



Return to Education Attendance Guidance for September 2020

Introduction

This guidance has been produced to support all VT Academies to prepare attendance arrangements for the new academic year 2020-2021 as we enter the 'Recovery Phase' following the COVID-19 outbreak. The guidance has been produced to help our academies target attendance related activities before and during the summer holidays and in the new academic year to help support pupils successfully return to education.

Before the end of term

- **Government checklist to support government guidance**

Please see the government checklist for school leaders to support full opening: behaviour and attendance available [here](#). This checklist is to assist all school leaders and staff in preparing to welcome back all pupils full-time from the beginning of the autumn term.

- **Conduct Management Information Systems (MIS) checks at the end of academic year**

Guidance has been produced to ensure schools/settings have conducted all the necessary administration procedures in relation to your Management Information System (MIS) to be conducted before the end of term. Please note this guidance has been produced for SIMS.

Primary Guide available [here](#)

Secondary guide available [here](#)

- **Identify vulnerable pupils and those requiring support to return to education in the new academic year**

As we enter the 'Recovery Phase' of COVID-19 it is important that those pupils identified as vulnerable, who have been encouraged to attend throughout the outbreak, continue to be supported to attend in the new academic year. In preparation for this it is important that your vulnerable cohort is identified this should include any child/young person subject to Child Protection involvement from social care, children identified as Children in Need, Children in Care, those with an EHCP and cases open to Families in Focus. For clarification of who should be included it is important to liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Designated Teacher and SENDCO in your setting to identify your vulnerable cohort. This cohort may also include pupils identified as 'vulnerable otherwise' where you have identified concerns, but they do not fit in with any of the previously listed categories.

- **Learning from Behavioural Insights Team attendance project**

A behavioural insights approach could be useful when communicating with parents regarding attendance, particularly when dealing with sensitive issues and encouraging pupils back to school and other education settings. This involves carefully targeted positive messages to inform parents of their child's attendance and how they can work with the setting to support their child to make a new start.

You may also want to adapt the sample letter in [Appendix A](#) which helps to outline your school/setting's perspective in relation to attendance support in the new academic year.

- **Make Children Missing Education/Pupil Tracking referrals**

Child Missing Education (CME)

If you are aware of a pupil of statutory school age who is not on a school roll or getting a suitable education other than at school, for example the family moved house permanently and are no longer within a reasonable distance to school then you will need to complete a CME form available [here](#) (see Appendix B).

Pupil Tracking

If you are aware of a pupil who is on your school roll who you cannot confirm their whereabouts despite carrying out reasonable enquires (see Appendix C) then you should complete a Pupil Tracking Form available [here](#).

- **Consider a wellbeing questionnaire**

You may wish to consider conducting a survey with parents/carers to understand pupil experiences during the COVID 19 outbreak conducted online or otherwise – an example of a wellbeing questionnaire can be found in Appendix D.-

Over the summer holidays

- **Conduct Management Information Systems (MIS) procedures for the start of the academic year**

Guidance has been produced to ensure schools/settings have conducted all the necessary administration procedures in relation to your Management Information System (MIS) to be conducted before the start of the next academic year. Please note this guidance has been produced for SIMS, if you use another MIS please contact your provider for support as necessary to conduct these procedures (See Appendix E)

- **Website**

Please ensure your website is up to date indicating when pupils should be returning to school and any other key information such as uniform, transport, free school meal information and other arrangements. This is especially important if your setting is offering a phased return. You should also indicate expected start and finish times. Please also indicate term dates for the new academic year.

- **Send out reminder texts especially for the harder to reach families**

The COVID-19 outbreak may have resulted in less contact with some of your harder to reach families and therefore it would be appropriate to send out reminder texts regarding the details for the start of term. This may also provide an opportunity to send a positive message for the start of the new term and the academic year.

- **Consider a dedicated phone number/email for queries**

As we enter the 'Recovery Phase' of the COVID-19 there may be an increase in the number of attendance queries from parents/carers including worries related to health, availability of uniform and transport etc and therefore it may be advisable to set up a dedicated phone number or email address to deal with specific queries.

Start of the new term

- **Set up new cohort for tracking for vulnerable and targeted cohorts**

Following on from the work conducted at the end of the last academic year to ensure all vulnerable pupils are supported in relation to attendance it is important to set up monitoring groups either in SIMS or other MIS. Alternatively, you may wish to consider using other data management system such as CPOMS.

Supporting young people returning to formal education following the COVID 19 outbreak

As we enter the Recovery Phase of the pandemic various, teams within the Bristol local authority and beyond have been producing a wide range of resources, training materials and other support information to help schools and other education settings return to formal education following the COVID 19 outbreak using a trauma informed approach.

To help support Bristol schools and other education settings a guidance document has been produced which will act as a 'directory' of key resources during the Recovery Phase. The guidance entitled 'Supporting Bristol children and young people returning to formal education following the COVID 19 outbreak' is available on the Learning City webpage under the Education tab at <https://www.bristollearningcity.com/bcc-guidance-supporting-the-return-to-formal-education/>

This guidance also provides details of a hardship fund that may support families with the cost of uniform which in turn may support a successful return to education.

- **Attendance Coding**

Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

A new category of non-attendance – 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' has been created and must only be used to record sessions that take place in the 2020 to 2021 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England (PHE) 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 coronavirus (COVID-19)

In line with the Secretary of State's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend a given session, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

Schools and settings will be using the attendance and absence codes in use before the outbreak (see Appendix F) in addition to the new category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' as detailed below:

- pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' should be recorded using code X
- schools should continue to use code X for non-compulsory school aged pupils who are not expected to attend a session, as they did before the outbreak

**Circumstances for non-attendance related to COVID-19 during academic year 2020-21 -
Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'**

VT Academies will follow the procedures detailed below when pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have 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.

VT Academies will follow the procedures detailed below when 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 14 days from when the member of their household first had symptoms. Code X should be used during this period.
- In all cases of self-isolation, schools will ask parents to inform them immediately about the outcome of a test. However, evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence will not be requested before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

To support decision making reference should be made to relevant government guidance available [here](#).

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

Schools and settings will follow the procedures detailed below when 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 14 days if they have had recent close contact with a person who has 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 14 days since they were last in close contact with the person that has tested positive when they were infectious.
- Code X should be used for these pupils during this period.

To support decision making reference should be made to the relevant government guidance available [here](#).

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

- 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.

To support decision making reference should be made to the relevant government guidance available [here](#).

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 school or setting.
- Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from PHE or the DHSC should be recorded as code X.

- The school will 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 will not be used for sessions after the pupil has been advised to return to the school or setting

To support decision making reference should be made to the relevant government guidance available [here](#).

Staggered start times – taking the register

- Normally schools would have the same open and close of register time for a whole cohort of pupils, however, schools may need to use staggered start times to support social distancing. Therefore, schools should take the register for each pupil/group at the time the pupil/group is expected to start on any given day. The expected start time should be made clear to the parents/carers, to avoid pupils/groups arriving later than expected and any unnecessary follow up work by the school and to ensure the arrival of pupils on site can be managed effectively and safely.
- If a pupil arrives after the expected start time but within the agreed margin of their expected arrival time they should be marked as ‘L’ late before the close of registration (authorised absence mark for that session) with the minutes late (after their expected time) noted on the Management Information System e.g. SIMS in the usual way.
- If a pupil doesn’t arrive within an agreed margin of their expected arrival time and the parents/carers have not contacted the school to explain why, the school should follow its first day absence procedures. If the pupil does arrive after their register has closed, they should be marked as ‘U’ late after the close of registration (unauthorised absence mark for that session) with the minutes late (after their expected time) noted on the Management Information System e.g. SIMS in the usual way.
- Schools should consider extending the length of time that the register is open for and if changes are made the School’s Attendance Policy should be updated to reflect the changes.

Further Key Information

Local lockdown

- If rates of the disease rise locally, the school or setting may need to prevent some pupils from attending.
- The school or setting will follow PHE or DHSC guidance on what measures are necessary in the event of local lockdown.

- Where attendance is to be limited to certain groups, 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' - code X – will be used for pupils who are asked not to attend.

If you require any further information please contact the Education Welfare Service – education.welfare@bristol.gov.uk 0117 3521438

Review existing policy documents

If you are considering attendance arrangements that are likely to be for a fixed period of time such the start of the academic year or temporary amendments to the time registers are closing as pupils may be using different methods of transport, then you may wish to produce an addendum to an existing policy as necessary in line with appropriate guidance and support. A model addendum policy has been produced by Bristol City Council and will be located on the Attendance Toolkit and can be found on the Safeguarding in Education Team webpage available [here](#).

- **Procedure for pupils who do not attend at the beginning of the academic year both for new pupils and returning pupils**

All pupils listed on the Establishment Portal should be admitted on their first day (typically the first day of term).

If an existing pupil or pupil not admitted as part of a bulk admissions arrangement does not return to school on the first day, they are expected reasonable enquires should be conducted. If the whereabouts of the pupils cannot be ascertained a Pupil Tracking form should be completed as soon as possible and sent to the Education Welfare Service.

Bulk Admissions Cases

If a new pupil who has been admitted as part of a bulk admissions arrangement i.e. pupils starting school at the beginning of Reception or Year 7 does not turn up, then reasonable enquiries should be made. If the pupil cannot be located then you need to make contact with the Education Welfare Service (EWS) - education.welfare@bristol.gov.uk 0117 3521438. Do not fill in a Pupil Tracking form at this stage you will be given further advice by the EWS.

If you do make contact with the parent and carer and they confirm that they no longer require the place because they have found an alternative placement at another school or education establishment, please confirm your conversation in writing to the parent/carer with details of the new setting and forward a copy of this correspondence to the Admissions Team school.admissions@bristol.gov.uk This pupil can then be removed from roll following your standard procedures.

If the parent/carer says that they do not want the place offered but are not sending their child to an alternative school or setting, it is important to remind parents and carers of the following advice to help them make an informed decision.

- Parents/carers are responsible for providing an education for their children
- Once confirmed a place is not required by the parent/carer the offer of the place may not be available again if they change their mind
- There is a short supply of places in some parts of the city and holding out for a place at another school/ setting may not result in a place being offered that meets the parents/ carer preferences
- Parent/carers may wish to consider their child attend the setting that has been offered until a preferred alternative has been found.

If parents/carers still refuse the place and decide to Electively Home Educate (EHE) you will need to notify the EHE team (Appendix G) - ehe@bristol.gov.uk 0117 3521438. If there is not education provision being offered then you will need to complete a Child Missing Education (CME) form available [here](#).

If a child/ young person arrives at the setting but is not on the admissions list please contact the Admissions Team school.admissions@bristol.gov.uk

- **Penalty Notices**

Separate advice will be issued will be issued regarding penalty notices in the new academic year.

- **Supporting a return to education**

There are various teams both within and external to the Local Authority that support children return to education. These teams can support the approaches you may have already undertaken, they include:

- **The Education Welfare Service (EWS)** has provided transition support for targeted pupils as they start secondary provision in September. The team will contact any setting where this arrangement is in place. This is in addition to regular support offered by the EWS, please make contact with the team directly if you have any enquires - education.welfare@bristol.gov.uk 0117 3521438
- **See Hear Respond** is a new service developed to fill the widening gap for children and young people during COVID-19. From June to 31st October 2020 it will work with schools and other agencies to find those children who are hidden from view; who are not receiving support currently from statutory organisations and those who are at risk and/or experiencing adverse impact to

their health and wellbeing. For further information please visit Barnardo's website <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/see-hear-respond> for further information

- **Team Around the School**, please contact your local Families in Focus team to discuss what support is available for individual cases where attendance concerns may have been identified.

Families in Focus (N) 0117 3521499

Families in Focus (E/C) 0117 3576460

Families in Focus (S) 0117 9037770

- **The School Nursing Team** may be able to provide some support, advice and guidance where health issues are identified as a barrier to attendance.
- **Education Inclusion Managers – Safer Options Team** may be able to provide support regarding education for pupils at risk of serious young violence and involvement around criminal activity – please contact via your local Families in Focus team

APPENDIX A

Insert School logo

School Attendance – COVID-19 Update September 2020

A very important message for all parents/carers

Insert Date

Dear Parent/Carer,

This is a message about school attendance.

..... Academy is working in partnership with parents, carers and Bristol City Council to encourage children back into education following several very challenging months for families and education settings. We would like to thank parents and carers for the work you have done in ensuring your children have received education during this period.

In March when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, the government made it clear that no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child’s non-attendance at school. Schools and settings were then closed to all but a specific group of pupils; those of key workers and vulnerable children.

Now the circumstances have changed, it is vital for all children to return to schools and other settings to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on their education, wellbeing and wider development. We know that many children have missed being with their friends and the wider social aspects of school life.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. ***School attendance is therefore compulsory again from the beginning of the autumn term.***

This means from September 2020, the usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

- parents' duty to send their child to school regularly where they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability of local authorities to use legal sanctions, including penalty notices and prosecution in court.

If you are worried about your child attending school the first port of call is to discuss your concerns with us directly. Our specialist staff who may be able to help, and all schools work closely with health and council teams who may also be able to help if needed.

In addition, this is not the time to take your child out of school for a family holiday or other term time leave. It is unlikely that any leave will be authorised by the Head Teacher/Principal after so much enforced absence from school. The more your child is in school, the more they will improve their learning and enjoy the other benefits of their educational experience.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members.

No school or local authority wants to take legal action, and every attempt to resolve parent and carers' concerns and improve a child's attendance will be made before any formal action is considered.

After so much disruption to your child/ren's education over recent months, the most important thing is that the school and parents/carers work together to get children back into education. [name of setting] is ready to listen so please contact us if you have any worries and we will try to help you.





We wish you and your child all the best for the coming academic year.

Yours faithfully





Principal

Children Missing Education (CME) or whose whereabouts is not known

CME referral and deletion from roll form queries:

	<p>Have the family moved to a new house permanently and are no longer within a reasonable distance to school? Reasonable distance isn't legally defined but is broadly understood to be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no more than a 45-minute bus journey each way for Primary aged pupils - no more than a 75-minute bus journey each way for Secondary age pupils.
	Have the family left the country permanently and have they provided you with flight confirmation/new address (this could be a temporary address)?
	Have the family left Bristol LA permanently and provided you with a new address (this could be a temporary address)?
	If the answer to any of these questions is yes you may have grounds to remove from roll in which case complete CME and deletion from roll forms as soon as possible.

Pupil Tracking referral form:






	1. Have the family failed to return from a planned leave of absence, and reasonable enquiries have failed to establish the pupil's whereabouts?
	2. Has the child stopped attending school and reasonable enquiries and home visits have failed to establish the young person's whereabouts?
	3. Have the family left the Bristol LA permanently and failed to provide you with a new address?
	If the answer to any of these questions is yes you should report the case to the Education Welfare Service for Pupil Tracking

Any queries contact the Education Welfare Service on Tel: 0117 352 1438 email at childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk




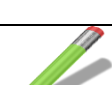


<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/attendance-inclusion>

Reasonable Enquires to establish the whereabouts of a child

Reasonable enquires to be made by schools and education settings:

	Contact parents/carers via a variety of means – phone, text, email, letter (in some cases this may require messages being translated)
	Contact emergency contacts
	Check with child's friends, other staff & families, siblings' school, social media (if open access to profiles)
	Check with other agencies and any professionals involved
	Undertake a home visit/s (take calling card/prepared letter requesting urgent contact)

Reasonable enquiries made by the local authority in partnership with schools and education settings

	Check with parent/carers to establish information
	Check data basis within the local authority
	Check with UK Visas and Immigration and/or the Border Force
	Check with the local authority and school from which they originally moved.
	Check with agencies known to be involved with the family
	Check Key to Success or school2school (s2s) systems

REMEMBER you do not have to wait a given period before reporting a child for Pupil Tracking or as a Child Missing Education, it is once your reasonable enquiries have been made.

Any queries contact the Education Welfare Service on Tel: 0117 352 1438 email at childrenmissingeducation@bristol.gov.uk

APPENDIX D

Return to Education Wellbeing Questionnaire – An Example

We are really looking forward to seeing you when you come back to school in September. We care about all of you and we thought we would like to know how you are doing and what your day-to day life has been like during lockdown. Please take a few minutes to answer each of the questions with your child from their perspective, so that we can have a better idea of how best to support you and your child in September.

How are you feeling?

Happy
Okay
Sad

What have you been looking forward to at school?

Seeing your friends
Seeing your teacher
School dinners
Playing
Learning
Something else.....

Who have you been at home with?

What have you been doing at home?

What has made you happy whilst you have been at home?

What has made you sad?

Is there anything you would like the school to know about?

Parents, is there anything you feel your child might need support with?

Parents, is there anything that you need support with?

APPENDIX E

SIMS September checklist

Now that you are getting ready to return in September, it would be useful to add some guidance around what is needed to help aid you with your return. (You may have already done some of these processes prior to September)

Admit all applicants on the first day, this is important as your admission records should be the same as your attendance register, also this ensures you are safeguarding all pupils that accepted a place at your setting and so if you have any no shows you can follow this up efficiently. (For further guidance on no shows and attendance codes refer to '*Return to Education Attendance Guidance Sept 2020*' document) see '[QRSAdmission Document](#)' for further admission guidance. Do not delete any pupils from your database without speaking to SIMS/LA data team first as this can have implications on the councils central databases. (Email either sims.helpdesk@bristol.gov.uk or Steve.Greenham@bristol.gov.uk)

Download the Pupil Premium file from Key 2 Success website and import this into SIMS, ensuring you tick the PP status field as this gets reset every academic year. Login via <https://services.signin.education.gov.uk>. Importing in to SIMS [guidance](#).

Obtain any missing CTF's from previous schools and import into SIMS. (See '[Importing – Exporting CTF](#)' document)

Ensure all pupils have a UPN, for any pupils that do not, please send an Excel list of pupil's forename, surname and DOB via S2S to the LA data team to check they do not already have one in the Councils database before creating a new one. (See '[Using S2S to send documents securely](#)' documents)

Ensure you have census related personal data fields populated ready for the October Census. E.g. Forename, Surname, DOB, First Language, Gender, Ethnicity, UPN, UCI (secondary schools only), ULN (secondary schools only).

Login to your free school meals checking service to run checks or acquire current FSM eligibility lists. LA's offering: <https://establishment.bristol.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home> (see '[EYES Topic Document](#)' for guidance)

NB If you do not use SIMS as your Management Information System please contact your own provider for support to ensure you are able to conduct the procedures as indicated above.

APPENDIX F

Attendance Coding

Contents of Attendance Register in line with Department for Education Guidance available [here](#)

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent;
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances; or,
- Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)¹¹

The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

Absence and Attendance Codes

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

Present at School

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm

Present in school during registration.

Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity (*currently all off site visits for VT Academies are cancelled until further notice – however, the information below will be implemented once Off-site visits are allowed*)

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore, by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised, and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing schoolwork. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Code W: Work experience

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Authorised Absence from School

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made, they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school

Principals should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Several different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: Absent from school without authorisation

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they should record it as unauthorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)

For the school year 2020 to 2021, a new category has been added to record instances when a pupil is 'not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)'. See this addendum for further information, including advice on the application of code X.

Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)

(This code is not counted as an absence in the school census)

This code is used to record sessions where the pupil's travel to or presence at school would conflict with:

guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England or the Department of Health and Social Care or

- any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

- And their equivalents in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland if a pupil attending a school in England resides there.

Schools should also continue to use code X to record when a pupil not of compulsory school age is not expected to attend as detailed below.

Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census.

Code X: Not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities, then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays);


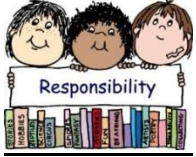




weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

Attendance Quick Guide





Elective Home Education

Educating a child at home instead of sending them to school

Do's and don'ts for schools and education settings:

	<p>Do make parents aware of local and national EHE guidance available on the Bristol City Council website.</p>
	<p>Do make parents aware that EHE means they are taking full financial responsibility for their child's education including planning & delivering the education, finding an exam centre and entrance into public exams.</p>
	<p>Do make parents aware that once their child is removed from the school's roll, there is no guarantee that a place would be available should the parent change their mind and an application would have to be made in the usual way for in-year school admissions.</p>
	<p>Do make sure you get the parents EHE request in writing – letter or parental email is fine</p>
	<p>Don't write the EHE request letter on behalf of the parent as this may be evidence of 'off-rolling'.</p>
	<p>Do ensure all 'Exit from School' forms and Children Missing Education procedures are completed as soon as possible in accordance with our Bristol City Council CME guidance.</p>

Actions taken by the Local Authority (LA) in relation to Elective Home Education:

	<p>The LA will check with parent/carers to establish information and their education plans and offer to meet with new EHE families usually within the first 3-6 months.</p>
	<p>Checks are made with data bases within the LA and other LAs from which a child originally moved (if applicable) as well as any agencies known to be involved with the family.</p>
	<p>The LA will review each case to ensure parents are making an informed choice and there is no evidence of 'off-rolling'.</p>
	<p>Note: Under current legislation and guidance the LA does not provide the learning for the child to undertake at home or have a duty to see the pupil.</p>

REMEMBER education is compulsory, school is not. Parents have the right to choose to home educate their children but it is not a decision we would recommend until all other options have been explored. Any queries contact an EHE Officer on Tel: 0117 352 1438 or email at ehe@bristol.gov.uk