

Attendance & Absence registration - Guidance on complex codes

This guidance provides examples of good practice concerning the recording of **dual** registration sessions, as well as providing clarity on the most misunderstood codes:

The B code
The D code
The T code
The I code
The M code

The attendance register requires two attendance marks (am & pm) as explained in **Section 6 of the Education Pupil Registration Regulation 2006**.

Full guidance on the use of attendance and absence codes can be found in the following DfE guidance:

[School attendance guidance May 2022 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106522/school-attendance-guidance-may-2022.pdf)

Should you require any support or have any queries please contact the Non-School Attendance Helpline on 01223 715682 or via email: nsa.helpline@cambridgeshire.gov.uk. The helpline is open Monday – Friday, 10.00 – 16.00.

Difference between D and B codes

The B code is used for off-site **supervised** educational activity whilst the **child remains on the school roll** and should not be confused with dual registration guidance (as set out below).

The below points summarise the use of B code, as explained in the **DfE - Absence and Attendance Codes 2009**.

B Coding:

- Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity
- Pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision
- Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in **regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** – this means the activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
- The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded
- This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing schoolwork

- Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils
- The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code

The B code can be used when a child is expected to attend an Alternative Provision (AP) if the above criteria is met. The child's attendance / absence is recorded by the AP provider and this information must be shared with the school where the child is registered. **The child does not go roll at the AP provider.** If the child accesses the education provided by the AP, then the school will record this with a B code. All absences will be recorded using the appropriate absence codes.

What is dual registration ('D' code)

The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school, e.g., a **main** and **host** school with the pupil being registered at the two schools at the same time. In this instance a **D code** is used.

The meaning of D code is 'expected to attend another school or PRU' (Pupil Referral Unit). A child cannot be dual registered at an overseas school as the word 'registered pupil' in the **Education Act 1996** only relates to schools in England and Wales.

The D code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question at the main school, because they were scheduled to attend the host school at which they are also registered. The D code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school, or a special school on a temporary basis. Also, Military families and parents who are co-parenting can be examples when dual registration arrangements can be used.

Dual registration can also be used where a 'Traveller' child is absent from the main school due to travelling for the purpose of business and are admitted to a school in the area that they have travelled to.

How to arrange dual registration:

This is something that is mutually agreed by two schools and the parents/carers. Arrangements and expectations surrounding the dual registration must be agreed in writing between both schools, which includes first day response, consideration for timescales and reviews/ monitoring.

Prior to either making or accepting a dual registration arrangement, schools must consult with CCC admissions team on 01223 743800 to establish PAN (Published Admission Number)/class structures, waiting lists and current school applications being processed.

Parents must be informed prior to consenting to dual registration that this arrangement will not entitle them to a permanent placement at the host school.

How to record dual registration:

Pupils who are dual registered at two schools should be registered as such in both schools' information management systems (MIS) under "pupil enrolment status". For example – when a student is on roll at a main school but is attending a host school.

The school where the child is expected to attend is responsible for accurately recording the pupil's attendance and chasing up non-attendance such as present or unauthorised absence codes.

Dual registration arrangements can be on a full-time and part-time basis. For example, there may be instances where a pupil is referred to another school for several days a week, rather than for whole weeks or complete terms. An example of this would be when a pupil is referred to a language unit in the Host school for 3 days a week and attends their Main School for the other 2 days. The host school will use the usual attendance / absence marks for the three days and the Main school will use the D code. For the two days when the pupil attends their Main school, the usual present / absent marks will be used by the Main school. The Host school will record these two days with a D code.

Where a pupil is dual registered at two school settings, recording would be as below:

Main school = If the dual registration arrangement is agreed on a full-time basis, D code is used by the main school for all the sessions when the child is expected to attend the Host school. If the dual registration is arranged on part-time basis, the main school would use the D code for the sessions that the child is expected to attend the Host school and use the appropriate attendance / absence codes when the child is expected to attend the Main School.

Host school = Use a present mark or an absent mark for the sessions the child is expected to attend the Host school and the D code when they are not expected to attend the Host school.

Both schools share responsibility for the child. Failure to attend either school at the proper time without good reason is an unauthorised absence, the appropriate absence code should be reflected on the attendance register of the school the child is **expected to attend only**.

Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the Host school can notify the Main school of any absences of individual pupils. It is recommended that a copy of the weekly attendance certificate/record is sent to the Main school from the Host school without delay at the end of the last agreed session each week. This is to enable the Main school to undertake any attendance interventions that may be necessary or terminate the arrangement.

For safeguarding and educational reasons, the school that the child is **expected** to attend is responsible for following up of all unexplained and unexpected absences in

a timely manner, such as through “First Day Calling” procedures. The Main school is expected to support the Host school with any referrals, attendance interventions, requests for support and/or safeguarding concerns.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence (‘T’ code)

The T code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling as part of their business/ trade but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision (at a school or other provider). A traveller child is required attend school at least 100 days out of 190 days expected in school. This allows 90 days to travel for the purpose of family business as a Traveller. Parents must inform the school that they intend to travel for business purposes before they embark on their travel.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. If the pupil is known to be dual registered and present at another school during the session in question, the attendance should be recorded using code D by the Main school, as described in the dual registration guidance above.

Absence due to illnesses (‘I’ code)

Schools should authorise absences due to illness using I code unless they have genuine cause for concern. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, schools can record the absence as unauthorised using code O and should advise parents of their intention. Where there are high levels of sickness absence, schools can request parents to provide medical information to support illness. Medical information can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, medicine bottles etc. rather than doctors’ notes.

Most minor illness are self-limiting and do not require contact with a GP. Medical certification for short term illness is not appropriate and should not be requested as standard school policy. GPs are not contractually obliged to provide a sick note for children off sick for school. It is encouraged that schools are proactive in setting up meetings with parents and professionals to work together to find practical solutions. This will ensure an inclusive approach and minimise disruption to child’s education.

Absence due to Medical or dental appointments (‘M’ code)

These should be coded with an ‘M’ in the attendance register. Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for minimum time and return to school immediately following their consultation.