

Atam Academy

Addendum to Attendance Policy

January 2021



Coronavirus (COVID-19) update: Please note, COVID Attendance Addendum has been created in line with the current government guidance.

Last updated: 02/02/2021

This addendum to our school's attendance policy will be adopted by the school from ATAM Academy and has been created in line with the Government guidance in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The addendum has a section which is specific to a national lockdown, where the school is closed to most pupils and also a section which reflects the additional measures being taken when the school is open to staff and pupils during the Covid-19 crisis.

This addendum applies until for the remainder of this academic year 2020-2021. It sets out changes and exceptions to our published Attendance Policy. Pupils, parents and staff should continue to follow the guidance and expectations in the school's attendance policy with respect to anything not covered in this addendum. 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. This addendum should be read in conjunction with the school's current attendance policy.

Introduction

At ATAM Academy, we strive to secure the best outcomes for our pupils. We fully appreciate that regular attendance at school is vitally important in helping pupils reach their academic potential, develop socially and emotionally as well as developing a range of life skills which will support them as they leave our school and start the next phase of their education at secondary school.

Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Children who frequently miss school often fall behind and they may find it challenging to make the expected progress in their learning. Regular absences may also lead to children finding it difficult in maintaining friendships and they can feel isolated from their school community. Atam Academy staff will work in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers to ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the opportunities and experiences offered by the school. Atam Academy will encourage and support parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves the maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Ensure that pupils are safe; having parent/carer contact when they are absent, so the school know (to the best of their knowledge) where the pupil is when absent. Monitoring trends and patterns of absence of individual, vulnerable pupils
- Support pupils and their parents/carers in establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality
- Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer to improve each pupil's academic outcomes
- Enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school
- Ensure parents/carers are aware of their legal responsibilities

Section 1 Expectations and practices when the school is open to staff and pupils during the Covid-19 Crisis.

Attendance Expectations

As from 24th August the Government/Department of Education have stated that from the start of the Autumn Term 2020 pupil attendance will be mandatory and all the usual rules on attendance will apply. Parents' have a duty to ensure that their child(ren), of compulsory school age, attends regularly and on time at the school where the child(ren) is a registered pupil. The school have a responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence, they have the ability to issue sanctions, including a penalty notice fine, in line with the local authorities' codes of conduct.

Expectations of Parents/Carers

We value the support of our parents and carers and we would appreciate it if they could:

- If a pupil has symptoms, they should not attend school given the potential risk to others. If a parent/carer insists on their child attending school we can take the decision to refuse if, in our reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with Covid-19. Any such decision will be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and the current public health advice.
- Ensure that their child(ren) attends school regularly
- Ensure that their child(ren) attends school at the correct time
- Ensure that if their child is unable to attend for any reason, they call our Attendance Officer before 08:00am or email: info@atamacademy.com ParentMail or phone: 0208 252 9831
- Call the Attendance Officer each and every day that their child is absent
- Provide the Attendance Officer with the appropriate paperwork for any medical appointments
- Provide the Attendance Officer with medical evidence to support any periods of absence if necessary
- Follow the Coronavirus related absence reference guide (appendix 1) and government guidance
- If a pupil has symptoms, they should not attend school given the potential risk to others. If a parent/carer insists on their child attending school we can take the decision to refuse if, in our reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with Covid-19. Any such decision will be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and the current public health advice.

Expectations of Pupils

We understand that this is a challenging time for a lot of our pupils, and we want to support them in attending and engaging in their learning. We would appreciate it if they could:

- Attend school regularly and be on time
- Make themselves aware of the correct dates and times for the start and finish of the school day for their year group
- Arrive to all lessons on time
- Report to reception if they are late to school
- Sign out at reception for appointments

Expectations of Staff

We appreciate the support of our staff in ensuring registers are taken promptly and correctly

- Ensure that all registers are completed correctly within the first five minutes of every lesson
- Use the following three codes for their register: N – Absent, / - Attended or L – Late

Expectations of Our Key Attendance Staff

Our key attendance staff work to ensure all pupils are safe and that where support is needed, it is offered.

The Attendance Officer will record attendance and follow up absence.

The Attendance Officer will liaise with the HoY and Pastoral lead regarding school absence.

The Head of Year will support the Attendance Officer in following up absence.

The Attendance Officer and Head of Year will offer support as and when appropriate.

The Attendance Officer will code all absences correctly.

The Attendance Officer will track all coronavirus related cases and ensure that there is follow up contact and support.

Exemption and guidance

The Government states that now much more is known about COVID-19 that in future there will be far fewer children and young people advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high. Therefore, the majority of pupils will be able to return to school.

However, a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result

If a child is identified as clinically extremely vulnerable, they should have received a letter confirming this or have been told directly by their GP or hospital clinician. The School will require a copy of the letter. We will ensure that a comprehensive learning plan is created and implemented for any pupils who fall into this category. For the most up to date guidance on clinically extremely vulnerable and shielding please visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus and follow the education links.

Support

If you have any concerns, questions or require support please contact our Attendance Officer, Marcia Lewis, via email at info@atamacademy.com or via phone on 0208 252 9831

Although, at the current time, we cannot invite parents/carers into the school for meetings, we will offer our support through phone calls, zoom or Google Meet meetings

Absence from School (Please refer to Appendix 1 for a table outlining possible absences, codes and actions)

In line with the Secretary of State's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice relating to Covid-19, a new category of non-attendance has been introduced. This ensures that absences which fall into one of the categories below will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes and will, therefore, not affect a pupil's attendance record for the academic year 2020-21.

Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' could apply. In line with current legislation, and current guidance from Public Health England and Dept for Health and Social Care, examples are as follows.

Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)

Pupils who have symptoms should self-isolate and get a test.

If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I – illness, as would usually be the case. Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.

If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. They should only return to school if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of

sense of smell or taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. 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.

If someone in the pupil's household has symptoms, the household should self-isolate and the member of their household should get a test.

If the member of the household tests negative, the pupil can stop self-isolating and can return to school. Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result when the pupil can return to school.

If the household member tests positive, the pupil should continue self-isolating for the full 10 days from the day after contact with the individual who tested positive. Code X should be used during this period.

In all cases of self-isolation, schools should ask parents to inform them immediately about the outcome of a test. Schools should not require evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)

Pupils may not have symptoms themselves but may be required to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with coronavirus (COVID-19).

The NHS test and trace guidance states that a person should self-isolate for 10 days from the day after contact with the individual who tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). In the event of a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) case in the school community, the local health protection team will provide advice on who this applies to, advising them to self-isolate for 10 days from the day after contact with the individual who tested positive. Code X should be used for these pupils during this period.

Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, code X should be used in the register.

Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable (in a future local lockdown scenario only)

Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August 2020. This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding.

If in future, rates of the disease rise in local areas, children still on the shielding list (or family members still on the shielding list) from that area, and that area only, may be contacted by the government and advised to stay at home and shield during the period where rates remain high. Families will receive a letter if they are required to shield again that parents will be able to share with the school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from PHE or the DHSC should be recorded as code X.

Schools should contact parents of pupils who are shielding when measures in the local area are lifted and shielding is paused again, to set out the expectation that they can return to school. Code X should not be used for sessions after the pupil has been advised to return to school.

When a child is absent in relation to Covid-19, the school will, wherever possible, provide access to remote learning.

If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19), we will offer them access to remote education. We will keep a record of and monitor the engagement of the pupil with their remote learning, but this will not be reported in our official attendance register. Where we have concerns about a lack of engagement, we will make contact with the parents/carers to offer support and check on the welfare of the child.

Safeguarding Our Pupils

- It is a legal requirement for parents/carers to inform the school of the reason for any absence. They are expected to contact the school every day their child is absent to update the school on the wellbeing of their child.
- Parents should contact the school either by phone, email or info@atamacademy.com as early as they can so the school enter the correct code in the register, inform staff of the pupil's absence and plan for support i.e. remote learning.
- If parents/carers do not contact the school to inform them of the reason for their child's absence, the school will follow their absence protocols and will endeavour to make contact with the parents/carers. If parents/carers cannot be contacted staff will attempt to use the logged emergency contact details for the pupil.
- If contact to the emergency contact and the parents/carers is unsuccessful staff may refer the absence to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or other key pastoral staff.
- If a pupil is considered vulnerable or has the support of external partners i.e. Social Care, the appropriate member of staff will make contact with the child's key worker to make them aware of the absence.
- If staff have concerns about the safety of a child, they will contact Children's Social Care or the police for advice or to make a referral.

Section 2 Expectations and practices when the school is closed to most pupils during the Covid-19 Crisis.

The Government are keen to reassure parents and carers that “Limiting attendance does not suggest that schools and colleges have become significantly less safe for young people. Instead limiting attendance is about supporting the reduction of the overall number of social contacts in our communities. We have resisted restrictions on attendance at schools since the first lockdown but, in the face of the rapidly rising numbers of cases across the country and intense pressure on the NHS, we now need to use every lever at our disposal to reduce all our social contacts wherever possible.” (DfE Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools Guidance for all schools in England January 2021)

We have assessed the risks and implemented proportionate control measures to limit the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). As required by law we regularly review our risk assessment and have implemented sensible and proportionate control measures which follow the health and safety hierarchy of controls to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level.

- We will offer face to face learning to children of critical workers and vulnerable children, identified by using the government’s guidance as well as being advised by our pastoral and safeguarding teams
- We will speak with parents/carers where they feel their child should be able to attend school to discuss their needs. We may ask for evidence in relation to their role and/or circumstances
- We would appreciate it if parents and carers who are critical workers keep their children at home if they can
- One of the most important preventative measures is to minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have Covid-19 symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school. We will ensure that pupils, staff and other adults do not come into the school if they have Covid-19 symptoms or have tested positive in at least the last 10 days and ensuring anyone developing those symptoms during the school day is sent home, are essential actions to reduce the risk in schools and further drive down transmission of Covid-19.
- If a pupil has symptoms, they should not attend school given the potential risk to others. If a parent/carer insists on their child attending school we can take the decision to refuse if, in our reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with Covid-19. Any such decision will be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and the current public health advice
- We will continue to record attendance and complete a.m. and p.m. registers
- We will follow up absences of the pupils who are expected to be in school. However, where a parent wishes for their child to be absent, we will authorise the absence during this national lockdown period
- Absence will not be penalised. No penalty notices for non-attendance will be referred to the local authority and none will be issued during the lockdown period

Vulnerable Pupils

If vulnerable children and young people do not attend school, we will

- Work with the local authority and social worker (where applicable) to explore the reason for absence. We will discuss our concerns using supporting guidance, considering the child's circumstances and their best interests with parents/carers and supporting professionals
- Work with the local authority and social worker (where applicable) and other relevant professionals to encourage the child or young person to attend educational provision, particularly where the social worker agrees that the child or young person's attendance would be appropriate
- Notify the pupil's social worker (if they have one) if the pupil is required to self-isolate. We will discuss with the social worker, parents and pupil (if appropriate) the best way to maintain contact and offer support to the vulnerable child or young person during the period of isolation
- If we were to grant a leave of absence to a vulnerable child or young person we still speak to parents and carers, and social workers (where applicable) to explore the reasons for the leave of absence and any concerns raised. We will focus on the welfare of the child or young person and ensure that the child or young person is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home.
- If the parent of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent, the parent should let the school know. The Government expects schools to grant applications for leave of absence 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
- During a local or national lockdown, we will continue our collaborative work with multi agencies to maximise opportunities for face-to face provision for vulnerable children
- All vulnerable children are still expected to attend school full time and will NOT be marked as Code X if they are not in school (except if they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining).

Remote Education

- All children who are not attending school as they have been advised to learn from home will be given access to and expected to engage with remote learning.
- All pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to Covid-19, we will immediately offer them access to remote education
- We will keep a record of, and monitor engagement with all remote learning activity; this record will not be tracked in the attendance register.
- We will check to ensure that vulnerable children are able to access remote education, support them or their families to access it (as far as possible) and regularly check to see if they are engaged in their learning

- If a pupil is failing to engage with their remote learning over a 2 day period, the school will contact the parents/carers to explore the reason why
- If a member of staff becomes concerned about a pupil's levels of engagement, emotional wellbeing or has a safeguarding concern they will report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

How we can support pupils with their mental health and wellbeing during lockdown.

Please contact our Pastoral Lead or Safeguarding Leads: Sheila Wrack, Jamie Ali or Bharat Singh if you have any concerns for regarding mental health or wellbeing during lockdown. The DSL, Jamie Ali can be contacted via email on j.ali@atamacademy.com and our Pastoral Lead Sheila Wrack via email on s.wrack@atamacademy.com Our Deputy DSL can be contacted via email on b.singh@atamacademy.com

Parents can all call the school on 020 8252 9831 or by email at info@atamacademy.com

Key Contacts

Child Protection and Assessment Team (CPAT)

E-mail: CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk

Tel: 020 8708 3885 (weekdays)

Emergency Duty Team (EDT) Tel: 020 8708 5897 (evenings and weekends)

Families Together Hub E-mail: Early.Intervention@redbridge.gov.uk

Tel: 0208 708 2611 Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Team

E-mail: cafadmin@redbridge.gov.uk

Tel: 0208 708 9535

Emergency – Police – if child or young person is in immediate danger Tel: 999

If parents have any concerns they can contact the school via the website contact page – please click [here](#)

Appendix 1 –

Coronavirus related absences quick reference guide for Parents & Attendance Officer

What to do if....	Action	Absence Code	Return to school when...
Local or National lockdown where the school is closed to most pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children of critical workers or who are identified by the school as vulnerable may attend the school If a vulnerable pupil is granted leave of absence If a vulnerable pupil is not attending and the absence is not Covid-19 related All other children will be expected to access remote learning The school will monitor pupil's access to remote learning 	/ \ C Refer to SENDCo/ DSL No code required	The Government or PHE within a local authority advise that the school may fully re-open to staff and children or as advised below
My child is in a class or group that has been asked to self-isolate and has developed symptoms within the 10-days from having contact with the individual tested positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not come into school Contact the school daily Get a test If the test is negative and they still feel unwell <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-isolate for the remainder of the 10 days (as Covid-19 may develop) If the test is positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-isolate for remaining 10 days from onset of symptoms 	X	
My child has mild Coronavirus symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not come into school. Contact the school daily. Self-isolate Get a test Inform the school about the test result 	X	The child can return when their test result is negative
My child tests positive for Coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not come into school. Contact the school daily. Self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days Get a test Inform the school about the test result 	I	The child can return after a 10 day period of self-isolation even if they have a cough or loss of smell/taste as these symptoms can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. They must NOT return if they still have a temperature
Someone in my household has Coronavirus symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not come into school. Contact the school daily. Self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days 		The child can return to school when the household member's test result is negative

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The household member must get a test immediately • Inform the school about the test result 	X	
Somebody in my household has tested positive for Coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 10 days 	X	The child may return when they have completed a 10 day period of self-isolation
NHS Test and Trace have identified my child as a 'close contact' of someone with symptoms or conformed coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 10 days 	X	The child may return when they have completed a 10 day period of self-isolation
We/my child has travelled and has to self-isolate as part of the period of quarantine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not take unauthorised leave in term time • Consider quarantine requirements and FCO advice before booking travel • Provide information to the Attendance Officer as per school attendance policy <p>Returning from destination where quarantine is needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 10 days <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay for a 'Test to Release' test 	G for unauthorised absence for period of holiday. FPN if that is policy. X	<p>The quarantine period of 10 days has been completed</p> <p>NB <i>You may be able to end self-isolation early if you pay for a private coronavirus (COVID-19) test through the 'Test to Release' scheme after 5 days self-solation. If the test is negative the child may return to school</i> <i>If the test is positive you need to self-isolate for another 10 days. Count the 10 days starting from the day you took the test, or from when you first had symptoms if that is earlier.</i> <i>If you're living or staying with someone in the UK they should also self-isolate for 10 days, starting from the day you took the test.</i> <i>If the test is inconclusive you also need to self-isolate for another 10 days.</i></p>
We have received medical advice that my child must resume shielding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact the School's Attendance Officer as soon as you receive the confirmation – copy for the School. • Shield until you are informed that the restrictions are lifted, and shielding is paused again. 	X	The child can return when confirmation that the restrictions have been lifted and child can return to school again.

Documents which may offer support - Direct links

[NHS test and trace](#)

[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)

[how to self-isolate when you travel to the UK](#)

[guidance on shielding and protecting extremely vulnerable persons from Covid-19](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision>

for **Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings**

Updated 8 January 2021