

Eaton Bray Academy



ATTENDANCE POLICY

V3.0

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Attendance Policy

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AMENDMENT HISTORY

Issue	Author	Date	Description
V0.1(Draft)	SH	4/1/05	Initial draft
V1.0	SH	15/10/2015	Updated
V2.0	SH	15/10/2019	Updated
V3.0	LM	06/10/2020	Updated to include: New Headteacher Role of office manager Statutory guidance from DfE COVID addendum



Introduction

The staff and governors of Eaton Bray Academy firmly believe in regular attendance and encourage all children to attend school on time and every day when the school is in session, as long as they are well. We believe that regular attendance is vital for effective learning to take place.

Eaton Bray Academy will give high priority to ensuring that all parents and pupils are aware of the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

We work hard to support parents and carers who, for whatever reason, find it difficult to maintain regular attendance for their child.

Mrs. Mercer
Head



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1 RATIONALE

A high level of school attendance requires the school to follow well-established procedures consistently and fairly. All staff need to have a clear understanding of school policy and parents need to be aware of the high priority the school places on good attendance.

We aim to identify and address as speedily as possible any problems that may affect attendance, in order to achieve a consistent overall attendance rate of above **95%**.

2 PRINCIPLES

The school will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. School staff will promote positive attitudes towards pupils returning from absences.

Staff will be made aware of the registration process and receive training, when necessary, on registration procedures and the education law.

Registers will be completed accurately at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session and attendance regularly monitored.

Parents will be encouraged to contact the school early on the first morning of absence.

The Head teacher will regularly monitor attendance procedures with the assistance of the teaching staff and the Office Manager. The school governors will also be informed of the effectiveness of school procedures.

Procedures will allow returning pupils to catch up on missed work without disrupting the work of other pupils in the class.

Other relevant agencies i.e. the School Access and Inclusion Service Attendance Officer will be encouraged to work with the school to improve school attendance and to develop the whole school Attendance Policy.

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These



documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents

- Parents should ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- They should be properly dressed and in a fit condition to learn.
- If a child is going to be absent or late, it is the responsibility of the parents to inform the school.
- Parents should wherever possible avoid making medical appointments during school hours.
- Parents should be aware that absence during term time can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Teaching staff

- The teaching staff will ensure that the registers are marked in accordance with school policy.
- Staff will follow school procedures to follow up absenteeism and work with parents to promote good attendance.
- The staff will encourage good attendance through their own personal example.



Office manager

- Monitor the use of registers to ensure that correct procedures are being followed.
- Liaise with staff regarding the correct coding of registers.
- Produce a fortnightly report regarding attendance including class attendance and persistent absentees.
- Inform the Headteacher of any concerns regarding attendance immediately.
- Contact parents when children are absent and no reason has been given.
- Keep records regarding reasons for absence
- Keep records regarding school leavers and reasons

Head Teacher

- The Head Teacher will regularly inspect the registers to ensure that correct procedures are being followed.
- The Head Teacher will work with the staff and Attendance Officer to follow up unauthorised absences and irregular patterns of attendance.
- The Head Teacher will keep the School Governing Body informed of the levels of attendance in the school.
- The Head Teacher will work with the staff, Governors and Attendance Officer in reviewing the effectiveness of the Attendance policy.
- The Head Teacher will submit attendance returns to the DfE or other recognised agencies as required.
- The Head Teacher will ensure that a record is maintained to monitor the follow up of poor attendance.

The Governing Board

- The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Central Bedfordshire Council Access & Inclusion Service

- Carrying out register checks which are followed up with agreed actions.
- Organising attendance panels.
- Accepting referrals.



- Supporting parents/carers to help them improve their child's attendance.
- Agreeing Fixed Penalty Notices where appropriate.
- Taking court action as required.

4 PROCEDURES

The school will follow these procedures for recording and monitoring attendance:

- Registers are taken online using Integriss.
- Morning registers are marked at 8.50am and close at 9.20am.
- Afternoon registers are marked at 1.00pm for Reception and Key Stage One and at 1.15pm for Key Stage Two. Registers closes ten minutes after the stated time.
- The Office Manager will produce a weekly attendance summary report and update the school website with attendance percentages for each class.
- The Head Teacher will inspect the registers regularly to ensure that correct procedures are being followed and to monitor pupil attendance.
- The Office Manager will produce a report on a half termly basis to identify persistent absentees and write to the relevant parents informing them of our concerns regarding their child's attendance.
- The Attendance Officer from Central Bedfordshire Access and Inclusion Service will make regular visits to the school to review our attendance, to provide assistance and support, and to facilitate intervention where there are concerns about the attendance of individual children

Lateness

Any child arriving at school after 9.00 am should report to the School Office. If there is no legitimate reason for their lateness (eg a medical appointment or educational visit) they will be signed in as late (code L). The registers will be amended to record a pupil's late arrival.

Registers close at 9.20 am. Any child arriving at school after this time without a legitimate reason will be marked as a late arrival after registration closed (code U). This is classed as an **unauthorised absence** for the whole school session and will be reflected in the child's overall attendance percentage.



The same procedures will apply for afternoon registration in the event that a child goes home for lunch and returns late.

Parents of children who are regularly late will receive a letter notifying them of their child's late arrival at school. These will be sent out on a half termly basis.

Reporting

A child's attendance record will be reported in the child's annual report.

5 ABSENCE

Definitions

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason (for example illness) and the school has received notification from a parent/carer.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. An absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without a good reason, even with the support of a parent/carer.

Only the school can authorise an absence – parents/carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences explained by parents/carers will be classed as authorised.



If a child is absent, parents/carers should notify the school office before 9.00am, or as early as possible, by telephone, email or via the absence tool on Parentmail. The absence will be recorded appropriately in the register with the correct code.

Follow Up of Absence

If no contact is received from parents of the pupil on the morning of the first day of absence, the class teacher will record the absence in the register with no code. Office staff will then endeavour to contact a parent/carer by telephone, email or other means to confirm a reason for the absence and amend the register accordingly. Should no sufficiently plausible reason be obtained as to why a child is absent, the absence will be marked unauthorised.

If no contact can be made with the primary parent/carer, office staff will contact other individuals listed as emergency contact in the order that they are listed. Should this be unsuccessful, other means to establish the whereabouts of the child may include:

- contacting other local schools where siblings are known to attend
- contacting family friends or relatives who are known to us
- checking social media

If the absence continues after ten school days without explanation from the parents, the matter will be referred to the Attendance Officer.

If there are concerns as to the whereabouts and safety of the child, then safeguarding procedures may be implemented.

Long Term Absence

If an absence is likely to continue for an extended period of time, or be a repetitive absence, the school will work with a range of support services so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given home tuition.

In the event of a child returning to school after a long period of absence then an individual integration programme will be implemented when necessary.



Persistent Absence

If a child or the child has an attendance rate below 90%, this is classed as “persistent absence”. The Office Manager will identify children who fall into this category on a half termly basis, or more frequently if there are specific concerns, and implement the following procedure:

- An “initial concern” letter will be sent to the child’s parent/carer to inform them that there is a concern over their child’s attendance
- If the child’s attendance does not improve, the Head Teacher will invite the parents to a meeting to try and resolve any difficulties that may be preventing the child from attending school.
- The parents will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance and the school will request supporting evidence for any future absences, or they will be marked as unauthorized.
- If the pupil’s difficulties are not resolved and the attendance does not improve then a formal referral will be made to the School Attendance Officer.

Supporting evidence may include:

- An appointment card/letter
- A note from a GP/Practice Nurse giving reasons for absence
- A copy of a prescription made out for the child

When the evidence is presented a decision will be made as to whether the absence will be authorised or not. This is the decision of the Headteacher.

6 REQUESTS FOR ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Eaton Bray Academy understands that there are occasionally exceptional circumstances whereby a parent/carer may legitimately request leave of absence for a child. “Exceptional circumstances” can be defined as *rare, significant and short*.

If a parent wishes to make an application for absence during term time, they should complete an absence request form available from the School Office at least 14 days before the date(s) requested.



Head teachers may only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. When a parent makes a request for absence during term time, Head teachers should determine whether the absence can be authorised and the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

The Head will take into account the child's attendance record in determining whether the absence can be authorised.

Family Holidays

Parents do not have any legal right or entitlement to take their child out of school in order to go on a family holiday during term-time and should not, as a rule, expect any leave request to be granted.

Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents/carers are encouraged to book appointments for children outside of school time, although it is understood that this is not always possible. Parents/carers are expected to provide evidence, such as an appointment card or letter, of such appointments if they take place in school time. A "leave of absence" form would not need to be completed in this case.

Absences for Cultural Reasons

Absence requests for cultural reasons such as traveller absences or religious observances will be considered in accordance with the advice given by the Access and Inclusion Service.

7 FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

Where a child is absent for a family holiday or other absence that has not been authorised, the School may notify the Local Authority, and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

A Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued when the number of unauthorised absences a child has had amounts to at least ten sessions (five days) during a twelve week school period.



Once a Fixed Penalty Notice has been issued, there is no statutory right of appeal, although there are circumstances in which the council may withdraw the Notice.

A Fixed Penalty Notice is initially for £60 (per parent per child). If this is not paid within twenty-one days from the date of issue it rises to £120. If after twenty-eight days of the date of issue the £120 is not paid, the council will prosecute under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. This will lead to an appearance in the magistrates' court and may result in a fine up to £2,500 and / or three months imprisonment.

For information about Fixed Penalty Notices or any other issues related to school attendance contact:

Access and Inclusion Service
Central Bedfordshire Council
Watling House
High Street North
Dunstable
LU6 1LF
Tel: 0300 300 4953



APPENDIX 1 – ATTENDANCE CODES

- - Attendance Not Required
- # - Planned whole or partial school closure
- * - Not Yet Marked
- / - Present
- B - Educated off site (NOT Dual reg.)
- C - Other Authorised Circumstances
- D - Dual registration (attend elsewhere)
- E - Excluded (no alternative provision)
- G - Family holiday (NOT agreed)
- H - Family holiday (agreed)
- I - Illness (NOT medical or dental)
- J - Interview
- L - Late (before registers closed)
- M - Medical/Dental appointments
- N - No reason yet provided for absence
- O - Unauthorised absence
- P - Approved sporting activity
- R - Religious observance
- S - Study leave
- T - Traveller absence
- U - Late (after registers closed)
- V - Educational visit or trip
- W - Work experience
- X - Non-compulsory school age absence
- Y - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Z - Pupil not on roll



APPENDIX 2 – INITIAL CONCERN LETTER

Dear Parent/Guardian

Attendance Rate Below 90%

I am writing to you concerning _____'s school attendance.

The school has a policy, agreed with the Access and Inclusion Service at Central Bedfordshire Council, of informing parents if their child's attendance rate falls below 90%.

_____ 's attendance rate so far this academic year is _____%. The school will be monitoring this over the next half term. If there is no significant sign of improvement in that time, a referral will be made to the Attendance Officer.

We are committed to supporting children to attend school. Please contact the school if you feel we can help and support _____ in increasing their level of school attendance.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Mercer
Headteacher



APPENDIX 3 – MEETING REQUEST LETTER

Dear

Re. [Child's Name]

Following a recent register check, the School Attendance Officer raised concerns regarding your child's attendance. The school's attendance target is 95%. Your child's attendance is currently []%.

We request that you attend a meeting with myself and the School Attendance Officer. This will take place on [] at []. Please confirm whether you will be able to attend.

Please note, no further absences will be authorised without medical evidence.

If you accrue ten or more unauthorised absences you may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Mercer
Headteacher



APPENDIX 4 – LATENESS TO SCHOOL LETTER

Dear

During my regular checking of the registers I notice that [] has been late for school on [] occasions this term.

It is essential that pupils form good habits of punctual attendance at school from the earliest age. Children who arrive late at school often;

- Miss vital parts of the lesson
- Disrupt the class when the lesson is underway
- Find it acutely embarrassing entering a class once the lesson has started

If a pupil arrives at school after the registers have closed without an adequate reason, we have to record this as an unauthorised absence. If you accrue ten or more unauthorised absences you may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

The Attendance Officer regularly checks the registers and takes referrals for pupils with irregular school attendance, which includes lateness.

If you require any support in order for [] to arrive at school on time then please contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Mercer
Headteacher



APPENDIX 5 – ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Attached is an application form for you to request permission for your child to be absent from school for any reason, including to take part in a family holiday. Before completing the application form, please read these notes carefully:

- The law states that you do not have the right to take your child out of school for holidays during term time. The Local Education Authority works with schools to reduce the numbers of children missing school because of holidays taken in term time and schools can refuse your request to take your child out of school.
- If you wish to take your child on holiday during term time, you must apply for permission in writing using the attached form. Permission for authorised leave of absence may only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- There are certain times of the year when a child may experience problems because of missing school. These include at the start of a new school term and periods where statutory tests take place. In deciding whether to authorise your child's absence and give permission for a holiday in term time, the school will take these and other factors into account.
- If the school refuse your application and you still take your child out of school the absences will be treated as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences may lead to a Penalty Notice being issued against you for irregular school attendance.

Having read these notes, if you still wish to apply for a leave of absence for your child to accompany you on holiday during term time then please complete the application attached. This form should be returned to your child's school as far in advance of the proposed absence as possible.



APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Pupil's Name Class

Home Address

I wish to apply for my child to be absent from school during the following dates:

First day of absence Date of Return to School

Total number of school days missed

Reasons for absence from school:
.....
.....

I make application for my child named above to have authorised absence from school for the reasons stated. I understand that if this is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice.

Name of Parent/Carer making application

Signed Date

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL GIVING AT LEAST 4 WEEKS' NOTICE OF INTENDED ABSENCE

✂-----

Pupil Name Class

Current attendance % as of/...../.....

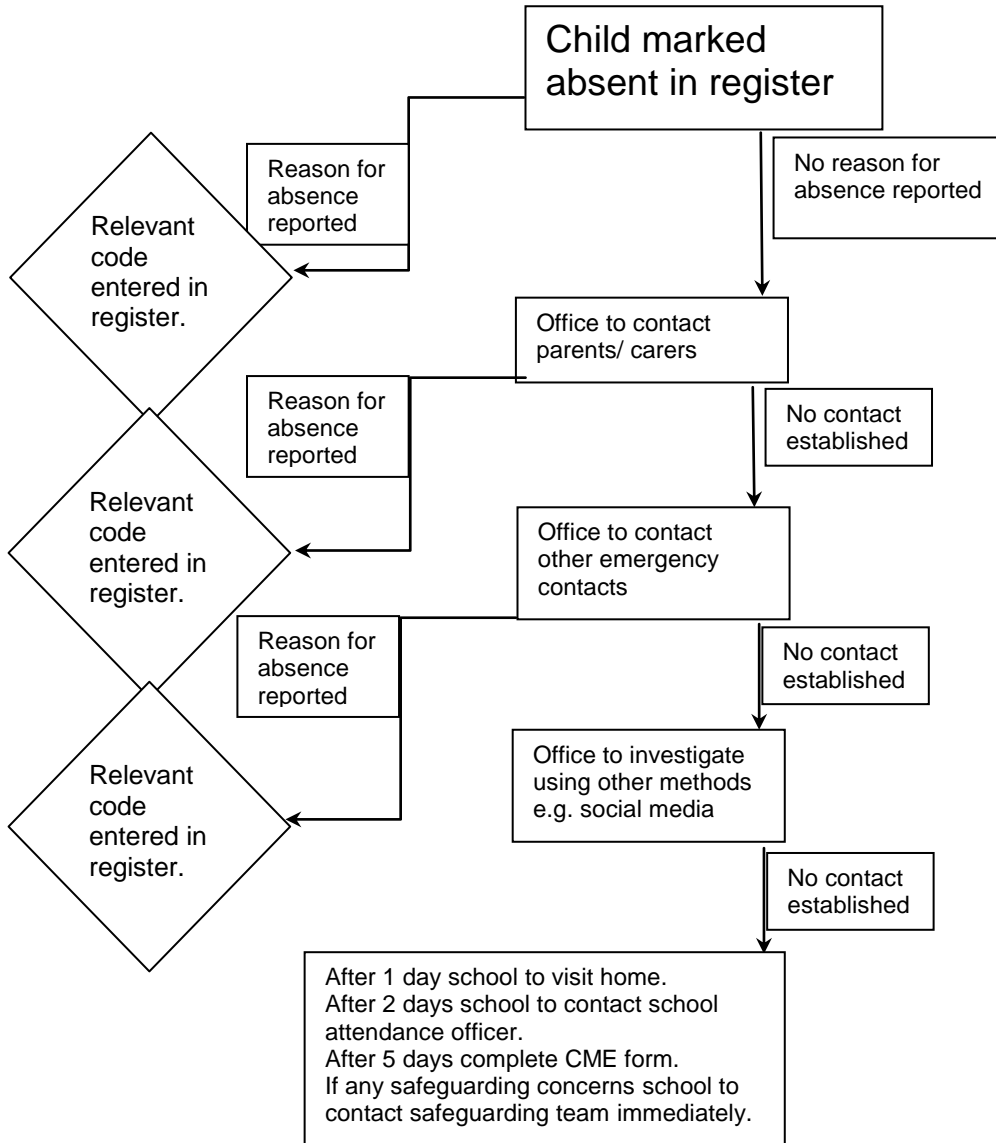
AUTHORISED: Your request has been authorised for the following dates:
____ / ____ / ____ to ____ / ____ / ____

UNAUTHORISED: Your request for a leave of absence during term time has not been authorised because:

Signed Head Teacher Date ____ / ____ / ____



Appendix 6 – Attendance Procedure





Covid 19 Addendum – Attendance

1. This addendum applies from the start of the autumn term 2020 until the end of the 2020/21 academic year. It sets out changes to our normal attendance policy, and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal attendance policy continues to apply. We may need to amend or add to this addendum as circumstances or official guidance changes. We will communicate any changes to staff, parents and pupils.

2. Guidance and definitions

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's (DfE's) guidance on school attendance during the 2020/21 academic year.

In section 4.2 of this addendum, where we refer to 'close contact', this means:

- Direct close contacts: face-to-face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face-to-face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin).
- Proximity contacts: extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual.
- Travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person. This definition is from the DfE's guidance on full reopening for schools (see number 9 in 'the system of controls').

3. Attendance expectations

It is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age to attend school unless:

- They have been granted an authorised absence by the school in line with our normal attendance policy They cannot attend school due to specific circumstances related to coronavirus (see section 4, below)



4. Where 'non-attendance in relation to coronavirus' applies

We will only accept 'non-attendance in relation to coronavirus' in circumstances where a pupil's travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- Against guidance from Public Health England and/or the Department of Health and Social Care relating to the incidence of coronavirus or its transmission.
- Prohibited by any legislation or statutory directions relating to the incidence of transmission of coronavirus.

4.1 Pupil develops symptoms or lives with someone who does:

- The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day that their child needs to self isolate. The pupil will stay at home until they or the symptomatic person they live with receives their coronavirus test results.
- If the pupil's test result is negative: the pupil will return to school when they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus.
- They should continue to stay at home if they remain unwell (i.e. with a different illness). If the person the pupil lives with tests negative: the pupil will stop self-isolating and return to school

4.2 Pupil or a 'close contact' of theirs receives a positive test result

- The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school about the positive test result as soon as possible.
- Pupils who test positive must self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms, and must only return to school when they no longer have symptoms (other than a cough or a loss of sense of smell or taste).
- If a member of the pupil's household or a 'close contact' tests positive, the pupil must self isolate for 14 days. The pupil must do this from when the member of their household first had symptoms, or the day the pupil last met with the 'close contact' who received the positive result. See the definition for 'close contact' in section 2 of this addendum.

4.3. Pupil has to quarantine after travel abroad

- The parent/carer must notify the school if their child has to quarantine after travel to a country that is not on the government's exemptions list.



The pupil must quarantine for 14 days on their arrival to the UK and return to school thereafter.

4.4 Pupil is required to shield during a local lockdown

- The parent/carer will notify the school if they are advised by the government to stay at home and will provide proof of their shielding letter by sending a scan to admin@eba.ec or a photocopy to the school address. The pupil will stay at home until the shielding measures in the local area are paused. Once the shielding measures are lifted, we will contact the pupil's parent/carer to set the expectation that they can return to school.

4.5 Remote learning provision

- If a pupil is not attending school because of circumstances related to coronavirus, but where the pupil is not ill, the school will provide the pupil access to remote education.

5. Recording attendance

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. Please see appendix 1 for relevant attendance codes and when they will be used.

6. Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent or carer
- Notify their social worker, where they have one
- If a pupil does not attend because they, and/or their parent/carer are concerned about returning to school because of coronavirus, we will: Arrange a phone call between the parent/carer and a relevant member of staff to explain the protective measures the school is taking to keep pupils safe.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum every 2 months during term time.



Appendix 1 – COVID 19 related registration codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil has to self-isolate because they have symptoms or live with someone who does, and are waiting for their test results
I	Illness	Pupil remains unwell following a negative test result (i.e. with a different illness)
I	Illness	Pupil has to continue to self-isolate because they tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil has to self-isolate (for 14 days) because someone they live with tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil has to self-isolate (for 14 days) because they are a close contact of someone who tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil has to quarantine (for 14 days) after a trip to a non-exempt country
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil is required to shield in the case of a local lockdown, or lives with someone who is required to shield
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Pupil is asked not to attend in the case of local lockdown