

Attendance Policy

Covid 19 addendum attached

Context

1. In line with Buckinghamshire and National Guidance on attendance, Pace believes that attendance at school is vital in maximising a child's success at school and future life chances.
2. Pace therefore endeavours to ensure that all children of school age receive a full-time education which maximises their opportunity to realise their full potential.
3. Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.
4. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.
5. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:
 - 5.1 Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
 - 5.2 truancy before or during the school day
 - 5.3 absences which have never been properly explained
 - 5.4 children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
 - 5.5 shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
 - 5.6 day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

6. At Pace, staff will work closely with families to ensure that children attend school and arrive punctually. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends the school to which they are registered.
7. In order to ensure efficient communication and record keeping, the following procedures will be followed. The Parent Handbook sets out the parental role in following these procedures.
8. Notice is given by parents in advance of known absences, for example medical appointments
9. In the case of a child's illness, Pace Reception should be informed as early as possible on 01296 392739 (at 8:30am, no later than 8.45am) either by telephone or using 'Parentmail.'
10. Requests by parents for taking children out of school for family holidays MUST be made on the official request form and submitted to the Head of Service. Families are discouraged from taking children out of school for the purposes of a holiday and permission is given only at the discretion of the Headteacher. However, we recognise the particular challenges faced by families of children and young people attending Pace, and will normally authorise absence for family holidays providing that the period of absence:
 - 10.1 does not exceed 10 school days in any one school year,
 - 10.2 does not occur immediately prior to or during Statutory Assessment periods and/or termly Assessment Weeks
 - 10.3 and that the procedures for requesting absence are followed giving a minimum of 2 weeks, and preferably one month's notice
11. A register of attendance is taken every morning at 9:15am. A note is made of a pupil's absence and the reason for it, if known. Where the reason for lateness or absence is unknown, a phone call will be made immediately to the parents to ascertain when the child will be arriving or returning to school, and the reason for lateness.
12. Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school for a variety of reasons. If your child is reluctant to attend please speak directly to a member of the staff team so that we can take steps to resolve the problem as quickly as possible and support your child accordingly.
13. In the case of an unauthorised absence, Pace is required to inform the pupil's placing authority and make them aware of the details. Parents should be aware that unauthorised absence may place their child's placement at risk lead and could lead to the placing authority taking legal action against them.

- 14 On occasions, children who attend Pace may have a prolonged period of absence due to illness or surgery. In these cases, Pace staff will establish prior to planned surgery, when and how the pupil will return to Pace, working with the parents and other agencies as required.

- 15 In all cases of prolonged absence Pace staff will visit the child in hospital and/or at home and maintain regular contact with the family to monitor progress and provide educational and therapeutic input.

- 16 If Pace staff have any concerns about a child's frequent or persistent absence from school, the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Team will be contacted. See Child Protection Policy.

Date: October 2021

Review Date: September 2022

To be reviewed by: Head Teacher

Covid 19 Addendum to attendance policy

1. Aims and scope

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Supporting parents/carers and pupils who are concerned about the return to school due to coronavirus

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 section 4 of 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 using the contact procedures outlines in section 9 of the usual Pace attendance policy.

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 via email or parentmail to their class teacher.

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 tailored to meet their individual needs and circumstances. This will involve a combination of activities to complete at home, teletherapy and participation in sessions where appropriate.

Each school group has their own remote learning contingency plan which will be applied for both individuals and groups depending on circumstances. We will be mindful to strike the right balance based on the individual family's circumstances to offer high quality remote learning support at a level that is helpful and supportive without be overwhelming or causing stress.

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. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to 'exceptional circumstances'
- Unable to attend for reasons related to coronavirus (see appendix 1 for the relevant absence codes and when we will use them)

Pupils must arrive in school at their designated time slot on each school day.

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 discuss this with the family and will take steps to actively support them and offer reassurance about how Pace is mitigating risk and

to provide further details about the protective measures in school to keep pupils and staff safe.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or Department for Education is updated.

Appendix 1: pupil absence codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's addendum to their school attendance guidance for the 2020/21 academic year. If not covered here, our normal attendance codes apply.

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

