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**Attendance Guidance for Schools following National Lockdown- January 2021**

Following on from the lockdown announcement, Government have issued guidance over the last week to provide schools and local authorities with updates on how to code registers and provide data to the DfE which we are sharing with you below. We hope you will find this guidance useful and would advise if there are any situations or questions with regards to the coding of registers please get in touch with the Attendance Service who will provide further clarity where needed.

Please also see Appendix A which provides a list of Government guidance related to Attendance and some aspects of education to date. There may be additional changes in the weeks ahead, we will endeavour to provide an update if there are further changes to the guidance

**How are Schools expected to Record Attendance during this Lockdown?**

(See Appendix A, no.1 & 2: Restricting Attendance during National Lockdown Schools: Page 26)

**Attendance recording in schools**

As vulnerable children are still expected to attend school full time, they should not be marked as Code X if they are not in school (except if they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining). Schools and colleges should encourage vulnerable children to attend but if the parent of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent from school, the parent should let the school know that the pupil will not be attending. The Department for Education expects schools and colleges to grant such applications for leave given the exceptional circumstances. **This should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.** As with vulnerable children, critical worker parents and carers should let schools know if their child will not be attending and, if not, schools should grant a leave of absence (code C) given the exceptional circumstances.

All pupils who are not expected to be in school should be marked as Code X. They are not attending because they are following public health advice.

To add further clarity:

If we look at provision split into 2 cohorts A and B:

Cohort A)     Online/remote provision to be accessed - children not expected to be in school are coded X on the register (SIMs)

Cohort B)      Vulnerable +key worker children – identified as children expected to be in school– marked present as usual / \,  or marked as a  C code if the parent wishes to keep their child at home

**Cohort A- Online/Remote Access**

(refer to Appendix A no.2 :Restricting Attendance During National Lockdown Schools: Page 46 and see no 7: Get laptops and tablets for children who cannot attend school due to coronavirus)

It is expected that Teachers will monitor children accessing online/remote learning and will flag any issues with relevant school staff for children unable to access online provision, and /or with safeguarding concerns. It is expected that school will be responsible for supporting with online provision, by providing devices/laptops to enable online access, and meantime provide paper based work for children who cannot access online provision. Where there are concerns with a child not accessing provision despite having online facilities, please flag this and investigate further with the parent. Should a safeguarding concern arise please discuss with your school DSL.

 Please be mindful of families in which there are multiple siblings and more than 1 laptop is required.

**Cohort B –Onsite Provision Vulnerable/Key worker Children**

(refer to Appendix A no 2: Restricting Attendance During National Lockdown Schools page 25)

Government have issued further guidance to define children falling into the vulnerable and key worker group (see Appendix A no 8: Guidance of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educations settings). For those children eligible to attend on site provision, attendance should be marked in the usual way (e.g. follow School guidance notes see Appendix A no 1: School Attendance Guidance), for example, present marks fro all children attending on site, absence related attendance codes most appropriate for absence e.g. I for illness.

However, should a parent/carer’s decline an offer of a place and prefer their child/ren to stay at home for remote learning, a C code has to be applied in the register, but before agreeing to the child being kept at home, please bear in mind, if there is Social Care involvement, we advise you to consult with the Social Worker before finalising agreement on this, as Social Workers are more likely to be aware of safeguarding concerns and if home learning will be appropriate.

Where it has been agreed for remote/online learning to go ahead, this should be monitored by the Class Teacher to ensure all children are accessing learning and support mechanisms to be put in place whereby the child is falling short of accessing the education.

**Children who are Extremely Clinically Vulnerable are to remain at Home and to access education from Home**

(see Appendix 8 no 5 & 6- Guidance on Shielding and Protecting People who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable from COVID-19 and Education and Childcare Settings: National Lockdown)

Clinically extremely vulnerable children and young people should not attend school or other educational settings, because the risk of exposure to the virus in the community is now very high. Your school will make appropriate arrangements for you to be able to continue your education at home. Following the reintroduction of shielding, clinically extremely vulnerable children advised not to attend education or childcare.

Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals are those identified through a letter from the NHS or a specialist doctor as in the group deemed clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV or shielding list).

**Children Who are Absent from either Remote or On site Provision**

(refer to Appendix A no 1 and no 2: School Attendance: Guidance for Schools and Restricting Attendance During National Lockdown School )

Currently the guidance for remote learning is to monitor if a child is accessing remote/online provision, whilst also ensuring the welfare of a child, therefore during this activity teachers may become aware of a child who is absent. It is expected this will be monitored, followed up and support provided where necessary.

With regards to onsite provision the usual absence codes will apply. If a child is absent, please verify the illness by phone with the parent, and follow standard procedures, e.g. N for unknown but to be investigated, I –for illness, O for unauthorised absences, G for unauthorised holiday, and **X is still to be used for covid related absences.**

If the absence is coded unauthorised please investigate the reason for absence and work with the family in providing support and in accessing education. Should any safeguarding concerns arise please consult with your DSL or Social Care.

**Guidance on Online DfE EMSS Daily Register Completion**

(refer to Appendix A no 12: How to complete the Education Setting Status Form)

Schools are required to provide DAILY completion of the Education Setting Status Form found on the DfE portal (IDAMS) <https://viewyourdata.education.gov.uk/>

The document, Appendix A no 12, is a preview of the form and provides the type of questions and information with some guidance, asked by the DfE. Schools should aim to provide their data by **2pm daily.**

Examples of the questions on the EMSS are as below:

We are asking educational settings for information about pupil or student attendance and setting closures or partial closures during coronavirus (COVID-19).

* whether your setting is open
* numbers of vulnerable children and children of critical workers attending
* the number of pupils or students with a social worker or an education, health and care plan; children of critical workers; and eligible for free school meals
* the number of pupils or students and workforce on site
* pupil or student absences due to coronavirus (COVID-19)
* remote education arrangements
* free school meals arrangements -the provision for free school meals for pupils or students on site and those learning remotely (see Appendix A no 10 Guidance for Schools and LA’s on Providing Schools Meals During the Covid -19 outbreak)
* staff absences

**If a school is closed, you will still be expected to provide this daily update.**

This data is being collected to help manage the impact of and response to coronavirus (COVID-19) on the education sector. The information you supply helps the department and other government bodies make decisions.

**Enforcement (Fines/Warning Periods) Update**

(refer to Appendix A no 4 for Disapplication Notice: School attendance legislation changes) Government have suspended enforcement action from 7.1.2021 by virtue of the Coronavirus Act 2020 Provision of Remote Education Temporary Continuity Direction 2020.

* The specified disapplication notice in this period applies to 7.1.2021 to 6.2.2021. The notice can only be issued for 4 weeks therefore it may be revised as we approach the beginning of February and a decision will be made appropriate to the situation at the time
* SBC will resume enforcement once Government reapplies the relevant legislation and guidance, most likely once schools are back to normal operations

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate in contacting the **Attendance Service on 01753 787670, or by emailing** [**Attendance@slough.gov.uk**](mailto:Attendance@slough.gov.uk)**.**

Farah Malik

Interim Attendance Team –Service Manager

Attendance Service

Slough Borough Council

Directorate: People - Children

Direct Line: 01753 787670

Email:[Attendance@slough.gov.uk](mailto:Attendance@slough.gov.uk)

**Appendix A: List of Documents and links Related to Attendance**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | Name of Document | Document | Link | Date of Update |
| 1 | School attendance: guidance for schools |  | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance> | 7.1.2021 |
| 2 | Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: Schools |  | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak> | 7.1.2021 |
| 3 | What to do if a pupil is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) |  | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak> | 7.1.2021 |
| 4 | Disapplication Notice: School attendance legislation changes |  | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disapplication-notice-school-attendance-legislation-changes> | 7.1.2021 |
| 5 | Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19 | See website | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19> | 11.1.2021 |
| 6 | Education and Childcare Settings: National Lockdown |  |  | 5.1.2021 |
| 7 | Get laptops and tablets for children who cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19) | See website | <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-laptops-and-tablets-for-children-who-cannot-attend-school-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19> | 8.1.2021 |
| 8 | Guidance of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educations settings | See website | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision> | 8.1.2021 |
| 9 | What Parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges | See website | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak> | 8.1.2021 |
| 10 | Guidance for Schools and LA’s on Providing Schools Meals During the Covid -19 outbreak | See website | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance> | 8.1.2021 |
| 11 | Press Release 11.1.2021: Ofsted Publishes guide to what works well in remote education | See website | <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsted-publishes-short-guide-to-what-works-well-in-remote-education?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=f1e82bc5-a906-465c-aa67-ffd43a2ae73d&utm_content=immediate> | 11.1.2021 |
| 12 | Guidance: How to complete the educational setting status form for the DfE |  | <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-complete-the-educational-setting-status-form> | 11.1.2021 |