



The Robert Carre Trust

## Attendance Policy COVID Recovery period, annex 1

Date of formation: September 2020

### Context

This policy has been written following the Government's announcement that all schools must reopen to all pupil's full time from the beginning of the autumn term. It has been written using the DfE, HSE, PHE and LCC School Recovery Guidance made available 2 July 2020. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Robert Carre Trust (RCT) Behaviour Policy, the COVID 19 Safeguarding policy and the RCT COVID 19 Risk Assessment.

The guidance from the government says that the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children and young people returning to school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the risk. Schools will need to take steps to reduce risks and measures put in place should be proportionate. The school should minimise risk and the expectation is that all students return and attendance is compulsory. Further government guidance can be found at:-

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm\\_source=25%20August%202020%20C19&utm\\_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm\\_campaign=DfE%20C19](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm_source=25%20August%202020%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19)

### COVID-19 and attendance expectations

Under the Coronavirus Act 2020, the government disapplied certain statutory provisions, so that the parent of a child of compulsory school age is not guilty of an offence on account of the child's failure to attend regularly at the school at which the child is registered (section 444 of the Education Act 1996). This means that parents would not be penalised if their child does not attend school.

From September 2020 the government and the school **expect all students** to attend school unless there is a public health or clinical reason for them not to. It is imperative that absence records are kept under review, for example when a self-isolation period should come to an end. Parents and carers have a responsibility to

Students who are self-isolating should have access to remote education and the school has a responsibility to ensure that engagement is monitored. The Trust will supply work for students via Teams and their class groups.

We expect parents / carers to let the school know if their child is unable to attend and the reason. Schools in the Trust will reinstate 'first day calling' and contact the pupil's parent or carer on the first day of absence where this does not happen.

### Support

The school will support families in helping their child attend school as we understand that some children and young people may be anxious to attend due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Schools in the Trust will support pupils and families in matters relating to attendance and where necessary they will apply appropriate sanctions.

The schools in the Trust recognise that some students are likely to need some social and emotional support on their return to school and we will work with those students to help improve attendance.

Schools in the RCT will consider what additional support or reasonable adjustments are needed and put a plan in place to deliver this with regular review points.

### **Self-isolation and shielding**

A small number of children and young people may be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they:

- are self-isolating
- have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves
- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)
- If your child is unable to attend school or college for these reasons, ask your school or college what support they can provide for remote education.

Shielding advice for all adults and children was paused from 1 August. This means that children and young people can return to school if they:

- are on the shielded patient list
- have family members who are shielding

See the guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable for the current advice. Children and young people under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school or college. This should usually be at their next planned clinical appointment.

If children are not able to attend school because they are following clinical and/or public health advice, you will not be penalised.

For students who have special educational needs, disabilities, are vulnerable or work with a social worker the schools in the Trust will ensure the services and support are in place to support a smooth return to school.

### **Monitor and Improve**

We will review attendance regularly by tracking attendance with an emphasis on early intervention to prevent patterns of poor attendance becoming habitual and entrenched.

We will invite feedback from stakeholders (staff and pupils) regularly in order to help support strategic decisions that inform best practice and provide opportunities to assess the effectiveness of attendance policies in what is likely to be a changing context.

### **Actions you can take**

Do not send your child school if:

- they are showing coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms
- someone in their household is showing symptoms

Arrange a test (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/>) if you or your child develops symptoms. Inform the school the results.

If the test is positive, follow guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection, and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.

It is really important that you help The Robert Carre Trust implement these actions by following the advice set out here and wider public health advice and guidance.