



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

How this policy fits in with other policies:

Acceptable
use policy

Rewards &
Sanctions
policy

Adab policy

Log of updates

July 2024	Updated policy format, monitoring steps included in appendix.
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Introduction

Muslims build their day around the five daily prayers which must be said at specific times. Tardiness is frowned upon and a sign of poor adab. At Lady Nafisa School we strongly promote punctuality and treat cases of tardiness seriously. For a pupil to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils.

Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance including e.g. newsletters and end of term reports.

11 School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE). Attendance should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, and is an important aspect of safeguarding. This guidance takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Act 2000.

12 Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996.
- The Education Act 2002.
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended).
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013
- DfE (2019) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children Missing Education'
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education'

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

2. CATEGORIES OF ABSENCE

Authorised

21 **Illness** There may the exceptional occasion where a pupil is ill and there is no alternative but to stay at home to ensure a speedy recovery. We would expect parents to take their children to the doctor in such cases.

Parents must advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible and provide the school with an expected date of return. School may require medical evidence at any time to authorise any absence. This will

usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

22 **Medical/dental appointments** Parents are advised where possible to make medical appointments **outside of the school day** (e.g. doctors, dentist). **Where this is not possible, and appointments can only be made during the school day, pupils should attend school for part of the day.** If the medical appointment is during the school day, evidence must be provided. Schools should not authorise a whole day's absence for a medical appointment that occurs in the morning; the child would be expected to return to school in the afternoon, and vice versa. Parents should notify the school in advance of an appointment and bring in the hospital appointment letter or dentist / doctors' appointment card to reception.

23 **Other authorised circumstances** These relate to where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances.

24 **Excluded (No alternative provision made)** Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's tutor will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

25 Granting approval for term – time absence

2.5.1 According to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. (see 2.5.5 below)

2.5.2 The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteachers discretion. **Absence during term time should be avoided because pupils can fall behind with their work and find it hard to reintegrate.**

2.5.3 Parents who need to take their child out of school during term time due to exceptional circumstances **must send a written request to the Headteacher in advance of the event, leaving enough time for the school to discuss the request with the parent.** Retrospective requests, or requests which leave no time for the school's consideration, will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as **unauthorised**.

2.5.4 All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing outlining the conditions of any leave granted.

2.5.5 Exceptional circumstances for which Headteacher may grant leave include:

- When a family needs to spend time together because of an immediate family member's bereavement, crisis or serious illness.
- Funeral of immediate family member.
- Religious observance.

- One off sporting events/performing arts competitions, if the child is participating and is at county standard or above and a letter has been provided from the performing arts/sports regional governing body as evidence.

2.6 **Study leave** Study leave may be granted for Year 11 pupils approaching GCSE examinations. School will offer in school study programmes during this period to reduce absence levels.

3. Unauthorised absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the Headteacher. Unauthorised leave taken during term-time will be subject to a penalty charge of £20 per day for every day missed.

4. DELETIONS FROM THE REGISTER

41 In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013, pupils will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order.
- The School Attendance Order is revoked by the local authority.
- The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age.
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed.
- Death of a pupil.
- Transfer between schools.
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system.
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil.
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age.
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the pupil.
- Left the school but not known where he/she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil.

42 Lady Nafisa School will follow Hillingdon Council's **Children Missing Education Protocol** when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown. Where a pupil has not returned to school for **ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days**, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the Local Authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the pupil. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause. The school will also act accordingly if it is felt there are safeguarding concerns due to the child's absence (please see the school's safeguarding policy)

5. REPORTING TO PARENTS

Parents receive a termly report of their child's progress which indicates their attendance record. Parents can also have a copy of their child's attendance registration certificate upon request.

6. USING ATTENDANCE DATA

61 Pupils' attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and Department for Education and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern. All information shared will be done so in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

62 Close management and scrutiny of attendance records help us trigger action to support parents and pupils when attendance becomes a concern.

7. SUPPORT SYSTEMS

71 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 school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

72 We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.

73 The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used may include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils.
- Support from the school's welfare team
- Attendance Plans
- Referrals to support agencies.
- Rewards
- Adapted timetables.
- Additional learning support.
- Behaviour support.
- Reintegration support packages.

74 Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

75 Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, we will consider the use of legal sanctions.

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.

8. School Procedures

- 81 Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised (C), unauthorised (O) or as an approved educational activity (V) (attendance out of school)
- 82 Only the head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.
- 83 Pupils are expected to arrive in school at 8:00am. Morning registration will take place at 8:10a.m. If a student arrives after registration, they are marked in as late. The registers will remain open till 9:15 (end of period 1).
- 84 Any pupil arriving after the close of registers will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (O) unless there is an acceptable explanation.
- 85 In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate absence code will be entered.
- 86 The afternoon registration will be after lunch at 1:35pm. The registers will close after 10 minutes at 1.45p.m.
- 87 Parents must inform the school if their child is going to be absent on or before the first day and the reason for the absence. If no reason is given within 24 hours, the absence will become unauthorised.
- 88 When making medical/dental appointments, every effort must be made to ensure appointments are outside school hours but we acknowledge that this is not always possible. Medical/Dental appointments must be accompanied by an appointment card or other written confirmation.
- 89 **Absence Notes** Absence notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.
- 810 **Frequent Absence** It is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve any concerns with parents.
- 811 Where incidents of poor attendance and/or lateness are identified through monitoring, parents will be notified in writing that this is a cause for concern. If this continues, the school will invite parents in to discuss causes and ways forward.
- 812 **A Welcome Back** It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to other pupils.
- 813 **Promoting Attendance** The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents that it is their responsibility to ensure that their pupils receive their education.
- 814 **Attendance Awards** Students will be awarded with 100% attendance certificates in assembly on at the end of the academic year.
- 815 **Attendance Targets** The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a head teacher will be responsible for overseeing this work.
- 816 Our schools targets are for at least 96% attendance for all pupils.

9. Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements regarding register and admission roll keeping can be found in The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006.

- Attendance registers, by law, must be kept for at least 3 years;
- Entries in paper registers must be in ink;
- All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

The registers are stored safely in the central office once registration is closed.

10. Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school at the time of registration must be recorded within one of these categories:

- [1] Unauthorised Absence (O or U for lateness);
- [2] Authorised Absence (C);
- [3] Approved Educational Activity (V).

1. Unauthorised Absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without a valid reason.

2. Authorised Absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. This would include:

- Field trips and educational visits;
- Sporting activities;
- Link courses or approved education off site;
- Most types of dual registration.

Note: Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

Appendix

1. Attendance Guidance for Parents
2. Every school day counts
3. Good time keeping at Lady Nafisa School
4. Attendance Strategies – A Summary of the
Monitoring and Escalation Procedures
5. Punctuality Sanctions 2021-2022

Attendance Guidance for Parents/Carers

Raise your child's attendance - Raise their chances!

At Lady Nafisa School excellent attendance and punctuality is our aim for every student. Full attendance maximises learning opportunities and parents/carers have a vital role in promoting good attitudes in attendance. Evidence shows that students who attend school regularly make better progress both academically and socially. Good attendance is essential to success in school.

90% attendance = ½ day missed every week

1 school year at 90% attendance = 4 whole weeks of lessons missed.

90% attendance over 5 years of secondary school = ½ a school year missed.

It is suggested that 17 missed school days a year = one GCSE grade drop in achievement.

We ask for support from parents/carers to:

- Ensure that their Pupils are present at every opportunity
- Arrive on time
- Avoid allowing Pupils to stay at home unnecessarily
- Avoid taking them out of school without authorisation.

We monitor attendance closely and will follow up unexplained absence with parents/carers, by telephone or by letter. The Department for Education's threshold at which a student is defined as 'persistently absent' is 15% (down from 20% previously). Where a student's attendance record reaches a concerning level, we will contact you to discuss ways in which the school can support you and your child.

The school attendance target of 96% is the minimum that we expect for all students. Every lesson counts and it is this commitment to learning that will have a positive impact on attainment and progress.

Reporting Absence

What to do if your child is ill:

If your child is too ill to attend school, parents/carers should contact the School Administrator as soon as possible. The telephone system allows callers to leave a message 24 hours a day. Alternatively you can email at admin@ladynafisa.org.

Please give your child's name, Year Group, the reason for the absence, and how long you expect the absence to last. We ask that you contact us each day that your child is absent unless you have given us an indication of how long the absence will last. On your child's return following an absence, we request that parents/carers write a brief note explaining the absence. The student should hand the note in at the School Office.

What to do if your child has an appointment:

We ask that, where possible, you make routine medical and other appointments out of school time. If this is not possible, we require notification in advance. Please telephone, email or provide a note from home or appointment letter/card to confirm the appointment. In most cases, your child should attend school before the appointment and return to the school afterwards wherever possible. Students should bring a note from home to the School Office when it is time for them to sign out and sign back in on their return.

Punctuality

All students are expected to arrive to school on time and be ready and punctual to lessons. This is a minimum expectation. Students should arrive for 8.00 a.m. Students are expected to be in registration for 8.10 a.m. ready to start learning. After this time, students will be marked as late. We will text you whenever your daughter is late. (See appendix for Punctuality sanctions). We would be grateful for your support in ensuring that your child arrives on time.

Holidays in term time

The Government strongly urges parents/carers to avoid taking their Pupils out of school for family holidays as this will disrupt their education. Whilst we understand the difficulties parents/carers may have in organising holidays during the school holidays and the benefits to be had from cheaper term-time holidays, this type of absence is detrimental to a child's education.

There is a common misconception that any child is allowed to take 10 days holiday per year. This is not true. Parents are entitled to request leave of absence from the school. The Head teacher has the discretion to allow up to 10 days in any academic year for the purpose of a family holiday only where there are **special circumstances**. Other factors will be taken into account, such as:

- The time of year the child will be absent (no requests will be granted at the start of a new academic year, during exam time), or for any student in Y11
- The attendance record of the student
- The number of previous requests for family holidays

Any request should be made well in advance and in writing. We will consider all requests individually, **although family holidays will only be authorised in the most exceptional circumstances**. Where a parental request has been refused, and parents/carers continue to take their child out of school, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Please contact the Headteacher should you wish to discuss the matter further.

Leave of absence for other reasons

Absence will not be authorised for reasons such as shopping for uniform, birthdays, day trips, etc. If parents/carers wish their child(ren) to be absent for other reasons, such as compassionate leave, special family events, or to participate in sporting competitions etc, application should be made in writing, in advance where possible, or by telephone/email to the Headteacher.

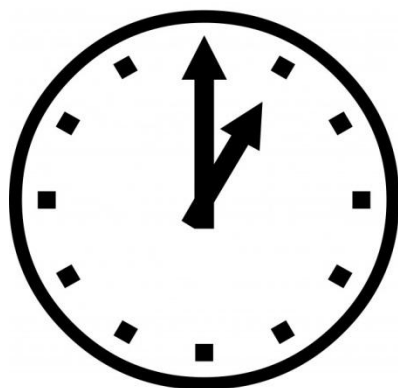
Every School Day Counts

- Days off school add up to lost learning
- Every school day counts!
- We have extra holiday time (state schools have 175 days) so each school day is even more important!

<u>187 days</u> to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, family events and other appointments				
178 school days in a year. 178 days for your child's education	8 days absence	17 days absence 161 days of learning	26 days absence 152 days of learning	36 days absence 142 days of learning
	170 days of learning			
100%	96%	90%	85%	80%
GOOD Best chance of success. Gets your child off to a flying start!		WORRYIN G Less chance of success. Makes it harder to make progress	<u>SERIOUS CONCERN</u> Not fair on your child. Possible legal action.	

Good time keeping at Lady Nafisa means.....

.....being in school, on time, everyday, ready to learn.



30 MINS LATE

IF YOU ARE 5 MINUTES LATE EVERYDAY	IF YOU ARE 10 MINUTES LATE EVERYDAY	IF YOU ARE 15 MINUTES LATE EVERYDAY	IF YOU ARE 20 MINUTES LATE EVERYDAY	25 MINS LATE	13 DAY S LOST
2 DAYS LOST	4 DAYS LOST	6 DAYS LOST	8.5 DAYS LOST	11 DAY S LOST	
Poor punctuality – Less chance of success		<u>Very poor punctuality</u> -serious impact on education and reduced life chances.			

DID YOU KNOW? If you are 10 minutes late each day you will have missed nearly 1 week of school in one year?

Attendance Strategies – A Summary of the Monitoring and Escalation Procedures

Stage	Attendance & Punctuality	Strategy	Expected Outcome	By whom
All Students		Letter to parents to outline expectations – include target attendance level of 96% as a minimum.	Procedures are clear and transparent and the importance of good attendance and its relationship with attainment shared so that parents will be more likely to ensure that their child is in school.	Head
		Attendance included on Pupil Progress Reports (three times per year).	Current attendance is known so that a target can be set.	Admin
		Attendance included in newsletters.	Raise the profile of attendance so that stakeholders understand its importance and are more likely to send students to school.	Admin
		Text parents	Parents fully informed when their child is late and can follow up at home	Admin
		Assemblies	Constantly promote the value of good attendance so that students come to school.	All staff
Stage 1	98% - 100%	Attendance trophy at the end of the year for 100% attendance.	Reward students for their good attendance and promote it.	Head
Stage 2	97%	Meeting with tutor and text message sent home	Remind students of the importance of good attendance and its link with achievement and attainment.	Form Tutors
Stage 3	96% - 95%	Letter sent home Attendance is dropping and becoming a concern.	To improve attendance by: promoting its importance; ensuring that there are no underlying issues; ensuring that the school is doing all that they can to meet student needs; to hold parents/carers more accountable.	AO
Stage 4	94% At risk of becoming persistent absentee if current attendance trends continue.			
		Student on attendance report for 4 weeks	Student to have 100% during this period. To hold students and parents accountable.	AO
Stage 5	93%	Parents Meeting Meeting with parents and SMT and the parents/carers may face statutory action. All further absences will be unauthorised without medical evidence and followed up by AO.	To see a significant improvement in attendance.	Head teacher
Stage 6	92%	Safeguarding checks. Weekly contact with school via AO. Legal proceedings considered via Hillingdon council.	To see a significant improvement in attendance.	Head teacher / SMT

PUNCTUALITY SANCTIONS 2021-2022

REMEMBER

8:00am – Doors open

8:10am – Registration

9:25am – formally close register, arrival after 9:25am is marked as absent.

1 LATE IN THE HALF TERM	Text message sent home
2 LATES IN THE HALF TERM	30 Min lunch time detention
3 LATES IN THE HALF TERM	Fine (£1 paid at the door) and 30 min afterschool detention. Year 11 will lose school leaving privileges for 5 days.
4 LATES IN THE HALF TERM	Letter sent home and 1 hour afterschool detention
5 LATES IN THE HALF TERM	2 weeks on punctuality report
6-9 LATES IN THE HALF TERM	Parents meeting with tutor
10 – 15 LATES IN THE HALF TERM	Internal morning exclusion