

EMERSON PARK ACADEMY

COVID-19 – Attendance Policy addendum

Attendance expectations

From the start of the autumn term 2020 pupil attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will 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 are to record attendance and follow up absence. The ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct will apply.

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

Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term 2020, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

To ensure we record this accurately and consistently, we have made changes in line with DfE guidance to add a new category of non-attendance – 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'. Pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' will be recorded using code X.

This category will only be used to record sessions that take place in the 2020 to 2021 academic year 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 coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England (PHE) and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)³
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of 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 a given session, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' could apply.

- Students who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Students who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19).

- Students who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine.
- Students who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a future local lockdown scenario only e.g. a Local lockdown.

Safeguarding

We will continue to apply all safeguarding responsibilities connected to student attendance at school as detailed in the attendance and safeguarding policy.

Non-attendance of timetabled students will be followed up in the usual way and the reason for absence will be documented on SIMS

Where every effort has been made to contact a family of a child that has failed to attend and there are safeguarding concerns, a home visit may be required.

No staff member should enter the property, they should ensure that social distancing is adhered to. If further concerns are raised reporting should take place through the normal channels.

Guidance for those when undertaking home visits -

- Do not enter the home
- Knock on the door and then speak to parent/carer and child from a safe distance ideally 2 metres from the front door
- If a family is self-isolating, view the child through a window and ascertain as best you can through gestures, thumbs up, waving, lip reading, etc. that the child is safe and well
- It is important to physically see the child, even if only through a window
- The home visit must be completed with another member of staff

Links with other policies

- Safeguarding policy
- Attendance policy
- Remote learning policy

To be reviewed in June 2021