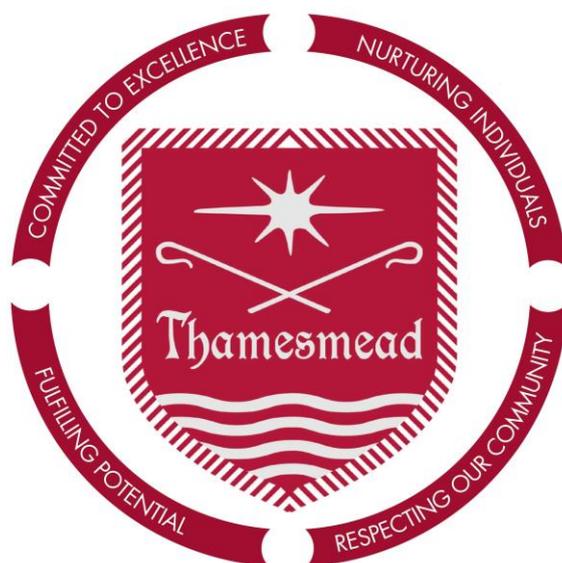


THAMESMEAD SCHOOL



Student Attendance, Absence & Punctuality Policy (COVID-19 Addendum)

Person Responsible	A Bate
Governors Committee	Personal Development Behaviour and Welfare
Review period	As necessary
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1. Aims and scope

Thamesmead School remains committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Ensuring all children are able to access full-time education in school
- In the event of a school closure allowing the children of critical workers to access full-time education in school if parents/carers cannot keep them at home
- Following up on absence among any student expected to attend to attend school

This addendum sets out changes to our normal Attendance, Absence & Punctuality Policy, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal Attendance, Absence & Punctuality 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 students as necessary.

2. Guidance and definitions

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's (DfE's) [guidance](#) on restricting attendance during the national lockdown, and its [addendum](#) to the school attendance guidance for the 2020/21 academic year.

This addendum reflects the [advice](#) from Surrey County Council.

In section 4.3 of this addendum, where we refer to 'close contact', this means:

- lives in the same household as someone with COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19
- has had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 with either a PCR test or LFD test (if a confirmatory PCR test is negative, provided it was taken within 2 days of the positive LFD, it overrides the lateral flow test and close contacts can stop self-isolating):
 - face-to-face contact including being coughed on or having a face-to-face conversation within 1 metre
 - been within 1 metre for 1 minute or longer without face-to-face contact
 - been within 2 metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact or added up together over 1 day)
 - travelled in the same vehicle or a plane

This definition is from the DfE's guidance on restricting attendance during the national lockdown).

3. Students eligible to attend school during a school closure

3.1 Vulnerable children

During the national lockdown all vulnerable children are expected to attend school. In particular, children with a social worker are expected to attend due to their safeguarding and welfare needs.

The definition of vulnerable children includes those who:

- Are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including:
 - Looked-after children
 - Children with a child in need plan
 - Children with a child protection plan
- Have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

In addition to this, children can be identified as vulnerable for the following reasons:

- On the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred
- Adopted or on a special guardianship order
- At risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Young carers
- Care leavers
- Facing difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example, due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
- In need of support for their mental health

For further guidance please refer to the [DfE guidance regarding critical workers and vulnerable children who can access school or educational settings](#).

In the event of a school closure parents/carers must inform the school office if their child:

- Falls into one of the categories above (and is therefore expected to attend school) but parents/carers wish for their child to learn from home
- Has had a change in circumstances, which means their child now falls into one of the categories above
- Does not fit into one of the categories above but parents/carers have concerns that their child is otherwise vulnerable

3.2 Children of critical workers

In the event of a school closure parents/carers who are critical workers **should keep their child at home if they can**. If this is not possible, children of critical workers are able to attend school.

Critical workers are those whose work is critical to the coronavirus and EU transition responses, including parents/carers who work in:

- Health and social care
- Education and childcare (including social workers)
- Key public services (including the justice system, religious staff, charities delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting)
- Local and national government who are involved in delivering the coronavirus response, EU transition or essential public services
- Food and other necessary goods
- Public safety and national security
- Transport and border (including transport systems through which supply chains pass, and the construction and operational support of critical transport and border infrastructure through which supply chains pass)
- Utilities, communication and financial services

A more detailed list of critical workers is available on the government website [here](#).

Parents/carers that qualify must notify the school if they wish for their child to attend, by contacting the school office.

We will request evidence from parents/carers of their job role. This could be an ID badge, a letter provided by your employer which confirms your critical worker status, a payslip or contract.

4. Where ‘not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus’ applies

For the 2020/21 academic year, there is a new category of non-attendance to capture circumstances where students cannot attend school due to COVID-19: ‘Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus’.

This applies where a student’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 or transmission of coronavirus

4.1 Students is not eligible to attend school and must stay at home

Students that do not fit into an eligible group (see section 3) must follow public health advice and not come into school.

4.2 Student due to attend school develops symptoms or lives with someone who develops symptoms

The student's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day that their child needs to self-isolate. The student will stay at home until they or the symptomatic person they live with receives their coronavirus test result.

If the student's test result is negative: the students 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 (e.g. with a different illness).

If the symptomatic person the student lives with tests negative: the students will stop self-isolating and return to school.

4.3 Student due to attend school or a 'close contact' of theirs receives a positive test result

The student's parent/carer must notify the school about the positive test result as soon as possible.

Students who test positive must self-isolate for at 10 days from the onset of symptoms (i.e. the day the symptoms started and the next 10 full days), 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 student's household tests positive, the student must self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of the household member's symptoms (as above, the isolation period includes the day the symptoms started and the next 10 full days).

If a 'close contact' of the student tests positive, the student must self-isolate for 10 days from the day after the student last met with the 'close contact' who received the positive result (i.e. the isolation period includes the date of the last contact and the next 10 full days).

See the definition for 'close contact' in section 2 of this addendum.

4.4 Student due to attend school and receives a positive rapid lateral flow test result

If a student takes a rapid lateral flow test at home and the result is positive, the student and anyone they live with must self-isolate immediately. Find out [how long to self-isolate for on NHS.UK](#)

The result of the lateral flow test must be reported as soon as possible and a PCR test (a test that is sent to a lab) arranged to confirm your result as soon as possible.

The student and the rest of the household must continue to self-isolate until you receive the result of the PCR test. Follow the advice you're given when you get the result.

A negative result means that active COVID-19 infection was not detected, at the time of the test. However, this does not guarantee that you do not have COVID-19.

5. Remote learning provision

In the event of a school closure or individual students having to self-isolate the school will provide access to remote education for students not attending school for the scenarios included in the section above, or other examples that come under the category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus'.

During remote learning lessons will be delivered using Microsoft Teams.

- Our approach and expectations regarding remote education are set out in our Remote Learning Guidance document
- We will keep a record of, and monitor, student engagement with remote learning, but we will not track this information in the attendance register

6. Recording attendance of all students

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 students is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to 'exceptional circumstances'
- Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus

See appendix 1 for the relevant absence codes and when we will use them.

7. Following up on 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

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum every half-term.

Appendix 1: Absence codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance](#) on restricting attendance during the national lockdown, and its [addendum](#) to the 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 related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Students is not eligible to attend school and is learning from home
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Students is a child of a critical worker (and therefore eligible to attend school) but is learning from home
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Students is a child of a critical worker attending school part-time, and not expected to attend this session
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Students is a child of a critical worker and expected to attend the session, but has not attended (and there isn't another authorised absence code that is more applicable)
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Vulnerable students is eligible for a place in school but their parent/carer wants them to learn from home
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Students due to attend school has to self-isolate because they have symptoms or live with someone who has symptoms, and are waiting for their test results
I	Illness	Students due to attend school remains unwell following a negative test result (i.e. with a different illness)
I	Illness	Students due to attend school has to continue to self-isolate because they tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Students due to attend school has to self-isolate because someone they live with tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Students due to attend school has to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Students is required to shield