

1st October 2021

Dear Varndean families

The new Department for Education attendance addendum, means that it is necessary to make some changes to how we are coding Covid-19 illness and we wanted to keep you updated as you'll notice this on Varndean Plus when viewing your child's attendance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2021-to-2022-academic-year>

Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should self-isolate and get a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test.

If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well, they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I (illness). Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.

If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance. Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

Although these DfE changes may affect your child's percentage attendance, we will of course take Covid illness into consideration prior to any attendance letters or potential fines. Our 'illness' or I code has a subcategory (102) which allows us to record that the illness is due to COVID.

We remain committed to keeping Covid out of school through our 'Keep Covid Out' so thank you to those families who are continuing with the twice weekly lateral flow testing and for being vigilant with any symptoms you notice. We do not want any of our families



to be concerned about absence levels that are connected to having the virus and wholly support keeping your child away from school if they have Covid symptoms.

Any rewards linked to good or improved attendance will take into account any Covid illness to not disadvantage students as we know students are proud of good attendance.

Recording lateral flow test results

Thank you for your continued support with recording your child's LFT results each week. The link to record the results for the week ending 3rd October is:

<https://forms.gle/wS1cLdETgi5LCz768>

Please also register the results with the NHS:

<https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

Kind regards
Varndean School