

Pear Tree Community Junior School



COVID-19 Attendance Policy Addendum (V2 29-5-20)

Effective from 1st June 2020

“We want to get all children and young people back into education as soon as the scientific advice allows because it is the best place for them to learn, and because we know how important it is for their mental wellbeing to have social interactions with their peers, carers and teachers. Children returning to educational and childcare settings in greater numbers will also allow more families to return to work”, Department for Education (DfE) May 2020.

On 20th March 2020, school life for many children changed. Both children and parents found themselves working in unprecedented circumstances where children were learning from home and parents were teaching their children from home. For many, this situation compounded an already difficult home-life.

When applying this Addendum, we must remember that our children have had no formal education for upwards of 8 weeks at the time of writing this Addendum. This, in turn, could mean a breakdown of routines and heightened anxiety when preparing to return to school for many children and parents.

From 1st June 2020 and only if it is safe to do so, we will be welcoming back children as part of a phased-return. The DfE has identified that children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 are the first groups of children to return. In addition, **‘vulnerable’** children and **‘children of Key Workers’** from all year groups will continue to be expected to attend where it is safe and appropriate for them to do so.

Vulnerable children are identified as those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child;
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and it is determined, following a risk assessment, that their needs can be met as safely or more safely in the educational environment; or
- have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by education providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who are therefore in need of continued education provision - this might include children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training'), those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers, and others at the provider and local authority discretion

Guidance on who is identified as a **Key/Critical Worker** can be found: [parent or carer who is listed as a critical worker](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Preparing for Re-opening

Following extensive planning, risk assessments and collaboration with Transform Trust at the point of re-opening, we will be welcoming back as part of our own phased return Year 6 children, alongside our vulnerable and key worker children from all year groups. After which, and only if it is safe to do so, we will start to welcome back other year groups identified by the DfE.

Upon re-opening and until further notice, our school will be open 4 days each week: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays to those eligible children. The school will be closed on Wednesdays to all but the vulnerable and key worker children, this will allow for deep cleaning. We will continue to provide work for home learning for Wednesdays.

Is Attendance Compulsory?

We expect all vulnerable and key worker children to attend, where it is appropriate for them to do so, i.e. unless they are self-isolating or they are clinically vulnerable.

For children who have a Social Worker, attendance is expected unless the Social Worker decides the child is at less risk at home or in their placement.

For children who have an education health care plan (EHCP), attendance is expected where it is determined, following a risk assessment, that their needs can be safely met in school.

No child with symptoms should attend for any reason. If someone in a child's household is extremely clinically vulnerable, then the child should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to, and the child is able to understand and follow school instructions on social

distancing. We have worked hard, taking in account the restrictions of our buildings, to ensure that wherever possible, the 2 metre distancing will be followed in school but we cannot guarantee this. We acknowledge that it may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing, if stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those children to attend and we will provide home learning resources.

Absence

Parents/carers should notify the School Office (as normal) if their child is unable to attend on a daily basis. We will consider the circumstances and explore with you the reason for the absence to help address any concerns and barriers.

A member of our Safeguarding Team will follow up any absence from a vulnerable child who we expect to attend and we will continue to inform Social Care where children with a Social Worker do not attend.

A member of the School Office will contact parents/carers who have indicated that their child will be attending should they be absent and no reason is provided.

What happens if there is a confirmed case of Coronavirus in school?

If a child or staff member develops symptoms compatible with Coronavirus they will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Everyone in the same household will be expected to self-isolate for 14 days. Staff and children will have access to a test if they display symptoms of Coronavirus. Where a child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class/group will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. Other families of that class do not need to self-isolate unless symptoms develop. If other cases are detected within the class/group or cohort or across school, Public Health England's local Health Protection Teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases, a larger number of other children may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure. We are following guidance on infection prevention and control measures which will reduce the risk of transmission.

Penalty Notices

Parents/carers will not be penalised if their child does not attend. Under the Coronavirus Act 2020, the Government has relaxed the law so that parents/carers are not guilty of an offence on account of their child's attendance.

We will work with parents/carers and other services to support families to enable their child to return to school.

Start Times

We expect children to arrive on time. Registers have previously 'closed' 20 minutes after the start of the school day. This will continue to be the case. However, groups are being staggered at 5 minute intervals from 8.45am. Initially, the last scheduled arrival time will be 9.10am meaning the register will close at 9.30am. (should we have 12 groups in the main building, the last arrival time would be 9.35am)

Please contact the School Office for further information: 01332 760610

Dropping off/collecting children

Children will be dropped off via Harrington Street gate at an allocated time between 8.45am and 9.15am. The gate will be closed at 9.15am. Late arrivals will come through the Pear Tree Street gate (Via the carpark).

Children will be collected from Harrington Street Gate at the end of the day. The school day will be shortened to allow a staggered collection. The first group will go at 2.10pm and the last group at 3pm.

Registers

During the lockdown period, we have been recording daily attendance and reporting this daily to the DfE by 12 noon.

Coding

- Where a child cannot attend school due to illness, as normally would happen, the child should be recorded as absent in the attendance register and the school will authorise the absence. Code I (Illness) should be used in this instance. You should note whether the illness involves coronavirus symptoms.
- Where a child is shielding, self-isolating, or the child has an education, health and care plan (EHCP) and their risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school, they should be recorded as Y (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances) should be used in this instance. You should note whether the absence is due to shielding or isolation.
- Where a child does not attend school – despite being eligible and is not shielding, self-isolating, unable to attend due to illness, nor has an EHCP risk assessment saying their needs cannot be safely met at school, the child should be recorded as Code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) where no other authorised absence code is appropriate.

- Where a child is attending another school at which they are registered (for example a pupil referral unit (PRU), as would normally be the case, Code D (dual registration).
- Where a child is attending a host school on a temporary basis because their home school cannot accommodate them, the child will not be registered at the host school. The home school should record the child as attending an approved education activity using Code B (off-site educational activity).
- Code M should be continued to be used for specific authorised absence such as a medical appointment).
- Children who are not in an eligible year group or priority group (key worker children and vulnerable children) should be recorded as Code X (not required to be in school).