Hummersea Primary School

Attendance Policy

February 2024

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1. Aims

This policy links to the vision and values of our school. Hummersea is a family. Together we believe, we achieve, we inspire. Here at Hummersea, be the best you can be!

<div align="center">

Be respectful

Be enthusiastic

Be resilient

Be determined

Be proud

</div>

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

- Promoting good attendance and punctuality

- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence

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

- Acting early to address patterns of absence

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

As from September 2013, parents no longer have the right to request leave of absence for their children for an annual holiday. The amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration Regulations make clear that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

We do all we can to encourage children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes across school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.

2. Legislation and guidance

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

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

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

It also refers to:

- School census guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education

- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

- Leave of absence policy | Redcar and Cleveland (redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)
- Legal action to enforce school attendance | Redcar and Cleveland (redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)

3. Roles and responsibilities

The benefit of regular school attendance impacts positively on all aspects of school life as well as the wider community. Attendance is everyone's responsibility and is more likely to be improved when parents, pupils, schools and other agencies work together.

Parent/Carers	To ensure their child receives an efficient, full-time education. • Ensure their child attends school every day it is open, prepared for school, in the correct uniform • Telephone school before 9am on the day of absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they will be expected to return • Provide up to date contact details. • Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances • Make medical/dental appointments outside of school hours where possible. • Work with school where support is offered to improve attendance
Pupils	• To attend school regularly, on time and prepared for the day
Head teacher	• To act as attendance lead and oversee school attendance procedures • To champion and improve attendance in school • To analyse absence data to identify cohorts and implement strategies
Attendance Officer	• To monitor and analyse attendance data and work with pupils and parents/carers to reduce absence
Designated Safeguarding Lead	• To collaborate with the attendance lead concerning vulnerable pupil absence and in regard to part-time/alternative provision arrangements
Class Teacher	• Recording daily attendance • Knowledge of pupil/class attendance. • Discussions with pupils/parents/carers regarding absence and implementing rewards.
School administration	• To maintain the attendance register and adhere to registration practice.
School Governors	• To have an understanding of school attendance data, incentives, strategies and procedures

4. Recording attendance

<u>Registration</u>

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. The register is taken twice daily (at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session).

To manage lateness and follow up on absence, the school will close the register at an agreed time (9:30am - 30 minutes after the session begins).

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

The school gates open at	8:45am
Pupils will be welcomed into school	By staff at classroom doors
Pupils arriving early can	Attend breakfast club
Morning register will be taken at	9:00am
To report an absence, parents/carers should contact	01287 641781

5. Authorised and Unathorised absence

<u>Unplanned absence</u>

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by **9:00am** or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff.

For more detailed support on attendance, parents/carers should contact the school office as above or Miss K Whaley (Attendance Officer)/Mrs C Grainger (Headteacher).

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

<u>Planned absence</u>

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

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Medical/Dental Appointments	Where possible parents/ carers are encouraged to make dental/medical appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, parents/ carers should seek the school's agreement in advance, provide supporting medical evidence and the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
Holidays	A leave of absence request form (Appendix 2) must be submitted to school at least 1 month in advance of the leave in order to allow the Head teacher to consider any exceptional circumstances. This is a safeguarding issue. A school cannot grant leave of absence retrospectively. Consideration will be made to any unauthorised leave of absence in term time that meets the local authority code of conduct for the issue of a penalty notice.
Exceptional Circumstances	There may be an exceptional circumstance when your child requires leave of absence. Each application will be considered individually.

Lateness and punctuality

Lateness disrupts learning and where pupils are regularly arriving late to school it will be highlighted to the parent/carers via a phone call, letter or meeting. Support and advice is available from school Miss K Whaley (Attendance Officer)/Mrs C Grainger (Head teacher) on reducing lateness.

Pupils arriving after the register has closed will receive an unauthorised mark in the register and will be subject to attendance monitoring by school.

Following up unexplained absence

The school will support pupils and parents/ carers by working together to address any barriers to attendance.

If a pupil is absent from school and no reason for absence has been provided by the parent/ carers, the school will engage in a number of strategies to obtain a reason for absence and ensure the safety of the pupil.

- First Day Calls - parents/carers will be called, and /or any other contacts to alert them that their child has not arrived in school and establish the reason for absence.

- Other Agencies - the school will contact any other agencies involved with the family, ie. social care if this is relevant.

- Home Visit – School Attendance Officer or school staff may make a home visit to discuss a pupil's attendance or as part of safeguarding procedures if not sighted within 3 days.

- Other agency involvement - if the school is concerned about the welfare of a pupil, they may contact Children's Services, the local authority or police for advice.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via discussions with the class teacher at parents consultations and letters providing information on children's attendance.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good attendance will be promoted in school in a number of ways:

- Whole school assemblies to celebrate the importance of good attendance in school.
- Attendance weeks with incentives for children being in school every day and on time.
- Individual rewards for children showing good attendance.

Displays and information to parents/carers on how good attendance impacts children.

7. Attendance Monitoring

Attendance data is regularly and thoroughly tracked across the school to monitor and analyse both areas of improvement and concern. Attendance will be tracked across a variety of cohorts, to highlight any areas that require specific intervention.

- Whole school - tracked along national and local figures. Shared with school staff (staff meetings), pupils (weekly assembly) and parents/carers (parent consultations).
- Cohorts - across forms/years and specific groups to highlight areas that require targeted intervention.
- Individual - to identify issues relating to attendance and offer support and advice at the earliest opportunity.
- On all levels to inform and evaluate school reward and incentive programmes.

Supporting Improved Attendance

97 - 100%	**Attendance levels are good to excellent** Positive encouragement/incentives/rewards systems are used to maintain high levels of attendance.
94 - 96.9%	**Concerns emerging** Establish reasons for absence, patterns of absence, analyse data to regularly monitor absence. Letter parent/carer advising of concern, offer support to improve and advise that future absences will not be authorised unless medical evidence is provided.
90 - 93.9%	**Attendance levels causing concern** Parents/carers invited to a meeting in school to identify any barriers and complete an attendance support plan. Where issues identified are outside of school offer referral to Local Authority Early Help service. Review date set.
Below 90%	**Persistent Absentee despite school intervention** Commencement of formal attendance support procedures. Attendance meeting held with parents/carers and school to formulate attendance plan and liaise with Local Authority in regard to issue of education supervision order, parenting order, fixed penalty notice or prosecution if unauthorised absence continues.

Absence and Missed Learning (Across an academic year)			
Attendance Percentage	Number of days missed	Number of weeks out of school	Number of hours missed
97%	5.7	1.14	28.5
95%	9.5	1.9	47.5
90%	19	3.8	95
85%	28.5	5.7	142.5
80%	38	7.6	190
70%	57	11.4	285
60%	76	15.2	380
50%	95	19	475

Persistent Absence and Severe Absence

Any pupil who has 10% absence or more is classed as a persistent absentee and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. The school attendance lead and attendance officer will analyse absence data to identify individuals that require targeted intervention to support their improved attendance. This could include creating an attendance plan, incentive scheme or formal attendance support procedures. A home visit may be made by the attendance officer/school to those pupils who are persistently absent in order to discuss and identify any barriers to attendance. Wider support services may be accessed to remove any barriers. All interventions offered to support improved attendance will be evaluated.

School Level Intervention

Working together is the most effective way to tackle absence effectively. Where concerns are identified, schools will follow intervention below to work with parent/carer and pupil to improve attendance. School may need to refer to the local authority and 'fast track' a case to formal attendance procedures if the level of unauthorised absence requires such intervention.

Attendance Rewards	Targeted and whole school attendance awards
Attendance Letter 1	Letter to parent/carer advising of attendance level
Attendance Letter 2	Letter to parent/carer advising of attendance level and requesting that medical evidence is provided to support any future illness/absence
Attendance Plan	Attendance meeting with parents/carers and pupils to complete an improving attendance plan, identify any issues, signpost/refer to support agencies and set attendance targets

Referral to Local Authority	Case discussed with local authority attendance support team.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Mrs C Grainger (Attendance Lead/Head teacher). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

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

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Leave of Absence

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME
The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) sets out the law in respect of leave of absence during term time.
An application for leave of absence in term time should be made to the Headteacher for the school at which the child is on roll, by a parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides and giving **at least 4 weeks'** notice.
School requires an application for leave of absence in term time to be completed whenever a child is to be absent from school, for any reason, other than medical or illness absence. This ensures the school is aware of the absence and the appropriate safeguarding procedures have been followed
A SEPARATE APPLICATION IS REQUIRED FOR EACH CHILD

Parent/Carer Details	
Name & Address of Parent/Carer with whom the child normally resides:	
By signing this form you are agreeing to the request being made. Signature(s):…………………………………………………………………………………………………….. Date: ……………………………………………………………	
Where leave of absence in term time is taken without a request being made, this will be investigated in accordance with our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and the Child Missing in Education procedures, which may involve a referral to the Local Authority Children's Services and the Police. Fines may be issued.	

Child Details	
Name:	D.O.B:
Address:	
Year Group:	

Dates Request	
First date of absence:	Last date of absence:
Reason for request:	
Has an application for leave of absence been made to another school? If yes, please give the name of the school/pupil:	

A Head teacher will not grant leave of absence during term time unless there is an exceptional circumstance. Please provide evidence of any exceptional circumstance with the application.

Office use only: Please tick appropriate box	
Leave authorised Exceptional circumstance found	☐
Leave denied Exceptional circumstance NOT found	☐