

18th October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Attendance recording

Part of a school's statutory obligations is to ensure that attendance to school is correctly recorded. There are several guidance documents that contain the actions schools are required to undertake when recording attendance. There has been a change in the Department For Education's (DfE) guidance in respect of recording attendance during the Covid pandemic and we would like to explain the impact of the change. Previously, when a child was absent from school due to a confirmed Covid infection, schools were required to use an 'X' code on the register. This code was used from the time a child was absent with symptoms pending the outcome of a PCR test, until their period of mandated isolation (usually 10 days) ended. Additional time beyond the period of isolation was recorded using the 'I' code which stands for illness. The 'X' code had no impact on a child's attendance – it neither counted for nor against.

The change in statutory guidance from the DfE states the following: "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." Whilst we understand that this will cause your child's attendance figure to be reported as lower than was previously the case. As the guidance is statutory, the school are obliged to complete attendance registers in line with its directives.

There are circumstances where it would be unfair for a student's reduced attendance due to missing school for a single period of Covid absence to be taken into account. It will not impact when considering a student's eligibility for a reward trip and whether or not to pursue parents and carers under an attendance order.

We understand any frustrations about having a period of mandated absence, which is out of your control, impacting on your child's attendance but we are required to record Covid related absences in this way.

Yours faithfully,



Mr C Major
Deputy Headteacher