

NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL



Addendum to the Attendance Policy

September 2020, COVID – 19 Response

"If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples"

(John 13:35 GNB)

Introduction

In March when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, it was made clear to parents that they would not be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school.

The circumstances have now changed and it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development.

Missing out on more time in the classroom risks students falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. **School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term.** This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure that your child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

Pupils who are shielding or self-isolating

- Whilst the majority of pupils will be able to return to school a small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August, 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 can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. Read the [current advice on shielding](#).
- If rates of the disease rise in local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore they may be temporarily absent.
- Some students no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school (usually at their next planned clinical appointment). You can find more advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health at [COVID-19 - 'shielding' guidance for children and young people](#) if you think this applies to you.
- **Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.**

Students and families who are anxious about returning to school

- All other pupils other than those detailed above, **must attend school** unless a statutory reason applies, for example; the student has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, or is absent for a necessary religious observance etc. as detailed in the Attendance policy.

- It is understandable that some students or members of the household may be reluctant or anxious about a return to school. If this is the case, parents should contact school via a member of the pastoral team so that they can discuss their concerns and enable the school to provide reassurance of the measures that are in place to reduce the risk in school.
- Where further support is needed, the school will work with parents to identify what additional support or reasonable adjustments may be needed and will put a plan in place which will be regularly reviewed. In some cases this will also involve working with local services and social care.

What to do if a student, or anyone in the household has symptoms of COVID-19

- Students **must not come to school if they or someone in their household has COVID-19 symptoms**
- The symptoms are;
 - New continuous cough
 - High temperature
 - A sudden loss or change in the sense of smell, taste or both
- Anyone with COVID symptoms must self- isolate for at least **10 days** and get tested (within the first 5 days of having symptoms)
- Students who test positively for the virus must stay away from school for at least **10 days** usually
- Students will usually have to self-isolate for **14 days** if;
 - they live with someone who has the symptoms of COVID 19 or tests positive for it
 - someone in their support bubble has symptoms or tested positive
 - they have been told by **NHS Test and Trace** that they have been in contact with someone who has coronavirus
- You will need to pass this information on to school when you are reporting an absence
- Students do not need to self- isolate if they have been in contact with someone outside of their household or support bubble who has coronavirus unless they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace (or they develop symptoms).
- **For the most up to date information on self –isolation and NHS Test and trace you can follow this link; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>**

What happens when a student becomes ill during the school day with COVID-19 symptoms

- Students know to inform the nearest member of staff that they feel ill and they will be sent to reception.
- At reception they will be looked after by a trained member of staff in a specially identified room for this purpose with access to a toilet.
- Staff who will be looking after students are required to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) like a face mask and gloves, as a precaution.
- Parents and Carers will be contacted and the student will be sent home.

Remote Learning

- Since lockdown, we have been delivering lessons remotely through SMHW and other online platforms such as Microsoft teams.
- If students are unable to attend school for any reason linked to COVID -19, school will be providing work for them remotely so that they can continue to access their education.
- Engagement with remote learning will be monitored by staff.

Reporting an absence

- Absences must be reported on the first day as normal
- Parents and Carers will be contacted on the first day of absence where this does not happen
- School must be informed if a student is self- isolating and how long that is expected to be for

The adaptations we have made to this policy are based on the most current government guidance which is under constant review and may be subject to change.

