



Emerson Park Academy

12th January 2024

Dear parents/carers,

Key Attendance and Punctuality Information - Spring Term 2023-24

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome your child back to the spring term at Emerson Park Academy. I hope you had an enjoyable Christmas and New Year period.

I am pleased to share that our whole school attendance up to and including the last two days of the Autumn term surpassed our pre-pandemic levels. This is in contrast to the national school attendance picture where many schools are suffering with falling attendance rates and an increasing number of persistently absent students. Thank you for your continued support in this matter.

Our overall attendance last term across all year groups was 93.63% attendance, with more than 845 students attending more than 90% of the time. This is to be celebrated especially considering the many severe seasonal infections in circulation during late November and early December. Even more impressively 197 students achieved 100% attendance and this was recognised in our end of term PRIDE assemblies.

Attendance levels are a key focus at Emerson Park Academy because evidence shows that students with the highest attendance levels throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE results. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you about some of the key attendance and punctuality information. Information on the following can be found on the next page:

- Illness
- Medical appointments
- Request for leave
- Holiday term time leave
- Persistent absence
- Punctuality
- Communication

This new term is an excellent opportunity for every student to increase their attendance level and together with your continued support I am hopeful that we can continue to celebrate high levels of attendance and achievement at Emerson Park Academy.

Kindest regards,

Mark Hope
Senior Leadership Team – Attendance and Punctuality

Pupil absences line – 01708 463065
Please use this number to report your child's absence or lateness

Illness

As you are already aware the school helps the local authority to facilitate the roll out of the seasonal flu vaccination programme for eligible children, as well as routine immunisations throughout the year, which in turn helps to reduce absences and the disruption they cause.

Children with mild illnesses, like a minor cough, runny nose, general cold, headache, stomach cramps or sore throat can still come to school.

Should a student feel unwell during the school day they should report to our medical office. Any student assessed and deemed too unwell to remain in school will need to be collected by an adult.

Medical appointments – authorised medical absence

Routine/non-urgent appointments (i.e. dental check-ups/hygienist, optician appointments) should be scheduled for outside of school hours.

Please notify us in advance and provide confirmation of your child's emergency/urgent appointment/periods of recovery in order for your child's absence to be recorded as an authorised medical absence.

Request of Leave

Parents should make application in advance by completing our 'Request for Leave' form available via the Attendance page of our school website. This includes absences for any event that requires your child to be absent from school (i.e. sporting fixtures, events associated with extra circular activities/clubs, college interviews, family funerals).

The school will communicate with you to advise if the request has been authorised/unauthorised.

Holiday during term time

We do not authorise holidays during term time. This includes weddings/weddings abroad, family gatherings and celebrations, however parents should make application in advance by completing our 'Request for Leave' form, providing as much detail as possible, to ask if the request can be considered under exceptional circumstances.

The school will communicate with you to advise if the request has been authorised/unauthorised.

Please note - we do not authorise requests retrospectively and unauthorised absences may result in a fine. Last term the Local authority issued 41 fines to our parents / carers for taking students out of school.

Persistently absence (PA)

Children who are registered at a school but regularly fail to attend are officially referred to as being 'persistently' or 'severely' absent. Any child with attendance below 90% is classified by the DfE and ultimately by the school and local authority as persistent absent.

In the vast majority of cases a student may dip into this category for a short period of time, due to a brief period of illness. If attendance remains below this threshold or deteriorates further, then our partnership with the Local Authority may lead to action from their Education Welfare Officers.

Punctuality

Students are expected to arrive on site no later than 08:30 for a 08:40 start in their Form Groups each morning unless advised otherwise by the Head teacher. Students shouldn't arrive on site in the morning any earlier than 8:05am as our Reception and qualified first aid staff will not be present, unless the student is invited in earlier by staff (e.g. Sports Clubs that run from 7:45am, where staff are first aid trained).

Communication

To help ensure good communication between the school and yourselves please inform us as soon as possible of any changes to your contact details or home address.

Finally, please contact your child's Head of Year, Form Tutor or our dedicated Attendance Officer (Ms Savage on **01708 463065**) if your child is suffering from any issues which may be impacting on their attendance or punctuality.