

Rawdhatul Uloom Islamic Primary School

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Rationale:

Rawdhatul Uloom Islamic Primary School promotes the view that regular attendance is important to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for all of our children. Regular attendance also supports good friendships and builds confidence. We want all our children to be in school because they enjoy being part of Rawdhatul Uloom Islamic Primary School.

Aims:

- To promote excellent attendance.
- To ensure daily punctuality.
- To raise the level of achievement.
- To provide an effective but manageable means of monitoring attendance for groups and individuals.
- To provide effective and prompt support for families experiencing difficulties with attendance.
- To raise awareness that unauthorised attendance and poor punctuality is not acceptable.
- To promote the fact that children have the right to attend school regularly.

Guidelines:

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year unless there is a good reason for absence. There are 2 types of absence: -

- Authorised – where the school approves pupil absence. These absences may include sickness, hospital and emergency dentist appointments and. Medical appointments should be arranged if possible out of school hours. Where this is not possible it is expected that the pupil will only miss part of the day by attending school prior to/after the appointment.
- Unauthorised – where the school will not approve pupil absence. These absences include shopping, going to the airport, visiting relatives, holidays, parent(s)/carer unwell, excessive appointments without notification.

Absence Procedures:

If a child is absent, parent/carers should call the school on the first day and every day of the absence before 9:00am stating the reason. The school will then decide whether to authorise the absence. If authorisation were to be refused then the parent/carers would be informed.

If children are too ill to come to school during the day, they are also too ill to fulfil any evening commitments.

Leave of Absence:

Parents should not book holidays in term time. Parents are not allowed to take their child out of school for a holiday.

Holidays During Term Time

The DfE regulations make it clear that parents do not have any right or entitlement to take a child out of school for the purposes of a term time holiday. The regulations do state that Headteachers may, in exceptional circumstances, grant up to 10 school days leave in a school

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year for the purposes of an annual family holiday but parents should not expect such leave to be granted as a right. The law says that it is likely that in most cases Headteachers will refuse to authorise absence. The Government's guidance on term-time holidays states: 'Parents should not normally take pupils on holiday in term time'.

In exceptional circumstances, parents must apply in writing using the school's leave of absence form.

Pupil Term Time Holiday Request Form

Please contact the school office for a holiday request form.

It is the decision of the Headteacher as to what might qualify as an exceptional circumstance and each request for term-time absence will be considered on an individual basis. The Headteacher will also look very carefully at the child's previous attendance record when considering a request.

If we do not agree to grant leave and parents take their child on holiday in spite of this, then it will count as unauthorised absence – the same as 'truancy'.

If the child remains absent for longer than agreed, then this extra time will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence from the school may result in the issuing of a fixed penalty notice.

If a child fails to return to school within 10 days of the agreed return date and there is no appropriate contact from parents/carers, we will consult the LA Lead Officer School Attendance (LOSA) and complete the CME form when advised to do so.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interest of the child; nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendships and support from staff can provide children with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

Parents /carers can be prosecuted for their child's truancy or poor attendance. We want to avoid this happening and will do our best to work with families, but we will take necessary action in cases of persistent absence, unauthorised leave or truancy.

Response to absence:

- If any child has not been registered or the school has not been notified about a child's absence by 9:00am, the Attendance Officer (M Bilal Nadat) will contact the parent/carer on the first

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morning.

- If an absence is unexplained the school will ask the parent/carer for an explanation. If no reason is forthcoming an email or WhatsApp message will be sent. If a reason is still not forthcoming the absence will be unauthorised.
- Any absence considered not to be a justified reason will remain unauthorised. A series of unauthorised absences will trigger a meeting with the headteacher and may involve the LA Lead Officer School Attendance (LOSA) with the possibility of penalty notices being issued after 5 consecutive unauthorised days absent OR 14 unauthorised sessions over two consecutive terms.
- If a child has less than 95% attendance the class teacher will discuss their concerns with the parent and school will monitor their reasons for absence. If the attendance does not improve the AO (M Bilal Nadat) will: have a discussion with the parent; put in writing concerns to the parent/carer with an Action Plan for improvement; consider a referral to the LA Lead Officer School Attendance (LOSA) or the school nurse.
- Any child with an absence rate of under 90% are classed as persistent absentees and will have their records closely monitored by the Attendance team. Poor attendance is discussed with the LA Lead Officer School Attendance (LOSA).
- Any pupil with 10 days of unauthorised absence must be reported to the Local Authority. Parents will be notified in writing and invited to meet with the AO (M Bilal Nadat).
- Any pupil with 15 days of illness must be reported to the Local Authority. Parents will be notified in writing and invited to meet with the AO (M Bilal Nadat).
- On-going concerns from one year to the next will be addressed at the start of the year in order to support good attendance from the outset.

Punctuality:

- Children who are late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.
- School gates open at 8.30am and school begins officially at 8.50am; all children should be in their classroom by this time. Any child arriving later than 8.55am will be marked in as late. Any child arriving later than 9.20am should enter by the main entrance, and be signed in by their parent. The child will then join their class.
- After several episodes of lateness in a half term a letter or ClassDojo/WhatsApp message will be sent to the parent(s)/carer with the aim of addressing the situation and the child's punctuality will be monitored. If the situation does not improve the parent/carer will be invited to a meeting with the Attendance Officer (M Bilal Nadat).
- Persistent late arrival after the registers close can result in a penalty notice being issued.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Attendance figures are analysed by year group and whole school. We use our own data system as well as FFT and DfE websites.
- Individuals are monitored if less than 95%.
- The school liaises regularly with the LA Inclusion Officer to discuss data.
- All practices will be reviewed regularly.

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Weekly/Half termly:

- Children whose attendance below 95% is highlighted:
 - for the class teacher's use for praising children with good attendance/awareness of poor absence
 - for monitoring by senior leaders.

Termly:

- We implement different strategies to encourage and reward *improved* attendance. These may include:
 - *parent meetings
 - *set goals to support improved attendance
 - *senior leaders monitor late arrivals and encourage pupils to be on time
 - *talk to the children about non-attendance and late arrivals

Annually:

Children with:

- 100% attendance and punctuality are rewarded with a trophy and certificate.
- 1 session absent and upto 3 lates are awarded a medal
- 2 sessions absent and upto 5 lates are awarded a certificate
- 100% punctuality are awarded a certificate

Procedures:

- Daily. Teachers complete the class register sheets. The AO will enter the appropriate code where a child is absent.
- Weekly. The AO will amend any entries where children arrive late or leave early and follow up unknown reasons for absences.
- If there is no explanation the absence is registered as unauthorised. Where there is a concern regarding attendance this will be followed up.
- A log is kept of all children who are persistently absent or arrive late. This is shared with staff periodically so they have an awareness of any patterns to absence.

Completing the register:

The marking of registers can sometimes become so routine that its importance is lost. However incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all children: they are documents that may be required in a court of law and must be accurate for safeguarding. They also contribute to the child's annual report and to records of achievement. For these reasons all alterations should be accountable.

What can parents/carers do to help?

- Ensure regularly attendance and good punctuality.
- Let the school know as soon as possible why your child is absent.

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- Speak to school when your child returns to school to find out what learning they have missed and if you can help them catch up.
- Make appointments out of school hours.
- Make your appointments which do not clash with pick up time.
- Do not allow your child to take time off school unless it is really necessary. Please DO NOT book holidays in term time.

If you are worried about your child's attendance what can you do?

- Talk to your child, it may be something simple that can be cleared up easily.
- Talk to the staff at school.
- Send your child to school if they have a cough or cold; we will contact you if they are really not well.
- The school may refer you to the LA Lead Officer School Attendance (LOSA) for persistent absence
- If the LOSA becomes involved, they will support and engage to improve attendance and punctuality. If attendance doesn't improve it could lead to a penalty notice being issued and/ or prosecution in the Magistrates court.

Penalty Notices

The DFE introduced some recent changes. Changes to be aware of are:

- **Penalty notices issued for offences will be charged at a new rate of £160 per parent per child. This can be paid at £80 if paid within 21 days.**
- **A second penalty notice issued to the same parent, for the same child, within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days, with no option for a discounted rate.**
- **The threshold at which a penalty notice must be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period¹. This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.**
- **A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions).**
- **Only penalty notices issued for absences taking place after 19th August 2024 will count towards the above thresholds.**

All authorised absences are at the Headteacher's discretion and this decision is final.

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Please encourage your child to have excellent attendance and a positive punctuality record as every day in school matters and a good start to each day makes a difference.

Suspensions/ Exclusions

A pupil would only be suspended in extreme circumstances after working closely with the pupil and parents/carers. It is hoped that a short suspension would suffice and in that time the pupil would be given work to complete at home. There would be a meeting to discuss the suspension between the Headteacher and parents and a further meeting to discuss expectations as the pupil is reintegrated back to school.

A permanent exclusion would be referred to the Governors and only be considered when all other support and strategies have been exhausted.