EMMANUEL COLLEGE

APPENDIX 5: COVID-19 ATTENDANCE POLICY ADDENDUM

Introduction

The school closures during the last academic year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic meant that not all children have been expected to attend school, however, from the start of the autumn term 2020 student attendance returned to being mandatory for all students. This also applies to the 2021-22 Academic year meaning that the usual school attendance procedures apply including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered student
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education[1]

This addendum outlines the circumstances in which school attendance may affected by Covid-19 and the expectations of parents, students and the College when this applies.

Absence in circumstances relating to COVID-19

Emmanuel College will continue to record absence that is in relation to Covid-19 by using the attendance code identified by the Department for Education (X). This code will be used when a student does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19 from Public Health England (PHE), or its successor UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19

As outlined by the Department for Education this category must only be used to record where a student is not attending for the reasons set out above. It should not be used to record any other type of non-attendance or absence - for example, where a parent or student is anxious about attending school because of COVID-19.

Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19' could apply

(a) **Students who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed COVID-19**
    Students who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should self-isolate and get a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test. If a student tests negative and if they feel well, they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the student remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then their absence will be recorded as Code I (illness) and parents should follow the usual absence procedures outlined in the Attendance Policy. Code X should only be used up until the time

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[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2021-to-2022-academic-year

of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.

(b) Students who are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19
Students who are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to self-isolate. They should instead get a PCR test, and should only self-isolate if they test positive. If they do test positive, they will be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school. If a student tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance. Code X will be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the student tests positive, they will be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

(c) Students 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 student is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, code X will be used in the register.

(d) Students who are clinically extremely vulnerable when shielding is advised
Clinically extremely vulnerable people are no longer advised to shield. All clinically extremely vulnerable students should attend school unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care who have been advised by their clinician or other specialist not to attend. If shielding is advised nationally or in a local area again, by DHSC, PHE or UKHSA, then students who are clinically extremely vulnerable may be advised not to attend school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from DHSC, PHE or UKHSA will be recorded as code X.

(e) Students who are self-isolating but who have not had a PCR test
In line with public health advice, students with symptoms must self-isolate and would strongly encourage them to take a PCR test. If the student is unable to take a PCR test, we will record the student as code X in the register.

In line with the guidance from the Department for Education we will follow up with families if they we are not satisfied with the reason as to why the student is not in school. We may request supporting evidence from the family of the student in this case. If the reason given for absence is not in line with the guidance above or there is not reasonable evidence to suggest this, absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Remote Education

If a student is not attending school because their attendance would be contrary to government guidance or legislation around COVID-19, we will ensure students have access to remote education as soon as possible. Remote education will be provided via ITsLearning and students should access the work for their daily lessons using this platform. If they have a question about their work, they should message their teacher directly using ITsLearning. Teachers will keep a record of the work completed during any period of absence related to Covid-19. Remote education is only provided as a result of the absences outlined above and not as a result of any other category of illness or absence.