

School Attendance Policy for full school re-opening - March 2021

This document does not replace our existing **Attendance Policy** which can be found on our website at <https://johnperryn.ealing.sch.uk/information/policies> but it outlines our attendance procedures for the period of school re-opening from March 2021– this is under regular review.

Please refer to DfE guidance at the end of this document for information on **vulnerability and shielding and what parents and carers need to know about schools reopening.*

JOHN PERRY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Background

The fulltime attendance of **all children** will be mandatory again in school from the **Monday 8 March 2021**.

It is vital for **all children** to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing, and wider development.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school.

This means from **Monday 8 March 2021**, (*high schools will have staggered return dates due to testing*) we welcome your child back into school and the usual rules on **School Attendance** will apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil and they are of compulsory school age
- Schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with Local Authorities' codes of conduct

Returning to School

All Pupils of compulsory school age must be in school unless a statutory reason applies and where the absence has been **authorised** by the school (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, has been told to quarantine, is absent for a necessary and authorised religious observance).

We understand that some pupils, parents, and households may be reluctant or anxious about attending school. This may include pupils who:

- have themselves been shielding previously but have been advised they no longer need to shield
- live in a household where someone is clinically vulnerable (CV) or CEV (including young carers)
- are concerned about the possible increased risks from coronavirus (COVID-19) such as those who have certain conditions such as obesity and diabetes

This may also include some pupils with EHCP plans. Where this is the case, the school may contact the SEND and School Nursing Teams for advice and support, and we may require medical verification or other relevant documentation in order to assess risk. View link [current advice on shielding](#)

Where any of the above apply, please discuss your concerns with us and allow us to reassure you on the measures we have in place to reduce any risks.

A small number of pupils will still be unable to attend from 8 March in line with public health advice to self-isolate because they:

- have symptoms or have had a positive test result
- live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive and are a household contact

- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)

There is growing evidence that many children identified at the start of the pandemic as clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) are not at increased risk of serious outcomes from coronavirus (COVID-19) and children are gradually being removed from the shielding patient list (SPL) as appropriate, following review with a clinician.

The school may request from parents a copy of the shielding letter sent to CEV children, to confirm that they are advised not to attend school or other educational settings whilst shielding guidance is in place.

If your child is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we will offer access to education at home resources (Remote learning). We will monitor engagement with this activity to ensure learning is being accessed appropriately. This may also apply to some pupils with EHCP plans where parents will be involved in the planning of a child's return to school.

Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.

Exceptional leave (optional)

There is no entitlement to leave during term time for the purpose of a holiday. Parents should plan their holidays within school breaks. If you need to take your child out of school for an **exceptional circumstance**, you must apply in writing and seek permission from the school as usual. Please provide the school with as much information as possible regarding your particular circumstances including if you are a Key worker. Please also consider that your child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine. View link [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, International Travel\) \(England\) Regulations 2020](#)

If you and your child have been delayed in returning to the UK during the lock-down period or travel- ling abroad and you have been told to quarantine, you should not attend school during the period of quarantine. Please discuss such circumstances with the school and provide documentary evidence in support of absence; the school will consider the circumstances of the trip/time abroad to inform their decision to authorise absence or not. Current advice on [travel corridors](#)

Outbreaks

In the event of a local outbreak, the school or number of schools may need to close temporarily to help control transmission. If this is the case, the school will provide your child with education at home resources (remote education).

Punctuality

Some groups of children will be given staggered start and finish times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave school. Where this is the case, you will be informed. Staggered start and finish times will not reduce the amount of overall teaching time each child receives. Please ensure your child arrives on time and is collected on time in order to minimise disruption. Please contact the school ahead if you are experiencing difficulties. *If lateness persists, the school will want to discuss this with you and agree some support measures; if matters do not improve, the lateness will **not be authorised** and the matter may be referred to the Local Authority **School Attendance Service**, who may invite you to agree a Parenting Contract to improve matters.*

Please refer to our 'drop off and collection' arrangements and **be aware that the gathering of parents at the school gates and otherwise coming onto the site without an appointment, is not allowed.**

Management of non-attendance:

Families should notify their school as normal if your child is unable to attend on any given day and update the school regularly regarding on-going absence.

Where a child is not regularly attending the school, we will want to discuss this with you to understand what the difficulties are and agree with you some supportive measures to improve matters as early as possible. We will follow our normal absence procedures to establish the reasons for absence (please refer to our main Attendance Policy found on our website at <https://johnperryn.ealing.sch.uk/information/policies>). Where our efforts do not result in an improvement in attendance or time keeping, we will refer to the local authority School Attendance Service for additional support, advice, and ultimately parental enforcement.

Referrals to the Local Authority (LA)

All unauthorised absence, including significant lateness is reported to the LA School Attendance Service to seek additional advice and support for parents as necessary. Where unauthorised absence is frequent and or persistent, sanctions will be imposed and will include warnings, penalty notices (Fixed Penalty Fines), prosecution in the magistrate's court or an education supervision order through the family proceedings court.

Where a child or family is away from home including abroad, and unable to return home due to the pandemic/travel restrictions, parents are expected to provide the school with detailed information as to the whereabouts, reasons for travel and estimated return dates and we will do our best to support you. Where the school is not satisfied with the reasons provided, the absence will not be authorised, and this could result in Fixed Penalty Fine (please refer to our main Attendance Policy) Where such cases are not satisfactorily explained and evidenced, we cannot guarantee to hold a place open for your child.

Please be aware that leave of absence is only granted in **exceptional circumstances** at the discretion of the Headteacher and in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the governing body. **There is no entitlement to time off during term time for the purpose of a holiday.**

Children Missing Education (CME)

Where the school is unable to contact a child/family over a 3-day period, they will contact the School Attendance Service to carry out enquiries to try to locate them. A door-step home welfare visit will also be undertaken.

Where the school and the Attendance Service have failed to locate the child/family within 10 days, the child will be referred to the **LA Children Missing Education Officer (CME officer)** who will undertake additional checks with other agencies to locate them, including consultation with social care, the police, health and housing. Where these enquiries do not lead to confirmation of the child's whereabouts, the matter will remain open to that service who will widen their enquiries. In these circumstances, the school cannot guarantee to keep a school place open for your child.

Safeguarding

If at any time the school are concerned for a child's safety or welfare from any year group, we will consult with Ealing Social Care in line with our Child Protection Procedures.

During the period of pandemic, additional stresses can be placed on families; please let us know if your child or a child you know might be in a private fostering situation. **Private Fostering** is when a child or young person under the age of 16 (or under 18 if they are disabled) is living away from home full time for 28 days or more with an adult **who is not** there:

- Parent, stepparent, or legal guardian
- Grandparent
- Brother or sister
- Aunt or Uncle.

If you are aware of a private fostering arrangement, please contact the school so that we can help to offer you and your family additional support.

*** Guidance on vulnerability and shielding**

<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>

*** Guidance on schools reopening**

<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/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>