Attendance Policy: COVID-19 Addendum

Prepared by	Kenan Drugzani, Assistant Principal
Acknowledgements	Gloria Gold – Vice Principal (Pastoral)
Date Last Approved	23 September 2021
Policy Approved by	Board of Directors
Version	2.0
Next Policy Review Date	September 2022

Version Control Table

Version	Date	Amended by	Rationale
0.1	05.11.2020	Kenan Drugzani	First draft of new policy
1.0	12/11/2020		Version approved by Committee
1.1	14/09/2021	Kenan Drugzani	Updated to reflect current attendance procedures around Covid and the return to normal start and finish times.
2.0	23/09/2021		Version approved by the Board

Guidance on version Control:

The above is an example of how to complete the Version control table.

Versions are 0.1, 0.2 etc until such point as the document is approved. Then it becomes version 1.0.

Subsequent edited versions become 1.1, 1.2, or if it's a major update, 2.0. Do not worry about the numbers going up and up its about getting the policy right – it's all fine.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: COVID-19 ADDENDUM

Policy Coverage

THE POLICY APPLIES OR COVERS THE FOLLOWING GROUPS			
Type of Learner	**Tick (✓)**	**Type of Stakeholder**	**Tick (✓)**
Key Stage 3 (KS3) Carousel	✓	Teaching Staff	✓
Key Stage 4 (KS4) GCSE	✓	Education Support Staff	✓
Key Stage 5 (KS5) Level 2	✓	Administrative Support Staff	✓
Key Stage 5 (KS5) Level 3	✓	Directors	✓
Key Stage 5 (KS5) A Levels	✓	Employers	✓
Apprentices	✓	Visitors / Contractors	✓

Contents

1. Aims and scope

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

- Ensuring every learner has access to full-time education to which they are entitled

- Acting early to address patterns of absence

- Supporting parents/carers and learners who are concerned about the return to college 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 learners.

2. Guidance and definitions

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's (DfE's) guidance on school attendance during the 2021/22 academic year.

This addendum reflects the latest advice from the London Borough of Newham.

3. Attendance expectations

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

> They have been granted an authorised absence by the college in line with section 1 of our normal attendance policy.

> They cannot attend college 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 learner's travel to, or attendance at, college 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 LFD test result positive

Learners with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. They will also need to get a free PCR test to check if they have COVID-19.

Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the learner should continue self-isolating. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test, and the learner can return to school as long as the individual doesn't have COVID-19 symptoms.

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

Pupils 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 should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

The parent/carer has to email absence@ldeutc.co.uk informing of such.

4.3 Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils 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 pupil tests negative and if they feel well, 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). 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 in line with public health guidance. 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.

4.4 Remote learning provision

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

Our approach and expectations regarding remote learning are set out in our remote learning policy which has been shared with learners and parents/career at the start of the academic year 2020/21 and it forms an integral part of our re-opening college plan. This guidance which can be found on the Covid-19 information section of our college website too. We will keep a record of, and monitor, learner engagement with remote learning, but we will not track this information in the attendance register. This monitoring is completed through quality assurance of lessons from the Teaching and Learning aspect of the college. All lessons are broadcasted as per our re-opening plan. Learners have the opportunity to attend those lessons regardless of the reason for absence.

5. Recording Attendance

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each college day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every learner is:

> Present

> Attending an approved off-site educational activity

> Absent

> Unable to attend due to 'exceptional circumstances' (as defined in section 1 of our normal attendance policy)

> Unable to attend for reasons related to coronavirus (see appendix 1 for the relevant absence codes and when we will use them)

Learners must arrive in college at their designated entrances on each college day at the following times

Y9-11: (@8.40am)

-8.40-9.00 Form time.

Year 12-13 and apprentices (@9.00am)

9:00 start for their first lesson.

The registers will remain open for 10 minutes. Portable registers on each entry point are taken in the morning and end of day, which then can be used for various purposes such as fire drills registers etc.

6. Following up absence

Where any learner we expect to attend college 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 learner does not attend because they, and/or their parent/carer are concerned about returning to college because of coronavirus, we will:

> Arrange a phone call/video meeting/in-college appointment between the parent/carer and a member of the Pastoral team and/or SLT to explain the protective measures the college is taking to keep learners safe

6.1 Legal sanctions

Having taken in consideration the advice provided by the DfE and the London Borough of Newham (LBN) at the start of academic year 2021/22, the penalty procedures (described in our normal policy) for unauthorised absences will be applied consistently.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum 2 months during term time by Kenan Drugzani- Assistant Principal in charge of Behaviour and Attitudes.

Appendix 1: Learner 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.

In line with current legislation, and guidance from PHE (and its successor the UKHSA) and DHSC, examples are as follows.

Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils 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 pupil tests negative and if they feel well, 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). 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 in line with public health guidance. 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.

Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils 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 should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

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, the school should use code X in the register.

Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable when shielding is advised

Clinically extremely vulnerable people are no longer advised to shield. All clinically extremely vulnerable pupils should attend their education setting unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or another 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 pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable may be advised not to attend school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from DHSC, PHE or UKHSA should be recorded as Code X.

Pupils who are self-isolating but who have not had a PCR test

In line with public health advice, pupils with symptoms must self-isolate and schools should strongly encourage pupils to take a PCR test. Where the pupil is unable to take a PCR test, the school should record the pupil as code X in the register.

Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes, in line with the school attendance: guidance for schools.