maintain good attendance?

- 3.1 Schools across the Trust will need to communicate clear and consistent expectations around school attendance to families (and any other professionals who work with the family where appropriate) throughout the summer ahead of the new school year.
- 3.2 Staff need to identify pupils who are reluctant or anxious about returning or who are at risk of disengagement and develop plans for re-engaging them. This should include disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people, especially those who were

persistently absent prior to the pandemic or who have not engaged with school regularly during the pandemic.

- 3.3 Schools are required to put measures in place for those families who will need additional time and support to secure pupils' regular attendance.
- 3.4 Staff will need to work closely with other professionals as appropriate to support the return to school, including continuing to notify the child's social worker, if they have one, of non-attendance.

4. Safeguarding

- 4.1 We will continue to apply all safeguarding responsibilities connected to pupil attendance at school as detailed in the policy.
- 4.2 Non-attendance of timetabled pupils should be followed up in the usual way and the reason for absence should be documented on Bromcom.
- 4.3 Where every effort has been made to contact a family of a child that has failed to attend and there are safeguarding concerns, a home visit may be required. No staff member should enter the property, they should ensure that social distancing is adhered to. If further concerns are raised reporting should take place through the normal channels.
- 4.4 Please follow the Trust Staff Home Visits Policy when undertaking home visits.

5. Alternative Provision

- 5.1 Pupils in alternative provision (AP) settings (including pupil referral units, AP academies and AP free schools) will return to school from week commencing March 8th.
- 5.2 To support this return, AP settings must comply with health and safety law which requires employers to assess risks and put in place proportionate control measures.

6. Becoming unwell at school

- 6.1 If anyone in the school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must be sent home and advised to follow '[stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID19\) infection](#)', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 10 days and should arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.
- 6.2 If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age and needs of the child, with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

- 6.3 If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom must be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.
- 6.4 PPE must be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs). More information on PPE use can be found in the [‘Safe working in education childcare and children’s social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment \(PPE\)’](#) guidance.
- 6.5 Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any pupils who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test) or if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive (see below) or they have been requested to do so by NHS Test & Trace.

7. ‘Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)’.

- 7.1 No one with symptoms should attend a setting for any reason.
- 7.2 The DfE have added a new category of non-attendance – ‘not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)’. This category must only be used to record sessions that take place in the 2020 to 2021 academic year where a pupil does not 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)
- 7.3 In line with the Secretary of State’s expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend a given session, this new category of non-attendance will **not** count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

8. Pupils identified as clinically extremely vulnerable

- 8.1 The advice for pupils who have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable is to shield and stay at home as much as possible until further notice. They are advised not to attend school while shielding advice applies nationally.
- 8.2 All 16 to 18 year olds with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality will be offered a vaccine in priority group 6 of the vaccination programme. At present, these children should continue to shield, and self-isolate if they have symptoms or are identified as a close contact of a positive case, even if they have been vaccinated.
- 8.3 Schools are able to request from parents a copy of the shielding letter sent to CEV children, to confirm that they are advised not to attend school or other educational settings whilst shielding guidance is in place.

- 8.4 As normal, parents **should not** be encouraged to request unnecessary medical evidence such as doctors' notes from their GP when their child is absent from school due to illness. This is especially important in the context of the pandemic and the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination programme. If evidence is required, it can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, text or email confirmation of appointments, etc. rather than a doctors' note. As usual, input from GPs should only be sought where there are complex health needs or persistent absence issues.
- 8.5 We are required to provide remote education to pupils who are unable to attend school because they are complying with government guidance or legislation around coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement with this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

9. Recording non-attendance related to coronavirus

9.1 The set of sub codes to record non-attendance related to coronavirus is as follows:

- **Code X01:** Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school. This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.
- **Code X02:** Pupil self-isolating with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms. This code is used for pupils who are self-isolating because they have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) but they have not yet had a positive test.
- **Code X03:** Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) inside the school setting. This code is used for pupils who are self-isolating because of contact with a case of coronavirus (Covid-19) inside the school setting (for example, individuals, classes, year groups or bubbles who have been sent home because of potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID19) within the school setting). Includes test and trace where it applies.
- **Code X04:** Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) outside the school setting. This code is used for pupils who are self-isolating because of contact with a case of coronavirus (Covid-19) OUTSIDE the school setting (for example, a household member with symptoms or a confirmed positive test, or a social contact or a contact with someone from the local community with a confirmed positive test). Includes pupils advised to self-isolate through test and trace where appropriate.
- **Code X05:** Pupils required to self-isolate as part of quarantine requirement (after arriving in the UK from a non-exempt country or territory). This code is used for pupils who are required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK.
- **Code X06:** Pupil not in school because they have been advised specifically by their Doctor or public health authority that they are clinically extremely vulnerable and should not attend. This code is used for the small number of pupils who have been specifically identified as clinically extremely vulnerable and advised that they should not attend school.
- **Code X07:** Pupil advised specifically not to attend school as part of restrictions to education set out in Government advice. This is for pupils who as part of local or national restrictions to education settings, (including set out in the Contingency Framework and related guidance) are specifically advised not to attend school for public health reasons.

- **Code I01:** Illness. This code is used for pupils who are absent because of non-coronavirus (COVID-19) related illness or sickness.
- **Code I02:** Illness Confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19). This code is used for pupils who are absent because they have tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19).

9.2 Where these sub-codes are used, consideration still needs to be given on an individual basis whether Code X is the appropriate code for a given non-attendance. Code X should only be used where a pupil does not attend school because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from either Public Health England (PHE 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)

Where a pupil's non-attendance does not meet these requirements, it should not be recorded as Code X and schools should consider whether another code can be used.

9.3 Each school will be required to make a daily submission of absence information to the DfE.

10. Self-isolating

10.1 In all cases of self-isolation, schools should ask parents to inform them immediately about the outcome of a test. Schools should not require evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

10.4 In the event of a confirmed coronavirus (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 10 full days commencing the day after they were last in close contact with the person that has tested positive when they were infectious.

10.5 Pupils may be required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine following a visit abroad. Parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine.