

ROSELANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

AIMS

- To promote regular attendance of pupils, enabling them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them in law.

OBJECTIVES

- To maximise attendance rates.
- To record attendance regularly.
- To encourage parents to ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn.
- To actively discourage late arrival.

IMPLEMENTATION

Registers:

- Mark attendance registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, as an integral and key part of the school day. Using black ink, with red used for absences, the correct symbols should be entered where appropriate (see appendix sheet for current symbols, a copy of which is also kept in the front of each register cover)
- The symbols are to be accurately used to distinguish between different types of absence.*
- It is essential to show whether an absence of a child of compulsory school age is *authorised* or *unauthorised*.
- Registers should be returned to the office immediately they have been completed, for security reasons.
- Registers are to be stored in school for a period of three years after the date on which they were last used, in accordance with regulation 9 of the 1956 Regulations.

Absences:

Authorised and Unauthorised

Only the school, and not the parents, can authorise absence.

- Absence may be authorised if:
 - a)The pupil has absence authorised by school e.g. special event/appointment requested;
 - b)The pupil was ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause;
 - c)The absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong.

Absence may be authorised retrospectively.

- Leave for medical or dental appointments may be given where confirmation has been received from the parents.

Every absence must be explained, preferably in writing, or by direct contact from a parent to a teacher.

Exceptional circumstances – causing pupil absence:

In considering individual cases of authorisation of absence regard to the following factors will be given:

- the nature of the event
- its frequency i.e. is it a 'one-off' or likely to become a regular event?
- if advance notification was given
- the overall attendance pattern of the child.

Generally the rule is that only truly exceptional occasions may be sanctioned through authorised absence.

A sensitive response is to be made regarding requests for leave of absence related to bereavements, including attendance at funerals or associated events.

Appendix A provides a form for families to use to contact the school, requesting absence that is exceptional, giving clear reasons.

Family Holidays

Holidays are not authorized in school term time.

There is a strong correlation between good attendance and good achievement.

Off-Site Activities

These may be divided into two categories:

1. school directed e.g. school visits, sporting events;
2. individual activities e.g. music exams, special tuition.

Procedures to be followed for each:

1. normally registers will be called 'off-site' and pupils marked present or absent as usual. If smaller groups are away from the main class registration but the activities have been authorised by the school this constitutes an authorised absence.
2. the school will authorise absence for the individual activities at its own discretion. It is unlikely that there will be difficulties as the application is likely to be actively known already to the school.

Excluded Pupils

For a pupil who has been temporarily excluded he or she should remain on the school roll. The absence will have resulted from some specific action by the Head and Governing Body, thus the absence is authorised.

Lateness

- In recognition of local circumstances (such as bad weather or occasional transport difficulties) the register may be kept open for a maximum of thirty minutes from the beginning of the registration period.
- Keeping registers open for a complete morning or afternoon is totally unacceptable.
- Normally a firm line must be taken on late arrivals and the symbol for late arrival should be clearly marked.*
- The child's arrival must be marked for purposes of emergence evacuation.
- Emerging patterns of late arrival should be noted and (a) discussed with parents (b) be reported to the attendance officer.
- The individual circumstances of each case of lateness will need to be considered when enquiries are made and decisions have to be taken.

Communication

Effective communication regarding this policy is essential.

With Parents:

- a summary appears in the school prospectus;
- a summary is included in information to new parents;
- regular 'reminders' are included in letters home where appropriate;
- requests are made if written evidence does not appear to explain absence.

With staff:

- a copy of the policy is shared with staff and held in the school policy folder
- issues raised are reviewed and agreed at staff meetings e.g. codes on registers;
- Admin secretary keeps attendance records electronically and monitors lateness and poor attendance, reporting to Headteacher.

Action for Teachers:

- set high standards of expectation regarding attendance;
- keep registers completed accurately to date;
- mark registers appropriately and promptly;
- ensure written evidence of absence comes from parents, is recorded and then filed in the register sleeve at the back of the attendance register;
- express any concerns regarding lateness or attendance to the Head so they may be investigated.

All records of lateness and absence are recorded on the annual report to parents at the end of the academic year.

ABSENCE LEVELS

If a child's attendance falls below 85% their attendance will be monitored by the school's Attendance Improvement Officer. It is the expectation of Government for every child to attend school at least 95% of the time. Concerns will be raised where figures fall below 90%.

The governors of Roselands approved the revised policy in accordance with the above May 2013.

Appendix A

Family Holidays (During Term Time)

INFORMATION TO FAMILIES REGARDING ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

From September 2013 the governors at Roselands School will no longer be authorising term time holidays.

EVERY LESSON COUNTS

There is a strong correlation between good attendance and good achievement at school and clearly we want all our children to leave Roselands with the best life chances possible.

School attendance is important and whilst we fully appreciate how expensive a holiday can be, we cannot condone or authorise holidays during term time.

Children find it very difficult to catch up on the learning they have missed and in the longer term this can have a negative impact on their progress.

If a child's attendance falls below 85% they are now classed as a "persistent absentee" and their attendance will be monitored by our Attendance Improvement Officer.

The Attendance Improvement Officer is likely to contact families where attendance is below 90% to check on reasons for absence, in the same way that repeated lateness will also be followed up.

The Government expectation is for every child to attend school at least 95% of the time.

As a parent or carer a form must be completed if you want to take your child out of school during term time due to exceptional circumstances. Forms are available from the office correspondence boxes or available on our website.

Please return the form to the school office for our records.



**APPLICATION FOR LEAVE
FOR
EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

As a parent or carer, you should fill in this form if you want to take your child out of school during term time **for exceptional circumstances**.
After completing the form, please return it to the Headteacher of your child's school no less than 2 weeks before the date when you want the period of absence to start. Schools may decide whether or not to authorise the leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Parents or carers should not expect such leave to be granted as of right.
Permission will not be given if it is applied for after the absence has taken place.

PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GIVEN FOR HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

I request that _____ **Yr** _____
(Name of child)

be granted leave of absence from

_____ (Name of school)

From _____ **To** _____ **20**__

This is exceptional because
.....
.....
.....

(Signature of Parent Carer)

(Date)