



Hummersea Primary School

Attendance Policy

September 2026

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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!

Be aspirational

Be enthusiastic

Be resilient

Be determined

Be proud

We are committed to meeting our statutory duties and improving attendance through a whole-school culture that values every day in education, including:

- Promoting high attendance and punctuality for all pupils
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence, through early and proportionate support
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Using attendance data to identify patterns early and target support where it is most needed
- Building strong, respectful relationships with pupils and families to understand and remove barriers to attendance

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school. We maintain high aspirations for all pupils while recognising that individual support, reasonable adjustments and multi-agency working may be needed for pupils with health needs, SEND, caring responsibilities or other vulnerabilities.

We aim to make Hummersea a calm, safe, inclusive and rewarding place where pupils want to attend. Attendance improvement is approached in partnership with families, with support provided before legal intervention wherever appropriate.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy has been reviewed in line with current statutory requirements and Department for Education guidance. It has particular regard to:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002 and Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended
- The Equality Act 2010

DfE statutory guidance: Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026)

- DfE statutory guidance: Children missing education (September 2025)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions and Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
- DfE guidance: Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance

- Redcar and Cleveland School Attendance and Welfare Service guidance, including the local leave of absence policy and penalty notice arrangements

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.

Parents/Carers	Ensure their child receives a suitable full-time education. Ensure their child attends every day the school is open, on time and prepared for learning. Notify school before 9:00am on the first day of unexpected absence and on subsequent days unless another arrangement has been agreed. Keep contact details up to date. Request leave of absence in advance and only where exceptional circumstances apply. Work with school and relevant services where support is offered to improve attendance.
Pupils	Attend school regularly and on time, engage with learning and speak to a trusted adult if there are barriers that make attendance difficult.
Attendance Champion Headteacher - Mrs C Grainger	Provide strategic leadership for attendance. Set a clear vision and maintain effective systems for improving attendance. Monitor attendance and absence data, evaluate interventions and target resources. Work with pupils, families, governors, the Local Authority and other partners.
Attendance Officer Miss K Whaley	Monitor and analyse attendance data. Follow up absence and punctuality concerns promptly. Work with pupils and families to understand barriers, coordinate support and review attendance plans.
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Work closely with the Senior Attendance Champion where absence may indicate safeguarding concerns or where pupils are vulnerable, including pupils with social workers and those receiving part-time or alternative provision.
Class Teachers	Complete registers accurately and promptly. Know their pupils and raise emerging attendance or punctuality concerns. Promote the benefits of regular attendance and support positive relationships with families.
School Administration	Maintain the admission and attendance registers, follow up unexplained absence and ensure statutory attendance information is shared with the Local Authority and DfE as required.
Governing Body	Promote attendance across the school ethos and policies. Regularly review attendance data and challenge trends. Ensure leaders fulfil statutory duties, appropriate support is resourced and staff receive suitable attendance training.

4. Recording attendance

Registration

The law requires the school to keep an electronic admission register and attendance register. The attendance register is taken at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session, at the same time for all registered pupils.

The morning register is taken by 9:00am and closes at 9:30am. The afternoon register is taken at the start of the afternoon session and remains open for no longer than 30 minutes. Pupils arriving after a register has closed are recorded using the appropriate absence code.

For every session, the school records the appropriate national attendance or absence code and, where required, additional information including:

- Whether the pupil is attending school, attending approved education elsewhere, or absent
- The primary reason for absence using the appropriate national code
- The nature of approved educational activities or unavoidable causes where the regulations require this to be recorded

Registers are amended only where necessary and the original entry, amendment, reason, date and person making the amendment are retained. The school shares attendance information with the Local Authority and DfE as required. See Appendix 1 for the current national 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 by	9:00am (closes 9:30am)
To report an absence, parents/carers should contact	01287 641781 before 9:00am

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Unplanned absence

Parents/carers must notify school of the reason for an unexpected absence on the first day by 9:00am, or as soon as practicably possible, by contacting the school office. Unless otherwise agreed, parents should keep school informed on subsequent days of absence.

For more detailed support on attendance, parents/carers should contact Miss K Whaley (Attendance Officer) or Mrs C Grainger (Attendance Champion/Headteacher) via the school office on 01287 641781.

Absence because of physical or mental ill health will normally be authorised where the school is satisfied that illness is the reason the pupil is unable to attend. Where illness is prolonged or recurring, the school will work with the pupil, family and relevant services to understand barriers and support a return to regular attendance.

Medical evidence will only be requested in a minority of cases. Reasonable evidence may be sought where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of illness, or where it is needed

to understand prolonged or repeated health-related absence and identify suitable support or reasonable adjustments.

Where evidence is considered necessary, the school will be flexible about its form and will avoid placing unnecessary demands on health professionals. If the school is not satisfied that illness is the reason for absence, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised and the parent/carer will be informed.

Planned absence

Medical or dental appointments should be made outside school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, parents/carers should notify the school in advance and the pupil should be absent for the minimum time necessary. The school may ask for reasonable evidence of the appointment where appropriate.

Where a pupil is present at registration and leaves later in the session for an appointment, no absence is recorded for that session. Where the appointment requires the pupil to be absent at registration, the appropriate authorised absence code will be used.

Requests for other leave of absence must be made in advance. Leave will only be granted where the regulations permit it and each request will be considered individually on its own facts and circumstances.

Medical/Dental Appointments	Where possible appointments should be outside school hours. Where this is not possible, parents/carers should notify school in advance and the pupil should be absent for the minimum time necessary. Reasonable evidence may be requested where appropriate.
Holidays / leisure	A Leave of Absence Request form (Appendix 2) should be submitted at least one month in advance where possible. Leave cannot be granted retrospectively. A need or desire for a holiday or other leisure/recreation absence is not generally considered an exceptional circumstance. Unauthorised leave may lead to consideration of a penalty notice under the National Framework and Redcar and Cleveland Code of Conduct.
Exceptional Circumstances	Applications for discretionary leave are considered individually by the Headteacher, taking account of the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background. No blanket policy will automatically grant leave for a particular event or circumstance. Where leave is granted, the school determines the number of days authorised.

Pupils with health needs, SEND and other barriers to attendance

The attendance ambition is high for every pupil. Where a pupil has physical or mental ill health, SEND, a disability, caring responsibilities or another significant barrier, the school will listen to the pupil and family, consider reasonable adjustments and pastoral support, and work with relevant services to remove barriers to attendance. Attendance support will be regularly reviewed and adapted to individual need.

Where there are reasonable grounds to believe a pupil will miss 15 school days because of illness, either consecutively or cumulatively in the school year, the school will make the required sickness return to the Local Authority so that appropriate educational support can be considered.

A temporary part-time timetable will only be used in very exceptional circumstances where it is in the pupil's best interests. It will be agreed with the parent, form part of a wider support or reintegration plan, have regular review dates and a proposed end date, and remain in place for the shortest time necessary. It will not be used to manage behaviour. Remote education does not count as attendance and, where used, should form part of a wider plan to support reintegration.

Lateness and punctuality

Lateness disrupts learning and can become a barrier to progress. Where patterns of lateness emerge, the school will speak with the pupil and parent/carer to understand the reason, offer support and agree improvement actions.

A pupil arriving after the register has closed will normally be recorded with code U (unauthorised absence for that session) unless another authorised absence code more accurately reflects the reason. Late-after-close sessions count towards the national threshold for considering a penalty notice.

Following up unexplained absence

The school will work in partnership with pupils and parents/carers to identify and address barriers to attendance.

If a pupil is absent and no reason has been provided, the school will act promptly to establish the reason and assure itself of the pupil's safety. The response will be proportionate to the pupil's vulnerability and any safeguarding concerns.

- First-day contact - parents/carers and, where appropriate, other emergency contacts will be contacted promptly when an unexplained absence is identified.
- Relevant professionals - where appropriate, the school will contact the pupil's social worker, youth offending team worker or other involved professionals about unexplained absence.
- Home visits - an attendance officer or other appropriate school staff may undertake a home visit where this is proportionate and helpful. Safeguarding concerns may require a same-day response; the school will not wait for a fixed number of days before acting where risk is identified.
- Safeguarding escalation - if the school is concerned about a pupil's welfare or cannot establish their whereabouts, it will follow safeguarding procedures and seek advice or make referrals to Children's Services, the Local Authority and/or police as appropriate.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about attendance and absence. Communication will make the information meaningful, for example by explaining the number of days or sessions missed and the impact on learning, rather than relying only on headline percentages.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good attendance will be promoted through a positive, inclusive whole-school culture, including:

- Assemblies and curriculum opportunities that explain the benefits of regular attendance and punctuality.

- Positive recognition of strong and improving attendance at class, group and individual level where this can be done sensitively and without discrimination.
- Recognition that focuses on effort, improvement and overcoming barriers, so pupils are not disadvantaged because of unavoidable illness, disability or other authorised absence.
- Clear information for families about attendance expectations, support available and the impact of missed learning.

7. Attendance Monitoring

Attendance data is monitored routinely and analysed in depth at least half-termly, termly and annually to identify patterns early, target support and evaluate impact.

- Whole school - benchmarked against local, regional and national data and, where available, similar schools. Trends are reported to leaders and governors.
- Cohorts - analysed by year group and relevant pupil characteristics, including SEND, pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils with a social worker, young carers and any groups showing lower attendance than their peers.
- Individuals - patterns, reasons and changes in attendance are reviewed so that support can be offered before absence becomes entrenched.
- Impact - the school evaluates attendance strategies and individual interventions and changes its approach where support is not having the intended effect.

Supporting Improved Attendance

Strong / improving attendance	Maintain high expectations and positive relationships. Recognise strong or improving attendance sensitively where appropriate.
Emerging concern / declining pattern	Review patterns and reasons promptly. Speak with the pupil and family, understand barriers, offer early support and monitor impact.
Attendance requiring targeted support	Meet with the pupil and parent/carer. Agree a clear attendance support plan, remove in-school barriers, consider reasonable adjustments and involve wider services where appropriate. Review regularly.
Persistent / severe absence	Persistent absence means missing 10% or more of possible sessions. Severe absence means missing 50% or more. Support should intensify as absence increases. Severely absent pupils are a top priority for joint planning with the Local Authority and relevant partners, with safeguarding considered where appropriate.

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

A pupil is persistently absent where they miss 10% or more of possible sessions and severely absent where they miss 50% or more. The school will identify pupils at risk before these thresholds are reached wherever possible. Support will become more intensive as absence increases, and severely absent pupils will be prioritised for a joint action plan with the Local Authority and other relevant services. All interventions will be reviewed for impact.

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.

Universal / early support	Promote clear expectations, a welcoming school culture and sensitive recognition of strong or improving attendance. Use data to identify emerging concerns early.
Listen and understand	Contact the pupil and family when a pattern emerges. Explore barriers, agree immediate actions and make reasonable adjustments or pastoral support available where needed.
Targeted attendance plan	Hold a meeting with the pupil and parent/carer, agree a written support plan with clear actions and review dates, and refer/signpost to wider services where appropriate.
Formalise support	Where voluntary support is not effective or not engaged with, work with the Local Authority to consider an attendance contract, Education Supervision Order and/or Notice to Improve as appropriate.
Legal intervention	Where support is not appropriate, has not been successful or is not engaged with, consider a penalty notice or prosecution on an individual case-by-case basis and in line with the National Framework and Local Authority Code of Conduct.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

All state-funded schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate when a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The sessions may be consecutive or non-consecutive, may span terms or school years, and can include any combination of unauthorised absence and late arrival after the register has closed.

Decisions are made case by case. Where support is appropriate it should normally be offered first. If support has not worked or has not been engaged with, a Notice to Improve will usually be considered before a penalty notice. A Notice to Improve is not normally required where support would not be appropriate, for example an unauthorised holiday. Equality Act duties and individual circumstances will always be considered.

Under the current national framework, a first penalty notice is £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second penalty notice to the same parent for the same child within three years is £160. A maximum of two penalty notices may be issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period; a third or subsequent offence will require consideration of another legal intervention, which may include prosecution. The school will follow Redcar and Cleveland's current Code of Conduct.

8. Children missing from education

A child missing education (CME) is a child of compulsory school age who is not registered at a school and is not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. A pupil who remains registered at Hummersea but is persistently or severely absent is not, by definition, CME; however, unexplained or prolonged absence may be a safeguarding warning sign and must be acted on promptly.

Where a pupil's whereabouts or circumstances are unclear, the DSL, Attendance Champion and Attendance Officer will make effective and rapid reasonable enquiries, working with the Local Authority and other agencies as appropriate. Actions will be child-centred, proportionate to risk and clearly recorded.

The school will follow Redcar and Cleveland's CME referral processes where a child may be missing education and will not delay safeguarding action while waiting for a fixed number of days. A pupil's name will only be removed from the admission register where a ground in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 is fully met. Where the regulations require joint reasonable enquiries with the Local Authority, these will be completed before deletion from roll.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed whenever national or local guidance changes and at least annually. The school will seek pupil and parent views where appropriate. The Governing Body will approve the policy and review attendance data and the impact of the school's attendance strategy.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- SEND and Inclusion Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

- Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following is a concise summary of the national attendance and absence codes in use from August 2024. Staff should refer to the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the current DfE statutory guidance for the full criteria and precedence rules.

Code	Definition	Scenario / use
/	Present - morning	Present at school when the morning register begins to be taken
\	Present - afternoon	Present at school when the afternoon register begins to be taken
L	Late before register closes	Arrives after registration starts but before the register closes
K	LA-arranged education	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority; nature of provision must be recorded
D	Dual registered	Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered
P	Approved sporting activity	Attending a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational visit or trip	Attending an educational visit or trip approved by the school
W	Work experience	Attending approved work experience
B	Other approved educational activity	Attending another supervised educational activity approved by the school; nature of activity must be recorded

Code	Definition	Scenario / use
C	Leave of absence in exceptional circumstances	Discretionary leave granted in advance where exceptional circumstances apply
C1	Regulated performance	Leave granted to participate in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad
C2	Temporary reduced timetable	Compulsory-school-age pupil absent with leave because an agreed temporary part-time timetable does not require attendance
M	Medical/dental appointment	Absent with leave to attend a medical or dental appointment

Code	Definition	Scenario / use
J1	Interview	Absent with leave to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution
S	Study leave	Absent with leave to study for a public examination
R	Religious observance	Day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parent's religious body
I	Illness	Unable to attend because of physical or mental illness
E	Suspended/permanently excluded	On roll but excluded on disciplinary grounds and no alternative provision is in place for that session
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Mobile child travelling with a parent in the course of the parent's trade or business, where the statutory criteria are met
G	Holiday without leave	Absent for a holiday where leave has not been granted
N	Reason not yet established	Reason for absence has not yet been established; must be amended when the reason is known
O	Other unauthorised absence	Absent without leave and no other authorised absence code applies
U	Late after register closes	Arrives after the register has closed and no authorised absence code applies

Code	Definition	Scenario / use
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Unable to attend because required Local Authority access/transport arrangements are not available
X	Not required to attend	Pupil not of compulsory school age and the timetable does not require attendance
Y1	Transport normally provided unavailable	School is beyond walking distance and normally provided transport is unavailable
Y2	Widespread travel disruption	Unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises unusable	Part of the premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil cannot practicably be accommodated elsewhere on site
Y4	Whole school unexpectedly closed	School was due to meet but the whole school session has been cancelled unexpectedly
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Unable to attend because the pupil is in qualifying criminal justice detention
Y6	Public health guidance/law	Attendance would be contrary to or prohibited by public health guidance or law
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	Unable to attend because of another unavoidable cause; the nature of the cause must be recorded

Code	Definition	Scenario / use
Z	Prospective pupil	Name entered in advance of agreed starting date; not collected statistically
#	Planned whole-school closure	No session is planned, e.g. holiday, bank holiday or INSET day

Appendix 2: Leave of Absence

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the law on leave of absence. Applications for discretionary leave must be made in advance by a parent/carer with whom the pupil normally lives. Redcar and Cleveland asks for at least one month advance notice where possible. Each request will be considered individually. A need or desire for a holiday or other leisure/recreation absence is not generally an exceptional circumstance.

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:

If leave is taken without approval it will be recorded using the appropriate unauthorised absence code. Where the national threshold is met, a penalty notice may be considered in line with the National Framework and Redcar and Cleveland Code of Conduct. Any safeguarding concerns will be addressed under the school's safeguarding procedures.

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:

Leave cannot be granted retrospectively. The Headteacher will consider each request individually and will only grant leave where the regulations permit it. For discretionary Code C leave, exceptional circumstances must apply. Holidays and leisure/recreation are not generally exceptional circumstances.

Office use only: Please tick appropriate box

Leave authorised

Reason / attendance code:

Leave not authorised

Reason: