



**Minerva**  
Learning Trust

## **Attendance Policy 2021-2022**

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# Version Control

Version 1

# 1. Scope and definitions

## 1.1 Introduction

Minerva Learning Trust believes that attendance and punctuality is the key to success of our students and their ability to benefit from all the opportunities available to them in school.

There is a definite clear line between good attendance and achievement alongside the development of social, emotional, and personal skills.

This is a successful Trust and our students and parent/carers play their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly, and should be at school, on time, every day unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

## 1.2 Why regular attendance is so important:

### Learning

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Student absence disrupts teaching routines which may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

### Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses: -

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti – bullying

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis must be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday and ceases compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year which they reach the age of 16. However, as a result of Raising the Participation Age (RPA) which was introduced in September 2013, the law now requires that young people continue in education, employment or training until the age of 18. Students must then do one of the following until they are 18:

- Stay in full-time education, for example at a college.
- Start an apprenticeship or traineeship
- Spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

### **1.3 Expectations**

Parent/Carers and Students can expect School in the Minerva Learning Trust to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- Reward good attendance and punctuality.
- Make contact following the Minerva Learning Trust First Day Absence Gradual Response when a student fails to attend School.
- Ensure accurate recording of attendance and to keep parents regularly informed about their child's attendance.
- Act promptly and keep Parents informed when issues affecting attendance arise.
- Involve appropriate outside agencies where necessary when issues arise that are impacting on attendance and learning.

Minerva Learning Trust expects Parent/Carers to:

- Fulfil their legal responsibility to encourage their children to attend school regularly and punctually The Law relating to attendance Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:- (a)

- age, ability and aptitude and (b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'
- Contact the school on each day of absence to explain the reasons and ensure that medical evidence is sent into school.
  - Ensure their child arrives in uniform and has all the essential equipment for learning.
  - Avoid taking family holidays during term time and making non-urgent medical/dental appointments during school hours where possible.
  - There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So, help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number for at least two contacts.

Minerva Learning Trust expects Students to:

- Every student to achieve 100% attendance during an academic year
- Arrive equipped and ready to learn
- Follow registration procedure
- Inform the Attendance Team of known absences in advance (appointment card or letter)
- Sign in/out should they arrive after 9:00am and leave before 3:00pm (only with an authorised note)

#### **1.4 Registering students**

The Education (student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 requires schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the student was:

- Present
- Absent
- Present at an approved educational visit
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

All teaching staff are responsible for registering students within the first 10 minutes of a lesson. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action.

Red flags in SIMs registers are used a method of communication staff and used in following situations:

- Record information from parents and carers as to a student's whereabouts
- To enable staff to locate a student that is not in their timetabled lesson.

## **2. Absence Procedures**

If your child is absent, you must:

- Contact the school every day your child is absent before 8.30am
- Provide medical evidence for continuous days' absences or when a child's attendance is 97% or below.

If your child is absent Minerva Learning Trust Staff will:

- Make contact following the Minerva Learning Trust First Day Absence Gradual Response when a student fails to attend School.
- Text, call, or conduct a home visit on the day of absence if we have not heard from you.

### **2.1 The School Attendance Officer**

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. We will always try to resolve the attendance issues by agreement, however if efforts to improve the child's attendance fail and unauthorised absences persist, sanctions such as fixed Penalty Notices and or prosecutions will have to be pursued.

### 3. Recording Absence

Morning and afternoon attendance and absences are recorded electronically using the school's MIS system. Attendance Officers will use attendance codes as set out by DfE.

Code	Recorded as	Information
/ \	Present	Students who are in attendance at school
B	Present	Students attending an alternative provision (educated off site)
C	Authorised Absence	Leave of absence authorised by the school
D	Not expected to attend	Will be used for any students attending another provision which they are registered at. (This may include Hospital and Home Education students and also any students on a managed move or who is at a PRU)
E	Authorised Absence	Excluded
G	Unauthorised Absence	Holiday not authorised or excess of the period determined by the Head Teacher
H	Authorised Absence	Holiday authorised by the school
I	Authorised Absence	Student cannot attend due to illness not relating to Covid-19 and the school has received satisfactory medical evidence
J	Present	Students who are at an interview with prospective employers or another educational establishment
L	Present	Students who arrive to school after the closure of registration register
M	Authorised Absence	Student cannot attend due to a medical or dentist appointment and the school has received satisfactory medical evidence
N	Unauthorised Absence	Reason for absence not yet provided
O	Unauthorised Absence	Absent from school without authorisation or medical evidence is not satisfactory.
P	Present	Students who are participating in a supervised sporting activity
R	Authorised Absence	Religious observance
S	Authorised Absence	Study Leave
T	Authorised Absence	Gypsy, Roma and Travellers absence
U	Unauthorised Absence	Arrived to school after registration closed
V	Present	Students who are on an educational visit or trip
W	Present	Students who are on work experience
X	Not expected to attend	Students who are not required to be on school in year 12 & 13. This code is to be used for students not attending a session who meet the criteria for not attending in circumstances related to COVID-19. This includes any students who is not in an eligible year group in the first week of induction packages
Y	Not expected to attend	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z	Not expected to attend	Student not on admission register
#	Not expected to attend	Used for planned whole or partial school closure.



## 4. Understanding the types of absence

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school with an evidenced reason for example, illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which are not evidenced and for which no "leave of absence" has been granted by the school. Unauthorised absence can lead to issuing of fixed penalty notices and/or prosecution.

Unauthorised absence includes (but not limited to):

- None evidenced illness absences when a child's attendance is 97% or below.
- Parents/Carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school after the morning registers are closed (10:30am)
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time.

Please remember it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure the attendance of a child. Any child may be off school because they are ill; sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents, and the child.

If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending.

This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

### 4.1 Religious Observance

Minerva Learning Trust acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. Schools should be informed using the Minerva Learning Trust Request for Exceptional Leave form which the Headteacher will consider the leave to authorised or special leave for religious observance.

## **4.2 Responding to poor Attendance and Punctuality**

In line with Attendance Policy and school staff following the First Day Absence Gradual response, the Attendance Officer will raise the cases of individual/groups of students with poor attendance/punctuality at regular meetings where the most appropriate intervention and strategies will be discussed, and individual action plans agreed.

## **4.3 Home Visits**

The aim of a home visit is:

- To establish a partnership between home and staff so that all parties share their knowledge about the child to enable the individual needs of the child to be met.
- To develop and strengthen relationships with parent and carers for the best interests of the child.

### **Reasons for home visits**

Home visits are important in helping the school to make contact with parent and carers. They are particularly useful as they enable the parent or carers to still have contact with the school, but in their own environment.

Home visits are to be used when

- Students are refusing to come into school
- When there are attendance issues or concerns
- When all other means of contact with a family has failed
- To meet with parent or carers to discuss an issue regarding their child where it is in the best interest of the child to have that discussion in their own home rather than at school *or* where it would be difficult for a parent or carer to attend school for a meeting and information needs to be shared in a face-to-face meeting in a timely manner.
- To try and establish that a child is safe if they are absent from school and attempts to contact parent or carer have not elicited a response and we have any welfare or safeguarding concerns for the student.
- To work with and support parent or carer in developing strategies to help their child attend school where attendance is an issue.
- To visit a child who has been off school for a period of time, for example due to a medical issue.
- To investigate situations when there are suspicions that someone may be on holiday contrary to earlier indications (for example when a child is not at school and reported as being ill during the same period for which a request for exceptional leave in term-time had been refused).

#### **4.4 Punctuality**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. Registration occurs at the start of each day. Therefore, if students are late for school, then they are late for learning. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons, can cause embarrassment that can also encourage absence.

##### **How we manage lateness**

We expect your child to be in registration at that time your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. At 9.30am the registers will be closed.

In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive the U code that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a penalty notice if the problem persists.

If your child is registered late, you will be contacted by text.

If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Attendance Officers to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

## **5. Request for leave of absences**

Headteachers are only allowed to grant leave of absence to students in exceptional circumstances. Department for Education guidelines are clear that taking term-time holidays will not be considered as an exceptional circumstance.

If leave of absences is declined by the school yet parents or carers still remove their child, then this would be classed as unauthorised absence for which a fixed penalty notice and/or prosecution could be pursued. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

All applications for leave of absence must be made in advance. In making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually. Parents/carers who do not request term time leave and take their child on 'unauthorised leave', could be liable for a fixed penalty notice and/or prosecution and even potentially lose their place at their school.

Requests for exceptional term time leave must be made at least 20 school days in advance of any arrangement being made. This will allow sufficient time for the request to be considered by the school. The request must be made in writing (letter or email) by the parent/carer using Minerva Learning Trust Request for Exceptional Leave form. A copy of this form can be downloaded from the school website. One form per child per request should be completed.

### **5.1 Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A student is classified as a 'persistent absentee' if they miss 10% or more schooling for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent/carers fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. The school will monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

### **5.2 Children Missing from Education**

When a student has been marked present for more than 20 school days A nominated member of school staff will liaise with the Children and Young People's Directorate Children Missing from Education Team. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children Missing Education (CME) are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later on in life.

Minerva Learning Trust will take reasonable steps to locate the missing student examples of which are taken.

- Check with agencies known to be involved with family.
- Check with Local Authority from which child moved originally, if known.
- Check with any Local Authority to which a child may have moved.
- Home visit(s) made by appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessment and if appropriate make enquiries with neighbour(s).

This procedure will include any student who is missing education due to an unauthorised leave of absence. Minerva Learning Trust staff will inform the Local Authority of the removal from roll of any missing student or students leaving the area who have given a forwarding address.

If no further information is received from the Local Authority or any other Agency, the child will be removed from our roll in accordance with the Department of Education advice on School attendance.

### **Nursery age children**

For nursery students that leave at the end of the summer term and have not been offered a place in the school's reception class a Removal from Roll form is required, and the school should send a CTF to the students' new school.

### **Post 16 Students and School Sixth Forms**

With the introduction of Raising the Participation Age (RPA) in 2013 Local authorities have a duty to make arrangements to identify students that are not participating in education or training. If a student leaves a post 16 provision before completion a CME form should be completed and return to the CME at the local authority as early as possible. This will enable the local authority to take swift action to encourage the young person to re-engage.

## **5.3 Looked After Children**

Safeguarding Lead within the Minerva Learning Trust schools liaises with the Children and Young People's Directorate Children Looked After Team. Looked After Children will be set up as a discrete attendance group on the school motoring system and individual attendance checked each half term. The Attendance Officer has daily telephone contact with Welfare Call regarding the attendance of Looked After Children.

### **5.3 Using Attendance Data**

Students' attendance will be monitored and shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a student attendance is a cause of concern.

Each week Attendance Team will provide all Form Tutors with attendance data for each student within their form group. This data will also be shared with Senior Leadership Team and Pastoral Teams.

The attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

Attendance data will be shared with the Department for Education and the Local Authority as required.

#### **Support Systems**

The Minerva Learning Trust recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a student's life. This may be related to problems in school or at home. Parent or carers should contact the school as this will help identify additional support that maybe required. All Attendance Officers in school have undergone advanced child protection training.

The support offered by school will be student centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents or carers and students.

The school can implement the following strategies to support improved attendance.

- Attendance Action Plan
- Referral to schools Pastoral Team
- Additional Learning Support
- Reintegration support packages
- Referral to School Nurse Team
- Competition of CAF's for outside agency support
- Attendance Report cards
- Attendance panels

When parents and carers fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absences occurs legal sanctions maybe initiated.

## 5.4 Legal Sanctions

Prosecution where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered student at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

Parenting Contracts (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003) A Parenting contract is a voluntary agreement between school and the parent, it can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance.

The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly.

The contract can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents fail to carry out agreed actions.

Penalty Notices (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003) Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A student is absent from school for the purpose of a leave of absence in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- A student has accumulated an unacceptable level of unauthorised absence and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve.

A Penalty Notice gives the parent the opportunity to discharge themselves of their legal responsibility if a £120 fine is paid within 28 days or £60 if paid within 21 days of the date the notice was issued. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Sheffield City Council's Penalty Notice Protocol.

## **Addendum A**

# **Recording attendance in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19)**

### **What is COVID-19?**

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus which is linked to the same family of viruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and some types of common cold.

### **Symptoms of COVID-19**

Symptoms can include fever, a loss or change to taste and smell, cough and shortness of breath. In severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia or breathing difficulties. More rarely, the disease can be fatal. These symptoms are very similar to the flu or the common cold, which is more common than COVID-19.

### **How COVID-19 spreads**

The virus is transmitted through direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person through coughing and sneezing. Individuals can also be infected from touching surfaces contaminated with the virus and then touching their face. COVID-19 virus may survive on surfaces for several hours, but simple disinfectants can kill it.

Links to more detailed and further guidance can be found below. Schools and parents or carers can keep up to date by following the government links below.

This includes advice on:

- How to help prevent spread of all respiratory infections - including COVID-19
- What to do if someone confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 has been in a school or other educational setting;
- What advice to give to individuals who have travelled from specified countries or areas within the last 14 days.

### **Virus Guidance**

Schools and parents or carers should refer to the latest information and advice from the Department of Health and Social Care and Public Health England to get the most up to date guidance as things develop: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>

### **Education Guidance**

The Government has published guidance for schools and other educational settings in providing advice for students, staff and parents/carers about the novel coronavirus, COVID-19. The following link will take you to that advice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>



## **Which Students should attend?**

All the schools in the Minerva Learning Trust are following the Trusts robust reopening action plan and thorough risk assessments in order to mitigate risks and to ensure that the re-opening of settings happens in a planned way that keeps all stakeholders safe and well.

### **Provision from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021:**

Government has been made mandatory for all year groups to return to school and sixth form full time from the beginning of the autumn term.

### **Students should not attend if:**

- They are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)
- They are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)
- They are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

### **In an event of a national or local lockdown**

Student attendance will not be mandatory within the period of the lockdown stated by Government. Early years, schools and colleges remained open only for priority children.

### **For children of critical workers**

It will not compulsory to take up the place made available. Early years providers, schools and colleges should speak with parents to discuss what provision is needed as many parents working in critical sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home safely.

### **For vulnerable children and young people**

For vulnerable children and young people who have a social worker, or those who are deemed otherwise vulnerable attendance is expected. For those who have an education health and care (EHC) plan, attendance is expected where it is determined.

## **Simple Strategies to slow down or Prevent COVID-19 and keep people safe.**

As with other respiratory infections like the flu or the common cold, public health measures are critical to slow the spread of the illness.

Students will be expected to adhere to the following basic measures when they return to school.

Public health measures are everyday preventive actions that include:

- **Social distancing which is staying 2 metres** (3 steps) away from anyone you do not live with.
- **Staying at home when you have the symptoms.** You are advised to book a free COVID-19 test via [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website.
- Follow the **Catch it, Kill it, Bin it** protocol. Covering mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue when coughing and sneezing disposing of the used tissue immediately and wash your hands.
- **Washing hands regularly for 20 seconds with soap and water** especially when leaving the house or arriving home, arriving at school, and leaving school, after blowing your nose, coughing and sneezing and before eating or handling food.
- **Cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects.**
- **Avoid public transport** by walking or cycling. If you must use public transport wear something that covers your nose and mouth.
- **Adhere to other individual school protocols** including things such as arrival and leaving times, one-way systems, use of equipment etc.

## **Recording Attendance during COVID-19**

**From 1st September 2021 Schools** are instructed to:

- Resume taking the attendance register for all students.
- Follow up any students absences
- Consider using the attendance and unauthorised and authorised absence codes in the following sections when completing the attendance register until further notice.
- Complete the Public Health questionnaire via Anycomms
- Complete the Department for Education daily educational setting status form from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 by 12pm.

The following **register codes** should be used from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021.

Code	Recorded as	Information
/ \	Present	Students who are in attendance at school
B	Present	Students attending an alternative provision (educated off site)
C	Authorised Absence	Leave of absence authorised by the school
D	Not expected to attend	Will be used for any students attending another provision which they are registered at. (This may include Hospital and Home Education students and also any students on a managed move or who is at a PRU)
E	Authorised Absence	Excluded
G	Unauthorised Absence	Holiday not authorised or excess of the period determined by the Head Teacher
H	Authorised Absence	Holiday authorised by the school
I	Authorised Absence	Student cannot attend due to illness not relating to Covid-19 and the school has received satisfactory medical evidence
J	Present	Students who are at an interview with prospective employers or another educational establishment
L	Present	Students who arrive to school after the closure of registration register
M	Authorised Absence	Student cannot attend due to a medical or dentist appointment and the school has received satisfactory medical evidence
N	Unauthorised Absence	Reason for absence not yet provided
O	Unauthorised Absence	Absent from school without authorisation or medical evidence is not satisfactory.
P	Present	Students who are participating in a supervised sporting activity
R	Authorised Absence	Religious observance
S	Authorised Absence	Study Leave
T	Authorised Absence	Gypsy, Roma and Travellers absence
U	Unauthorised Absence	Arrived to school after registration closed
V	Present	Students who are on an educational visit or trip
W	Present	Students who are on work experience
X	Not expected to attend	Students who are not required to be on school in year 12 & 13. This code is to be used for students not attending a session who meet the criteria for not attending in circumstances related to COVID-19. This includes any students who is not in an eligible year group in the first week of induction packages
Y	Not expected to attend	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z	Not expected to attend	Student not on admission register
#	Not expected to attend	Used for planned whole or partial school closure.

## **Closing Attendance registers:**

In order to accommodate schools arranging staggered starts for student's attendance registers should be open for longer. Individual schools should decide what time is suitable to close the attendance register. Given that data should be submitted by 12.00 to the Public Health England and Department for Education it is advisable that this is done before this time.

## **In an event of a national or local lockdown attendance coding will be**

Schools should also continue to record attendance in their usual attendance register and use the following coding during the local lockdown:

**Where a school is closed to all students** for any session, schools should record a X code for all students.

**Where a school is open to vulnerable children and children of critical workers,** schools should use the following codes:

All students who are not eligible or expected to attend a session should be recorded as code X (not required to be in school). This includes children of critical workers whose parents have indicated they will not attend a given session. Temporarily, code X can be used for compulsory school age children – usually it is only used when non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Vulnerable children who are self-isolating, or have an education, health, and care plan (EHCP), and whose risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school, should be recorded as code Y (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances). Temporarily, code Y can be used where a student is not attending school due to following government guidance on coronavirus (COVID-19)

Where a vulnerable child does not attend school for any other reason they should be recorded as absent (but all absence at this time should be authorised) where no other authorised absence code is appropriate, they should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school).

## **Reporting Absence during COVID-19**

### **If a student becomes ill or fails to attend**

- Parents and carers must contact the school via the school's absence line stating the students name and year group and reason for absence. This may be due to illness, self-isolation, quarantine, or other personal circumstances.
- If a student tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. If your child test comes back negative, then your child is able to return to school. If the child lives in the same household or has been in direct contact with a confirmed case of Coronavirus, then they must

self-isolate for 14 days. This should be recorded on SIMs and date stamped so school is clear when any isolation period will end.

- Parents are advised to follow government guidance on testing if they are showing symptoms of COVID-19 or suspect somebody in their family has it. Parents and carers should keep school updated and report any confirmed cases.
- In event that a student is absent, and no contact has been made by parent or carer, the school will make contact with the named parent/carers as indicated in SIMs. This will be a voice call, but other methods of communication (e.g., text message or email) will be attempted if the voice call is not successful. If no contact is made a risk assessment should be conducted to ascertain whether a home visit should be carried out. School will follow the safeguarding protocol.

All reasons for absence must be recorded by each school and students coded appropriately for monitoring, recording, and reporting purposes. Safeguarding for children not attending school.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or DfE is updated around attendance. The policy will be available on the school website for reference.

### **Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Covid-19 Safeguarding Policy Addendum
- Behaviour Policy

## **Appendix 1 – Definition of Vulnerable People**

### **Who is 'clinically extremely vulnerable'?**

Expert doctors in England have identified specific medical conditions that, based on what we know about the virus so far, place someone at greatest risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Clinically extremely vulnerable people may include the following people. Disease severity, history or treatment levels will also affect who is in this group.

1. Solid organ transplant recipients.
2. People with specific cancers:
  - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy.
  - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy.
  - people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment.
  - people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer.
  - people having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors.
  - people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs.
3. People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary (COPD).
4. People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell).
5. People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
6. Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

People in this group should have been contacted to tell them they are clinically extremely vulnerable.

If you're still concerned, you should discuss your concerns with your GP or hospital clinician.

- If they're clinically vulnerable – parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category, and staff in this category should continue to work from home wherever possible.

## Who is clinically vulnerable?

If you have any of the following health conditions, you are clinically vulnerable, meaning you are at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. You are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if you do go out, take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household.

Clinically vulnerable people are those who are:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab each year on medical grounds):
- chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
- chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- chronic kidney disease
- chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), or cerebral palsy
- diabetes
- a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions, treatments like chemotherapy, or medicines such as steroid tablets
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- pregnant women

As above, there is a further category of people with serious underlying health conditions who are clinically extremely vulnerable, meaning they are at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus. You, your family, and carers should be aware of the guidance on shielding which provides information on how to protect yourself still further should you wish to.

- If they live with someone who's clinically extremely vulnerable, they should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, they're able to understand and follow those instructions.
- If they live with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), they can attend school.
- Anyone experiencing symptoms of coronavirus, or living with anyone experiencing symptoms, shouldn't attend.