

Attendance & Punctuality and Registration of Pupils Policies: Temporary Covid-19 Addendum – January 2021

Scope and duration

This addendum provides additional information in respect of how the current Attendance & Punctuality Policy and the Registration of Pupils Policy for all Anthem schools will be applied from 5 January 2021. It will continue in operation until further guidance is issued by the Department for Education.

Which pupils can attend school?

On 4 January 2021, the Prime Minister announced a new national lockdown to begin on 5 January 2021. During this lockdown period, primary and secondary school children are **only** eligible to attend school if:

- at least one parent or carer is a critical worker; OR
- they meet the definition for vulnerable children.

All other school children will be offered remote education until at least the February half term, as instructed by Government.

Early years providers should stay open and allow children to attend their normal timetabled hours. This includes nursery provision within primary schools but not Reception years.

Children who are self-isolating and children with COVID-19 symptoms who are waiting on the results of a test should not attend school.

Children who are clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend either.

The Department for Education has advised schools not to allow children other than those who are vulnerable or whose parent or carer is a critical worker to attend on-site, even if the school believes it can accommodate more children safely.

Pupil attendance

The school will continue to record attendance in the register and follow up on any absences of pupils who are expected to attend. If your child is in the vulnerable category but you do not wish them to attend, the school will authorise the absence during this lockdown period. There will be no penalties for absence during this time.

Critical workers

Critical workers are classified as parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus and EU transition response. Further information can be found through this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision>

Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can attend school if required. However, critical workers parents should keep their child at home if they can. We encourage parents to consider the spirit of the lockdown when making their decision.

The school will speak to parents and carers to identify who requires a school place and may ask for evidence (such as an ID badge or payslip) to prove someone is a critical worker.

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include children who have a social worker, an education, health and care plan (EHCP) or who may be vulnerable for another reason at local discretion (“otherwise vulnerable”).

Vulnerable children are strongly encouraged to attend school. However, they should self-isolate if they:

- have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves
- live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive
- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19) and are requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace or the Public Health England (PHE) advice service.

If the school has to temporarily close on public health advice, we will inform the local authority to discuss alternative arrangements for vulnerable children and work towards welcoming back pupils as soon as possible, where feasible to do so.

Addressing non-attendance

If a vulnerable child does not attend, the school will speak to the parent or carer and social worker and Local Authority (where applicable) to explore the reasons for this and to address any concerns raised, and make sure that the child is able to access remote education and support while they are at home. The school will encourage the child to attend school, particularly where the social worker agrees that the child’s attendance would be appropriate.

Parents/cares of vulnerable children should notify the school as normal if your child is unable to attend so that the school can provide remote education. The school will authorise the absence during this lockdown period and penalties will not apply during this time.

Recording attendance

Pupils who are not eligible to attend a session

All pupils who are not eligible to be in school during the lockdown period should be marked as **Code X** on the school attendance register. They are not attending because they are following public health advice.

Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker

Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can attend school if required. If they do not attend, then they should be marked as **Code X** on the school attendance register. They are not attending because they are following public health advice to stay at home where possible.

Pupils who are expected to attend a session but do not – vulnerable children

As vulnerable children are expected to attend school full time, they will not be marked as Code X if they are not in school (except if they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining).

If the parent/carer of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent, they should let the school know. This should be recorded as **Code C** (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

Educational setting status form

From 11 January 2021, we will resume completing the educational setting status form and submitting it to the DfE by 2pm every day or as soon as we can after that time.

The number of vulnerable children and children of critical workers attending the school will be included in the daily attendance figures returned to the DfE as well as information about the remote education arrangements made by the school.

If the school is closed, we will still complete the form every day so the DfE is aware of the closure. However, the school does not need to submit it if we are closed for a planned holiday like half-term.

Review

Anthem Schools Trust will review the content of this addendum in line with Government guidelines as and when necessary.