



## COVID-19 – INTERIM ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE

### Addendum to the Attendance Policy for Academic Year 2021-2022

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| Date shared with staff: | 14 October 2021         |

This document has been developed to reflect changes in practice as a result of COVID-19.

**It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware of this guidance and are kept up to date as it is revised. The revised policy will continue to be made available publicly.**

### Background

This addendum has been produced in line with Department of Education (DfE) guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2021-to-2022-academic-year>

It replaces temporary guidance documents on recording attendance during the COVID-19 outbreak.

This Addendum outlines:

- Attendance expectations
- Not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19
- Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19' could apply
- Remote education

The addendum should also be read in line with the DfE's guidance [School Attendance: main guidance August 2020](#) and Carmel Christian School's Attendance Policy.

## 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

Although school attendance is mandatory, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

In 2020, a new category of non-attendance – 'not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19' was created to record sessions where a pupil does not attend during the 2020-2021 academic year 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

The category remains in place for the 2021 to 2022 academic year and 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.

Carmel Christian School will be continue to use the attendance and absence codes in use before the outbreak of COVID-19 (See Appendix A) in addition to this category of 'not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19' using code X.

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

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

Carmel Christian School will follow the procedures detailed below when 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), as would usually be the case.
- Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. We will 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.

### *2. Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19*

Carmel Christian School will follow the procedures detailed below when a pupil is 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.

To support decision making reference should be made to the relevant government guidance available [here](#).

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

Carmel Christian School will follow the procedures detailed below when pupils 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.

To support decision making reference should be made to the relevant government guidance available [here](#).

### *4. Pupils who are self-isolating but who have not had a PCR test*

Carmel Christian School will follow the procedures detailed below when pupils are self-isolating but 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.
- We will follow up with families if we are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. We are aware that we can request supporting evidence from the family. If we are not satisfied with the reason given for absence, we 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 Carmel Christian School because their attendance would be contrary to government guidance or legislation around COVID-19, we will offer them access to remote education (this may be online or via other means). Carmel Christian School will keep a record of, and monitor engagement with, this activity, but this will not need to be tracked in the attendance register.