



**St. Cuthbert's**  
Roman Catholic High School

# **WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY & PROCEDURES**

## **COVID-19 ADDENDUM TO THE ATTENDANCE POLICY**



### **Mission Statement**

*'The Lord God requires of us that we should help others whenever we can,  
always make the right choices and be the best that we can be in everything that we do'.*

Policy: **COVID-19 Addendum to the Attendance Policy**

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## **COVID-19 Addendum to the Attendance Policy**

Version 1.0 - June 2020

### **CONTEXT**

On 20th March 2020, as a result of Covid-19 and the Government's resulting social distancing strategy schools closed to all learners except those of critical workers, those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and those learners categorised as vulnerable. As such, although St Cuthbert's RC High School has never fully closed and has remained open initially to children of critical/keyworkers and those deemed vulnerable, there are many learners who have not been in school for some time.

We have committed to the wider opening of our schools based on the condition that there will be sound national medical and scientific evidence that it is safe to do so. 'Wider Opening' means a resumption of our core business of education, rather than the current limited arrangements which are, in effect, organised as childcare for key workers and vulnerable pupils. We want our children back in school so that we can support them more effectively from an academic, social and welfare perspective.

This addendum supports our school's attendance policy in clearly outlining the processes that will be followed in recording attendance, in line with the Government's guidance, as well as ensuring school attendance is maximised for those groups expected to be in school.

This addendum applies from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 and will be in operation until further notice and will be reviewed in line with the Government's reviews of legislation and guidance in the coming weeks and months.

There may be circumstances where it is necessary for the school to close to some or all groups of pupils, i.e. where we are instructed to close by the Local Authority in the event of a localised Coronavirus outbreak. In the event of this happening, the provisions of this addendum will be suspended in part or whole for the duration of the school closure.

### **OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

1. We will follow Government guidance on the wider opening of our school; however, we have made local decisions about the extent of provision that can be offered to families. This is to maintain the health and safety of our children and staff and is a function of the school building(s) as well as the resources available to us.
2. We will continue to provide provision at school for the families of critical/key worker children and those identified as vulnerable.
3. We will prioritise educational provision in this order: vulnerable pupils and children with EHCPs; children of critical/key workers then children of core year groups and other children. This will apply where the Headteacher identifies a high risk of limited capacity in school, this may be due to staff absence or where the anticipated number of children arriving in school is too high to maintain a safe adult to child ratio. Government guidance states that settings have the flexibility to focus first on continuing to provide places for priority groups and then to other children.
4. We will follow existing Government guidance on attendance and absence and the provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020. We will not penalise parents if their child or children do not attend school. All absence will be authorised in line with Government guidance.
5. We will follow the Government's guidance in recording and reporting on attendance as our school opens its doors to more pupils.

This addendum will be reviewed following any Government review of the guidance (the next review date will be before 1 July 2020).

This addendum relates to recording and reporting on the attendance and absence of five groups of pupils:

1. Children of critical/key workers, some of whom may not be on this school's roll ordinarily.
2. Vulnerable children
3. Children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
4. Other children, i.e. year 10 and 12 in secondary schools.
5. Children whose education is being supported remotely at home who are not in one of the groups identified above.

***NB These groups are not mutually exclusive.***

The Government guidance issued on 28 May 2020 (3) stated that from the point at which they open to wider groups of pupils schools will need to do the following:

- Schools should resume taking an attendance register for all pupils.
- Schools should use the codes suggested in the guidance to record attendance and absence in the attendance register.
- All settings should submit daily attendance figures to the Department for Education using the educational setting status form by midday every day.

Recording pupil attendance on the school's attendance register

From 23rd March 2020 to the **12<sup>th</sup> June 2020** the following applied to **St Cuthbert's RC High School**

- Use # for all pupils on the attendance register.
- Complete and submit attendance data to the DfE using the relevant form, including staff numbers in school/on site.

## **2 Attendance guidance link**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/818204/School\\_attendance\\_July\\_2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818204/School_attendance_July_2019.pdf)

**3** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

- Share this information with the schools / Trusts Data manager / attendance leader / administrative manager who collates and shares this information with the Local Authority as and when required.

From the date the school opens to wider groups of pupils (15<sup>th</sup> June 2020) dependent on inductions and phasing for students taking place if applicable, following guidance applies. This supersedes the processes outlined above.

Pupils who are eligible to attend and do attend, i.e. pupils in one or more of groups above.

- Use / = am \ = pm.

Pupils who are not eligible to attend a session, i.e. those in group 5 above who will not return to school nor in groups above.

- Use X on the attendance register.

Pupils who are eligible to attend a session but do not, apply the following code on the attendance register dependent on circumstances. The Government guidance states that 'at this time, all absence should be regarded as authorised'.

- Use Y (pupil absence due to exceptional circumstances) where (a) a child is shielding, (b) a child is self-isolating 4 or (c) have an EHCP and a risk assessment has determined that their needs cannot be met in school. See below for further information. Temporary codes have also been created in sims to allow for more accurate recording.
- Use I (illness) where a child is too ill to attend school.
- Use C (authorised absence) where a child who is expected to be in school does not attend.

The child may be in any one or more of groups above.

Pupils who are not ordinarily on your school roll should be added to your register as a guest pupil, and attendance codes recorded as above. These pupils should continue to be added to the form submitted to DfE on a daily basis. The home school will need to record the pupil as B (approved off site educational provision) and the attendance or absence of these pupils should be shared with the home school.

Pupils on your school roll who are currently dual registered, e.g. with a PRU or in Alternative Provision, should be recorded as a D code for the sessions they are attending AP or a PRU/another school.

Absence due to other reasons

- Use the appropriate code to record absence of pupils due to other circumstances, e.g. M for medical appointments, etc. This applies to only those pupils who are expected in school.

**4 See Note 1 on the DfE guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings/process-for-recording-attendance-and-using-the-educational-setting-status-form#note1>**

Deep Cleans

Where a school has a planned or sudden closure in order to undertake a deep clean, pupils should be coded as X code given that pupils are not expected to attend

Partial timetables

Where a partial timetable has been agreed for an individual pupil who falls into one or more of groups above the X code should be used on the sessions where the pupil is not expected to attend.

## Staggered start times

Where a staggered start time is in place, pupils arriving within the timescales agreed with parents or carers use the attendance codes as normal. For pupils arriving later than 30 minutes after their agreed start time the L code should be used.

## Pupils who are unable to attend school

'Extremely clinically vulnerable' **(5)** pupils - these children have been advised to shield and relevant medical advice should be followed. Please indicate in the notes (code Y).

Pupils with EHCPs whose needs are unable to be met at this time, following a risk assessment. The RA should be reviewed periodically. Please indicate in the notes (code Y).

Pupils living in 'shielding households'. At present, Government advice is that pupils living in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable should attend school only if all pupils in their 'bubble' can adhere to stringent social distancing. This may not be possible. Please indicate in the notes (code Y).

Pupils who are self-isolating. This will be a temporary absence of at least 14 days. Please indicate in the notes (code Y).

## Pupils who do not attend for other reasons

We anticipate that a significant minority of pupils of those who can return to school on the **15<sup>th</sup> June 2020** will not do so. In these circumstances we are sympathetic to parents' views and the decision they have made with regard to their child or children returning to school. Efforts should be made by teaching and pastoral staff to encourage children to return to school, focused on vulnerable children and those with EHCPs. In the interim, work should continue to be provided for children to undertake at home, in line with the school's plans for providing remote learning for all pupils.

## **5 Link to Government guidance on extreme clinical vulnerability and shielding**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-on-protecting-people-most-likely-to-get-unwell-from-coronavirus-shielding-young-peoples-version>

## Recording attendance in temporary staffing groups

Pupils in our school will be taught in class sizes, in line with Government guidance.

Our school will follow all relevant guidance for maintaining the safety of pupils in school and will review and adapt provision should the guidance change **(6)**.

We will adapt our school registers as needed to enable staff to record attendance accurately and efficiently, this may include creating new groupings for the pupils expected to attend. We will also adapt our reporting facility in SIMs, as necessary, to enable school leaders to accurately track and monitor the attendance and absence of pupils. This, in turn, will support the school in providing information to its senior leadership team, the DfE, the Trust (if applicable) and the LA. There is no expectation that attendance or absence figures will be used for accountability purposes for the duration of the provisions of this addendum, in line with the Government's statement **(7)**.

Reporting on pupil attendance and absence to DfE, the Trust (if applicable) and the Local Authority

Schools should continue to provide information to DfE by midday on a daily basis via the online

Form **(8)**.

**6** Implementing protective measures in schools

**7** See Attendance reporting

**8** <https://form.education.gov.uk/service/educational-setting-status>

Links to relevant Government guidance and legislation

Government guidance on recording attendance and absence, covering the wider opening of schools from 1 June 2020

Attendance guidance for schools (with reference to updates to legislation regarding attendance and registration)

Further information can be found here:

- Attendance legislation (from 1 June 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings/process-for-recording-attendance-and-using-the-educational-setting-status-form>

- Link to Attendance legislation disapplication at gov.uk page
- School registration legislation (from 1 June 2020)
- Link to School Registration modification notice at gov.uk page