Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Governing Body	**Date:** February 2024
Last reviewed on:	October 2023 (updated due to amendments required)	
Next review due by:	February 2026 (unless amendments required earlier)	

Contents

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

> Promoting good attendance

> Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence

> Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled

> Acting early to address patterns of absence

> Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the DfE, and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

> Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

> Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

> Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

> The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (& 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

> The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

> This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for:

> Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
>
> Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
>
> Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
>
> Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
>
> Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
>
> Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
>
> The link Governor to meet termly with Mrs Aydin (Assistant Head)

3.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

> Implementation of this policy at the school
>
> Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
>
> Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
>
> Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
>
> Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

> Leading attendance across the school
>
> Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
>
> Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
>
> Having an oversight of data analysis
>
> Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
>
> Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
>
> Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs A Aydin (Assistant Head) and can be contacted via telephone 0116 2665656

3.4 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

> Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
>
> Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
>
> Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
>
> Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
>
> Advising the headteacher of previous absences making them eligible for penalty notices to be issued

The attendance officer is Mrs S Beeby and can be contacted via 0116 2665656 & sbeeby@herrick.leicester.sch.uk

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- ➢ Recording attendance on a daily basis, via the school on-line SIMS system
- ➢ Submitting this information to the school office
- ➢ Recording attendance at the start of the morning and afternoon session.

3.6 School staff

School Administration staff will:

- ❯ Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis via and record it on the school system
- ❯ Transfer calls from parents to the Assistant Head (Attendance) in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- ❯ Make sure their child attends every day on time and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- ❯ Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- ❯ Ensure that appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- ❯ Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the morning (1 session) and afternoon (1 session) total of 2 sessions per day. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- ❯ Present
- ❯ Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- ❯ Absent
- ❯ Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- ❯ The original entry
- ❯ The amended entry
- ❯ The reason for the amendment
- ❯ The date on which the amendment was made

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

> Whether the absence is authorised or not

> The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

> The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55am and will be kept open until 9.00am.

The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1.15pm.

See Appendix

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office (0116 2665656) (see also section 7).

The school will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

In line with LCC Educational Welfare instructions the school will ask for medical evidence after 3 days of the child being ill. PA (Persistant Absentees) children will be monitored by the Attendance Lead and the child's parents will be asked to provide medical evidence for **any** absence where the child is reported as being 'ill' (even if for 1 day).

Evidence of emergency appointments i.e. Doctors, Dentists is required – if not received the absence will be marked as unauthorized.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we ask parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours in order to ensure the children do not lose learning time.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Appendix 2: Recording Absence

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

> Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

> After the register has closed will be marked as unauthorised, using the appropriate code

Appendix 3: **Lates & Collections documents.**

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil expected to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

> ➤ Call the pupil's parent/carer the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will contact the EWO

> ➤ Identify whether the absence is approved or not

> ➤ Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

> ➤ Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will contact the EWO

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Absence information checked weekly by the Attendance Officer. If a child's absence is below 90%

> ➤ A letter is sent to parents

> ➤ If attendance has not improved by the end of half-term, parents are asked to make an appointment to meet with the Attendance Lead / Assistant Head.

> ➤ Monitored pupils will receive a home visit from the Assistant Head / Headteacher if there is a Safeguarding concern

> ➤ If still no improvement the matter is passed to the EWO

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels termly.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher/Governors discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request as well as the child's attendance and learning.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, at least 2 weeks prior to leave date.

Requests must be made on the Leave of Absence Request Form which is available from the school office or on the School website.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

> ❯ *Illness and medical/dental appointments* (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

> ❯ *Religious observance* – One day is authorized where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek confirmation from the parents' religious body

Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English & Welsh gypsies, Irish & Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) & circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers.

Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

Appendix 2: Leave of Absence Request Form

5.2 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is:

> ➢ of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher/EWO, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice takes into account:

> ➢ Child's attendance record
>
> ➢ The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
>
> ➢ Previous holidays taken (including previous school if new child)
>
> ➢ One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
>
> ➢ Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

> ➢ The school present a cup to the class who has the highest attendance in the weekly full school assembly
>
> ➢ Attendance charts in situated in the hall and main reception area which are updated weekly
>
> ➢ The class with the overall best attendance are rewarded at the end of the academic year

Appendix 5: Children's Attendance

7. Attendance monitoring

> ➢ Attendance data is recorded weekly for all pupils.
>
> ➢ The data is broken down into specific areas in order to identify the pupils who require support with their attendance.
>
> ➢ Every half-term a report is produced to show persistant absentees – relevant action is taken by the Assistant Head (ie. Contact parents).

7.1 Monitoring attendance

> ➢ The school will:
>
> ➢ Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
>
> ➢ Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at National and Local Authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Governing Body.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

➢ Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families

➢ Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

➢ Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families

➢ Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

➢ Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

➢ Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (or EWO) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school (See 4.6)

➢ Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full Governing Body.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

> Child protection and safeguarding policy

> Behaviour policy

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Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Recording Absence

In order that the school is able to report the whereabouts of all children the following procedure is followed if a child is marked as absent.

1	Run off a list of all absent children from SIMS (Attendance programme)
2	Visit the classes to check that the information is correct
3	Check School emails for any information from parents/carers
4	Check School phone message system for any calls from parents/carers
5	Parent/Carer telephoned to obtain reason for absence
	If the call transfers to voicemail the following message will be left – *'Please contact the school regarding your child's attendance'*
6	The reason for absence is recorded on the child's attendance record

Application Form - Pupil's Leave of Absence

Please read the information overleaf before completing this form.

For your request to be considered, the form must be completed and returned to the school <u>two weeks</u> before you plan to leave. All sections must be completed and this will returned to you after the Headteacher has considered your application.

Please do not book any flights, tickets, or accommodation until you have received confirmation from school that leave has been authorised.

Name of pupil/s:	Class:
First day of absence:	Date of return to school:
Date submitted to school:	Total school days requested:

Reason for request:

_____

Destination address:

_____

Date you plan to travel: _____   Date you plan to return: _____

(Please note the application will not be considered without all the above information).

We require details of a point of contact. This person will notify us of any changes to your circumstances which may affect the date of your return. We may have to contact them in the event of your child not returning as expected:

Name of contact: _____Tel No: _____

Address: _____ Mobile: _____

I have read and understand the information above and the guidelines overleaf.

Signed: _____ parent/guardian   Date: _____

Print name: _____   Contact No: _____

School to complete	Date form received:			
Previous Absences:	**YES / NO**	Dates & reason:		
% Attendance:	Last academic year:		Current:	
Leave requested:	Authorised	**NOT** authorised	Penalty Notice **YES/NO**	

Signed: _____ Headteacher   Date: _____

Applications for leave of absence

Guidelines

Herrick Primary School is very reluctant for a pupil to miss any part of his/her education.

1. In line with the Government guidance, the school management and its governors are unable to authorise any term time absence, unless our view is that there are **exceptional circumstances.**

2. If permission is granted, photocopies of airline or travel tickets will be required by the school office **before** you travel. If your request has been agreed, failure to provide this information will mean that the request is no longer agreed and your child's absence will be classed as unauthorised.

3. We may also request copies of other travel related documents from you. We will advise you if this is the case. Where we do not receive copies of documents requested, this is likely to mean that we will not authorise some or all of any absence your child has in relation to this request.

4. If permission is granted, pupils must ensure that they are up to date with their school work before they leave and in addition, it will be parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that their son/daughter makes up any missed work in his/her **own time** upon return.

5. **The decision made by the school is final.**

Please note

If your child has unauthorised leave of absence you will either be issued with a Penalty Notice of £120 per parent per child (discounted to £60 if paid within 21days), or, your case may be referred by the Local Authority directly to the Magistrates' Court.

LATES / COLLECTIONS

'to give each and everyone a chance'

HERRICK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Children arriving LATE to school

If children arrive late to school, they will be asked to come to the main office where they receive a late mark and the reason for lateness entered.

If the lateness becomes persistent, the parents will be sent a letter reminding them of the school times.

If the lateness does not improve the child's whole attendance will be discussed at the monthly Assistant head & EWO meeting.

EWO will then herself contact the parents via letter or telephone call.

Children NOT collected on time

If a child has not been collected on time (3.15), the classteacher will bring them to the Office .

Office staff will call parents to let them know that their child has not been collected.

If another adult / older child is collecting, they will be asked if they are on the child's Contact Form.

If they are not on the form, we ask parents to email the school the persons name and relationship to the child . We ask age if older child.

Information passed to Head / Assistant Head

Child collected   Child not collected

Headteacher to contact Social Services

Children arriving EARLY to school

If a child arrives before the start of the school day, they will be asked to join Breakfast club until it is time for the class to begin (8.30am).

The Office will call parents to see why the child arrived early and remind them children should not arrive before 8.30.

Parents are reminded that leaving your child outside the school before it is open is a safeguarding issue.

The reply will be reported to our DSL who

Children not collected by parents or persons nominated

If a child is being collected by someone the school is unaware of, the child will be brought to the office who will inform the DSL, Headteacher.

Assistant Head or Office will contact the parents to find out why the school was not informed, and if the child know this person.

Parents are asked to add this person on the child's contact form or email the school giving details.

Once the DSL / Headteacher & Assistant

Late Collection of Pupils (extract from the school Charging Policy)

School finishes at 3.15pm for pupils. If pupils have not been picked up from the playground by 3.25pm they will be taken to the school office. Late parents need to come to the school office to notify the receptionist that they have come to pick up their child. If a parent repeatedly arrives at reception after 3.30pm a charge for late collection may apply.

We recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances which lead to a parent/carer being unable to get to school on time and parents must notify school by 3.00pm at the latest so that the teacher can be notified and the child/children can be reassured.

In cases of **repeated** late collection the following process will be followed;

- If a parent arrives late to collect their child/children without informing the school in advance of the exceptional circumstances surrounding their lateness, they will be issued with a late collection notice. This will remind the parent of the time school finishes and the importance of them collecting their child/children on time.

- Should the parent arrive late on a second occasion they will receive a letter notifying them that should they continue to pick up late the governing body will be notified and a late collection charge may be issued.

- Following a third late collection the governors will be notified and a fine will be issued to cover the supervision of your child, while waiting to be collected.

    £10 per half hour – 3.30 – 4.00pm   4.00 – 4.30pm

Appendix 5: Why Attendance is so important

'to give each and everyone a chance'

Children's Attendance

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Any absence (including lateness) affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.

Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility; failing to ensure your child's regular attendance and permitting their absence from school, without a good reason, is an offence in law and may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.

When a child is to be absent from school, we ask parents to contact the school giving the reason for absence, early in the mornings if the school have not received a call after 9.30am, the Office will check that the child is not in school and make a courtesy call to parents.

If a child has been absent from school for more than 3 days, the school request medical evidence to support the child's absence. If a parent does not provide evidence this will be 'unauthorised' and passed on to the DSL.

The DSL will contact the child's parents and inform them that the absence will be unauthorised and the EWO will be informed. The EWO will contact parents about the child's attendance and if there is no improvement and if the child's attendance drops below 90% they will become a 'persistent absentee'. the EWO & the DSL will arrange a 'panel meeting' to speak with parents about their child's attendance.

The EWO & the DSL will arrange a 'panel meeting' to speak with parents

We at Herrick Primary School check children's attendance everyday and monitor any weekly patterns that occur (i.e a child is absent every Friday etc). We also include in the figure a percentage of daily and weekly attendance. Attached is a copy of how we monitor the daily and weekly attendance.