

January 2021 COVID addendum - Attendance

During the period of national lockdown, our schools will remain open to vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers only.

All other pupils will receive remote education. Pupils who are self-isolating should not attend school. Clinically extremely vulnerable pupils are also advised not to attend school.

Schools will follow up on absences of the pupils who are expected to be in school but where a parent wishes for their child to be absent, we will authorise the absence during this national lockdown period. Absence will not be penalised.

We strongly encourage vulnerable children and young people to attend our schools. Parents/carers of vulnerable children and young people are strongly encouraged to take up the place. If vulnerable children and young people do not attend, we will:

- work together with the local authority and social worker (where applicable) to follow up with the parent or carer to explore the reason for absence, discussing their concerns using supporting guidance considering the child's circumstances and their best interests
- work together with the local authority and social worker (where applicable) and other relevant partners to encourage the child or young person to attend educational provision, particularly where the social worker agrees that the child or young person's attendance would be appropriate

Where schools grant a leave of absence to a vulnerable child or young person we will still speak to parents and carers, and social workers (where applicable) to explore the reasons for this and any concerns raised. The discussions will focus on the welfare of the child or young person and ensure that the child or young person is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home.

Recording attendance

All pupils who are not eligible to be in school will be marked as Code X. They are not attending because they are following public health advice.

As vulnerable children are still 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 of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent, the parent should let the school know. The Principal will consider any applications for leave of absence given the exceptional circumstances. These will be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.