

PGHS Attendance Policy Appendix for the Coronavirus Impacted Period

For the duration of the Coronavirus pandemic, Penwortham Girls' High School will adhere to the UK Government's attendance guidance and will following the procedural changes introduced by our local educational authority, Lancashire County Council.

It is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on their education, wellbeing, and wider development. Schools are required by the government to be clear with parents and carers that pupils of compulsory school age must be in school unless a statutory reason applies.

The aim of this policy appendix is to ensure school is ready to welcome back all pupils full-time from the beginning of the autumn term. This policy amendment recognises that some school norms and routines have been disrupted by the coronavirus outbreak and that some pupils may have been exposed to a range of adverse experiences, outlining the actions we will be taking to reset attendance expectations and to support the successful reintegrate of pupils.

Attendance from September

Attendance is **mandatory** for **all** pupils from the start of the new school year. This means that from the first of September 2020, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child attends regularly.
- Schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow-up absences.
- The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct.

Students will be expected to attend school on time, unless:

- Pupil illness

Pupils exhibiting any coronavirus symptoms should not attend school in any circumstance, as this could lead to a wider population outbreak. Children exhibiting symptoms should be tested as quickly as possible and school informed of the outcome.

Coronavirus symptoms:

- a new continuous dry tickly cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)
- Vital medical appointments (where possible, please arrange appointment for weekends or after school).
- Religious observance
- Authorised absence due to exceptional circumstance
- Self-isolation due to having a positive test result (10-days from the onset of their symptoms) or because of close contact with someone who has (14-day period).

NB: Self-isolating students will be set work remotely. Engagement with this work will be closely monitored.

- Shielding (self-isolating due to a family member who is shielding).

Shielding advice for all children will pause on the 1st August 2020, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list are also expected to return to school, as can those who have family members who have been shielding.

If rates of the disease rise in our local areas, children (or family members) from our area, may be advised to temporarily shield during the period when rates remain high. As with cases of self-isolation, in the event that a pupil is unable to attend school due to shielding, work will be set remotely and closely monitored.

- Partial or full school closure following Public Health England advice.

Recording of Attendance from September

To make sure all schools record absence in an accurate and consistent way the government has made changes to the regulations governing school attendance registers to add a new category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' (X).

NB: Number codes 7, 8 and 9 are no longer in use.

This category 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 or prohibited by any legislation.

Code X should be used in the following circumstances:

- Student is exhibiting covid-19 symptoms and awaiting a test result – NB: Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test result. After the test, if the remains absent either due to a positive test result or an alternative illness, this should be recorded using the 'I' code (illness) until they are able to return to school.
- Student is self-isolating due to Covid-19.
- Student is clinically vulnerable and is shielding due to a local lockdown scenario.
- Students who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine.
- Local rates of covid require schools to follow Public Health England advice to limit attendance amongst certain groups.

- Planned closure – used when there are no students in school, for example, when a deep clean is required.

NB: this new category of non-attendance (x) will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

From September, we will resume the expectation that parents will let the school know if their child is unable to attend school and the reason for the absence. If school has had no contact from parents prior to morning registration on the first day of absence, our attendance team will endeavour to make contact with the pupil's parent/carer. If no contact can be made, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and could lead to the issuing of a penalty notice.

Tracking of Covid-Related Absences

All Covid related absences will be recorded and tracked.

- Weekly 'X' figures will be reported on our weekly attendance summary.
- Return to school dates following Covid contraction, isolation or quarantine will be identified and communicated to parents.
- A live document tracking all X pupils, the reason for absence and expected return date will be shared on the T:Drive.

School Support

The attendance team will be working closely with Raising Achievement Coordinators and pastoral staff to help identify students whose attendance could be affected by the need for additional social and emotional support. Pupils may be reluctant or anxious about returning to school, particularly if they fall into one of the following groups:

- pupils who have been shielding.
- those living in households where someone else is clinically vulnerable.
- students concerned about their comparative risk to coronavirus, such those from a BAME background or children with certain conditions such as obesity and/or diabetes.

A proactive approach will be taken with pupils who have previously had poor attendance, particularly in cases where there have been low levels of engagement during the home school period.

The attendance team will work closely with parents of pupils where returning to school is proving more challenging. We will aim to build strong relationships and to maintain an open dialogue with parents who need further support, information, or reassurance on the importance and/or safety of returning to school.

In cases where there is no medical evidence at a consultant level advising against attendance at school (i.e. the need to shield), but there are some significant and genuine health concerns, school will consider the use of a temporary period of remote learning or a phrased return (Code C). Such measures will only be used as a short-term intervention and will require regular reviews while the school builds-up the confidence to fully attend school.

Where it is felt that a parent and/or pupil is failing to engage with the support provided, the full range of attendance related sanctions will be considered, including the issuing of penalty notices.

NB: 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 school.

Support for self-isolating pupils

School has a responsibility to ensure pupils who are self-isolating (X) are able to continue their learning remotely during their period of absence from school. All teachers are required to upload any lesson resources onto ClassCharts (or any other appropriate online platform). Teachers should make every effort to ensure resources are appropriate for home learning. If necessary, pupils and teachers can communicate directly through the school's email system.

A daily X list will be circulated by the Attendance Officer to all teaching staff to ensure all self-isolating students are catered for.

Punctuality

It is vital when school re-opens to all pupils in September 2020 that students arrive at school 'just in time'. In order to reduce contacts between pupils, different year groups will have different start and end times. Students arriving late increase the risk of out-of-bubble contacts, potentially, spreading the disease across the school community.

Start and End time:

KS3 (Years 7, 8 and 9): Arrive from 8.30 - school opens at 8.40.

KS4 Years 10 and 11): Arrive from 8.50 – school opens at 9.00.

Students who arrive late with no valid reason, increasing the risk posed to all members of the school community will be sanctioned. Parents will be approach and expected to work with the school to prevent tardiness.

<i>What to do if...</i>	<i>Action needed</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Return to school when...</i>
...my child has coronavirus symptoms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry cough • High Temp • Anosmia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate • Get a test • Inform school immediately about test result 	Code X	...the test comes back negative.
...my child tests positive for coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for at least 10 days • Provide evidence of the test result. • Inform school immediately about test result. 	Code I	...they feel better. They can return to school after 10 days even if they still have a cough or loss of smell/taste. These symptoms can last for several weeks once the infection is gone.
...somebody in my household has coronavirus symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate • Household member to get a test • Inform school immediately about test result 	Code X	...the household member test is negative.
...somebody in my household has tested positive for coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 14 days 	Code X	...the child has completed 14 days of self-isolation.
... NHS test and trace have identified my child as a 'close contact' of somebody with confirmed coronavirus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 14 days 	Code X	...the child has completed 14 days of self-isolation.
...we/my child travelled and has to self-isolate a part of a period of quarantine.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not take unauthorised leave in term time. Consider quarantine requirements and FCO advice when booking travel <p><u>Returning from a destination where quarantine is needed:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 14 days 	Code X	...the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed.

...we have received medical advice that my child must resume shielding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school as required by the pastoral team • Shield until you are informed that restrictions are lifted and shielding is paused again 	Code X	...school inform you that restrictions have been lifted and your child can return to school again.
...my school has sent my daughter home due to advice from Public Health England relating to confirmed cases in her class or year bubble.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Get a test • Self-Isolate until provided with further guidance. 	Code X	...school confirms that Public Health England advice is for the bubble to return.
...my daughter doesn't have consultant level advise against attending school, but there are significant and genuine health concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact school to discuss the situation and agree a return to school plan. <p>NB: With the provision of daily video conferencing and safeguarding checks, a student can be recorded as Code B (educated off-site).</p>	Code C	...support plan has been implemented and the lack of confidence in attending school has been addressed.
...school has been closed to all pupils in all year groups due; e.g. for a deep clean.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school 	Code #	...school confirms that Public Health England advice is that the school can safely reopen.

Information taken from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>