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Education, People & Business

# **Education Procedure Manual 3/08**

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE**

**For**

**Teachers and Employees on Scottish Negotiating  
Committee for Teachers (SNCT) Conditions of Service**

**Effective from: March 2024**

**Education, People & Business**



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### Version Control History

| Version No. | Effective Date | Details of change from previous version                                                                                                                                | Date Approved | New version no. |
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|             | Dec 2011       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transfer to new template</li> <li>• Updating terminology</li> <li>• Appendices removed to create stand-alone forms</li> </ul> | 15/03/2024    | 1.0             |
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### GDPR Statement

East Dunbartonshire Council holds, uses and processes information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and all other relevant national data protection laws. Further information detailing how East Dunbartonshire holds and uses personal information and copies of privacy notices used throughout the Council are available on our [website](#).

### Policy Review Statement

This policy will be reviewed in line with:

- Legislative Change
- Changes to SNCT National Conditions of Service
- Other external factors
- Feedback on the effectiveness of the policy
- Requests for review by Elected Members, Trade Unions and/or Management

### 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This procedure details the process for recording pupil attendance and absence using the correct SEEMIS codes.

### 2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This procedure is for all employees who record pupil attendance and absence.

### 3.0 References & Related Documentation

- 3.1 The following documents should be referenced when considering this procedure:
- SNCT Handbook
  - Equalities Act 2010
  - Scottish Government: *Included, Engaged and Involved, Part 1: Attendance in Scottish Schools (published December 2007)*
  - ScotXed data collection documentation for the annual *Attendance, Absence and Exclusions return (updated April 2011)*
  - ScotXed data exchange advice note SXD03/2006: *Accurate recording of exclusion data (in the case where a “temporary” exclusion results in removal from the roll on a ‘permanent’ basis)*, published February 2006.
  - Scottish Government’s Circular 5/2001 *Guidance on Education of Children Absent from School through Ill-health.*
  - Procedure Manual 3/18: Pupils’ progress records
  - Procedure Manual 3/35: *Education of children absent from school through ill-health*
  - Procedure Manual 3/39: *Procedure for managing un-notified absences of children in East Dunbartonshire primary, special and early years’ establishments (including procedure for early years’ private and voluntary ‘partnership’ centres)*
  - PM 3/08/F01: Attendance Reason Codes
  - PM 3/08/F02: Absence Reason Codes

### 4.0 Procedure

- 4.1 For ease of reference the manual is divided into the following sub sections:

- A. [Maintenance of School Registers](#)
- B. [Criteria for Attendance](#)
- C. [Criteria for Absence](#)
- D. [Medical and Dental Appointments](#)
- E. [Extended Leave with Parental Consent](#)
- F. [Exclusion](#)
- G. [Other Attendance and Absence Criteria](#)
- H. [Removal \(withdrawal\) from the Register](#)
- I. [Exemption from Attendance.](#)

### 5.0 Section A - Maintenance Of School Registers

- 5.1 The education authority is required to report from time to time on school attendance in

general. This takes into account statutory obligations, as a result of the issue of regulations by the Scottish Government, to report in particular on pupil absence statistics, which require to be included in the school handbook.

- 5.2 Moreover, in having due regard to pupils' care and welfare and exercising appropriate vigilance in relation to health and safety, schools must be in a position to account for those present within the campus at any given time.
- 5.3 Head teachers are, therefore, required to ensure that there is maintained on an up-to-date basis in their establishment:
  - i) a register of admissions to and withdrawals from the school
  - ii) a daily register containing the name of each pupil admitted and indicating the absence of each pupil not deemed to be present in respect of each meeting of the school
  - iii) a note of an authorised or unauthorised pupil absence or an exclusion from individual classes during the school day
  - iv) a summary register that will provide information on attendance for inclusion in the school handbook and in returns required by the education office, and
  - v) such documentation on individual pupil attendance as may be required by the Central Education Team for statutory and other purposes.
- 5.4 During exceptional circumstances, *e.g.* fuel shortage, fire, elections, strikes *etc.*, where a school is closed for a whole day the number of school openings will be reduced by the number of days total closure and registers will not be marked.
- 5.5 Where it is not possible to accommodate all pupils in the school, the attendance (or absence) of those who can be accommodated should be recorded in the normal way, whilst pupils who cannot be accommodated should be recorded as SNA (Should Not Attend).
- 5.6 The total number of attendances at the end of the year should indicate the number of openings approved by the Chief Education Officer, less the number of non-attendance days due to the exceptional circumstances and nationally agreed in-service days. The reason for the non-attendance must be marked on the register.
- 5.7 For the purposes of the Annual School and Pupil Census, the Status of each pupil should be recorded as one of the following:

|           |                                                                                                                    |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Status 01 | Pupil on roll of this school (except for those attending full time Further Education courses outside this school); |
| Status 02 | Pupil on the roll of another school;                                                                               |
| Status 03 | Adult-attending day education;                                                                                     |
| Status 04 | Pupil on roll of this school attending full time Further Education course outside of this school;                  |
| Status 05 | Pupil on roll of this school attending full time course other than Further Education outside of this school;       |

Status 06      Preschool child at special school.

- 5.8 The ScotXed Attendance, Absence and Exclusion Census guidance states that no pupil should be recorded as Status 01 in more than one school. This is non-problematic for the majority of pupils as they attend only one school and will be recorded as Status 01 in that school.
- 5.9 Some pupils, however, do attend a second school (or unit). Some examples are:
- Consortium pupils attending a second school to study a particular area of the curriculum
  - Pupils who attend wellbeing services
  - Pupils with additional support needs who, through the Council's policy on inclusion, attend some sessions in a mainstream school in addition to their main placement.
- 5.10 In the past there has been some confusion as to how these pupils should be enrolled within Click+Go and, consequently, there was inconsistency in the recording of their attendance. This document establishes procedure for schools on these matters to promote uniformity across the Authority.
- 5.11 Deciding on the Status 01 School
- 5.11.1 As stated above, no pupil should be recorded as Status 01 in more than one school. It is therefore important to establish which school is to be designated as the 01 school.
- 5.11.2 The general principle is that the Status 01 school should be the school in which the pupil spends the greatest part of a normal week, *i.e.* the school in which the pupil spends six or more openings each week. Where a pupil spends five openings a week in both schools, the Status 01 school will be the school in which the pupil spends the greatest number of hours each week (morning openings are longer than afternoon openings).
- 5.11.3 The two exceptions to this are:
1. where a pupil has been placed for more than half of the week in a school or unit for an assessment (or trial) period of not more than a term. During the assessment period, the pupil's existing school should remain as the 01 school and the assessing school designated as the 02 school. (If the assessment period is for longer than a term, the assessing school should become the Status 01 School and the pupil removed from the roll of the other school.)
  2. where a pupil has been placed in a Wellbeing Service and it is hoped that they will return to the mainstream school at some point in the future. In this case, the additional service should be designated as the 02 school and the school the pupil originally enrolled with will remain the pupil's 01 school. If it is not expected that the pupil will return to the mainstream school, the pupil should be removed from the roll of that school and their Click+Go record transferred to the new

establishment where they would become a Status 01 pupil.

## 5.12 Recording Attendance of Status 02 Pupils

- 5.12.1 The Scottish Government's annual ScotXed Attendance, Absence and Exclusions (AA&E) submission does not include data for Status 02 pupils. Where a pupil attends an 02 school, it is important that the 01 school takes responsibility for recording AA&E data on behalf of the 02 school. The 02 school may well record the pupil's attendance within Click+Go - indeed, this would be encouraged - but this information will not be collected by ScotXed.
  - 5.12.2 The Status 01 school should record the pupil's attendance during the openings that they attend the Status 02 school as OAT (Attendance other than at School). This code counts as attendance, but indicates that the pupil is not actually present in the 01 school. However, OAT should **only** be used when it is known that the pupil **actually** attended the 02 school. It is the responsibility of the 01 school to ensure that the pupil's attendance record within Click+Go is accurate, although the 02 school has the responsibility to inform the 01 school if the pupil is absent. If the pupil was absent from the 02 school, the relevant absence code should be recorded - e.g. SEL, ABS or MED - by the 01 school. If the pupil did not attend the 02 school for some other reason - e.g., sickness with educational provision (SEP) or work experience (WRK), the appropriate attendance code should be used by the 01 school. There should be weekly contact between the 02 and 01 schools to ensure that the pupil's attendance record is accurate.
  - 5.12.3 While the above might appear obvious, in the past it was not common practice throughout EDC. For example, some pupils were recorded within their 01 schools as being present for 100% of openings (with no indication that they attended another establishment during some, or possibly all, of these openings).
- ## 5.13 Recording Attendance of Pupils who attend College or Other Facility on a Full-time Basis (i.e., Status 04 and 05 Pupils)
- 5.13.1 Pupils who have not reached the statutory school leaving age but who attend a further education college on a full-time basis with the agreement of the school and local authority should be recorded as Status 04 within Click + Go by the school. Pupils who attend a facility other than college (e.g., Spark of Genius) on a full-time basis, should be recorded as Status 05. Although Status 04 and 05 pupils are not counted as being on the school roll, their attendance and absence data are included in the Scottish Government's AA&E collection. Schools therefore have a responsibility to maintain accurate attendance records for these pupils.
  - 5.13.2 The pupil's attendance at college/other facility should be recorded by the school within Click + Go as OAT (Attendance other than at School) during the openings when it is known that the pupil actually attended the college/facility. The relevant absence code should be recorded (e.g., SEL, ABS or MED) by the school if the pupil was absent from college. Similarly, the appropriate attendance code should be used if the pupil did not attend the college/facility for some other reason - e.g., medical/dental appointment (PER), sickness with educational provision (SEP) or work experience (WRK).



- 5.13.3 There should be weekly contact between the college/facility and the school to facilitate the accurate recording of attendance data.

## 6.0 Section B - Criteria For Attendance

- 6.1 The 'present' code applies when pupils are physically in the school.
- 6.2 A number of other codes are available which also map onto 'attendance', and these can be found on PM 3/08/F01 'Attendance Reason Codes'.

## 7.0 Section C – Criteria For Absence

- 7.1 Pupil absence from school falls into two categories: authorised and unauthorised.
- 7.2 There are specific circumstances when Absence will be considered to be authorised, and these are outlined in form PM 3/08/F02: 'Absence Reason Codes'.
- 7.3 Note: exclusions should not be recorded as unauthorised absence, since they are imposed by the school or authority and not by a pupil or parent. Exclusions must be reported and recorded separately from other types of absence. Further reference on exclusions can be found in Section F of this procedure manual.
- 7.4 Where a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, there is late coming or time missed during the school day, leading to around a half a day a week or more missed education, guidance from the EDC Promoting Attendance document should be followed. Schools should continue to diligently record such absences and begin to follow the steps outlined in the guidance linking with the home link officer and other agencies as appropriate. This will enable good practice in early identification and intervention in relation to attendance difficulties and ensure parents are supported to fulfil their legal duty to ensure their child is educated. Accurate recording of attendance and action by the school to support a return to regular attendance is necessary evidence, should any subsequent legal action be required.
- 7.5 As outlined in EDC Promoting Attendance Guidance, where attendance falls below 50% and enhanced supports have been provided with no impact, a referral to the Children's Reporter may be considered. Low or non-attendance can be a factor considered as grounds for referral when there are also additional concerns about a child or young person. Further information on these processes can be found [here](#).

## 8.0 Section D – Medical And Dental Appointments

- 8.1 For the purposes of the Annual ScotXed Attendance, Absence and Exclusions Return, some medical and dental appointments contribute towards "attendance" whilst others are recorded as *Sickness – Medically certified (no educational provision)* and ultimately become "authorised absence".
- 8.2 The codes to be used for medical/dental appointments are detailed in PM 3/08/F02: 'Absence Reason Codes'.



**9.0 Section E – Extended Leave With Parental Consent  
(Information Excluded From Attendance And Absence Figures)**

- 9.1 Extended leave with parental consent is recorded separately from the criteria for attendance and absence (*i.e.*, when calculating attendance and absence statistics, it is not included in either the numerator or the denominator).
- 9.2 The codes to be used for Extended Leave with Parental Consent are detailed in PM 3/08/F02: 'Absence Reason Codes'.

**10.0 Section F – Exclusion  
(Information Excluded from Attendance and Absence Figures)**

- 10.1 Exclusion should be recorded and reported separately from other types of absence.
- 10.2 Please note that exclusions must be recorded separately from removals from the register.
- 10.3 Where a decision has been taken to remove a pupil from the register following an exclusion, the school is not expected to continue to mark the pupil as absent. Indeed, the details recorded against the temporary exclusion must be updated in the event that the exclusion was changed to permanent - see ScotXed data exchange advice note SXD03/2006: *Accurate recording of exclusion data (in the case where a “temporary” exclusion results in removal from the roll on a ‘permanent’ basis)*, published February 2006.
- 10.4 Guidance issued by SEEMIS should be followed when recording exclusions and removals from the register.
- 10.5 The codes to be used for 'Exclusion' are detailed in PM 3/08/F02: 'Absence Reason Codes'.

**11.0 Section G – Other Attendance And Absence Criteria  
(Information Excluded from Attendance and Absence Figures)**

- 11.1 There are other criteria for logging attendance and absence available to schools that is not included in the annual attendance and absence figures.
- 11.2 The codes to be used for 'Other Attendance and Absence Criteria' are detailed in PM 3/08/F02: 'Absence Reason Codes'.

**12.0 Section H – Removal From The Register**

- 12.1 Removal (withdrawal) from the school register is defined as;
- i) permanently excluded from the school arising from an incident in class or outside class
  - ii) withdrawn by parents with the consent of the education authority *e.g.*, educated at home
  - iii) known to be attending another school

- iv) attending a college with no expectation that he or she will return to school (education authority consent is required if the pupil is below school leaving age). Status 04 should be used if the pupil is to be retained on the school roll
- v) the pupil is known to have died
- vi) special arrangements have been made to receive education elsewhere than at an educational establishment (although it may be appropriate to retain the pupil on the school roll as a Status 05 pupil), and
- vii) absent for a period of two consecutive weeks and unable to be traced and the Chief Education Officer notified as detailed below.

12.2 If a pupil's whereabouts is unknown within the two week period, the Chief Education Officer must be advised urgently in writing, and any steps taken by the school to identify the whereabouts of the pupil must be detailed. Notification to the Chief Education Officer will enable a search procedure to be initiated with other authorities throughout the British Isles. (See Procedure Manual No. 3/39: *Procedure for managing un-notified absences of children in East Dunbartonshire primary, special and early years' establishments (including procedure for early years' private and voluntary 'partnership' centres)*).

12.3 In all cases, appropriate arrangement should be made for the transfer of pupil records, following removal of a pupil's name from the register. (See Procedure Manual No. 3/18: *Pupils' progress records*.)

### 13.0 Section I - Exemption From Attendance

13.1 Exemption from the obligation to attend school may be granted by the authority as prescribed in section 34 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. Such exemptions are applicable only in respect of children over 14 years of age and would be granted by reason of exceptional hardship at home (but not financial hardship).

13.2 Applications by the parents or carers require to be made through the Central Education Team who, upon receipt of the application, will first consult the head teacher of the school and, where appropriate, obtain the views of the school medical officer and social services.

13.3 Under section 40 of the Standard in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000, the authority has a duty to make special arrangements for the education outside school of children who have been granted an exemption for attendance.