



Attendance Policy

Ratified by Governors: September 2026

Review: September 2027

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1. Aims

Herrick Primary School is committed to meeting its obligations in relation to school attendance through a whole-school culture and ethos that values high attendance. Every day in school matters, and being in school is one of the strongest protective factors for a child's learning, wellbeing and safety.

We will do this by:

- Promoting high attendance and punctuality for every pupil
- Reducing absence, including occasional, 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, with support offered before any legal action is considered
- Building strong, respectful relationships with families so that barriers to attendance are understood and removed
- Working in partnership with the local authority, health services, children's social care and other agencies where pupils need additional support
- Making sure our expectations are clear, communicated consistently and applied fairly to all pupils

We recognise that poor attendance is often a symptom of wider circumstances rather than the problem in itself. Our first response to absence is always support.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's statutory guidance *Working together to improve school attendance* (July 2026), which schools, governing bodies and local authorities must have regard to. It also reflects the DfE guidance on the school census, which sets out the persistent absence threshold.

It is drawn from the following legislation, which sets out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, which replaced the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 from 19 August 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024, which introduced the National Framework for penalty notices
- The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, which changed the arrangements for children who are removed from the school roll to be educated at home and for school attendance orders
- The Equality Act 2010, in relation to reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils

We also have regard to the following DfE guidance:

- Keeping children safe in education (current version)
- Children missing education
- Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, issued under section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014

- Allergy safety in schools (DfE, July 2026), issued under section 34 of the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026

Where a pupil’s absence is connected to a medical condition, this policy is read alongside the school’s Medicine in School Policy and Allergy Safety Policy. Those policies take precedence on how a condition is managed; this policy governs how the resulting absence is recorded and supported. Section 6.3 sets out how the two fit together.

Where this policy refers to the local authority, this means Leicester City Council and its Education Welfare / Attendance Service.

3. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Session	Half a school day. There are two sessions each day (morning and afternoon), so 10 sessions in a normal school week.
Authorised absence	An absence the school has agreed to, or accepted a satisfactory explanation for. Only the school can authorise an absence – parents cannot.
Unauthorised absence	An absence the school has not agreed to, or for which no satisfactory reason has been given.
Occasional absence	Attendance below 96%. At this level a pupil is already missing a meaningful amount of learning and we will begin to monitor and offer support.
Persistent absence	A pupil who misses 10% or more of possible sessions (attendance below 90%).
Severe absence	A pupil who misses 50% or more of possible sessions (attendance below 50%).
Parent	Any person with parental responsibility for a child, and any person who has care of a child. Where this policy says “parent” it includes carers.

Attendance of 90% may sound high, but it means a child misses the equivalent of half a day every week, or around **four weeks of school each year**. Over a primary school career that is close to a full academic year of lost learning.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school’s policies, ethos and practice
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing, benchmarking and challenging attendance data, including historic and emerging trends, and comparing the school with national figures and with similar schools
- Making sure attendance is a standing item at full governing body meetings and that an attendance action plan is in place where attendance is a concern
- Making sure all staff receive adequate and up-to-date training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

A named link governor for attendance meets at least termly with the Senior Attendance Champion and reports back to the full Governing Body.

4.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy across the school
- Making sure the school has a designated Senior Attendance Champion with the time, training and authority to lead attendance
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Governing Body
- Supporting staff to monitor the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of attendance strategies and interventions
- Deciding whether an absence is authorised, including all requests for leave of absence in term time
- Requesting that the local authority considers a penalty notice or other legal action where the national threshold has been met and support has not worked

4.3 The Senior Attendance Champion

The Senior Attendance Champion is the designated senior leader with overall responsibility for attendance. They are responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school and offering a clear vision for improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations, processes and the accuracy of registers
- Having oversight of attendance data and its analysis
- Devising and delivering strategies to address the areas of weak attendance identified through data
- Arranging and leading attendance support meetings with parents
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families, including working with external agencies
- Representing the school at targeted support meetings with the local authority
- Making sure attendance concerns that may indicate a safeguarding risk are shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Senior Attendance Champion is Mrs Arzu Aydin (Deputy Headteacher) and can be contacted on 0116 266 5656.

Mrs Aydin is also the named person with overall responsibility under the Medicine in School Policy and the Allergy Safety Lead under the Allergy Safety Policy. Holding all three roles means that attendance affected by a pupil's health is picked up and planned for by the same person, rather than being treated as two separate conversations with the family.

4.4 The Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Taking and recording day-to-day absence messages from parents
- Following up any unexplained absence on the first day and each day it continues
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9) and making sure codes are accurate and applied consistently
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus
- Providing regular attendance reports to staff, and reporting concerns to the Senior Attendance Champion and headteacher
- Working with the local authority attendance team to tackle persistent and severe absence
- Maintaining accurate records of the support offered to each family, so that any later legal action is properly evidenced

The Attendance Officer is Mrs S Beeby and can be contacted on 0116 266 5656 or at sbeeby@herrick.leicester.sch.uk.

4.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Taking the register accurately at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions, at the times set out in section 5.1, using the school's management information system
- Making sure the register is submitted promptly so that the office can follow up any absence
- Passing on to the office or the Senior Attendance Champion any information a pupil or parent shares about a barrier to attending
- Welcoming pupils back after absence and helping them to catch up, so that returning to school feels manageable
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality with their class

4.6 School office and administrative staff

Office staff will:

- Take and record calls and messages from parents about absence on the day it occurs
- Contact parents on the first day of any unexplained absence, and on each subsequent day it continues
- Pass calls that need more detailed discussion to the Senior Attendance Champion
- Keep pupil contact details, including at least two emergency contacts, accurate and up to date

4.7 Parents and carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school every day, on time, unless they are too ill to attend or the school has authorised the absence
- Contact the school office by 9.00am on the first day of any absence, giving the reason and the expected date of return, and to make contact on each subsequent day of absence
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers
- Make medical and dental appointments outside the school day wherever possible, and bring their child in for the rest of the day when an appointment cannot be avoided
- Apply for any term-time leave of absence in advance, using the form in Appendix 3, and not to book travel before a decision has been given
- Talk to us early if something is making it hard for their child to attend, so that we can help

4.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time and ready to learn
- Tell a trusted adult in school if something is making it difficult for them to come to school

5. Recording attendance

5.1 The attendance register

We keep an attendance register and place every pupil on it. We take the register at the start of the morning session and again at the start of the afternoon session — two sessions per day. In line with the statutory

guidance, the register is taken at the same time each session for all pupils, including any pupil on a part-time timetable, phased return or other bespoke arrangement.

The register records whether each pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend because of exceptional circumstances

School day timings:

- Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am
- The morning register is taken at 8.55am and closes at 9.00am
- The afternoon register is taken at 1.15pm
- The school day ends at 3.15pm

We also record:

- Whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised
- The nature of the activity where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity (codes B and K, and code Y7, must always carry a note)
- The nature of the circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend for exceptional reasons

Any amendment to the register records the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date it was made and the name of the person who made it. Every entry is kept for three years from the date it was made.

We share our daily attendance register data with the Department for Education, the local authority and, where relevant, other agencies, in line with the statutory guidance. See Appendix 1 for the full list of national attendance codes.

5.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day, by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office on 0116 266 5656.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. If we are not satisfied, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be told this in advance.

Pupils should attend school unless they are too ill to do so. Where a parent is unsure, we encourage them to speak to us before keeping their child at home; we may be able to put support in place, such as a later start, a quiet space or a phased return, so that the child can attend for at least part of the day.

Medical evidence

In line with the DfE statutory guidance, we do not routinely ask for medical evidence for every illness absence. We may request reasonable evidence where:

- We have genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, or
- A pupil's illness absence is prolonged, frequently recurring or complex, and evidence would help us understand their health needs, consider reasonable adjustments and plan suitable provision

Where evidence is requested, we will accept whatever is reasonably available. This does not need to be a letter from a GP and we will not ask families to obtain evidence that would cost them money or take up NHS appointment time unnecessarily. Appointment cards, appointment texts or emails, prescriptions, medication packaging with the pupil's name, or a letter from a clinician already involved with the child are all acceptable.

In line with the Medicine in School Policy and the Allergy Safety Policy, we will not insist on a letter from a consultant where a GP, community nurse or school nurse can provide the same information, and we will not disregard medical evidence or professional advice once it has been given.

Where a pupil has an Individual Healthcare Plan, absence connected to the condition described in that plan is dealt with through the plan and its review, not through repeated requests for evidence for each episode. Repeatedly asking a family to re-evidence a condition the school has already recorded is not acceptable practice.

If a pupil is absent for a medical or dental appointment that could not be arranged outside school hours, we ask parents to provide evidence of the appointment where they can. Where no explanation or evidence is provided and we are not satisfied with the reason given, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Becoming unwell during the school day

A pupil who becomes unwell in school is not sent home as a matter of routine. Where the pupil can be made comfortable, given their medication or observed for a period and then return to class, that is what we do, and the pupil remains marked present for that session.

- Medication that a pupil needs during the day is administered in school under the Medicine in School Policy, so that the pupil does not have to go home or be collected for it
- A pupil who has had a mild or moderate allergic reaction is observed with an adult for at least 60 minutes, in line with the Allergy Safety Policy, and does not normally need to be sent home
- Where a pupil has an Individual Healthcare Plan, that plan determines when they should be sent home; office staff check the plan before contacting parents
- A pupil who becomes unwell is never sent to the office or medical room unsupervised, and in a medical emergency help and medication are brought to the pupil
- Parents are not required or made to feel obliged to come into school to administer medication or provide medical support

Where a pupil is genuinely too unwell to remain in school and is collected during the day, the session already attended is recorded as present and the remaining session is coded according to the reason for absence.

5.3 Planned absence

A medical or dental appointment will be recorded as authorised where the parent notifies the school in advance. We ask parents to make appointments outside school hours wherever possible, and to bring their child into school before or after the appointment rather than taking the whole day.

Any other request for term-time absence must be made as far in advance as possible, and at least two weeks before the requested dates, using the Leave of Absence Request Form in Appendix 3. Section 6 sets out which absences the school can authorise.

5.4 Lateness and punctuality

Arriving late means a child misses the start of the day, and repeated lateness adds up quickly: 15 minutes late every day is the equivalent of around two weeks of school a year.

A pupil who arrives:

- Before the register closes at 9.00am will be marked as late, using code L, and is counted as present
- After the register closes will be recorded as an unauthorised absence for that session, using code U, unless there is an acceptable explanation

Pupils arriving late must come to the main office with their parent so that a late mark and reason can be recorded. Where lateness becomes persistent, we will write to parents, and if there is no improvement we

will invite them to an attendance support meeting and may discuss the case with the local authority. See Appendix 4.

5.5 Following up absence

Where a pupil who is expected to attend does not attend, or stops attending, without explanation, we will:

- Contact the parent on the morning of the first day of absence to find out the reason and check the pupil is safe. If we cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts we will escalate this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, where appropriate, contact the local authority
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised
- Record the correct attendance code as soon as the reason is known, and in any event no later than five school days after the session
- Make contact on each day the absence continues without explanation, so that proper safeguarding action can be taken where necessary
- Consider a home visit by a member of the senior leadership team where there are safeguarding concerns or where we have been unable to make contact

Absence is treated as a possible safeguarding concern, not just an administrative matter. Where a pupil of compulsory school age is absent for 10 consecutive school days or more without authorisation, or where we believe a pupil may have moved without a destination school, we will follow the DfE's Children missing education guidance and notify the local authority.

5.6 Reporting to parents

The Attendance Officer checks attendance weekly. Our graduated response is set out in section 7. In addition:

- Parents receive information about their child's attendance and punctuality in the annual report
- Parents can ask the school office for their child's attendance figure at any time
- Where attendance falls below 96%, or where a pattern of absence emerges, we will make contact to offer support before attendance drops further

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 Leave of absence in term time

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence in term time where they consider there to be exceptional circumstances. The DfE is clear that a need or desire for a holiday, or absence for recreation, is not an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of any absence authorised.

Each application is considered individually, taking account of the facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request, as well as the pupil's attendance record and the impact on their learning.

Requests must be made in advance on the Leave of Absence Request Form (Appendix 3), available from the school office and the school website, and should be submitted at least two weeks before the intended first day of absence. Parents should not book travel or accommodation before a decision has been given.

Absence taken in term time without the school's agreement will be recorded as unauthorised (code G) and may be referred to the local authority for a penalty notice under the National Framework (see section 8).

Reasons that may be authorised include:

- *Illness and medical or dental appointments* — see sections 5.2 and 5.3

- *Religious observance*— up to one day is authorised where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. Where necessary the school will seek confirmation from the parents' religious body
- *Travelling for occupational purposes*— for pupils from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, showmen and circus families, bargees and other travelling families, where the family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, and it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision elsewhere
- *Participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad* under a licence — recorded using code C1
- *Other exceptional circumstances*— for example a family bereavement or a significant family crisis, recorded using code C

6.2 Pupils on a part-time timetable

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional cases we may agree a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs, for example while a phased return is arranged. Any part-time timetable will:

- Be agreed in writing with the parent and, where relevant, the local authority and other professionals involved
- Have a clear end date and a plan for returning to full-time education as quickly as possible
- Be reviewed regularly, at least every six weeks
- Be recorded using code C2 for the sessions the pupil is not expected to attend
- Be recorded in the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan where the reason relates to a medical condition, so that the healthcare and attendance arrangements are held in one place

6.3 Pupils with medical conditions, allergy or disability

Our attendance ambition for a pupil with a medical condition is the same as for any other pupil. What differs is the support we put around them. Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 requires the Governing Body to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions, and the Equality Act 2010 requires reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, which can include pupils with severe allergy or asthma.

Where a pupil has an Individual Healthcare Plan under the Medicine in School Policy, that plan is the single record of the arrangements the school will make, including any that affect attendance:

- Adjustments to the start or end of the day, or to particular lessons or activities
- Arrangements at meal and snack times, and for clubs, PE and trips
- When the pupil should and should not be sent home
- Any agreed phased return, temporary part-time timetable or adapted timetable
- How educational progress will be maintained where absence does occur

The Senior Attendance Champion, who is also the school's named person for medical conditions, makes sure attendance planning and healthcare planning are done together. Where a pupil with an Individual Healthcare Plan is flagged through the attendance monitoring in section 7, the plan is reviewed at the same time.

The following are not acceptable practice at this school, and mirror the unacceptable practice sections of the Medicine in School Policy and the Allergy Safety Policy:

- Penalising a pupil for absence or lateness caused by a medical condition or disability, including excluding them from attendance rewards

- Sending a pupil home frequently for reasons connected to their condition, or preventing them from staying for lunch, clubs or other normal school activities, unless their Individual Healthcare Plan says otherwise
- Requiring a parent to accompany their child on a trip, or to attend school to provide medical support, as a condition of the pupil taking part
- Treating absence linked to a known condition as a compliance problem rather than a support need
- Referring a family for legal action where the absence is explained by a medical condition the school is already aware of

6.4 Pupils who cannot attend because of health needs

Where a pupil cannot attend school because of a physical or mental health need, we will work with the family, health professionals and the local authority to put the right support in place. We will:

- Consider reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, as required by the Equality Act 2010
- Consider a time-limited phased return, adapted timetable or adjustments to the school day before any other intervention
- Notify the local authority where a pupil is likely to be absent for 15 or more school days, so that its duty to arrange suitable education can be considered

Where remote education is used, it will only be as a short-term, last-resort element of a structured plan to return the pupil to school, agreed with the family. Pupils receiving remote education are still recorded as absent, not present.

6.5 Removal from roll and children educated at home

Parents who are considering educating their child at home are encouraged to speak to the headteacher first, so that we can understand and try to address any concerns.

Under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026:

- We will notify the local authority whenever a parent tells us they intend to remove their child from the school roll in order to educate them at home
- For certain pupils – including those who are the subject of a child protection enquiry or plan, or who have been within the previous five years, and pupils who attend a special school – the parent must obtain the local authority's consent before the child can be removed. We will not remove such a pupil from the register until we receive notice from the local authority that consent has been granted
- We will follow any further requirements introduced by regulations or statutory guidance made under the Act, including those relating to mandatory meetings where these apply in Leicester

In all other cases, we will only remove a pupil from the admission register in the circumstances allowed by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, and will notify the local authority as required.

7. Supporting attendance: our graduated response

Our approach follows the DfE's expectation of support first. We expect high attendance from every pupil, and we work with families to remove the barriers that get in the way before considering any formal or legal action.

7.1 Promoting good attendance

- Attendance is discussed in assemblies and celebrated weekly; a cup is presented to the class with the highest attendance
- Attendance charts are displayed in the hall and main reception and updated weekly

- The class with the best attendance across the year is rewarded at the end of the academic year
- Rewards recognise improvement as well as high attendance. No pupil is excluded from an attendance reward because of absence caused by a medical condition or disability, and where a pupil has an Individual Healthcare Plan any adjustment to how rewards apply to them is recorded in that plan
- Attendance charts and class competitions are presented in a way that does not single out or embarrass a pupil whose condition affects their attendance
- Breakfast club provides a settled, supported start to the day and is used as part of attendance and punctuality plans where it would help
- Expectations are shared with families through newsletters, the school website, parents' evenings and the information in Appendix 5

7.2 Our stepped approach where attendance is a concern

Where attendance falls or a pattern of absence emerges, we take the following steps. We may move more quickly through them where there are safeguarding concerns, and we will always adapt them to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Step	Trigger	Action
1	Attendance below 96%, or an emerging pattern (for example repeated Friday or Monday absence)	The Attendance Officer contacts the family informally to check whether support is needed. A letter is sent setting out the current attendance figure.
2	Attendance below 90%, or no improvement after step 1	Parents are invited to an attendance support meeting with the Senior Attendance Champion and Education Welfare Officer. Barriers are identified and a written attendance plan is agreed, with a review date and any support the school can offer (for example breakfast club, a phased start, pastoral support, or a referral to an external service).
3	No improvement after the attendance plan review	The case is discussed with the local authority Education Welfare Officer. Where appropriate, a multi-agency early help assessment is offered and the family is supported to access wider services.
4	Support has not worked, or is not engaged with, and the national threshold has been met	The school works with the local authority to consider formal action, which may include a notice to improve, a penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 8). Before any referral, the Senior Attendance Champion checks whether the absence is explained by a medical condition recorded in an Individual Healthcare Plan. Where it is, the plan is reviewed instead of a referral being made.

We keep a written record of every contact, meeting and offer of support at each step. Where there are safeguarding concerns at any stage, the Designated Safeguarding Lead is involved immediately and a home visit may be carried out.

7.3 Working with the local authority

We take part in the local authority's targeting support meetings, where the school and the local authority attendance team jointly review pupils who are persistently or severely absent, agree next steps and decide which pupils need multi-agency support.

7.4 Pupils who may need more support

Some pupils face more complex barriers to attendance. Our ambition for their attendance is the same as for any other pupil, but the support we provide is adapted. We pay particular attention to:

- Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including those with an education, health and care plan. Reasonable adjustments are actively considered and recorded, and the SENCo is involved in attendance planning
- Pupils with physical or mental health needs, including anxiety-based school avoidance
- Pupils with a medical condition, including allergy, asthma, diabetes and epilepsy. Their attendance is reviewed alongside their Individual Healthcare Plan under the Medicine in School Policy, and any absence following an allergic reaction or other medical incident is cross-checked against the incident record kept under the Allergy Safety Policy
- Young carers, who are identified and monitored as a specific group and linked to local authority assessment and support
- Pupils who are known to children's social care, have a social worker, or are looked after or previously looked after
- Pupils eligible for free school meals and other disadvantaged pupils
- Pupils affected by domestic abuse, bereavement, housing insecurity or other family difficulties

Attendance data for each of these groups is analysed separately so that we can see where support is working and where it is not.

8. Legal intervention and penalty notices

Legal action is a last resort. It will only be considered where support has been offered and has not worked, or where a family has not engaged with the support offered. Parents are always told in advance when the school is considering asking the local authority to take formal action.

Absence that is properly explained by a pupil's medical condition is authorised and is not the subject of legal action. Where a pupil has an Individual Healthcare Plan, that plan is reviewed before any referral for formal action is considered.

8.1 The National Framework for penalty notices

Since 19 August 2024 a single national framework has applied across England. A penalty notice must be considered where a pupil of compulsory school age accumulates 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence (usually five school days, which do not have to be consecutive) within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The 10-week period can span different terms or school years, and the sessions can be any combination of unauthorised absence, including unauthorised term-time holiday.

The penalty amounts are set nationally:

- A first penalty notice is £160 per parent, per child, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within three years is charged at a flat rate of £160, with no discount for early payment
- A maximum of two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent for the same child within any three-year period. Where a third offence occurs, the case will normally be referred straight to the Magistrates' Court

Penalty notices are issued by the local authority. Payment is made directly to the local authority, and the money is not retained by the school.

8.2 Other legal action

Where absence continues, the local authority may use other measures, including:

- A notice to improve, giving parents a final opportunity to engage with support before a penalty notice is issued
- Prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which can result in a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or, in the most serious cases, imprisonment
- An education supervision order, parenting order or school attendance order, as appropriate

When deciding whether to ask the local authority to consider formal action, the school takes account of the pupil's attendance record, the number of unauthorised sessions in the rolling 10-week period, any previous penalty notices, the support already offered and any exceptional circumstances affecting the family.

9. Attendance monitoring, data and analysis

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Record attendance data for every pupil daily and review it weekly
- Monitor and analyse attendance and absence half-termly, termly and annually, at whole-school, cohort and individual pupil level
- Identify groups of pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern, including the groups listed in section 7.4
- Produce a report each half term identifying pupils who are persistently or severely absent, with agreed actions for each

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published nationally through the DfE's school absence statistics. We compare our attendance with national figures and with similar schools, and share this analysis with the Governing Body.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts who need additional support, and use that analysis to target support at those pupils and families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns, including absence by day of the week, by term, by year group and by reason code
- Review the accuracy and consistency of coding, including the use of codes B, C2, K and Y

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and school leaders to inform conversations with pupils and families
- Use data to evaluate the impact of interventions and adapt them where they are not working
- Report attendance data and analysis to the Governing Body each term

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Attendance Champion, and sooner if national guidance or legislation changes. At every review the policy will be approved by the full Governing Body and published on the school website.

11. Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- SEND policy and information report
- Medicine in School Policy – Individual Healthcare Plans, administration of medicines, illness during the school day
- Allergy Safety Policy – allergy register, emergency response, incident and near miss recording
- First Aid Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy (late collection)
- Complaints Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following codes are set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the DfE statutory guidance, and have applied since 19 August 2024. Codes H, J, N (as a permanent code) and the single Y code are no longer in use; leave of absence is now coded C, C1 or C2, interviews are coded J1, and the reasons a pupil is unable to attend are coded Y1 to Y7.

Present in school

Code	Definition	Notes
/	Present (am)	Pupil present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival before the register closed	Counts as present, but lateness is monitored

Attending an approved educational activity (counts as present for statistical purposes)

Code	Definition	Notes
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Must be supervised by someone with suitable skills and training. A note must be recorded. Cannot be used for remote learning
D	Dual registered at another setting	Pupil is attending the other school or setting where they are also registered
J1	Attending an interview	Interview with a prospective employer or educational establishment
K	Education provision arranged by the local authority	A note must be recorded
P	Participating in a supervised sporting activity	Approved by the school
V	Educational visit or trip	Organised or approved by the school
W	Work experience	Not normally applicable in primary schools

Authorised absence

Code	Definition	Notes
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances	Granted by the headteacher in advance, or in exceptional cases retrospectively
C1	Leave of absence for a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Where a licence has been issued
C2	Leave of absence for a pupil on a part-time timetable	For the sessions the pupil is not expected to attend

E	Suspended or permanently excluded, with no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
I	Illness	Where the school is satisfied the pupil is unable to attend because of illness
M	Medical or dental appointment	Should be arranged outside school hours where possible
R	Religious observance	Day exclusively set apart by the parents' religious body
S	Study leave	Not applicable in primary schools
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Family travelling for occupational purposes, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence

Code	Definition	Notes
G	Holiday not authorised by the school	Counts towards the penalty notice threshold
N	Reason for absence not yet provided	Must be replaced with the correct code within five school days, or with code O
O	Absence for another unauthorised reason	The school is not satisfied with the reason given, or no reason has been given
U	Arrived after the register closed	Recorded as unauthorised absence for that session

Unable to attend (not counted as an absence or as attendance)

Code	Definition	Notes
Q	Lack of access arrangements	The local authority has not made the travel arrangements it is responsible for
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age
Y1	Transport normally provided is not available	
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	
Y3	Part of the school premises is closed	
Y4	Whole school site is unexpectedly closed	
Y5	Pupil is in criminal justice detention	
Y6	Absence in accordance with public health guidance or law	
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	A note must be recorded
Z	Pupil not on the admission register	Register set up but the pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Holidays, INSET days, bank holidays

Appendix 2: Recording a pupil's absence (office procedure)

So that the school can account for the whereabouts of every child, the following procedure is followed each morning and afternoon where a pupil is marked absent.

1. Produce a list of all absent pupils from the school management information system.
2. Check with classes that the information recorded is correct.
3. Check the school email account for messages from parents.
4. Check the absence line and phone message system for calls from parents.
5. Telephone the parent to obtain the reason for absence. If the call goes to voicemail, leave the message: "Please contact the school regarding your child's attendance."
6. If there is no response, work through the pupil's other emergency contacts.
7. Record the reason for absence and the correct attendance code on the pupil's attendance record on the same day wherever possible, and in any event within five school days.
8. Where no contact has been made by the end of the morning, or where there is any safeguarding concern, inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A home visit or, in an emergency, a call to children's social care or the police may be needed.
9. Where the pupil has an Individual Healthcare Plan or is on the allergy register, check the plan before contacting the family, and let the Senior Attendance Champion know that the absence may be connected to the pupil's condition.
10. Where absence follows an allergic reaction, an asthma attack or any other medical incident in school, cross-refer to the incident record (Form I) kept under the Allergy Safety Policy so that the two records match.
11. Where absence continues without explanation, repeat contact daily and inform the Senior Attendance Champion.

Appendix 3: Leave of absence request form and guidelines

Application form: pupil's leave of absence

Please read the guidelines on the following page before completing this form

For your request to be considered, this form must be completed and returned to the school office at least two weeks before you plan to leave. All sections must be completed. The form will be returned to you once the headteacher has considered your application.

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

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

Reason for request:	
Destination address:	
Date you plan to travel:	
Date you plan to return:	

The application cannot be considered without all of the above information.

We require details of a point of contact who can notify us of any change in your circumstances that may affect the date of your return, and whom we can contact if your child does not return as expected.

Name of contact:		Tel no:	
Address:		Mobile:	

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

Signed:		Parent / carer	
Print name:		Date:	

School to complete	Date form received:
Previous absences:	Yes / No — dates and reasons:
Attendance %:	Last academic year: Current:
Leave requested:	Authorised / Not authorised Referral for penalty notice: Yes / No
Signed (headteacher):	Date:

Guidelines: applications for leave of absence

Herrick Primary School is very reluctant for any pupil to miss part of their education.

12. In line with government guidance, the school and its governors cannot authorise absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. A family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.
13. If permission is granted, copies of travel tickets or booking confirmations will be required by the school office before you travel. Where this information is not provided, the agreement may be withdrawn and the absence recorded as unauthorised.
14. We may also request copies of other travel-related documents. Where requested documents are not provided, we are likely not to authorise some or all of the absence.
15. If permission is granted, it remains the parent's responsibility to make sure their child catches up on any missed work on their return.
16. If your child's absence is not authorised, the case may be referred to the local authority. Under the National Framework, a first penalty notice is £160 per parent, per child, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second penalty notice within three years is £160 with no discount. Where a third offence occurs within three years, the case may be referred directly to the Magistrates' Court.
17. The decision made by the school is final. Complaints about the way a request has been handled can be raised through the school's complaints procedure.

Appendix 4: Lates and collections

Children arriving late to school

- Pupils arriving after 8.50am come to the main office, where a late mark and the reason for lateness are recorded
- Arrival before the register closes at 9.00am is recorded as code L; arrival after the register closes is recorded as code U, an unauthorised absence for that session
- Where lateness becomes persistent, parents receive a letter reminding them of school times and offering support
- If lateness does not improve, the pupil's attendance is discussed at the monthly meeting between the Senior Attendance Champion and the local authority attendance officer, and the family is invited to an attendance support meeting

Children arriving early to school

- Children who arrive before the start of the school day are taken to Breakfast Club until the school day begins
- The office contacts parents to find out why the child arrived early and to remind them that children should not arrive before 8.30am
- Parents are reminded that leaving a child outside school before it is open is a safeguarding risk; concerns are reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Children not collected on time

- If a child has not been collected by 3.25pm, the class teacher brings them to the office
- Office staff call the parent and then, if there is no answer, each emergency contact in turn
- If another adult or older sibling is collecting, staff check that they are named on the child's contact form. If they are not, we ask the parent to email the school with the person's name and relationship to the child
- Information is passed to the headteacher or Senior Attendance Champion. If a child remains uncollected and no contact can be made, the headteacher will contact children's social care

Children not collected by a parent or nominated person

- Children are released only to a parent or to an adult named on the child's contact form. Where someone who is not named on the form arrives to collect, staff will not hand the child over. The child is taken to the office and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and headteacher are informed. The office contacts the parent to confirm the arrangement, and the child is released only once that confirmation has been given.
- The Senior Attendance Champion or office contacts the parent to find out why the school was not informed and whether the child knows the person
- Parents are asked to add the person to the child's contact form or confirm the arrangement by email

Late collection charges

The school day ends at 3.15pm. Pupils not collected from the playground by 3.25pm are taken to the school office. Parents must come to the office to collect their child.

We recognise that there are occasions when a parent cannot get to school on time. Parents should notify the school by 3.00pm wherever possible, so that the teacher can be informed and the child reassured.

Where late collection is repeated, and in line with the school's Late Collection Policy:

Where children are collected late beyond the school's grace period of 3.25pm, the school will charge a late collection fee.

The charges will be made as follows:

- £5 per family for every 15-minute period following a 10-minute grace period at the end of the school day (3:25pm) or the end of an after-school activity (4.15pm).

A letter detailing the amount owed will be provided to parents/carers, and fees will be added to ParentPay accounts.

Late collection fees must be paid within five working days.

School would take reasonable legal steps to recover any debts incurred.

Appendix 5: Why attendance is so important

Information for parents and carers

Why regular attendance matters

- Any absence, including lateness, affects the pattern of a child's schooling. Regular absence seriously affects learning, friendships and confidence
- Absence also disrupts teaching routines, which can affect the learning of other children in the class
- Ensuring your child's regular attendance is your legal responsibility. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in a penalty notice or prosecution
- Children who attend school regularly are safer, happier and achieve more. School is also where difficulties are often first noticed and support offered

What the figures mean

Attendance	Days missed in a school year	What this means
100–96%	Up to 7 days	Good attendance — the best chance of doing well
95–90%	10–19 days	Cause for concern — we will contact you to offer support
Below 90%	20 days or more	Persistent absence — around four weeks of learning lost
Below 50%	95 days or more	Severe absence — urgent multi-agency support needed

What we ask you to do

- Call the school office on 0116 266 5656 by 9.00am on every day your child is absent, telling us the reason and when you expect them back
- Make medical and dental appointments outside school hours where you can, and bring your child in for the rest of the day when you cannot
- Book holidays in the school holidays. Term-time holidays cannot be authorised and may result in a penalty notice
- Talk to us early if something is making it hard for your child to come to school. We would much rather help than fine
- Tell us about any medical condition, allergy or medication your child needs, so that we can put the right support in place. If your child needs medicine during the day we can usually give it in school, so they do not have to miss learning or be collected

What we will do

- Check attendance every day and contact you on the first day of any unexplained absence
- Monitor patterns of absence, including lateness and repeated absence on particular days
- Contact you if your child's attendance falls below 96%, and invite you to a meeting if it falls below 90%, so that we can agree a plan together
- Only ask for medical evidence where we have a genuine reason to, or where illness is prolonged or recurring and evidence would help us support your child
- Work with the local authority and other services where extra support is needed

- Never penalise your child, or exclude them from attendance rewards, for absence caused by a medical condition or disability. Where your child has an Individual Healthcare Plan, we plan their attendance support alongside that plan

Appendix 6: Summary of changes made at this review

This appendix is for governors and staff and may be removed before the policy is published.

Area	Change
Legislation and guidance	Updated to Working together to improve school attendance (statutory, July 2026), the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 and the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026. Superseded references removed.
Attendance codes	Appendix 1 replaced with the national codes in force since 19 August 2024, including C1, C2, J1, K, Q and Y1–Y7. Codes H, J and the single Y code removed.
Medical evidence	The previous position (evidence after three days of illness, and for every illness absence for persistently absent pupils) has been replaced. Evidence is now requested only where there is genuine and reasonable doubt, or where illness is prolonged, recurring or complex, and a wide range of everyday evidence is accepted.
Register timings	New wording confirming registers are taken at the same time for all pupils in both sessions, including pupils on part-time or bespoke arrangements.
Penalty notices	Updated to the National Framework: £160 reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days; second notice within three years at a flat £160; maximum of two notices in three years; national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions in a rolling 10 school weeks. The previous £60/£120 figures were out of date.
Support-first approach	New section 7 setting out a stepped, recorded graduated response, attendance support meetings, targeted support meetings with the local authority, and the groups needing additional support (SEND, mental health, young carers, children with a social worker, disadvantaged pupils).
Health needs and part-time timetables	New sections on reasonable adjustments, phased returns, part-time timetables (code C2), section 19 notification, and remote education as a last resort with pupils still recorded as absent.
Removal from roll	New section reflecting the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 duties on notifying the local authority and obtaining consent for "relevant children" before removing them from roll for home education.
Roles	"Designated senior leader" retitled Senior Attendance Champion, with expanded governing body duties on benchmarking, training and challenge.
Review cycle	Moved from every two years to annual, given the pace of change in national guidance. This also brings the review cycle into line with the Medicine in School Policy and the Allergy Safety Policy.
Alignment with the Medicine in School Policy and Allergy Safety Policy	New section 6.3 on pupils with medical conditions, allergy or disability, mirroring the unacceptable practice sections of both policies; new wording in 5.2 on becoming unwell during the school day, medication given in school and the 60-minute

	observation period after a mild allergic reaction; medical evidence wording aligned so the school does not insist on consultant letters or re-evidence a condition already recorded in an Individual Healthcare Plan; attendance rewards explicitly adjusted for pupils whose condition affects attendance; a check for an Individual Healthcare Plan built into the office absence procedure and into the step before any referral for legal action; the named postholder corrected to Mrs Arzu Aydin and identified as holding the attendance, medical conditions and allergy safety roles.
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