

Le Rocquier School



Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy

DATE CREATED: April 2018

REVIEW DATE: April 2019

Principles

Le Rocquier School recognizes that for a student to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance and punctuality is essential.

Good attendance is important because :

- regular attendance has a direct link with high levels of school performance
- regular attendance supports students to make better progress
- regular attendance makes school work and learning easier to undertake
- regular attendance establishes routines for successful transfer to further, higher education and employment
- regular attendance support students to make better progress socially and to sustain friendships

In order to achieve high levels of regular attendance Le Rocquier school promotes and celebrates good attendance and punctuality and ensures it meets the requirements of the Education Law (Jersey) 2000.

Rights and Responsibilities

The School will encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff. The school will use a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will investigate promptly all absenteeism, liaising closely with parents. Staff will respond to absenteeism firmly and consistently. The school sets a target of 96% for all student attendance.

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance at school and that their child arrives properly dressed and in a condition to learn. They should aim for 100% attendance and avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments. Any periods of ongoing or persistent illness will require medical confirmation. Parents should call the attendance line before school registration should there be an unavoidable absence to inform the school.

Students are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually and will be sanctioned for lateness in accordance with this policy.

Promoting Attendance and Punctuality-Procedures

The positive impact of good attendance and punctuality will be celebrated throughout the school and students will be recognised and rewarded for their high levels of attendance. Assembly form group attendance competitions will be held.

The school registration is 8.35am and all students should arrive in their form room by this time. Form tutors will mark each student in the register (which is a legal document) with any students arriving after 8.40am marked as (L) late. Students should be in Form bases and sitting in silence during the calling of the register. Each student must be called by name and should respond in an appropriate formal manner. One registration per week will be devoted to celebrating good attendance and 100% attendance certificates will be given each term and presented to students in assembly. In addition 97% or above certificates will be awarded in the summer term.

A student who arrives after 8.45am (when form registration closes) must sign the Student late book at reception. Any student signing in after 8.45 am will be marked in the register as (U) to indicate that they arrived after registration closed. The late book will be used by the Attendance Officer and school based EWO in order to update the registers. Patterns of lateness can also lead to absence and therefore will be robustly challenged. Students arriving late will be required to attend a 30 minute detention that day. The Attendance Officer will inform the parents by text of the detention.

Le Rocquier school takes its responsibility for safeguarding seriously and any student who is absent without parental notice will have this recorded in the register. The Attendance Officer will send a text to the parent or carer noting the absence and requesting notification. If no response is forthcoming the Attendance Officer will raise this as a potential safeguarding concern with the school based EWO and appropriate action will be taken. Parents/carers do not have the right to authorise the absence of a registered student.

Students who continue to have a poor record of attendance or punctuality will be referred to the Attendance Officer who will speak to the student and the parents/carers about the concerns. If necessary, the parents/carers and the student will be asked to attend a meeting at school with the Year Co-ordinator and/or the Form Tutor and the Attendance Officer. If further action is required the student will be referred to the school based EWO.

If an attendance issue is not improving, once support and in school meetings have taken place, the case will be referred to Attendance Panel at the Education Department. At this meeting, a decision will be made as to whether or not the parents/carers will be referred to a Parish Hall Enquiry which could result in prosecution. A decision will then be made about a referral to court.

A student arriving late to a lesson must be dealt with by the subject teacher and if this becomes persistent the Curriculum Leader must be informed. All class teachers will take registers in each of their classes and check if a student is in school but missing from their lesson. When a student is found to be missing from a lesson, the subject teacher/Curriculum Leader will notify the school office who will coordinate a response. The Form Tutor and HOY and class teacher will be notified. Parents will be notified of internal truancy.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Parents/carers **do not** have an automatic right to withdraw students from school. Nor do they have the right to take a child out of school for a holiday.

All requests by parents/carers for authorised absence will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Absences may only be authorised if:

- the student was absent with leave (defined as 'leave granted' by any person authorised to do so)
- the student was ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause
- the absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the student, parent/carer belongs
- there is a family bereavement
- the student is attending an interview with either a prospective employer or in connection with an application for a place at another school or an institute of further higher education
- the student is attending approved work experience
- the student is participating in an approved public performance or sporting event
- a Year 11 student is granted study leave
- the student is involved in an exceptional special occasion (e.g. the graduation of an older sibling)
- leave of absence for a family holiday will normally be refused but may be granted under exceptional circumstances. No holiday for over 10 school days will be approved

Should a parent/carer consider making an application to the Headteacher to authorise a holiday, a Leave of Absence Form must be completed and handed to the Attendance Officer who will assess whether the request is reasonable. If the Attendance Officer (on behalf of the Head Teacher) sanctions the holiday request he/she will sign the form and record the leave of absence on SIMS. Parents/carers will then be notified as to whether the leave of absence request has been granted. Parents/carers wishing to appeal against a decision by the Head teacher should do so in writing to the Governing Body of the school.

Where 'leave' is approved by the school, the absence is considered authorised and a date is set for the student to return. Any additional absence will be treated as unauthorised. A similar line will be taken where parents fail to apply for permission in advance or take the student away without permission.

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Ensure an appropriate curriculum is provided to engage all students in their learning
- Actively promote and celebrate the benefits of good attendance and punctuality across the school
- Ensure whole school documentation and information to Parents/carers highlights the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- On Awards Evening, present certificates to students with 100% yearly attendance
- Ensure students who are absent through sickness for any extended period of time have work sent home to them. This work will be marked by the subject teacher
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students
- Ensure all staff are trained to address attendance issues

- Ensure that all attendance data is regularly collected and analysed in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievement, and support and inform policy and practice
- Monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and ensure it is reviewed annually
- Set appropriate annual targets via the Pastoral Improvement Plan (PIP) which are challenging and aspirational
- Implement strategies to ensure that action is taken with each group via the PIP to ensure attendance is meeting or exceeding the school targets
- Provide school attendance data to ESC as required
- Report attendance figures to the Governing Body who will monitor school attendance and related issues at the Governing Body meeting

Attendance Procedures-Operational guidelines

Stage 1 – Form Tutors will

- Check unauthorised absence daily
- Monitor students' attendance, in a similar way to attitude, effort or behaviour and if attendance dips a phone call should be made home to establish any issues. This should be recorded on SIMS
- If no reasonable explanation is provided or parents cannot be contacted then the matter will be referred to the HOY.
- Ensure that students who have authorised absence will be provided with school work to complete whilst away from school
- Check in with students who have been absent, complete the return to school slip and pass to the HOY who will collate them for pastoral meetings. Slips will be logged, scanned and saved in SIMS
- If attendance does not improve or continues to decline to 95% or below then the matter should be referred the HOY

Stage 2 – Heads of Year will

- Guide and support Form Tutors to assist them in addressing issues of attendance and accessing data
- Hold regular meetings, at least 1 per half term, with the School Attendance Officer in order to identify and support those students who are experiencing attendance difficulties and agree a course of intervention
- Meet student and parents and start an Attendance Plan should attendance fall to 95% or below. All communication to be logged in SIMS
- May seek support from the Student Welfare Assistant to initiate an Early Help.
- Monitor attendance following the meeting and discuss in the designated year group Pastoral Meeting
- Refer to the Attendance Officer if no reasonable explanation is provided or parents cannot be contacted
- Should attendance not improve or continues to decline to 90% or below the matter must be referred to the Attendance Officer.

Stage 3 – Attendance Officer will;

- Provide the Attendance Plan proforma to staff and offer support through the process
- Invite parents back into school to discuss attendance and review the Attendance Plan

- Undertake targeted intervention including the involvement of appropriate outside agencies for students whose attendance is highlighted as orange in the Attendance Dashboard
- Monitor attendance following the meeting and if attendance does not improve or continues to decline to 85% or below the matter should be referred to the school based Education Welfare Officer
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Stage 4 – School based Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will

- Inform in writing those parents/carers who offer unacceptable reasons for their child's absence that this will be recorded as unauthorised
- Invite parents of students referred to the school based EWO back into school to carry out an assessment, to hear the child's voice and put in place an intervention plan
- Continuously monitor attendance following the meeting and if no improvement is made or attendance continues to decline refer the matter to the Attendance Panel
- Undertake targeted intervention for students whose attendance is highlighted as red in the Attendance Dashboard
- Make arrangements to integrate students, who have been absent for any extended period of time, back into school through a structured individual programme. Students can have a gradual re-integration by working with the Student Support Department
- Collate the evidence (from Stage 1-3) in line with the Education Department Attendance Policy.
- Check attendance statistics for each tutor group and year group each month
- The school based EWO will provide information and analysis of student attendance and punctuality for the Head teacher and Governors on a half termly basis
- Provide information on the attendance notice board for the year based attendance figures and relay the information to HOY and Form Tutors
- Send a letter of congratulations to students whose attendance has improved significantly

Stage 5 – Attendance Panel

Stage 6 – Parish Hall