



Emerson Park Academy

6th January 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

Key Attendance and Punctuality Information - Spring Term 2024-25

I am writing to welcome your child/children back to Emerson Park Academy for the Spring term and also to share some information about attendance and punctuality.

Our whole school attendance continues to surpass the national and local attendance figures. Thank you for your continued support in this matter.

Overall, attendance last term across all year groups was 93.4%, with 872 students attending more than 90% of the time. This is to be celebrated especially considering the many severe seasonal germs in circulation during late November and early December. Even more impressively 185 students achieved 100% attendance for the entire term which is up on last year and this will be recognised in our start of term PRIDE assemblies to be held this week.

Attendance and punctuality 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.

I would like to remind you about some key attendance and punctuality information and have provided detail on the following topics over the next pages:

- Illness
- Medical appointments
- Request for leave
- Holiday term time leave
- Persistent absence
- Punctuality
- Lateness
- 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, Exams, Punctuality, Trip & Visits

Pupil absences line – 01708 463065

Please use this number to report your child's absence or lateness

Illness

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, where the student will be assessed and if deemed too unwell to remain in school we will contact you to see if you can get to school to collect. Unfortunately, we can not allow them to leave without an adult to collect them.

Medical appointments – authorised medical absence

Routine / non-urgent appointments (i.e. dental check-ups / hygienist, optician appointments) should ideally be scheduled outside of school hours. Where this is not possible we ask that time out of school is minimised and where possible students return/attend for as many lessons on that day as possible so they don't miss out on all the opportunities, knowledge and new skills that might be covered that day.

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

Request of Leave

Parents should make an 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 member's funeral).

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 in the UK and abroad, family gatherings or celebrations. However, if you need to request holiday during term time you must make an application in advance by completing our 'Request for Leave' form to inform the school and make the case that the leave is required under exceptional circumstances.

The school will then 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 academic year the Local authority (Havering Council) issued 139 fines to our parents/carers for taking students out of school. Thankfully, we have seen a 27% reduction over the same time period this academic year.

Persistent 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 local authority as persistently 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.

Last Autumn term saw our persistent absence rates fall back to pre-pandemic levels, with significant work being done in Year 8 & Year 9 with the introduction of our 100% Attendance Club Initiative. Congratulations to those students and families who were involved and improved their attendance figures.

Punctuality

Students should not be on the school site any earlier than 8:05am because our reception and qualified first aid staff are not present before this time. The only exception to this is if the student has been invited to enter the site early by staff e.g., to attend a Sports Club that will run from 7:45am where all our staff are first aid trained.

All students are required to be on site by 8:35am, with form time starting promptly at 8:40am each morning unless advised otherwise by the Head teacher.

Lateness

Unfortunately, last half term a small group of students regularly arrived late to school. We are working to combat this trend, so all students hear the numerous key messages that are shared during morning form time and assemblies. Therefore, we will be reminding students of the importance of arriving to school on time at our assemblies over the first few weeks back and after this we will be issuing sanctions to those that continue to arrive late.

If your child arrives late to school on any day then you will receive a communication from the school on that day informing you that they were late. I would be very grateful if you can speak to your child as a matter of priority if this occurs and I thank you in advance for your support in working with us to challenge this behaviour.

Local bus services

Any student who arrives late on site due to localised issues with the TfL bus services on either the 650 / 656 routes will not be penalised if they sign in with either myself or the attendance staff. We continue to have regular conversations with the local bus operators who are Blue Triangle for the 650 and 656 routes and Stagecoach for the 193 route.

Contact us

Following feedback, we are pleased to share our new dedicated attendance email address attendance@emersonparkacademy.org. This development has been introduced to help parents and carers communicate more efficiently to the attendance team.

Finally, please contact your child's Head of Year (**01708 475285**), Form Tutor or our dedicated Attendance Officer Miss Savage on (**01708 463065**) if your child is suffering from any issues which may be impacting on their attendance or punctuality.