

Egerton Rothesay School Attendance Policy

Introduction

ERS places a high priority on good attendance as it contributes towards effective learning and good personal development both at and beyond school. This policy has been produced to explain the responsibilities of all concerned and procedures relating to the attendance of pupils at Egerton Rothesay School.

Responsibilities

To encourage pupils to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality we have identified the following responsibilities:

ERS is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance and punctuality on a regular basis and taking action as appropriate.
- Investigating all absenteeism.
- Making a call home each morning where there is concern about a pupil's absence.
- Investigating patterns of absence and unusual amounts or lengths of absence.

Form Tutors are responsible for:

- Arriving in the form classroom in time to receive pupils for the start of the morning and afternoon registration sessions.
- Welcoming back a pupil after absence.
- Marking registers according to instructions issued and using correct codes.
- Monitoring patterns of attendance and absence of pupils.
- Informing a pupil's base leader if they identify a concerning pattern of absence.

The Administration Team is responsible for:

- Following up any unexplained absence with a morning call.
- Ensuring that all registers are maintained accurately and are up to date.
- Informing a pupil's base leader if they identify a concerning pattern of absence.

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in fit condition to participate in learning.
- Informing the school immediately about the reason for any absence. Notification can be made by telephone, personal visit, letter, email or fax.
- Keeping the school fully informed of continuing absences and any progress being made, being honest about absences and not giving the impression that attendance does not matter.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Following instructions for registering.
- Attending all lessons on time.
- Handing in any notes from parents.

Notification of Absence

When a pupil is absent, the parent should notify the school before 9.00am on the morning of the first day of absence. This should be done by telephone, personal visit, letter, email or fax, stating the reason for absence.

Authorised Absence

It is the duty of the school to decide whether an absence is to be authorised or unauthorised. In itself, an explanation does not authorise an absence. It is the school's acceptance of the explanation that authorises it.

Absence from school will be authorised for:

- illness
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- religious observance
- exceptional family circumstances such as bereavement
- work experience
- educational visits
- interviews
- approved off-site education
- exclusion
- family holidays under exceptional circumstances and agreed by the school
- approved sporting activity
- other occasions where permission for absence has been granted by the Headteacher.

Family holidays

Family holidays in term time account for a number of absences in any school year. Leave for holidays during term time is at the discretion of the school and not an automatic entitlement. ERS will consider an application for leave of absence for holiday reasons, in line with statutory regulations, which state:

- Parents cannot demand a leave of absence as an automatic right.
- A pupil should not normally be granted more than ten days leave of absence in any school year.
- Parental requests must be in writing to the Headteacher and will be considered on their merit.
- The school may grant holiday leave but is not required to do so. Any request for leave must be made in advance and it must be for 'going away' on holiday. It is not intended for authorising pupils to take day trips or have a holiday at home.
- Holiday leave will not be granted to a pupil who already has a poor record of attendance. The pupil's attendance record will always be taken into consideration.
- All requests for leave of absence are checked by the relevant Base Leader with the Headteacher to decide as to whether or not the Headteacher will grant leave of absence.
- If it is recommended that leave is not to be granted there must be sufficient evidence to support the decision.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable, and for which no 'leave' has been given. These include:

- An absence for which no explanation has been received.
- When a pupil has been kept away from school unnecessarily, eg to stay at home to mind the house, to let a workman in, baby sitting, because their uniform is in the wash, birthdays, to look after a sibling.
- Lateness which cannot be satisfactorily explained.

The school will inform parents of any absence that is to be recorded as unauthorised, giving the opportunity for the parent to respond with a satisfactory explanation.

If the school feels that a pupil's absence is beginning to affect or is likely to affect their education, or it is below 90%, it will raise this concern with the parent and seek to reach a satisfactory outcome. However, should the school remain sufficiently concerned about a child's attendance, it will report its concerns to the relevant Local Education Authority and will assist fully should the Local Authority decide that further action is required.

Attendance Registration Procedure

- Class Teachers/ Form Tutors will mark registers

- Every morning by 9.00am with return of register to Reception by 9.15am.

- Every afternoon by 4.00pm with return of register to Reception by 4.15pm.
- For a pupil receiving Specialist Support provision at 8.45am or 3.30pm, the Specialist Support Teacher will record attendance or absence on an attendance slip and pass this to Reception by 9.15am or 4.15pm.
- Each day, a member of the Administration Team will check registers, update it with codes for known absences and list any absences for which a reason is not yet known. They will phone the parent of any child who is recorded as absent without a reason before 11.00am and record the reason in the register if subsequently given.
- If a pupil arrives after 9.00am they must report straight to Reception. The receptionist will record their arrival and amend the register accordingly.
- If a pupil leaves the school before the end of the school day they should report to Reception before leaving. The receptionist will record their name and time of leaving the school. If a pupil subsequently returns to school, the receptionist will record their return time and if necessary, amend the register.
- It is not possible to refund fees in case of absence, but every effort will be made to assist the child in catching up on work missed.

Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years. The next review will take place in, or before, September 2025.

Policy approved by: Alison Walker
(on behalf of Governing Body)

Date: 26.9.22

Next Review (latest): Sept 2025

Attendance Register

This register has been specifically designed in consultation with head teachers to assist staff in the recording of attendance and to help identify children with attendance problems. However, for this to work properly, staff are required to complete it fully and with care. The last page of this register gives some examples on its use.

The Law

The Law requires that the register is called twice a day. This must be first thing in the morning and again in the afternoon. It is for the Governing body of the school to decide how long each registration period will be open. However, the DFES guidance states that registers should be closed no later than 30 minutes after registration.

When the register is called, pupils must be marked either present (in black) or absent (in red). It is illegal to leave a blank space.

Good Practice

- At the end of each registration period, total those present. This will assist in the event of a fire etc.
- At the end of each week the running total of each pupil's absences should be calculated. Remember, work experience and approved sporting activity count as being present.
- Schools should adopt a "first day contact" policy. If the reason for absence is not known, then enquiries should be made with results noted in the column provided.
- The attendance register is a legal document. Good practice dictates that line managers regularly check registers and sign them.
- Parents cannot authorise absences but should provide notes in order that the school may.
- Requests for holidays (up to 10 school days) can only be approved by the Headteacher. Requests for holidays in excess of 10 school days can only be authorised by the Governing Body.

Useful Tips

- Do not leave blank pages for holidays.
- Highlight columns which are "Non-Pupil Days" and Bank Holidays
- All black marks or black marks in red circles count as present.

Finally

Remember, on a week by week basis a pupil may have some unauthorised absences until a note is received and authorisation given. However if unauthorised absences become a concern, arrange for a referral to be passed to your Education Welfare Officer.