

Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) during the 2020 to 2021 academic year, separate arrangements will be provided during any Lockdown (6 August 2020)

Purpose of the document

- This is an addendum to the DfE [school attendance: guidance for schools](#) and replaces any previous guidance on attendance issued during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- It explains changes made to school attendance regulations which will be in place from 24 August 2020 for the 2020/21 academic year.

Attendance expectations

- From the start of the autumn term 2020 pupil attendance will be mandatory, and the usual rules on will apply, i.e.:
 - Parents' have a duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly
 - Schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
 - The Local Authorities ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices

New for 2020 to 2021 – not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

- Although school attendance is mandatory, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to COVID-19. The Government have therefore made changes to the regulations to ensure that these circumstances are recorded consistently.
- **A new category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' has therefore been added.**
- This category must only be used to record sessions 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 COVID-19 from Public Health England and/or the Department of Health and Social Care
 - Prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19
- No parent should be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend school, so this new category won't count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

Attendance codes

- From the Autumn term, schools should resume use of the pre-COVID-19 attendance and absence codes (as set out on page 10 of the [attendance guidance](#)) along with the new category.
- **Pupils who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' should be recorded using Code X**
- Schools should continue to use code X for non-compulsory school aged pupils who are not expected to attend a session, as before the outbreak

Circumstances where 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' could apply

- Pupils required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19
- Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19
- Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine
- Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a future local lockdown scenario only
- Local lockdown

Remote education

- If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19), schools are expected to immediately offer them access to remote education.

Data collection

- Collection of school attendance data as part of the school census will resume in January 2021. Subject to legislation, from January 2021, the census will collect attendance codes in addition to absence codes.
- Further information will follow on any additional attendance data needed to monitor the impact of COVID-19 and support government planning.