

Attendance Policy

Al-Falah Primary School

Reviewed on:	Dec 2022
Next review:	Dec 2024

Attendance Policy

Al Falah Primary School expects all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, due to ill health, are prevented from coming to school.

According to the DFE's new guidance (Working together to improve school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities Published: May 2022 Applies from: September 2022) for local Authority, school management, teachers, parents and guardian to ensure their children attend school regularly. Under the new circular the local authority (LA) will be monitoring children attendance and its emphasizes all parties to be vigilant to ensure children come to school every day.

Students need to arrive and collect on time, be appropriately prepared for the day and attend regularly. The Department for Education and the Secretary of State for Education have made it clear that the usual rules on school attendance will apply. Whenever the child is unable to attend Al Falah, please inform the school as soon as is practical and early on the morning of absences or lateness.

Learning: Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling, and regular absences will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning of others in the same class. It is your legal responsibility to ensure your child's regular attendance at school, and allowing absence from school without a valid reason is a criminal offence that may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding: - At Al Falah Primary School, we believe every pupil should be able to learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. We respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn and participate in all school activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children while they are not in the care of their parents or caregivers. Safeguarding is about offering early help and support to children and families, and difficulties with attendance and lateness may be signs that something is worrying the child or that there are difficulties within the family. Poor or irregular attendance, persistent lateness, or children missing from school may be considered a safeguarding matter if this places your child at risk of harm.

Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility, and within the context of this school, safeguarding and promoting the welfare and life opportunities for children encompasses:

Attendance, behaviour management, health and safety, access to the curriculum, anti-bullying, protecting children from abuse and neglect, online safety, radicalization and extremism, FGM, and CSE

More information on safeguarding and the protection of children can be found in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

In order to allow us to safeguard the children in our care, it is important that parents and caregivers provide the school with their current contact details and provide at least two other contact numbers in case of emergency.

The Law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs, he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

All children of compulsory school age (Reception to Year 6) must attend school. As parents or caregivers; you are responsible for ensuring your child receives an education. You risk criminal prosecution if your child fails to attend regularly and punctually at the school where he is registered. Prosecutions may result in fines of up to £2,500 and/or the possibility of three months' imprisonment. Courts may impose a parenting order or direct the local educational authority to apply for an education order at their discretion.

Arrival, departure and registration:

- All children are expected to arrive by **8.00 a.m.** and line up in the designated area every morning. School gates open at 8.00 am and close at 8.15 am.

- School finishes at 3.40 pm (Mon – Thurs) and at 11.40 am (Fri). Parents are given a 15 minutes' window to collect their child/children.
- Register is taken twice a day at 8.15 am and 12:20 pm. A day counts as 2 attendances.
- It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent / guardian outside the normal hours are signed in or out from the office. The signing in / out register in the office is used in the case of an emergency or a fire drill.

Lateness: (dropping children off or collecting children)

- If a child arrives after the registration period, they will be marked in as Late (L) and the parent or carer must sign the lateness book in the office stating reasons for the lateness. This is to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that all pupils are accounted for.
- If a child is collected after 4 pm (Mon – Thurs) or after 12 pm (Fri) parents must sign the late register in the office.
- Children who arrive late twice or more within a two-week period will be considered as **persistent late**.
- Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve.
- Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness, parents / carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities to seek support and advice to address these issues.
- If the persistent lateness continues, the attendance officer will arrange a meeting with the head teacher and the parent. The school may fine £20 per child for persistent lateness **(3 days every 4 weeks)**.
- Persistent lateness also may result in disciplinary action by Head teacher after two fines.

Illness and Medical Appointments

- Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.
- The school office should be informed during the morning of the first day of a child's absence through illness and then each morning, if appropriate, for the duration of the absence.

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as *authorised* when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, Unavoidable cause (which is expected to be an emergency and unavoidable) and the parent write a note or call the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Head teacher.

If your child is absent parents/carers must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence via email, text or telephone.
- Parents are expected to email or telephone the school by 8.30 a.m. on the morning of the day of absence to inform the school that their child will be absent and state a reason.
- If a child is absent for three days or more due to illness, parents will need to provide medical proof such as prescription, appointment card, doctor's note or prescribe medication.
- **Consequence of Persistent Unauthorised absence:**
- A pupil is considered to be a 'persistent absentee' if they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co- operation to tackle this.
- We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that level is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.
- PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.
- If a child is persistently absent without authorisation **(2 days in a 4-week period)** parents will be fined **£30** per child and must meet with the Head teacher. The Local Authority may be involved and this could result in dismissal from the school.

If your child is absent the school will:

- Endeavour to contact the parent or guardian, if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence.
- The class teacher will record the absence in the register (**N**).
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer and/or SLT members, Head teacher if absences persist.

Entrance:

Entrance	8:00 am-8:15 am
Main Gate	All year group

End of the day times and exit routes:

Exit route	3: 40 pm - 3.55 pm
Main Gate	All year group

Holidays:

The Governors recognise that pupil absence during term time can seriously disrupt pupils' continuity of learning. Parents are therefore strongly urged to avoid booking family holiday in term time. However, in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Head teacher, the Head teacher may consider to grant leave of absence of up to 10 days in any calendar year after examining the nature of written application from the parents. Parents need to take a form from the office to fill it in. Occasionally, it may be appropriate to allow a longer planned absence. In all such cases, the return date must be agreed by the Head teacher as any child who is absent longer than 10 days after the agreed time can legally be removed from the school roll. The Head teacher will discuss requests for any absences of more than 10 days with the management before deciding whether or not to grant permission.

Criteria By Which The Head teacher Will Make Decisions Concerning The Authorisation Of Holiday Absence:

- All holiday requests should be discussed with the Head teacher before any bookings are made.
- An absence for holiday that has not been agreed by the Head teacher will be recorded as unauthorized.

- Authorization will not be granted retrospectively.
- Holiday requests will not be granted if the absence will push the child's attendance below 96% for the academic year.
- The general attendance of pupils will be considered. If a child has had significant number of absences for any reason they will not be able to "afford" to miss any further schooling.
- The timing of the proposed holiday – one of the worst times for a child to be absent is at the beginning of a new school year, particularly with a new teacher or a new class; and for Year 6 pupils, in the build up to and during the National Curriculum tests.

Authorised or unauthorised absences:

Genuine reasons for absence include the following:

- Sickness
- Medical or dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances e.g. bereavement

The following absences will not be authorised by your child's school:

- Looking after the house
- Looking after brothers and sisters or sick relatives
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Translating

Long term absence:

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

Rewards for Good Attendance:

All the children who have close to or achieve 100% attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded in assembly. There are special certificates for any child who has 100% for a whole year which will be awarded

in the final assembly of the Summer Term. A reward will be given each term to the class with the best overall performance (e.g. additional playtime).

Attendance Targets:

The school is set a challenging attendance target each year. Current target is 96%. These targets are agreed by the senior staff and head teacher at the annual target-setting meeting. The admin will report to the head teacher on attendance percentages in the end of term and that will be recorded by the class teachers at the end of year report.

Monitoring and Reviewing:

- It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance.
- The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out.
- The Governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that the school's attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class. If they become aware of an unexpected pupil absence during the course of the school day, they will contact the school office immediately to phone at home. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Head teacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.

If a child is missing school for 10 days followed by process of school attendance system then the school has to inform the Hackney Learning Trust Children Missing Education (CME) department or the other relevant local authorities.

Contact CME: Billy Baker: 0208 820 7406/ 0208 820 7060

E-mail: Billy.Baker@learningtrust.co.uk

Contact details:

M A Hussain

Head teacher

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