

Addendum to Attendance Policy: COVID 19

June 2020

This policy addendum should be read in conjunction with the Trust's attendance policy.

The addendum has been drawn up in light of the DfE guidance issued on 1st June:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-foreducational-settings>

This addendum provides additional information in respect of how the current Attendance Policy for The Robinswood Academy Trust will be applied during the current Covid-19 pandemic. The addendum will apply for as long as the government guidance states that changes to pupils' attendance at school remain in place.

Compulsory Attendance at School: as per government guidance, the requirement for pupils to attend school every day has ceased to be compulsory. Parents currently may choose whether to send their children. Attendance is however, encouraged. As such, the current legislation around school attendance has been relaxed. Parents will not be prosecuted or fined if they choose not to send their children to school during this current period. It is likely at this time that many pupils will fall into the current definition of persistently absent. As such the definition of persistently absent will be suspended for this period.

Absence from school remains detrimental to a child's education. Parents should continue to notify the school if their child is not going to be attending school once they have registered for a place. During this period, where a child is expected in school, 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. Schools will continue to apply all safeguarding responsibilities connected to pupil attendance at school as detailed in the policy.

As per the government and Public Health England Guidance, pupils who are ill or who fall ill whilst at school will be required to stay away from school. If Covid-19 is suspected, pupils should stay away from school, as should their siblings and other members of their household, until they have recovered or have received a negative test. Proof of a negative test will be requested before the pupil returns to school, if pre the 7 day isolation period, or the 7 day isolation period should have passed.

Attendance Registers:

The most recent guidance requires schools to use their attendance register from 1st June and to send the educational setting status form to the DfE. Schools are no longer be required to send the daily return for attendance to GCC as they will obtain this information from the DfE; it is therefore vital that all schools complete their return to the DfE daily.

During this time the children will start school at staggered times. The registers will remain open in line with the length of time indicated in the main policy, i.e. starting from the staggered time.

With regard to completion of the attendance register all non-attendance will be recorded as authorised and the codes to be used are as follows:

X Code – to be used for pupils who are not eligible to attend a session

This includes any pupil who is not in an eligible year group or priority group (children of critical workers and vulnerable children). This may also include children who are in an eligible year group but are not required in school for a specific session, i.e., year 10 and year 12 pupils who are not among the quarter of pupils expected in school at a given time. (This is a temporary code during COVID as usually this code is used where non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.)

Y Code – to be used for pupils who are not attending due to shielding, self isolating or the pupil has an EHCP and their risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school.

I Code – to be used where a pupil cannot attend school due to illness, as would normally be the case

In order to complete the DfE status form schools should note whether the illness involves coronavirus symptoms.

C Code – to be used when a pupil does not attend school and where no other authorised absence code is appropriate

i.e. despite being eligible and is not shielding, self-isolating, unable to attend due to illness, nor has an EHCP risk assessment saying their needs cannot be safely met at school.

D Code – to be used where a pupil is attending another school at which they are registered as would normally be the case

B Code – to be used by the home school of a pupil who is attending a host school on a temporary basis because their home school cannot accommodate them.

Where other specific authorised absence and attendance codes are more appropriate schools may want to use these as usual, such as **code M** (medical appointment).

Date of addendum: June 2020