Attendance Policy

APPENDIX: COVID-19

Contents	Page
Section 1 ONLINE FORMS	**2-4**
1. Online arrangements	**2-3**
2. DfE sign-in queries	**3**
3. Data input queries	**4**
Section 2 TAKING REGISTERS	**4-6**
1. Taking Attendance registers following wider opening	**4**
2. Resuming the attendance register	**4-5**
3. Pupils who are not eligible to attend a session	**5**
4. Pupils who are eligible to attend a session but do not	**5**
5. Pupils who are attending other schools	**5**
6. Using other authorised absence and attendance codes	**6**
7. Staggered start times	**6**
Note Principles and guidance to decide if pupils are shielding or self-isolating	**6**

Introduction

Attendance has been collected throughout the COVID-19 period and attendance of pupils remain voluntary. This situation continues under wider opening, but schools are now being asked to pay particular attention to recording data online.

The purpose of increasing the data collection is to help build a national picture of educational provision so that the Government can focus support more effectively, monitor the impact of the virus, and ensure children are safe.

This appendix covers the use of:

- the online attendance form which applies to all schools in the Trust and has to be completed by each school individually;
- taking attending registers from 1st June onwards.

Section 1:

1.   Online arrangements

1.1   How is the attendance register and the educational setting status form linked?
Schools should begin to take the attendance register following wider re-opening from the 1 June. Data from the attendance register can be used to support schools to complete the daily educational setting status form. DfE will not be collecting pupil level data through the educational setting status form.

The questions in the educational setting status form on pupil attendance, absence, and illness, shielding or isolation have been designed so that schools following the attendance register guidance should be able to easily identify students with the relevant codes to fill in the daily data return.

1.2   Where can I find the list of critical workers?
The list of critical workers is available on the first page of the form, this currently includes those who work in the following sectors:
- health and social care
- education and childcare
- key public services
- local and national government
- food and other necessary goods
- public safety and national security
- transport
- utilities, communication and financial services

1.3   Who can complete the form?
Anyone who has a DfE Sign-in account can complete the form - this may be a headteacher, deputy head or business manager, or member of an education setting senior leadership team (SLT).

1.4   When does the form need to be completed by?
The form should be completed by 12 noon every working day. This ensures the Department for Education can use information gathered on the same day.

If it is not possible to meet the midday deadline, forms should be submitted at the earliest opportunity but the data may not be included in the DfE daily figures.

1.5   Will this data be shared with my local authority?
Local authorities have been given access to a spreadsheet showing attendance data for educational settings in their area, for those establishments that are submitting returns to the department. This spreadsheet is located on the View Your Education Data Portal and can be accessed via Identity and Access Management System (IDAMS).

1.6   Why haven't I received a confirmation email following the submission of my data?
We were aware of some technical issues due to the high volume of forms received and are working with colleagues to resolve these issues. You will receive a confirmation email when the issue is resolved.

2.   DfE Sign-in queries

2.1   What if I don't have a DfE Sign-in?

You can create an account in four simple steps.
1.   Select the create a DfE Sign-in account link
2.   Enter your name and your email address (it's best to use your work email address or one that is clearly associated with your organisation)
3.   We'll send you an email to verify your email address; copy the code from this email and paste it into the box on the verification page
4.   Create a memorable password (we recommend joining three or more familiar words)

Once you have created an account, you can request access for your organisation.

You may notice the term 'approver' during your account creation. You will need to assign designated approver to your organisation's account, usually a senior person, such as an administrator, manager, or headteacher. This person will be responsible for controlling who has access to DfE Sign-in.

You will need to request the approval of your organisation's assigned approver before creating your DfE Sign-In account.

If you are having problems using the DfE Sign-in service, visit DfE Sign-in Help. You will be able to request further assistance if required. When submitting a request, please select the 'Other' category.

2.2   I am unable to see the form within my DfE Sign-in services. How do I access it?
The form is not listed under "my services" on DfE Sign-in. You must access the form directly using the provided URL: http://www.education.gov.uk/educational-setting-status

2.3   My information on GIAS is incorrect, or is showing incorrectly on the online form
Please go to Get Information About Schools and update your details to show the correct Information. This will update DfE Sign-in overnight.

2.4   My information is correct on GIAS but is showing incorrectly on the online form.
You will need to update your details on DfE sign-in via 'Edit details'. If the problem continues, you will need to contact the DfE Sign-in service, follow DfE Sign-in help.

2.5   My setting is on GIAS, and has a URN, but I am getting an error message.
You will need to contact the DfE Sign-in service. To do this, follow DfE Sign-in help. You will be able to request further assistance via the link. When submitting a request, please select the 'Other' category.

3. Data input queries

3.1 If my entry for yesterday was wrong, can I amend it?
No. Entries for previous days cannot be resubmitted or changed. You can however resubmit a new form for the current day.

3.2 Should children who aren't on my school roll usually be included?
Yes. Children who aren't on roll at the school should be included in the daily attendance figures returned to DfE.

3.3 How should pupils attending hub schools be recorded?
Pupils attending hub schools should be included in the daily attendance figures returned to DfE, even if they aren't on roll at the hub school.

Settings that are closed need to complete the form once so the Department for Education is aware of the closure. If your educational setting reopens you should start completing the form daily from the date of re-opening.

3.4 What do settings record if a child is absent?
We are looking at the attendance figures on a daily basis. Please only record pupils who are present in the setting.

3.5 How are staff being counted?
DfE needs data on staff working in the schools, and staff who are unable to attend the setting.

3.6 What about pupils attending mornings or afternoons (half day) only?
If pupils attend your setting for half a school day, you will need to resubmit your application in the afternoon to account for these pupils. The data may not be included in the Department's daily figures, but it will help us to better monitor the national coronavirus response.

3.7 Where problems occur
You should contact the DfE coronavirus helpline on 0800 046 8687.

Section 2:

1. Taking Attendance registers following wider opening

1. Schools should resume taking an attendance register.
2. Schools should use the codes suggested to record attendance and absence in the attendance register.
3. All settings should submit daily attendance figures using the educational setting status form by midday everyday.
4. There's further guidance on school attendance policy at Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak

2. Resuming the attendance register

Schools should:
- resume taking the attendance register when more groups of pupils begin to return to school

- consider using the attendance and absence codes in the following sections when completing the attendance register until further notice

This guidance on resuming the attendance register will be reviewed regularly as the situation develops.

3.   Pupils who are not eligible to attend a session

This includes any pupil who is not in an eligible year group or priority group (children of critical workers and vulnerable children). This may also include children who are in an eligible year group but are not required in school for a specific session, i.e., year 10 and year 12 pupils who are not among the quarter of pupils expected in school at a given time.
They should be recorded as code X (not required to be in school). (Temporarily, code X can be used for compulsory school age children – usually it is only used where non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.)

4.   Pupils who are eligible to attend a session but do not

This includes children in eligible year groups, children of critical workers and vulnerable children, such as:

- where a pupil is shielding, self-isolating (see note 1), or the pupil has an education, health and care plan (EHCP) and their risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school, they should be recorded as code Y (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances). (Temporarily, code Y can be used where a pupil is prevented from attending school due to following government guidance on coronavirus). To help you to complete the educational setting status form, you should note whether the absence is due to shielding or isolation
- where a pupil cannot attend school due to illness, as would normally be the case, the pupil should be recorded as code I (illness). To help you to complete the educational setting status form, you should note whether the illness involves coronavirus symptoms
- where a pupil does not attend school - despite being eligible and is not shielding, self-isolating, unable to attend due to illness, nor has an EHCP risk assessment saying their needs cannot be safely met at school, the pupil should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) where no other authorised absence code is appropriate

At this time, all absence should be classed as authorised.

5.   Pupils who are attending other schools

Where a pupil is attending:

- another school at which they are registered (for example, a pupil referral unit (PRU)), as would normally be the case, code D (dual registered) should be used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question as they are attending the other school at which they are registered
- a host school on a temporary basis because their home school cannot accommodate them, the pupil will not be registered at the host school. The home school should record the pupil as attending an approved education activity using code B (off-site educational activity) - the host school does not need to add this child to their attendance register but should keep a record of their attendance for safeguarding purposes and include the child in their daily totals for the educational setting status form - schools should put in place arrangements whereby the host school notifies the home school of any absences.

6.   Using other authorised absence and attendance codes

Where other specific authorised absence and attendance codes are more appropriate schools may want to use these as usual, such as code M (medical appointment).

7.   Staggered start times

Schools should have a policy on how long the register should be kept open but where a school implements staggered start times, they may wish to consider temporarily extending this period, or reopening the register.

Note 1

Schools should use these principles and guidance to decide if pupils are shielding or self-isolating:

- children and young people who have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions have been advised to shield. Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. Few if any children will fall into this category, but parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.
- child or young person who lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, can attend their education or childcare setting.

- if a child or young person or staff member lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, as set out in the guidance on shielding, it is advised they only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, if they are able to understand and follow those instructions - this may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend.
- children or young people should not attend if they have symptoms or are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household.

_____

History of Appendix: added June 2020