

Attendance Addendum in Response to Covid-19 Pandemic



ALLINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY COVID-19 ADDENDUM

Allington Primary School believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children and young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become well-rounded, confident and emotionally resilient individuals who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

We are committed to:

- Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.
- Ensuring children attend school on time every day that school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.
- Promoting good attendance by the development of positive attitudes towards school.
- Striving to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.
- Making the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence to ensure that every pupil has access to full time education to which they are entitled.

In light of Government guidance with regards to self-isolation during the Covid-19 pandemic, some temporary changes have been made to the way the school monitors and records attendance. This addendum to Allington Primary School's Attendance Policy is with immediate effect and will remain in place unless alterations are stated within the addendum.

The Department of Education has outlined their expectation that all students should return to school in September. This addendum has been written in accordance with:

Guidance for full opening: schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings?utm_source=0e6da19a-f422-4893-af47-770e78e58269&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Collection: guidance for schools and other educational settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19>

According to Government guidance, from the start of the Autumn term 2020, pupil attendance is mandatory and the usual rules on attendance apply including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

The school will therefore continue to monitor attendance as per our attendance policy, and will continue to liaise with parents and external agencies where a child's attendance falls below the school's target of 97.0% attendance.

However, there will be some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to Covid-19. Government regulations state that these pupils' absences will be recorded under a new category of non-attendance 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19). 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, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

Examples of when this category of non-attendance may be used include:

- If a pupil is required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed Covid-19
 - Pupils who have symptoms should self-isolate and get a test
 - If the test is negative and they feel well, they should return to school
 - If the test is negative but the pupil still feels unwell, their non-attendance will be recorded as 'illness' and will be counted as an absence for statistical purposes
 - If the test is positive, the pupil should isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms
 - If someone in the household has symptoms, the whole household should self-isolate until that member has had a negative test or for the full 14 days from the onset of symptoms.
- If a pupil is required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed Covid-19
 - NHS Track and Trace states pupils should self-isolate for the full 14 days if they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19
 - Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.
- If a pupil is clinically extremely vulnerable in a future lockdown situation only.
 - Shielding advice changed on 1st August 2020, meaning even those remaining on the shielded patient list can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding
 - If local guidance changes, those who remain on the shielding list may be contacted and advised to self-isolate. They will receive a letter which should be shared with the school
 - When local restrictions are lifted, schools will contact parents to advise that children can return to school

LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

There has been no change to the procedure for requesting leave of absence. All requests for leave of absence, should be sent in writing to the Mrs Howson via the office. As always, parents should endeavour to plan holidays and trips abroad outside of term time.

Requests for leave of absence should include as much information as possible and evidence where necessary, to ensure an appropriate decision is reached. Each request will continue to be assessed on a case by case basis considering any exceptional circumstances.

QUARANTINE ARRANGEMENTS

If a pupil is required by legislation to self-isolate as a part of a period of quarantine, for example because they have visited a country on the UK's current quarantine list, their absence may be authorised if there is evidence to substantiate that the holiday was arranged prior to March 2020 and during school holiday time.

If evidence to confirm this is included with the leave of absence request, then the absence will be classed as an authorised absence and be recorded with a C code. Parents should consider any possible quarantine requirements before any leave is taken.

Date: 19.10.20

To Be Reviewed: In line with changes for Department for Education and other Government guidance