



Hertford St Andrew C of E School

Attendance Policy

Last reviewed on:	September 2026
Next review due by:	September 2027 or when DfE guidance changes

Vision

Hertford St Andrew (HSA) Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises the need to work in partnership with parents and the whole school community to improve children's learning and raise achievement. We believe that children cannot learn if they are absent from school. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Good attendance helps the children within this community to maximise their learning and regular, punctual attendance will establish good habits that will support them throughout their lives. We will strive to raise standards by promoting the regular attendance and punctuality of our pupils. We believe the foundation of securing good attendance is that our school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where our pupils will want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

We know that promoting good attendance, and taking action when absences cause concern, is part of our safeguarding responsibility.

This policy fully supports our vision for our pupils that they will Love Learning, Aim High and Trust God.

Statutory Framework

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly, on time. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school

Under Section 199 of the 1993 education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where he/she is a registered pupil. The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not, in itself, authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied with the explanation of absence, will it be authorised.

Parent/Carers may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the

person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child

Aims/Expectations

- To work within the guidance of the DfE document [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61222/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)
- To embed a 'support first' approach.
- To develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance and is an integral part of the school's ethos.
- To work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships.
- To ensure all stakeholders understand their responsibility under law and as part of our school community
- To monitor attendance effectively and take timely action

Attendance Targets

To keep whole school attendance above 96%.

To meet DfE Attendance targets for our school, as used on View your Attendance Data.

Promoting Regular Attendance

At Hertford St Andrew school, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all our pupils from the outset.

The name and contact details of the SLT Attendance Lead/Champion (the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school) is:

Rebecca Sutherland Cooper.

She can be contacted by emailing admin@hertfordstandrew.herts.sch.uk and marking for her attention.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff. To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools.
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters.
- Promote the benefits of high attendance.
 - Accurately complete admission and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law.
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance.
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress.

- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance and when they are at risk of persistent absence: at 92% attendance

Attendance Registers

The rules governing the maintenance of registers, including removal from roll, are contained in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Attendance registers are legal documents that may be required as evidence in court cases.

Attendance registers accurately record the reasons for absence. Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absence includes, (however this list is not exhaustive):

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to attend school.
- absences which have never been properly explained.
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however, is counted as an unauthorised absence for the session.
- shopping trips.
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments.
- their own or family birthdays.
- holidays taken during term time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends.
- day trips.
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

Absence Procedures

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day to day basis is: Mrs Leahy
admin@hertfordstandrew.herts.sch.uk

We monitor and review all pupils' absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly. If a child is absent from school the parent must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before 9.20 am
- The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take your call, or you may call into school personally and speak to the office staff. Please be aware that, if you leave a voicemail to report your child's absence, you may receive a call from the school so that we may discuss the absence before making a decision as to whether the absence is to be recorded as authorised.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 9.20 am;
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence. Medical evidence may be requested where school have reasonable doubt as to the authenticity of the absences and/or where your child is having multiple periods of absence which are reported as being due to medical reasons.

When determining whether a child is too ill to attend school, both parents and school staff can consider the advice contained within the NHS Guidance on School Absence and Childhood Illness: see Annex C.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first, and every subsequent day of absence, if we have not heard from you. However, it is your responsibility to contact us every day your child is absent, unless they have a GP or hospital letter for extended absence or are in a recognised quarantine period.
- If we are unable to make contact with you as first contact (as registered on Arbor) by telephone, we will telephone other parents with parental responsibility and emergency contact numbers, in order of precedence on Arbor.
- If we are unable to contact parents or emergency contacts to establish a reason for absence, we will make a home visit welfare check as part of our safeguarding duty. We will leave a record of our visit if there is no response. We may call the police for a welfare check if we are concerned for your family wellbeing or safety
- The Local Authority will be informed if no contact has been made with parent/carers by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate) as The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 Section 13 requires schools to inform the local authority of any pupils absent from school and where absences amount to more than 10 or more days, either consecutively or irregularly and have been unauthorised. This means school will have unauthorised 20 am/pm sessions of absences.

Schools are also under a safeguarding duty, under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to investigate any unexplained/unauthorised absences. At this point your child will be considered to be "absent from education".

If absences increase, we will:

- Write to you or phone you if your child's attendance is below 92% or causing concern, and/or where punctuality is a concern.

- Arrange a meeting so that you may discuss the situation with our SLT Attendance Lead or Family worker
- Consider and offer reasonable adjustments.
- Offer a Families First Assessment to ensure appropriate support is considered.
- Create a personalised robust support plan, such as an attendance contract, to address any barriers to attendance and make clear each person's role in improving the attendance patterns of your child.
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate.
- Seek advice, guidance and support from the Local Authority Statutory Attendance Support Team and consider appropriate legal sanctions, if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can sometimes lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

The times of the start and close of the school day for all pupils at HSA School are:

Gates open: 8.30am

Classrooms open: 8.35am

Registration starts: 8.45am. Gates close.

Registration closes: 9.15am

End of the school day: 3.15pm

How we manage lateness:

- The school day starts at 8.35am when children can begin to come into school;
- Registers are taken at 8.45am;
- Children arriving after 8.45am are required to come into school via the school office. Children younger than Y4 must be accompanied to the Office by an adult. If accompanied by a parent/carer they must sign them into our 'Late Book' and provide a reason for their lateness, which is recorded. Lateness up to 9.15am is recorded on Arbor as L and minutes of lost learning due to lateness are recorded;
- At 9.15am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site – 'U', but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean that they have an unauthorised absence;
- The school may contact parents/carers regarding punctuality concerns;
- From time to time a member of school staff will undertake a 'Late Gate' check, greeting late arrivals at the main entrance to the school. If your child has a persistent lateness record, you may be asked to meet with the Family Worker or Headteacher, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and, as a school, we celebrate good class, whole school and individual punctuality.

Unauthorised lateness could result in the school seeking advice and guidance from the Local Authority.

Understanding barriers to attendance

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents, and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can consider a Families First Assessment, use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Family Support Worker, or the relevant Local Authority team/s.

Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individual support plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain in place for these pupils; however, we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners, where appropriate.

Under the DfE's statutory guidance, schools are required to submit a sickness return to the Local Authority for all pupils who have missed/are likely to miss 15 or more school days (consecutive or cumulative) due to medical reasons/illness. See Annex A for summary tables of responsibilities for school attendance. The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact for more detailed support on attendance:

For Family Support: Lisa Want (Family support officer)

For SEND concerns and IHCPs: Jo Marshall (SENCo)

National Framework for Penalty Notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers).

The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings. Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child.

If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent/carer may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent/carer is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in HCC SAPT Statutory Attendance – Support First Model Attendance Policy September 2024 school hours. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is “in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school.” The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are “exceptional circumstances” and they do not have any discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year. It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child’s overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance, on the prescribed form provided by the school.

The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is therefore allowing the leave of absence, and that all parents who are on the holiday are allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework and Hertfordshire Code of Conduct, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence.

At HSA School 'exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as: events that are “rare, significant, unavoidable and short”. By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time, regardless of who has planned or paid for the event or absence (including grandparents or other family or friends). The headteacher/school may discuss the leave of absence request with other education settings and/or the Local Authority to determine any exceptional circumstances.

All families should be aware that family holidays will not usually be authorised as they are not exceptional.

If leave of absence is authorised or unauthorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence. Parent/Carers are however advised to read with their children and practise core skills for their year group.

Annex A: Expectations

Governing Body	• Ensure an effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures and responsibilities. • Offer a clear vision for high attendance, underpinned by high expectations and core values, which are communicated to and understood by staff, pupils and families. • Regularly review and understand attendance data, discussing and challenging trends and helping school leaders to focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it the most within school. • Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties. • Make sure staff, pupils and families understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and understand their role in keeping children safe. • Expect good attendance and punctuality from all members of the school community and make sure that pupils understand its importance. • Convey clear messages about how absence affects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes. Empower staff to take responsibility for attendance. • Recognise attendance as an important area of school improvement. Make sure it is resourced appropriately (including through effective use of pupil premium funding) to create, build and maintain systems and performance. • Have a designated attendance champion in the senior leadership team with clearly assigned responsibilities which are identified within the attendance policy, escalation of procedures and school improvement plan. • Make sure staff receive training/professional development and support to deploy attendance systems effectively.
Role of the Head	The Head is responsible for: • Having a clear, written school attendance policy based on the expectations set out in this model policy and ensuring the implementation of this policy – ensuring compliance with DfE Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities – Working together to improve School Attendance – September 2022 - Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) ▪ Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for safeguarding and how this links with poor school attendance – ensuring compliance with Keeping

	children Safe in Education (latest update), Statutory guidance for schools and colleges — Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) ▪ Developing good support for children with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and special educational needs (SEND). Ensuring compliance with Statutory Guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England December 2015 - Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) ▪ Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance. ▪ Ensuring accurate completion of admission and attendance registers. ▪ Ensuring staff are actively working to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual pupils and the pupil body as a whole. ▪ Having clear processes in place to address persistent and severe absence - pupils who are severely absent may be at risk of CCE/CSE/grooming etc. and this cohort must be made the top priority for action and support. Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Often severely absent pupils have additional needs and therefore it is vital that schools ensure all appropriate services are informed and aware of the pupil's absence so suitable support can be considered, and education provided/accessed. ▪ Ensuring that all staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness. ▪ Monitoring and analysing data and trends. ▪ Reporting to the Governing Body the attendance figures and progress to achieving the set targets. ▪ Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy. ▪ Building and modelling respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school. ▪ Open and honest communication with staff, pupils and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. ▪ Liaising with the school family worker and external agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
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- Sharing information on and working collaboratively with other schools in the area, LA's and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming severe or persistent.
- Ensuring the school attendance policy is applied fairly and consistently and recognises the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Ensuring all staff members:
 - treat pupils with dignity
 - build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
 - take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence, handling confidential information sensitively
 - understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity.
 - communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being
 - deliver clear messages about expectations, routines and consequences to new pupils and families through prospectus and admission/transition events
 - use physical presence to reinforce routines and expectations on arrival and departure
 - regularly communicate expectations for attendance and punctuality and school performance through regular channels of communication with staff, pupils and parents
 - establish and monitor implementation of rewards for attendance and punctuality and consequences for absence and lateness.
- Monitoring implementation of policy and practice, for example through form time, drop in, shadow late gate, planner checks
- Engaging community businesses, partners and residents to promote attendance and report non-attendance.
- Monitoring of whole school data regularly to identify reasons for absence, patterns, attendance of particular groups and the impact of interventions
- Establishing and ensuring implementation and robust monitoring of arrangements to identify, report and support children missing education (CME) or at risk of becoming CME

Ensuring compliance with guidance regarding Children Missing Education - see Herts Grid

	https://thegrid.org.uk/admissions-attendance-travel-to-school/attendance/children-missing-from-education ▪ Engaging pupils in consultation on attendance policy, practice, rewards and sanctions
Role of Pastoral team (Attendance Lead, DSLs, Family Worker, Attendance Office Support and SENCo)	They are responsible for: ▪ Implementing the policy with the Head. ▪ Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement. ▪ Championing and improving attendance. ▪ Ensuring practice is in place to address persistent and severe absence is robust. ▪ Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes ▪ Oversight of data analysis - ○ Monitoring and analysing attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues. This includes raising concerns with other agencies like children's social care and early help services which are working with families. ○ Robust school systems which provide useful data at cohort, group and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as: ➤ children who have a social worker including looked-after children ➤ young carers ➤ children who are eligible for free school meals ➤ children who speak English as a second language ➤ children who have special educational needs and disabilities ○ Keeping the Head and all school staff informed of attendance figures and trends by providing regular reports to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures ○ compiling attendance data for the Head, the Governing Body and the Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO). ▪ Ensuring a positive working relationship with the LAAO is fostered, including attending Attendance Targeted Support Meetings. ▪ Communicating messages to pupils and parents ▪ School attendance, safeguarding and pastoral support policies which should clearly outline: ○ the key principles ○ rules pupils need to follow ○ routines ○ consequence systems ▪ If required, holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be

	vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school. ▪ Undertaking home visits and welfare checks in line with school's safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe. ▪ Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals. ▪ Making sure escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by pupils and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly. ▪ The escalation of procedures to address absence needs to be: ○ understood by pupils, parents and carers ○ implemented consistently ○ reviewed regularly • ensuring that the Local Authority is notified of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly via a 10 Day Absence Form. See guidance on HCC Grid for form – https://thegrid.org.uk/admissions-attendance-travel-to-school/attendance/attendance-guidance-and-statutory-responsibilities
Role of the Teaching Staff	Teachers are responsible for: ▪ Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance. ▪ Implementing the policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently. ▪ Ensuring that the registers are taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and are accurate and up to-date; ▪ Reviewing class and individual attendance patterns; ▪ Informing the school SLT manager of any concerns; ▪ Emphasising with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance. ▪ Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy. ▪ Building respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school. ▪ Communicating openly and honestly with staff, pupils and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.

	▪ Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school. ▪ Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable. ▪ Modeling respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and pupils. This will help relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture. All staff members should: ○ treat pupils with dignity ○ build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries ○ take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence ○ handle confidential information sensitively ○ understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity ○ communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being Teachers should: • Rehearse and reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations continually • Emphasise the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment • Promote the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate pupils to be in the classroom • Promote rewards and celebrate progress but continue to outline sanctions • Apply rewards and sanctions consistently • Follow up on absence and lateness with pupils to identify barriers and reasons for absence • Contact parents and carers regarding absence and punctuality • Review year group attendance weekly to share data, identify issues, intervene early and help set targets • Periodically review practice and consistency both across the school • Proactively promote attendance practice as part of staff induction • Consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of pupils Pupils at risk of severe or persistent absence – good practice recommendations (this list is not exhaustive)
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	• Welcome pupils back following an absence and provide good catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps. This could include: ➤ lesson resources ➤ buddy support ➤ one to one input ➤ meet with parents and pupils (if appropriate) to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems ➤ establish action plans to remove barriers, provide additional support and set targets. This could include: ➤ lunchtime arrangements ➤ support with uniform, transport, wake up routines or emotional wellbeing ➤ lead daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support ➤ make regular contact with families to discuss progress ➤ consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups ➤ prepare supporting resources to ensure pupils can access learning when they return ➤ develop targeted intervention to address gaps and build pupils' confidence (including considering small group additional support) ➤ contribute to action plans which SLT/SENCo draw together where appropriate ➤ provide tailored praise and encouragement when pupils attend and arrive on time
Admin Staff	Expectations: • To ensure the recording of attendance and absence data is accurate. • To ensure robust day-to-day processes are in place. • To track and follow up absence and poor punctuality (implement punctuality routines such as late gate or sign in procedures). • Provide appropriate support and challenge to establish good registration practice. • Carry out robust first day calling procedures including priority routines for vulnerable children including children with a social worker. If absence continues without explanation, further contact should be made to ensure safeguarding. • Identify any absences that are not explained for each session and contact parents to understand why and when the pupil will return. • Where absences are recorded as unexplained in the attendance register the correct code should be inputted as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 working days after the session.

	• Where reasonably possible, ensure school holds more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. • Work with the School Family Worker to maintain positive relationships with families finding attendance challenging • Support the Pastoral Team to keep parents informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance and absence record (this should be communicated to parents in an easy-to-understand format and percentage headlines should be avoided. For example, concentrate on the amount of time missed and the impact on the pupil's learning). • Implement children missing education (CME) procedures when appropriate - • See guidance on HCC Grid regarding Children Missing Education, https://thegrid.org.uk/admissions-attendance-travel-to-school/attendance/children-missing-from-education <u>Pupils at risk of persistent absence</u> • Provide regular attendance reports to staff to facilitate weekly reviews with leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads) for monitoring and evaluation purposes • Initiate and oversee the administration of absence procedures. This should include: ➤ letters home ➤ engagement with local authorities and other external agencies and partners <u>Pupils who are persistently absent</u> • Develop and implement persistent absence action plans with pupils and families which address barriers and help establish positive attendance routines • Work in partnership with SAPT and other agencies to ensure the appropriate use of statutory parental responsibility measures
DSL/SENCo Attendance lead	<u>Pupils at risk of persistent absence</u> • Provide regular attendance reports to staff to facilitate weekly reviews with leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads) for monitoring and evaluation purposes • Initiate and oversee the administration of absence procedures. • Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school. • Identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.

	• Undertake home visits in line with your safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe. • Identify and, where possible, mitigate potential barriers to good attendance in liaison with families and relevant support agencies. • Implement children missing education (CME) procedures when appropriate - • See guidance on HCC Grid regarding Children Missing Education, https://thegrid.org.uk/admissions-attendance-travel-to-school/attendance/children-missing-from-education • Where pupils have additional vulnerabilities, which may require multi-agency meetings try to arrange those meetings outside of lesson time, where possible. • Engage with feeder schools or organisations to access absence information in order to identify target cohorts prior to transfer, including mid-year transfers and managed moves. This should include: • letters home • attendance clinics • engagement with local authorities and other external agencies and partners • work with families and the community to identify which methods of communication work best, recognising potential barriers in hard-to-reach families and find methods that work and are understood • consideration as to whether further interventions are required in line with the statutory guidance on parental responsibility measures • provide regular reports to leaders on the at-risk cohort provide regular reports/caseloads to local authority attendance team or independent attendance organisations to raise awareness of emerging at-risk pupils <u>Pupils who are persistently absent</u> • Develop and implement persistent absence action plans with pupils and families which address barriers and help establish positive attendance routines • Identify tailored intervention which meets the needs of the pupil, for example: • mentoring • careers advice and guidance input • use of school's remote learning offer • alternative provision where appropriate • Lead daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and impact of support, make regular contact with families to discuss progress
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	• Hold regular meetings or reviews of caseload with the Statutory Attendance & Participation Team (SAPT), external partners and alternative providers to check on welfare and review progress • Liaise with school leaders (designated safeguarding, special educational needs coordinator and pastoral leads) on referrals to external agencies and multi-agency assessments • Coordinate and contribute to multi-agency meetings to review progress and agree on actions • Work in partnership with SAPT and other agencies to ensure the appropriate use of statutory parental responsibility measures • Provide regular reports to leaders on the impact of action plans and interventions
Expectations of parents	Parents are responsible for: ➤ ensuring that their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance. ➤ instilling in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly. ➤ Following absence procedures ➤ informing the school of any changes to their contact details, including providing at least 2 emergency contacts. ➤ taking an active interest in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parent consultations and other relevant meetings. ➤ working in partnership with the school to resolve issues and help the school to understand their child's barriers to attendance. ➤ proactively engage with the support offered by school to prevent the need for more formal support. ➤ If formal support is needed, proactively engage with this support to prevent the need for any legal intervention. ➤ booking any medical appointments around the school day where possible ➤ Notifying the office if their child needs to leave school during the day and provide a reason. Children should be collected at the office, not the classroom door, and signed out for fire safety purposes ➤ only requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so at least 2 weeks in advance and in writing ➤ informing the school if they cannot get their child back from holidays, including weekends away, on time ➤ understanding that school cannot provide learning during unauthorised absence from school, including unauthorised holidays ➤ Understanding that school will not provide learning for children who are at home ill, as this undermines the recovery

	period. Learning may be provided when children are absent for medical reasons, but are well enough to learn ➤ treating staff with respect ➤ actively supporting the work of the school ➤ calling staff for help when they need it ➤ communicating as early as possible circumstances which may affect absence or require support Parents must not encourage their child to tell a lie about absences – they usually tell the truth and asking them to lie makes them upset and unsettled. It does not show respect for shared rules and expectations: a life skill necessary for their future schooling and employment. It also presents a safeguarding concern. A child who is asked to lie to school staff may not feel able to speak to an adult in school if they need to. It is important that children are empowered to speak openly in order to keep themselves safe.
Expectations of Pupils	• To be ready to learn • Help parents to get them to school on time by getting ready when asked • Get to and from school safely • Tell an adult if something worries them about school We acknowledge that on occasion, some children are reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is better to be open about the possible causes for this and encourage the child to discuss this in school and at home. We have professionals in school and have access to a whole range of external support services who can support families with issues around attendance and punctuality.
Working with the Local Authority	▪ Our school works in partnership with the Statutory Attendance & Participation Team to devise a strategic approach to attendance. ▪ The Headteacher or Attendance Champion (SLT) will meet with the link LAAO when required to discuss and improve attendance for all persistently absent or severely absent pupils. ▪ Action Plans will be developed for all persistently and severely absent pupils. The school may request support from the LAAO for advice and guidance with the implementation of these action plans. ▪ If parents do not proactively engage with support offered through the action plan, then formal intervention may be requested from the LAAO.

	▪ If parents do not engage with formal support, the school may request statutory intervention from the Local Authority. ▪ Statutory intervention can include: ➤ Parenting Contract ➤ Fixed Penalty Notice application from school ➤ Parenting Order ➤ Education Supervision Order ➤ Prosecution
Encouraging Good Attendance	The school encourages good attendance by: • Using clear and consistently applied systems and processes to improve, reward and incentivise attendance and address absences. Makes sure these systems are inclusive and appropriate for all pupils. • publicising good attendance during assemblies, newsletters and the termly report to the Governing Body. • Offering other school incentives to celebrate good attendance, including the attendance cup. • Keeping parents informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance and absence record (this should be communicated to parents in an easy-to-understand format and percentage headlines should be avoided. For example, concentrate on the amount of time missed and the impact on the pupil's learning). Parents can view their child's attendance through the Arbor App. The school will also report on this each term through parent consultations and letters.
Punctuality	▪ The School doors open at 8:35am. Gates close at 8.45am ▪ The register will be open for no longer than 30 minutes after the session begins. ▪ Pupils who arrive after the register has closed and before 9.15am and parent provides a satisfactory explanation will be marked as 'authorised absent' for that session (Code L) ▪ Pupils who arrive after the register has closed and parent fails to provide a satisfactory explanation will be marked as 'unauthorised absent' for that session (Code U). ▪ If parents are aware they will be unavoidably late to school in an emergency, they should call school as soon as they know, including ordering lunch ▪ Children who are below Y4 must be accompanied by a parent to the school office. ▪ School may arrange a meeting with parents to discuss concerns so that the problem can be addressed.
Pupils at risk of Persistent Absence	School is expected to:

	▪ proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance. ▪ Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance. ▪ Signpost and support parents to access any required services where out of school barriers are identified. ▪ If the issue persists, take an active part in a multi-agency effort with the Local Authority and other partners. ▪ Act as the Lead Practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. ▪ Where the Lead Practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the Local Authority and partners. To prevent persistent absence school will: • Put in all appropriate supportive measures • Work with the family • Email all parents from Admin when a child is at risk of persistent absenteeism: at 92% attendance • Ask for medical evidence for children's absence when they are at 90% attendance in order to put in support plans for medical needs, including mental health. • Require that all requests for a leave of absence are put in writing to the Headteacher in advance of the period of absence. The Headteacher will follow all attendance policies and guidance when considering school's response.
Pupils who are persistently absent	Persistent absence occurs when a child's attendance is at or falls below 90%. Absenteeism at this level will considerably damage a pupil's educational prospects and the school will work alongside parents/carers to tackle this issue. School is expected to: ▪ Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent. ▪ Ensure additional targeted support is in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners. ▪ If there is lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents, being clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future. ▪ Where support is not working or being engaged with, work with the Local Authority on legal intervention. ▪ If there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care. ▪ Work with other local schools, such as schools previously attended or schools of siblings.

	If a child is below 90% attendance school will: • Contact all parents to inform them that their child is a persistent absentee • Ask parents to a family worker meeting or call to develop an attendance action plan • Talk with the child, if appropriate, about any barriers to attendance • Monitor progress against attendance action plans • The Family Worker will contact children at 90% attendance to put in an attendance action plan. This may be a phone call or a meeting. Parents will get a letter summarising the actions agreed • Review attendance action plans internally at Pastoral Team meetings and with parents in Family Worker calls or meetings • When attendance does not improve, parents will be asked to meet with SLT to discuss next steps • Consider any safeguarding implications of extended absence • Follow all related policies for children with medical needs or SEND
Pupils who are severely absent	Severe absence occurs when a child's attendance is at or falls below 50%. School is expected to: • Continue support as for pupils who are persistently absent. • Agree a joint approach for all pupils who are severely absent with the Local Authority. Pupils who are severely absent may be at risk of CCE/CSE/grooming etc. and teachers must ensure this cohort is made the top priority for action and support. You must be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Often severely absent pupils have additional needs and therefore it is vital that school ensure all appropriate services are informed and aware of the pupil's absence so suitable support can be considered, and education provided/accessed.
Absence	HSA follows Regulation 7 of the Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and subsequent amendments 2013 and 2016) that gives a head teacher the discretionary power to grant special leave of absence when: - a written application should be made (at least) 4 weeks in advance of any proposed special leave by the parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides. The form is available from the school office. Absence in term time

	is not a right and can only be granted under exceptional circumstances. Each case is considered individually. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. If leave is taken without advance request or taken despite an advance request being refused, the Access and Engagement Service will be informed and a Penalty Notice may be issued. A child's previous attendance will be taken into consideration. There are 190 school days in a year – this leaves 175 days for time with family, cultural activities and holidays. • Only the school can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept it, if the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. • If, after further investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered – or when no explanation is forthcoming at all – the absence will be treated as unauthorised and the parent informed. • Leave of absence can be applied for in advance. It is the school's decision as to whether this is granted because of exceptional circumstances relating to the application (parents cannot expect, as of right, that the school will grant leave of absence). Parents/carers will be asked to complete an 'Leave of Absence' form in advance of the leave (4 weeks before)– available on the school's website. • Leave of absence to allow a pupil to take part in a performance within the meaning of s37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 © for which a child performance licence has been issued. HCC will not issue a child performance licence where absence is required without the written permission of the Headteacher. The Governing Body have decided in line with Government advice, that the following requests for absence from school will not be authorised (this list is not exhaustive): Holidays Shopping Looking after family Family outings and visits Birthday celebrations Getting up late
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	Sibling/parent being unwell
Part-time Timetables	- As part of the framework for the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after, and care leavers (Ofsted June 2015) local authorities are required to provide detailed data on school age children in their area who are not in receipt of full-time education and schools are similarly expected to maintain data on students of compulsory school age who are on their roll but attending on a part-time timetable. - The Local authority has published guidance for all maintained school, academies, free schools, studio schools, UTCs, ESCs and PSBs on the use of part-time timetables for pupils of compulsory school age (the term after their fifth birthday to the last Friday in June following their 16th birthday) - All schools are required to return information on children who are on part-time tables within five days of the pupil starting or ending a part-time timetable. Follow guidance from HCC Grid when considering a part-time timetable - https://thegrid.org.uk/admissions-attendance-travel-to-school/attendance/attendance-part-time-students
Monitoring	We believe this policy will be effective only if it is consistently monitored across the whole school. Monitoring is the responsibility of all parties as outlined in the expectations above.

Application for Leave of Absence for Parents/Carers

As a parent/carer, you must fill in this form if you want to request leave of absence during term time. Parents/carers should not expect this to be granted as a right. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, leave of absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Permission will not be given if the leave has already taken place or on the first day of the absence.

After completing the form please return it to the school office no less than 4 weeks before the date you want the period of absence to start.

Ms Sutherland Cooper, Headteacher, will respond in writing. Please note that the school operates fixed penalty notices as follows:- If a pupil has at least 10 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in the current and/or previous term, including leave of absence where permission has not been requested or requested and denied, the Headteacher can apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued by the Local Authority. The amount payable is £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. Separate notices are sent to each parent for each child. Please note the definition in this policy of 'parent'. Parents can discharge potential liability for conviction by paying the penalty.

Should the fine not be paid in full within 28 days, the Local Authority must consider prosecution.

I request that (name of student) in Class _____, who is currently a student at HSA Primary School, be granted leave of absence from: _____ to: _____.

Reason for request and why this cannot be taken during the 13 weeks of school holiday:

I confirm I have read HSA's attendance policy.

Name of parent/carer _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

HSA Primary School

E: admin@HSA.herts.sch.uk

For Office Use Only

Leave of absence declined _____

Leave of absence is granted from _____ to _____

Date letter sent _____

_____ Signature of Headteacher

Date _____