



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

O you who believe, uphold justice and bear witness to Allah, even if it is against yourselves, your parents, or your close relatives. Whether the person is rich or poor, Allah can best take care of both. Refrain from following your own desire, so that you can act justly- if you distort or neglect justice, Allah is fully aware of what you do.

Quran 4:135

Approved by:	Governing Board	Last reviewed: Spring 2024
Next review due by:	Summer 2025	

1. Introduction

This attendance policy is aimed to support Noor ul Islam Primary School to build on our capacity to improve regular school attendance and attendance practice within our school.

- regular and punctual attendance is key to the academic and social development that will improve the life chances of children
- children and young people who attend school regularly and punctually are less likely to be at risk, both in terms of engaging in anti-social behaviour and in terms of their own health and safety and welfare.

Attendance procedures set out the requirements for schools and other educational settings for the management of pupil attendance and absence. They reflect most recent statutory guidance from the DFE:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65df4a76f1cab36b60fc4726/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_29.02.24.pdf

2. Attendance

2.1 School Attendance Leader

The designated School Attendance Lead is: Kenza Benchiheb.

2.2 Parents, Carers and Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school regularly and to arrive at school punctually.

Responsibilities	Parents and carers	School
First day of absence	Do one of the following: a. Email before 9am: primary.school@noorulislam.org.uk <i>This is the preferred method.</i> b. Telephone the school before 9am: 020 8558 0786 - option 1 for primary school c. Inform in person at school office <i>You must state the reason for absence (e.g. not just 'unwell') and when the child is expected to return to school.</i>	Telephone home on the first day of absence if the school has not been informed.
When the child returns to school	Parent to take child to the school office if the absence was for 5 or more days	Meet with parents to make sure that the child is safe to return to school.
Attendance and Punctuality information	Parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school regularly and support the school to improve attendance and punctuality	The school regularly publishes its absence figures to parents and guardians to promote attendance and punctuality.
Policy implementation	To keep up to date with policy and practice	The governing board have a responsibility for attendance, and this is delegated on a daily basis to the Headteacher.

Pupils should not miss school frequently for minor illnesses, such as headache, cold or cough. It is important that parents seek medical advice on such cases as a matter of urgency.

If a pupil is absent, the absence is categorised by the school as either **authorised or unauthorised**. Only the school can authorise an absence not the parents or carers.

2.3 Authorised Absence – examples include:

- ✓ Sickness (with details provided)
- ✓ Bereavement in the family
- ✓ Emergency medical appointments (sight of appointment card should be requested)
- ✓ Hospital appointments that cannot be arranged outside school hours (appointment card should be requested) and this must be notified in advance

2.4 Unauthorised Absence

An unauthorised absence is where the school does not consider the absence to be reasonable or where no reason has been given. Examples include:

- ✗ Not 'feeling well...'
- ✗ Adults are not able to bring the child to school
- ✗ Might get ill – weather is cold
- ✗ Visiting family members or attending routine appointments
- ✗ Taking a family holiday
- ✗ Not 'sleeping well' at night
- ✗ Attending a family wedding abroad
- ✗ Extending holidays into the beginning of a new term or missing days pre-holiday breaks
- ✗ Visiting family that you haven't seen for a long time

Pupils should not have any unauthorised absences as it will result in the issuing of **fixed penalty notices** to both parents.

When unauthorised absence is persistent the School Attendance Lead may **liaise with the LBWF Education Welfare Officer and parent/carers** in the first instance and external agencies including, EP (Educational Psychologists) and Social Services if the situation is not resolved.

The continual failure to respect the school's procedures for absence may result in the **withdrawal of the child's place at the school**.

3. Unexplained absences and missing pupils

Any pupil who is absent for unexplained reasons will be referred to the local authority after 10 days. If necessary, the police will also be informed. In the event of absences where parents and emergency contacts are inaccessible, the attendance officer will investigate this further and ensure every effort is made to establish a reason for a pupil's absence, which will include a home visit with a colleague and checks with neighbors, and where there are concerns, the absence will be reported to the local authority and the police if necessary, within the third day of unexplained absence.

We will only remove a child from the school’s register once we have received notification from the relevant authorities to do so.

4. Transfers

The school will ensure that when a pupil moves their record is forwarded to the new school to avoid any pupil going missing and the local authorities informed. The local authority will be notified with the following information:

- Pupil personal information
- Date of leaving
- Reason for leaving
- New school information
- Start date at new school

Likewise records of all new admissions will be sought from the previous school before the pupil starts attending the school.

Rewarding Good Attendance	Sanctions for Unauthorised Absence
<p>Weekly champions for attendance and punctuality are presented to each class per key stage: Reception to Year 2 (EYFS & Key Stage 1) and Year 3 to Year 6 (Key Stage 2) in the Friday assembly with trophies. The running total for the winning classes are shared with parents.</p> <p>Pupils with 100% attendance & punctuality are given yearly certificates.</p> <p>Pupils who put in efforts and improve their attendance have their achievement celebrated in school assemblies and given star of the week.</p>	<p>A parent who fails to inform school reasons for absence and provide an adequate explanation for a child’s absence and/or is responsible for an unauthorised absence will be charged an additional fee by the school.</p> <p>The charge will be £50 per day of unauthorised absence per child. Parents will be required to pay the charge before their child is allowed back into school. The charge will be payable immediately upon return. Providing an explanation will not be sufficient to remove the charge. The charge will be payable in all circumstances where an absence has occurred, and it is deemed unauthorised.</p> <p>Further details of how the charge will be administered is available in the <i>Charging and Fees Policy</i> of the school.</p>

5. Absence requests during term time.

5.1 Requests for absence during term time will be considered only in exceptional circumstances and on a case-by-case basis. The governing board of the school also expects applications for leave in term time normally be refused. Any applications for leave in term time must be submitted at the earliest opportunity and at 3 weeks in advance to the School Attendance Lead. Applications received during or after a pupil has been taken on leave during term time cannot be considered and the absence will be unauthorised.

5.2 Parents/carers must provide supporting evidence of any exceptional circumstances and why the leave must be taken in term time instead of in the school holidays. All applications will be considered carefully, including how the pupil's educational progress could be affected. Where the request for leave involves travelling abroad, parents will be asked to produce the return tickets before leave is approved.

5.3. When considering an application for leave in term time for exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher must be convinced that: (1) The exceptional circumstances are justified by supporting evidence provided by the parents/carers related to the circumstances and that the supporting evidence is valid (tickets for travelling will not be considered as supporting evidence), and; (2) The evidence necessarily warrants the child being absent from school in term time - does the child have to be absent in term time due to the circumstances or can it wait until the school holidays?

6. Punctuality

6.1 Persistent lateness can be seen as absence and is managed in the same way as poor attendance.

6.2 Students will enter the school through the main entrance from 8:20 a.m. onwards and wait in the hall with their class.

6.3 Parents must not leave children at the gate unattended after 8:40 (or before 8:20). They will otherwise be marked late, and school will contact the parents for an explanation.

6.4 At 9:15am, the registers close and anyone arriving after this time will be marked down as having an unauthorised absence for the whole morning session

6.5 Office staff will contact parents and carers from 9:15am each morning if their son or daughter has not arrived at school.

6.6 In the afternoon, registers will be completed by 1.45pm in the autumn term and 1.55pm in Spring/Summer.

6.7 Reason for late drop-off/pick-up must always be provided and ALL lateness is included towards the half-termly count. The fee will be charged from the 4th late drop-off/pick-up.

Office Staff will:	Teaching Staff will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep accurate records of lateness. • Contact parents and carers regarding lateness. • Ask pupils/parents their reason for lateness, stressing how much we care about students being punctual for school each day • Talk to pupils about difficulties they may be having which may affect their punctuality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be in their classrooms by 8:40am to be able to register students on time and to provide them with an interesting and stimulating start to the day • Make a point of appearing pleased when a student is punctual • Certificates will be given to students to the most improved punctuality as part of Star of the Week • Positive comments on punctuality will form part of each parent meetings and end of year reports

7. Poor Punctuality

Incident	Parents and carers	School
Arrival at school	8:20am-8.40am: Children enter school through the gate and main school doors	8:20 to 8:40am Gates are opened for <i>adhkar</i> in the hall 8:40 – 8:43am Children are taken to class – they settle in class quickly and start learning. Register must be done by 8.45am. Pupils arriving after are marked as late in the registers.
Late to school	After 8.40am: Children enter school through the gate and main school doors and explain reason for lateness in the office	From 8:40am: mark the pupil as late on the paper register and note the reason for being late. Mark the pupils late on RM
Persistent late <90	Parents and carers are informed via email May be invited into school to discuss the issue	Headteacher to be informed of pupils whose lateness is causing concern
Pupils late more than three times in any one half-term	A charge of £10 per child per lateness after the third lateness	This charge will be administered for both late drop-offs and late pick-ups. Late drop offs are pupils who are marked as late due to arrival after 8.40am and late pick-ups are defined as those who are collected after 3.55pm from the late room. Those attending clubs after school will be considered as late pick-ups if they collect their child 5 mins after the stated time of collection (based on each individual club timing).

Attendance & Punctuality Thresholds

Each term, children with punctuality and attendance problems (at risk children) are identified. Investigations are made to understand the nature of the problems, identifying how the school can support parents in meeting their legal responsibility.

Thresholds	The following are suggested actions at each threshold:
96-100%	Reward regular attendance & punctuality
<95%	<p>Pupils deteriorating to 95% or below (equivalent to one session missed every two weeks) Make first day calls as above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send Yellow Letter to parent pointing out the deterioration in attendance levels. • Remind the parent of the school's target levels for attendance and the negative effect of irregular attendance on learning. Require the parent to provide an explanation and comments. • Keep in contact with parents on a weekly basis. Provide encouragement where improvement has been made. • Discuss the likelihood of referral to the Education Welfare Service unless improvement is made.
<90%	<p>Pupils deteriorating to 90% (equivalent to 1 session missed per week on average)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send Red Letter to parent pointing out the deterioration in attendance levels. • This is referred to as Persistent Absence to the Education Welfare Officer. • Maintain the approaches set out at the previous thresholds. The Headteacher or Attendance Lead should be involved and should add weight to any interventions already in place. • Ask parents to attend a school-based meeting with Attendance Lead and chaired by the Education Welfare Officer, Use the meeting to investigate why pupil has missed 1 session per week on average. • Discuss detrimental effect on learning. • Reach agreements for rapid improvements over the next half term. • Remind the parent that full attendance is the aim and that anything less than 90% will cause concern. • Consider using a parenting contract between school and parent. • Monitor attendance very closely and keep in regular contact with the parent, either to praise attendance levels or to show ongoing concern.
<85%	<p>Pupils deteriorating to 85% (equivalent to 1.5 sessions per week)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If pupil has not been referred to the Education Welfare Officer, this should be done (if this has not already taken place) and meeting to create a plan of action.

Please note for each individual case a decision will be based on whether all relevant actions are necessary based on the actual circumstances. However, in all circumstances parents should be informed of the actual attendance rates for their child(ren) when it falls below the threshold of 90%.