

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Reviewed Nov 2021
Review June 2023

This policy will contain within it, the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

This policy document on attendance and punctuality has been produced to explain to all concerned (Students, Parent / Carers & Staff) the rights, responsibilities and rules relating to the attendance of students at this school. If children do not arrive in school, they cannot be educated. Furthermore, good attendance promotes the best learning opportunities, punctuality and reliability: all valuable attributes for a successful working life after leaving school.

Emerson Park Academy values the importance of high attendance and good punctuality at its school. It recognises that high attendance maximises student educational opportunities and contributes significantly to high student achievement, progress and overall attainment at school.

We seek to ensure that all our pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her full potential.

Emerson Park Academy is committed to providing a full and inclusive education to all students and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels valued and secure. School staff will work with students and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge those who give low priority to attendance and punctuality. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents / carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Each year the Academy examines its attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is improving and continues to work towards the target set. Currently we are working towards a Whole School Attendance Target of 96% as we continually work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all students.

END of YEAR <i>(All figures are Sept – July)</i>	OVERALL ATTENDANCE	PERSISTENT ABSENCE
2015-2016	95.20	12.01
2016-2017	93.80	13.90
2017-2018	90.70	17.96
2018-2019	91.87	18.56
2019-2020	91.69	19.79
2020-2021	90.70	19.57

School attendance is subject to various educational laws and this school's attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Government, Department for Education and Havering Council.

- <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>
- <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance>
- https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20006/schools_and_education/220/find_a_school

Permitting absence from school without good reason is an offence by the parent(s) or carer(s).
Guidance for Parents / Carers

You have a legal responsibility to ensure your child attends school every day. By law, only the school can approve absences not parents. It is for the school to judge whether the explanation given is satisfactory justification for the absence. Parentally condoned unauthorised absence is a serious problem and the school will involve the Local Authority (LA) Attendance Service at an early stage if necessary.

Why must my child attend school regularly?

- A good education will help give your child the best possible start in life. If your child does not attend school regularly, he/she will not be able to keep up with the work and will miss out on other aspects of school life such as friendship groups and life skills
- Employers look for reliability and good school attendance and punctuality is an important indication of this. Children who have not attended their school regularly have less chance of getting a good job
- Young people who are absent from school for no good reason are at risk of becoming victims of crime or abuse. They may also be drawn into anti-social behaviour or criminal activity

What is an authorised absence?

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval / consent in advance for a student to be out of school, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence.

Acceptable reasons for absence may include:

- Illness/ Isolating as a Confirmed COVID-19 case
- Emergency medical / dental appointments
- Family bereavement
- Day of religious observance
- Exclusion/fixed term suspensions – results from a decision taken by the school. The school is responsible for setting work for the excluded students after a set number of days.

Please note however that they are still counted an absence from school and will reduce a pupil's level of attendance.

Consent in advance for an authorised absence may be also granted by the Head teacher when a student is asked, for instance, to represent a recognised organisation (e.g. Scouts, Cadets, Salvation Army etc.) and may be obtained, in advance, from the head teacher following a request in writing.

Excessive amounts of authorised absence can seriously disrupt a student's continuity of learning. Inappropriate use of authorised absences can be as damaging to a child's education as unauthorised absence.

School Procedures

Any student who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period will have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity.

The Head Teacher or a member of staff acting on his behalf will authorise absence if appropriate. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised. A range of support for parents / carers will be made available where they (the parent \ carers) are seeking the schools assistance to encourage a child to attend school more regularly. Emerson Park Academy will not ask students to remain at home, other than those that are formally suspended for a fixed term or permanently excluded, unless there is a serious risk to the student in question or other students in the school. In this case the school will seek advice from the LA to establish a way forward.

What is an unauthorised absence?

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no leave has been granted. Unacceptable reasons for absence may include:

- Holidays during term time
- Visiting relatives
- Shopping
- Birthday Trips/Celebrations
- Looking after siblings
- Routine medical/dental appointments (these should be arranged after school or during school holidays)
- Arriving late after the morning register has closed
- Parent condoned absences

What steps must I take if my child is absent?

We expect a parent to telephone the school daily to report an absence using our Absence line: 01708 463065 or 01708 475285 ext.267.

Parents should provide the following information:

1. Student's full name and ideally their Form class or Year Group
2. Reason for absence

We may request medical evidence to justify frequent or extensive absences.

If your child is absent for four or more schools days then you are required to provide medical evidence. If medical evidence is not provided the academy may consider recording a pupils absence as unauthorise.

If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we may not authorise the absence, and this will be recorded on your child's attendance record.

The school operates Groupcall a SMS / text based system. Groupcall generates a text message to the first named parent of the student, as held on our database, informing them if their child does not register for morning registration. If you receive a Groupcall text we would like you to either reply to the text or call the school on the 01708 475285 ext. 267 to confirm their absence or if you believe they should have registered in school, please call immediately.

Unexplained absences and / or frequent absences can be a serious cause for concern and therefore in terms of Safeguarding of Children and Young People, any unexplained absences will be a priority for this school.

Why are registers important?

- Registers are legal documents which record whether parents or carers have fulfilled their legal obligations and may be produced as evidence for an offence

- They are the best way to track students in cases of emergency (e.g. in the unlikelyhood of a fire)
- They assist the Academy in fulfilling safeguarding duties

What happens if my child is late?

Ideally your child will be on site by 08.40 and be in school by 08:45am for morning registration at 08:50 am. If your child arrives after registration has started he/she will be marked as late.

- Late marks will be shown on your child's attendance record
- In circumstances such as extremely bad weather or transport difficulties the Academy may keep the register open for a longer period to accommodate this
- If your child is late twice in one week, an after-school detention will be arranged
- A pupil arriving late after the morning registers have closed will receive an unauthorised absence mark and will be set an after school detention. This will be counted an absence from school and will reduce a pupil's level of attendance.

Medical Appointments & Students Signing In/Out

The Academy request, where possible, that medical appointments are made outside of school hours. If you require your child to leave school during the day for any reason, then please notify the school in advance of the date and provide confirmation of their appointment. Pupils are expected to be absent for the minimum amount of time possible and where possible return to school to resume lessons.

Please note - Students must always sign in/out at the school reception when returning to school after an appointment and before leaving site for an appointment.

Can we take family holidays during term time?

In short - Family holidays can only be taken during school holiday periods (outside term time). Information on the Academies term dates and INSET days and early finishes can be found on our website <http://www.emersonparkacademy.org/>
The school calendar is also included each year inside your child's school planner.

Since September 1st 2013, following amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) regulations 2006; head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Previously the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2006** allow head teachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in "special circumstances" of up to ten school days leave per year. Head teachers could also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

As a result of this change parents/carers will be issued penalty notices (fines) according to the regulations set out below.

In September 1st 2013 amendments made to the 2007 Regulations in the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** came into force (see Appendix 1).

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their suspended child is not in a public place during the first five days of suspension/exclusion.

Please note that we will not authorise requests for leave retrospectively.

Parents of pupils in Year's 10 and 11 (key Stage 4 pupils) are strongly discouraged from taking their child on holiday during term time whilst studying for their GCSE's/vocational skills courses.

Term time leave

The Head teacher of the Academy will consider all term time leave requests submitted in advance. Each request will be considered on its own merit and the impact upon the child's learning and wellbeing must be central to the decision made. However, a Head Teacher may take into account previous leave requests and other factors related to the child when making their decision.

Parents/carers who do not request term time leave in advance and take their child/children on 'unauthorised leave', or fail to keep the school informed of changes to leave arrangements, may receive a fine, be prosecuted and/or the children may lose their place at their school.

Requesting of term time leave in exceptional circumstances

Requests for exceptional term time leave must be made at least 20 school days in advance of any arrangements being made. This will allow sufficient time for the request to be considered by the school. The request should be made in writing using the 'Request for Leave' form (Appendix 3).

Exceptional term time leave requests must include specific start and end dates, as this will formally constitute the leave period. Where no specific dates are provided, then the request can neither be considered nor granted.

Parents/carers who are intending to travel abroad with their children during term time should not book travel prior to securing approval from the school.

Any changes to dates agreed by the school will require a re-submission for authorisation prior to departure.

The Head teacher's decision is final. The academy will not consider requests submitted after leave has already started or been taken.

Family Emergency – where no leave has been requested

There will be some occasions where it has not been possible for the parent/carer to make a request for exceptional term time leave.

Whilst emergency situations are often difficult, parents/carers are still required to contact the school at the earliest possible opportunity and submit a written request for exceptional term time leave.

This written request can be made on behalf of the parent/carer. The request must include a specific leave period including a return date.

Where parents/carers have not requested leave from the school which their child attends, the child is at risk of losing their place at the current school in accordance with Section 8 (h).

Considering the exceptional time leave request

The Academy will consider all exceptional term time leave requests on their own merit, in accordance with current legislation and guidance. We may seek advice from our Local Authority Attendance Officers, prior to making a decision, however, the final decision remains with the Head Teacher.

The following factors may also be considered prior to reaching a decision:

- Time of the academic year when the leave has been requested
- Duration of the absence – number of school days being missed
- The child's current attendance and punctuality rate
- Exceptional Term Time leave requested/taken in previous years
- Whether parents/carers have considered limiting the amount of time the child would be absent from school e.g. wrapping around school holidays
- Have alternative care arrangements been considered by the parent/carer to limit the time away from school
- Impact on any interventions, assessments or referrals being undertaken with the child or family e.g. family support, social care assessments, CAMHS, SEN
- The impact that the absence will have on the child

The decision and informing

The school will reach a decision and send a written response within 10 days of the leave request being received.

The decision will result in the term time leave request being either

- Authorised
- Unauthorised
- Part Authorised and Unauthorised

For example; Mr X has requested 3 weeks term time leave for his child. The school acknowledges that the reason given is important, but feels that 3 weeks is excessive and authorise 1 weeks leave, with the remaining 2 weeks being unauthorised.

What steps do I take if my child is avoiding school?

- Contact your son / daughters Head of Year immediately or Attendance Officer to seek support
It is important that we identify the reason for your child's absence (such as difficulties with school work, family difficulties or bullying)
- If difficulties cannot be resolved, the school may refer the child to the LA Attendance Officers
- In some cases you may find it helpful to contact the LA Attendance Officers yourself. Duty line contact number is 01708 431777

Guidance for Students

Students are largely responsible for their own punctuality and attendance. We expect our students to have attendance of at least 96%, which is the national average, with no unauthorised

absence. Lateness should be rare or non-existent. Parents/carers are expected to report/explain the reason for their child's absence.

Why must I attend school?

- It is a legal requirement to attend school
- To keep up with school work and achieve the best possible results
- To feel part of the school community
- To get a job. Good attendance and punctuality shows reliability – your attendance will be included in your reference
- To get a sixth form or college placement you desire

Punctuality to lessons

It is equally important that pupils are on time to each lesson. Some of the most important work in a class happens in the first few minutes when previous work is re-visited and understanding checked or the lesson aims & objectives are discussed by your subject teacher. If pupils are late to lessons, the subject teacher will impose a sanction in line with our school Behaviour for Learning Policy.

Having problems?

Problems with school work? Are you being bullied? Are your friends giving you a hard time? Are things difficult at home? You may think that truanting school is the answer but it can make things worse. *TALK TO SOMEONE* – your Form Tutor, your Head of Year, the Attendance Officer or your parents/carers. We will do everything we can to help you get over the problem.

What happens if I'm late to school in the morning, or late to Period 4 (afternoon registration)?

- The moving bell for registration sounds at 08:45, after which registration period starts at 8.50am. Students who arrive after 08:55 will be recorded as late by the Form Tutor
- Students who arrive late to school after 8.55am must report to the Main Office and sign in giving a reason. Coded 'L'.
- Students who arrive after 09:25 will be marked as absent and will not receive an attendance mark for the morning school session. Coded 'U'. The student will be required to provide a note or phone call from their parents / carers to explain / justify their absence.
- Students who have been late on two or more occasions (AM registration) in a week will receive a late detention with their Head of Year.
- Lateness is monitored by our Head of Year & Attendance Officer weekly and action is taken in line with our Attendance and Punctuality Procedures.
- In the afternoon, period 4 currently starts at 12.45pm (*times of the school day/lunch breaks adjusted to accommodate the Academy's Covid risk assessment*).

What does the school do to enhance attendance and punctuality?

The school has attendance targets to reduce both unauthorised and authorised absences in line with the national average and to improve attendance and punctuality year on year. To achieve this, the school has a number of initiatives including;

- Our Attendance Officer will meet weekly with our appointed LA Attendance Officers to monitor levels of attendance and punctuality for each year group
- Text message software is used to alert parents of students who do not arrive at school

- The Attendance Officer/Head of Year /LA Attendance Officers will hold meetings with parents of those pupils identified as needing to improve their attendance and/or punctuality with a view to discussing what support is required.
- These meetings and levels of attendance are recorded and monitored by the Attendance Officer using our attendance records and Whole School Attendance Tracker and discussed with the Assistant Head Teacher (responsible for Attendance) and Heads of Year.
- The Attendance Officer will track attendance of those pupils Educated Off Site with the aid of the Havering Alternative Provision platform.
- The Assistant Head Teacher (responsible for Attendance), assisted by the Attendance Officer will monitor attendance of those pupil based off site and will liaise regularly with the alternative education provider.
- The Attendance Officer will send Attendance Monitoring letters to parents / carers of students with attendance below 93% and our Attendance Officer in conjunction with our LA Attendance Officers will send letters to parents / carers of students with attendance less than 90%.
- The LA Attendance Officers will only become involved when attempts at direct resolution by the Academy have been unsuccessful.
- If the school feels there is an attendance or punctuality concern regarding a specific student and the school have been unable to resolve it, the LA Attendance Officer will write home to remind parents/carer of their legal responsibilities and maybe arrange a home visit, or invite parents to the school to discuss. If necessary legal action in conjunction with the Academy will be taken against the Parent / Carer.
- We will encourage parents/carer to share information with the Academy/LA Attendance Officer which is relevant to their child's non-attendance at school, so that every effort can be made to improve the situation.
- The Attendance Officer will distribute monthly persistent absentee list to Heads of Year.
- The Attendance Officer will distribute monthly persistent absentee list of vulnerable pupils to Safeguarding team.
- LA Attendance Officer will carry out home visit/welfare check for those pupils who have been absent/unseen for any period of time where there has been lacking or insufficient contact from their parent/carer.
- Heads of Year will ensure that attendance & punctuality is on the Agenda for all Year Group Meetings and is regularly discussed with their Form Tutors.
- Form Tutors will be notified monthly of each students level of attendance which they will record in each students planner and an email confirming their child's level of attendance will be issued to parents/carers.
- Every month Form Tutors, monitored by their HOY, will award PRIDE points to those students with 96-100% attendance and an email notification will be issued to parents/carers.
- The Attendance Officer and Assistant Head Teacher (responsible for Attendance) will report Whole Attendance figures termly to the Academy's Governing body.
- Text message software is used to alert parents of students who arrive late for school in the mornings.
- LA Attendance Officers will conduct regular 'late at the gate' checks to challenge and motivate as appropriate those pupils who arrive late in the mornings. Parents of those students that are signed in late by our LA Attendance Officers will be written to.
- Form Tutors assisted by Head of Year will issue sanctions to those pupils arriving late twice in one week or late after the morning register has closed.
- Head of Year, assisted by Attendance Officer will identify those pupils who are required to be monitored by the aid of a Punctuality Report to seek improvement.

- At the end of every term our Heads of Year will reward those students with 100% attendance with certificates. Trophies are awarded for the Form Group in each Year group with the best Attendance & Punctuality.
- In addition, a great deal of work is done in assemblies to encourage good attendance.
- The Havering School Admissions, Attendance and Inclusions Team is committed to the principle that all children have a right to a suitable education and must not be prevented from achieving or fulfilling that entitlement. LA Attendance Officer are employed by the Academy to ensure parents/carers carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to school attendance.
- Monitoring and improving attendance is the responsibility of all parties. The Academy, Parents / Carers, Students and LA Attendance Officer if necessary; supporting and working together in partnership.

Appendix 1

Schools Admissions, Attendance & Inclusions Team

London Borough of Havering
Education Services
9th Floor, Mercury House
Mercury Gardens
Romford RM1 3DW

t. 01708 431777

e. @havering.gov.uk

Dear Parent / Carer

Holidays During Term Time

As from September 2013, Schools and Head Teachers cannot authorise any leave of absence for holidays during term time unless they deem it to be an exceptional circumstance.

I must advise you that the Local Authority will consider issuing parents who take children on term time holidays with a Penalty Notice.

Fixed Penalty Notice

The Havering Code of Conduct (Penalty Notices) (England) determine that if a child of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly over a given period, the parent/parents/guardian may be subject to a fixed penalty notice. The notice is £60.00 fine for each child and imposed to each parent, if paid within 21 days. If unpaid the fine rises to £120.00 and if this is not paid within 28 days the LA have a duty to prosecute for the offence.

Prosecution

The parental duties under S7 444 (1) and 444 (1A) of the Education Act 1996 states that: **‘The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive full time education, suitable to the child’s age, ability and aptitude’** It is important for you to note that where a child or young person is failing to attend school on a regular basis, the Local Authority may take legal action against the parent in the form of a fixed penalty fine (see note above) or/and a prosecution in the Magistrates Court. If found guilty of this/these offences the penalty can be a fine of up to £2,500.00 and/or a custodial sentence of up to three months. If a parent/s are being prosecuted under section 444 (1A) defendants are required to attend court as a custodial sentence may be imposed, if they fail to do so a warrant may be issued.

It is the Local Authorities opinion that unauthorised holidays will not be accepted. Schools require that you provide a request for your holiday leave either by completing a leave of absence form issued by the school, or by putting your intention in writing.

Your request will then be looked into by the Head Teacher and if it is felt that the request falls under the category of ‘exceptional circumstances’ then the request will be granted. We understand that holidays are cheaper out of term time but this does not come under ‘exceptional circumstances.’

If your request is not granted then your child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised and you may be issued with a Penalty Notice.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Barbeau
Attendance Officer

Appendix 2

School Attendance Codes – Code descriptions and meaning

/ Present (AM)	Pupil is present at morning registration	Present
\ Present (PM)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration	Present
B Off site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity/placement approved by the school (NOT Dual registration)	Present
C Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances	Absent
D Dual registration	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered	Not counted in possible attendances
E Excluded /Suspended	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision made	Absent
G Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on holiday, not authorised by the school	Absent
H Authorised holiday	Pupil has been granted leave considered exceptional circumstances	Absent
I Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	School has been notified that a pupil is too unwell to attend due to illness	Absent
J Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective educational establishment	Present
L Late arrival (before registers closed)	Pupil arrives late before the register has closed	
M Medical/Dental appointments	Pupil is at an essential/emergency medical or dental appointment	Absent
N No reason yet provided for absence	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (the school will seek to amend this code once the reason for absence is confirmed)	Absent
O Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	School is not satisfied with the reason for absence/did not grant prior consent	Absent
P Approved sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school	Present
R Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of	Absent

	religious observance	
S Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leaving during their GCSE examination period	Absent
T Traveller absence	A registered Traveller Pupil is travelling, as agreed with the school	Absent
U Late (after registers closed)	Arrival after morning register has closed	Absent
V Educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an education trip/visit organised or approved by the school	Present
W Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement	Present
X Non-compulsory school age absence /Confirmed COVID case	Not counted in possible attendances	
Y Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances	
Z Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances	
# School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances	

Appendix 3



ENDEAVOUR
PERSEVERE
ACHIEVE

Emerson Park Academy

Request for Leave in Exceptional Circumstances

Name of Pupil		Date	
Year		Form	
Dates of Absences	From	To	

We regret to inform you that with effect from September 2008, any holidays taken during term time will be classified as unauthorised. However, exceptional circumstances will be considered.
This decision has been approved by our board of governors.

Please state below, with as much detail as possible, why you are unable to make arrangements for this absence to coincide with the 13 weeks annual holiday granted to all pupils.

Name of Parent		Signed	
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Office Use:

Approved ☐

Unauthorised ☐

***If unauthorised parent(s)/carer(s) may be subject to a penalty notice.
The Head Teachers decision is final.***

Appendix 4

Department for Education

Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) during the 2021 to 2022 academic year

Summary

This guidance sets out how schools should record where pupils are not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus in the 2021/22 academic year. This category should only be used to record where their attendance would be contrary to legislation or guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19 from Public Health England (PHE), or its successor body the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)^{[\[footnote 1\]](#)}, or the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC).

Attendance expectations

Attendance is mandatory. The usual rules on attendance continue to 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 to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education

Not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19

This category must be used to record sessions that take place in the 2021 to 2022 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 COVID-19 from Public Health England (PHE), or its successor UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19

This category must only be used to record where a pupil is not attending for the reasons set out above. It should not be used to record any other type of non-attendance or absence - for example, where a parent or pupil is anxious about attending school because of COVID-19.

The [schools COVID-19 operational guidance](#) sets out when pupils should self-isolate and when they ought to be tested in the 2021 to 2022 academic year.

Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19' could apply

In line with current legislation, and guidance from PHE (and its successor the UKHSA) and DHSC, examples are as follows.

Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should self-isolate and get a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test.

If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well, they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I (illness). Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.

If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance. Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to self-isolate. They should instead get a PCR test, and should only self-isolate if they test positive. If they do test positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, the school should use code X in the register.

Pupils who are self-isolating but who have not had a PCR test

In line with public health advice, pupils with symptoms must self-isolate and schools should strongly encourage pupils to take a PCR test. Where the pupil is unable to take a PCR test, the school should record the pupil as code X in the register.

Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes, in line with the [school attendance: guidance for schools](#).

Remote education

If a pupil is not attending school because their attendance would be contrary to government guidance or legislation around COVID-19, we expect schools to offer them access to remote education. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement with, this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

1. Public Health England is due to be abolished and its relevant functions for these purposes will be taken over by the UK Health Security Agency ('the UKHSA') on 1 October.