



# **Attendance Policy**

**Last Updated: September 2021**

**To Be Reviewed: September 2022**

In the Name of Allah the Most Kind the Most Merciful

## **AL RISALAH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

This policy reflects the vision and aims of Al Risalah School by

- ❖ Encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
  
- ❖ Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

### **School Attendance and the Law**

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually.

In line with the requirements, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence.

In compliance with the requirements the school will, after making appropriate checks, report all Children Missing from Education to the Local Authority, Education Welfare Service, who has a duty to investigate the whereabouts of such children and negotiate their prompt return to suitable education.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

### **Principles**

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is important not to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required in writing.

***Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.***

***Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:***

- ❖ ***parents keeping children off school unnecessarily***
- ❖ ***truancy before or during the school day***
- ❖ ***absences which have never been properly explained***
- ❖ ***children who arrive at school too late to get a mark***

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Safeguarding Officer or the Trust officials. If this does not improve the situation the parents may be financially penalised and if it still doesn't improve then the child may be asked to leave.

#### Attendance boards

There is one by the school entrance. The school attendance & punctuality levels are updated every week. The pupils and their families are given regular reminders of the School's attendance target and the need for high levels of attendance.

#### Certificates

At the end of each term the pupils achieving 100% attendance receive a certificate in assembly.

Form teachers will nominate each term, pupils who have achieved excellent attendance or a pupil whose attendance has improved. These nominations will be given to the Headteacher.

Pupils will be acknowledged in assembly and a certificate and reward given.

#### Newsletter

The Headteacher regularly reminds parents of the importance of high attendance levels and gives updates of the levels being achieved by individual classes.

## Support Systems

The school recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents should make the school aware of any difficulties that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school (e.g. illness, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse). This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

The school recognises that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance.

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Attendance panels (consisting of the Headteacher or another member of the senior team, a governor and the Clerical Officer)
- Referrals to support agencies
- Mentoring support
- Pupil Voice Activities
- Friendship groups
- PSHE
- Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning materials
- Reward systems
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Reintegration support packages

Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, the Education Welfare Service and the governing body will be informed.

## Members of staff responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

### Form teachers and Admin Officer

- Day to day management of pupil attendance and punctuality
- Reporting attendance concerns to the senior leadership team

### Head Teacher

- Monitoring the attendance and punctuality trends in order to achieve the maximum possible levels
- Liaising with the Admin Officer, Form Teachers and families with regards to attendance and punctuality matters
- Overseeing the work of the Admin Officer and Form Teachers Setting targets for attendance and punctuality
- Reporting to the Governing Body and the Director

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

### **Summary**

The school has a duty to promote good attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School is committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **REGISTRATION PROCEDURE**

Al Risalah School uses a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records. There is a procedure in place for the registration of pupils which takes place twice a day.

- Pupils are expected to begin arriving at Al Risalah School at **8:00 am**
- The individual class registers are taken at 8.05 am; children present at this time will receive an authorised present mark
- Any individual arriving in school at 8.06am or later must report to the school office where their arrival will be noted and recorded as late before the close of registers
- In line with the school safeguarding procedures, all pupils who are absent from school with no reason yet provided will receive a call from 9.00am onwards on the day
- All outcomes of these calls will be recorded on a the daily absent sheet

The afternoon registration:

- Afternoon registration takes place between 1.00 & 1.10pm – on Fridays, at 2.00pm.
- Pupils arriving after this time will be recorded as arriving late after the close of the register

The following national codes are used to record attendance information.

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
/	Present (AM)	Present
/	Present (PM)	Present
<b>B</b>	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
<b>C</b>	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
<b>D</b>	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
<b>E</b>	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
<b>F</b>	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
<b>H</b>	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>I</b>	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved Education Activity
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence

<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>#</b>	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

- By law registers must be kept for at least 3 years.
- Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes.
- Entries in paper registers must be in ink.
- All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

## APPENDIX 2

### DEALING WITH PUPIL ABSENCE

Parents are expected to provide the school with reasons for all absence from school (on the first day of absence) in the form of a **telephone call** to the school office where it can be recorded on the pupil's record. The school will monitor all children's attendance on a day by day, week by week basis.

Parents are requested to send a note with the student upon his return after an absence, stating clearly the dates of absence and the reason. Failure to provide a written explanation following an absence may result in the absence being marked as **unauthorised**.

### **Absence for medical reasons**

When a parent reports that their child is absent for medical reasons, staff will ask for further information (nature of illness, expected length of absence). If the school has concerns that the illness may not be genuine or warrant the amount of absence accruing, the school may ask to substantiate the illness by asking to see additional evidence (e.g. appointment card, note from a health professional).

If a student has an appointment, they should submit the appointment card or a parental letter to the form tutor during the morning or afternoon registration. In the absence of the form tutor, students should go to the school office.

### **Persistence Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling at any time within the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is most likely to cause considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and the fullest support and co-operation from parents/carers is required to minimise absence from school.

### **Term-time leave/holidays**

Parents are strongly advised to avoid taking holidays in term-time and to discuss their needs and intentions with the Head Teacher well in advance.

If it is absolutely necessary to request leave for family reasons, or for holidays during term-time, parents are required to seek **prior approval** using the form available (upon request) from the school office. Failure to notify the school of an impending absence will be marked as **unauthorised and the parents may be issued with a Penalty Notice of £150.**

It is important to point out that the guidance recommends that a **maximum of 10 school days may** be authorised for the duration of the student's life in the school.

Students who fail to return after the authorised period will be referred to the Governing Body and the Trust and if no contact is made by the parents with school within ten days, the student may be removed from the school roll.



## **Punctuality**

It is important that any emerging attendance concerns are identified early. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of lateness, the school will try to resolve the problem through a detention system and with the parents/carers. If this is unsuccessful the school will begin a fining system will begin. Parents will be fined £5.00 for every time their child is recorded late. In extreme cases it will involve the director before the child is asked to leave.

### Procedure regarding Punctuality

Students must attend school punctually and on every day of the school academic year. Student attendance and punctuality should not fall below 95% and lateness should be a rare occasion.

**Girls are considered to be late if they enter the school at 8:06am.**

**Boys are considered to be late if they enter school at 9:06am.**

The duty to ensure a child is at school on time falls exclusively to parents/ carers.

1<sup>st</sup> Late Recorded – No Action.

2<sup>nd</sup> Late Recorded – 30 minute Detention after school.

3<sup>rd</sup> Late Recorded – 30 minute Detention after school – First warning letter sent out to parent & invitation to speak with Form Tutor.

4<sup>th</sup> Late Recorded - 30 Minute Detention after school.

5<sup>th</sup> Late Recorded – 30 Minute Detention after school - Second warning letter sent out to parent & invitation to speak with Form Tutor.

6<sup>th</sup> Late Recorded – Fined at £5.00 per day begins (30 minute detention after school).

7<sup>th</sup> Late Recorded – Fined at £5.00 per day (30 minute detention after school).

8<sup>th</sup> Late Recorded - Fined at £5.00 per day (30 minute detention after school).

9<sup>th</sup> Late Recorded - Fined at £5.00 per day. Third Warning letter sent out to parent & invitation to speak with Head teacher.

10<sup>th</sup> Late Recorded - Full Day Suspension & Return to School with parents. Punctuality contract to be signed. Payment of fines before re- admission.

11<sup>th</sup> Late Recorded - Full Day Suspension & Return to School with parents. Reported to Governing Body for possible withdrawal of place at school. Parent invited to meeting.

### **School Attendance Panel (SAP)**

Failure to provide evidence for pupil absence could result in parents/carers being required to attend a SAP which may include the following people:

- Headteacher
- member of the governing body/ director
- health professionals may be invited if relevant
- Safeguarding Officer

This policy will be managed and monitored by the Head Teacher and reviewed as necessary.