



The Gateway Primary Academy

Attendance Policy: Coronavirus Addendum

October 2020

Updated September 2021

Written by: Mr Cassem

Approved by the governing body on:

This addendum will be updated in line with national and local guidance. It was written in October 2020 and updated following guidance in the [Addendum: recording attendance in relation to coronavirus \(COVID-19\) during the 2021 to 2022 academic year - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/addendum-to-school-attendance-policy) document.

1. Aims and scope

The Gateway Primary Academy is committed to:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lesson. We will also support parents/carers and pupils who are concerned about the return to school due to coronavirus.

This addendum applies from the start of the autumn term 2020 until the end of the 2020/21 academic year. It sets out changes to our normal attendance policy, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal attendance policy continues to apply.

We may need to amend or add to this addendum as circumstances or official guidance changes. We will communicate any changes to staff, parents and pupils.

2. Guidance and definitions

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's (DfE's) guidance on school attendance during the 2021/22 academic year.

In section 4.2 of this addendum, where we refer to 'close contact', this means:

- Direct close contacts: face-to-face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face-to-face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin).
- Proximity contacts: extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual.
- Travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

This definition is from the DfE's guidance on full reopening for schools (see number 9 in 'the system of controls').

3. Attendance expectations

It is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age to attend school. 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.

The only reasons a pupil may be absent are:

- They have been granted an authorised absence by the headteacher in line with our normal attendance policy. For further information, please read our attendance policy which outlines the reasons your child's attendance may be approved by the headteacher.
- They cannot attend school due to specific circumstances related to coronavirus (see section 4, below)

4. Where 'non-attendance in relation to coronavirus' applies (from September 2021)

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.

4.1 Pupil develops symptoms or lives with someone who does

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day that their child needs to self-isolate. The pupil will stay at home until they or the symptomatic person they live with receives their coronavirus test results.

If the pupil's test result is negative: the pupil will return to school when they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus. They should continue to stay at home if they remain unwell (i.e. with a different illness).

If the person the pupil lives with tests negative: the pupil will stop self-isolating and return to school

4.2 Pupil or a 'close contact' of theirs receives a positive test result

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school about the positive test result as soon as possible. They must ring the school office on 01322 220090 and ask to speak to Mr Cassem, who will then advise them that their child must self-isolate for at least 10 days from when their close contact developed symptoms.

Pupils who test positive must self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms, and must only return to school when they no longer have symptoms (other than a cough or a loss of sense of smell or taste).

If a member of the pupil's household or a 'close contact' tests positive, the pupil must self-isolate for 10 days. The pupil must do this from when the member of their household first had symptoms, or the day the pupil last met with the 'close contact' who received the positive result.

See the definition for 'close contact' in section 2 of this addendum.

4.3. Pupil has to quarantine after travel abroad

In line with our home-school agreement, the parent/carer **must** notify the school if their child has to quarantine after travel to a country that is not on the government's [exemptions list](#).

The pupil must quarantine for 10 days on their arrival to the UK and return to school thereafter.

4.4 Pupil is required to shield during a local lockdown

The parent/carer will notify the school if they are advised by the government to stay at home and will provide proof of their shielding letter by sending a scanned copy of the letter to the school office.

The pupil will stay at home until the shielding measures in the local area are paused. Once the shielding measures are lifted, we will contact the pupil's parent/carer to set the expectation that they can return to school.

On their return to school, a 'socially distanced' return to school meeting will be held in the school hall, where all attendees will be expected to wear a mask. The purpose of this meeting will be to establish what support The Gateway can provide to support the child's wellbeing when returning to school.

4.5 Remote learning provision

If a pupil is not attending school because of circumstances related to coronavirus, but where the pupil is not ill, the school will provide the pupil access to remote education.

For further information on our tiered approach to blended learning please visit our school website. <https://www.gateway-pri.kent.sch.uk/recovery-curriculum/>. There you will find information about the home learning your child will be provided at each level of their absence.

We will keep a record of, and monitor, pupil engagement with remote learning, but we will not track this information on the attendance register.

5. Recording attendance

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to 'exceptional circumstances' (as defined in our normal attendance policy)
- Unable to attend for reasons related to coronavirus (see appendix 1 for the relevant absence codes and when we will use them)

Pupils must arrive in school at their designated time slot on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9:00 . The register for the second session will be taken at between 12.50 and 1.15 pm depending on the time of the staggered lunchtime.

6. Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent or carer by a phone call on their first day of absence.
- Notify their social worker or early help worker, where they have one.

If a pupil does not attend because they, and/or their parent/carers are concerned about returning to school because of coronavirus, we will:

- Arrange a phone call/video meeting/in-school appointment between the parent/carers and a member of the SLT to explain the protective measures the school is taking to keep pupils safe
- If the parent is still not happy with sending their child back to school due as a result of their concerns we will follow the 'Kent Referral Pathway for Attendance' to seek further guidance and support with improving this child's attendance at school.

6.1 Legal sanctions

There are no additional legal sanctions for absence as a result of COVID-19. Please refer to our full attendance policy (October 2021) for full information about the legal sanctions we may apply in some circumstances.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or Department for Education is updated by Mr Cassem, headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

Appendix 1: pupil absence codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's addendum to their school attendance guidance for the 2020/21 academic year. If not covered here, our normal attendance codes apply.

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil has to self-isolate because they have symptoms or live with someone who does, and are waiting for their test results
I	Illness	Pupil remains unwell following a negative test result (i.e. with a different illness)
I	Illness	Pupil has to continue to self-isolate because they tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil has to self-isolate (for 14 days) because someone they live with tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil has to self-isolate (for 14 days) because they are a close contact of someone who tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil has to quarantine (for 14 days) after a trip to a non-exempt country
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil is required to shield in the case of a local lockdown, or lives with someone who is required to shield
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil is asked not to attend in the case of local lockdown