



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

Al-Burhan Grammar School is committed to provide a full and effective education for all of our students to ensure that every student achieves their full potential. Regular attendance and punctuality is a key requirement for this to occur and so must be monitored and maintained. There are clearly documented links between regular attendance and attainment. All students should be aiming for 100% attendance and parents support and encouragement in achieving this is crucial.

The purpose of this policy therefore, is to ensure that school staff has an understanding of school procedures related to attendance and punctuality, that all staff know what their responsibilities are in this matter and that as a school we meet all the key points as outlined in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

1.2 Responsibilities

Good attendance and punctuality is a key character trait which should be nurtured by everyone in the school community. Therefore, we believe that everyone should be involved in implementing this policy and have indicated the various responsibilities below.

1.2.1 Student's responsibilities

- To come to school on time: if travelling by public transport, it is the student's responsibility to catch a bus/train enabling them to arrive on time.
- To attend school regularly
- To tell a member of staff of any problem which make it hard to attend school regularly.

1.2.2 Parent/Guardian's responsibilities

- To place on importance on attendance and punctuality
- To develop good habits on your daughter by doing your best to ensure she is on time to school.
- To adopt a bracing attitude when it comes to illness etc.
- To try and book all non-essential appointments/activities outside of school hours
- To work with the school when managing any issues which may arise to do with attendance or punctuality

1.2.3 School Secretary's responsibilities

- Record attendance and absences regularly, accurately and efficiently
- On the first day of absence, make every responsible effort to contact the parent/carers
- Deal discreetly and properly with any problem notified to the school by the parents/carers

1.2.4 Teacher's responsibilities

- Provide good quality education



- Deal discreetly and properly with any problem notified to the school by the parents/carers
- Make all efforts to encourage good attendance

1.2.5 Headteacher's responsibilities

- to oversee the whole policy
- to take necessary measures to effectively implement the policy
- to have particular regard to the equalities aspect of the policy
- to investigate properly before removing any student from school register

1.3 Monitoring and Evaluation of this Policy

The Form Tutors, School Secretary and the Headteacher will, using the Registers, carry out monitoring of attendance and punctuality. An annual review will be undertaken to compare attendance and registration related data with those for previous years and with local and national averages.

2. Attendance

1.1 Importance

Regular attendance at school is vital to help children achieve and get the best possible start in life.

Children who frequently miss school often fall behind. There is a strong link between good school attendance and achieving good results. For example, only 12% of pupils with below 80% school attendance achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and Maths, compared to 68% for pupils with attendance greater than 95%.

Good attendance at school shows potential employers that a young person is reliable. Young people who are frequently absent from school are more likely to become involved in, or be a victim of crime and anti-social behaviour.

1.2 Illness

We understand that on occasions students may have to miss school due to ill health. We ask that parents:

1. Adopt a bracing approach to illness. Please only keep students off school when it is absolutely necessary.
2. Contact the school by telephone on 0121 440 5454 on the first day of absence by 9.00am indicating the expected date of return.
3. A written explanation for the absence must be brought in on the day students return and handed over to Form Tutor.
4. In cases of persistent or prolonged absence school will require medical evidence e.g. doctors note to explain the absence.

1.3 Medical appointments

Medical/dental appointments should be made out of school hours to prevent disruption to learning. Where this is not possible please write to your daughter's Form Tutor with the appropriate evidence e.g. letter / appointment card.



1.4 Holidays

Holidays must not be taken during term time. The Government has made amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 which came into force on 1st September 2013. The amendment states that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Parents needing leave of absence for exceptional circumstances should apply to the Headteacher by completing an “Application of Leave of Absence – Student” form. The exceptional reason should be outlined in detail and evidenced. Wanting to take advantage of off-peak holiday prices is not an exceptional circumstance. This application must be submitted to the Form Tutor at least three weeks before the first date of the requested leave.

Parents must allow the school to consider their application before booking flights or leaving the country, even when unforeseen events occur (e.g. family bereavement). As part of their application for leave in term time in exceptional circumstances, parents/carers will be expected to demonstrate a willingness to make arrangements which cause the least disruption to their children’s learning.

Parents who take their children on holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absence for their child. These remain on the child's record and will be monitored. Parents will also be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

1.5 Other requests for absences

Requests for absence for engagements resulting from personal sporting or other commitments/interests should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher by completing an “Application of Leave of Absence – Student” form. These will be considered individually taking into account the impact the absence will have on their progress.

1.6 Religious observation

Muslim and Christian holidays are already covered by the school's holiday pattern. Any additional requests should be made in writing in advance to the Headteacher.

1.7 Unauthorised absence

In addition to holidays taken in term time, penalty fines can also be issued to parent/carers of students who have a series of 10 or more unauthorised absences.

1.8 How we will support you in encouraging good attendance

1. School reports will show your child's level of attendance and punctuality record. We will clearly indicate if it is a cause for concern.
2. We will reward and recognise students with excellent attendance records.
3. Parents will be informed by letter / phone call if we have concerns about attendance and punctuality levels.
4. In severe cases of poor attendance / punctuality, parents will be asked to come into school for a meeting with senior members of staff.



3. Punctuality

3.1 Importance

Good punctuality is also essential for students' progress. Students who are late for school miss learning and develop bad habits resulting in them being unprepared for the world of work. Students who arrive late must sign in and inform the office.

3.2 Responding to Lateness

Students who are late for school will receive a detention and a fixed penalty fines depending on the number of lateness in a week. If their lateness becomes habitual we will ask parents to come into school for a meeting with senior members of staff. Fixed penalty fines may also be used when students are persistently late.

The exact length of detention etc varies from time to time depending on effect. A sample step-by-step used in the past at Al-Burhan is as follows:

- Tally of lateness kept on a central annual spreadsheet
- 2x late in one week = 45minutes detention on Friday of same week (if second late is Friday – contact parents by phone)
- 3x late in one week = 45 minute detention on Friday + £5 fine
- 4x late in one week = Call parents in and discuss
- Consequences for lateness applied to a student in two consecutive weeks = call parents in and discuss

4. Leaving School during the Day

If a student feels unwell, she must tell a teacher straight away. Normally, she will be sent to the School Office where she will be taken care of. If she is too ill to remain at school or if hospital treatment is necessary, parent/carers will be contacted to make suitable arrangements.

Accidents and injuries of any sort must be reported to a member of staff immediately. The same sequence of events as above will be followed.



5. Appendix 1:

Procedures and timelines for intervention regarding leave in term time

- Parents should be advised that if they take leave in term time which is not authorised, they may be served with a penalty notice which may result in legal action via the Court. Birmingham Education Welfare Service has developed a legal process where parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice for removing their child from school for an unauthorised leave of absence in term time. A combination of all unauthorised absence over the preceding 12 months, including code G will be taken and will be the basis of any decision by the school. (Section 8) Please note that penalty notices are issued in respect of each parent for each child. Therefore a family of two parents who take two children on unauthorised leave during term time would receive four notices, potentially a fine of £240 to £480. The process does not apply where schools have granted any leave or where the child may be/has been removed from roll as detailed in Section 9.
- For safeguarding reasons, pupils who are the subject of a child protection plan should not be removed from roll under these regulations, without consultation with the allocated social worker. The social worker should be immediately notified of any absence from school.
- Before a pupil can be deleted from the register under regulation 8(1)(f) (in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence exceeding ten school days for the purpose of a holiday) the following conditions must be satisfied:
 - The pupil must have been granted leave
 - That agreed leave must exceed 10 school days
 - The pupil must have failed to attend within ten school days following the expiry of the period during which leave was granted
 - The proprietors (Headteachers), or governors, must be satisfied that the pupil is not unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable absence by making reasonable enquiry
 - Both the proprietor and the Local Authority have failed after reasonable enquiry to locate the pupil.
- Where a Headteacher agrees for a pupil to have more than 10 school days leave i.e. 11 or more days (Headteachers are strongly advised not to grant leave of more than 10 days), and does not return to school on the agreed date the school should immediately contact/write to the parent(s) to ascertain the reason for non-return. If there is no response from parents or the reasons given are unacceptable, the parent(s) must be advised that the pupil may lose his/her place; that the absences will be unauthorised (use code G). The school and then the Children Missing Education Team (CME Team) will make reasonable enquiries *within 10 school days to ascertain the



whereabouts of the pupil before de-registration is considered. The further period of 10 school days will be coded 'G' and count as unauthorised absence for example where the Headteacher authorised 12 school days of leave, deregistration would not take place until the 23rd school day of absence. (Pupils cannot be lawfully removed from the school register until a further 10 school days of continuous unauthorised absence after the agreed date and only once reasonable enquiries have been made by the school and LA to ascertain the whereabouts of the child.)

- Where a Headteacher agrees for a pupil to have between 1 and 10 school days leave and where the pupil does not return to school on the agreed date, the school should immediately contact/write to the parent(s) to ascertain the reason for non-return. If there is no response from the parents or the reasons given are unacceptable, the parent(s) must be advised in writing that the pupil may lose his/her place; and that the absences will be unauthorised using code G. The school and then the Children Missing Education Team (CME Team) will make reasonable enquiries *within 10 school days to attempt to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil before deregistration is considered. If the pupil hasn't returned after 20 school days of continuous unauthorised absence (which began the day after the last day of authorised absence) de-registration could take place on the 21st day of unauthorised absence. (Pupils cannot lawfully be removed from the school register until 20 school days continuous unauthorised absence after the agreed return date and only once reasonable enquiries have been made by the school and LA to ascertain the whereabouts of the child)
- Before a pupil can be deleted from the register under regulation 8(1)(h)) (In the case of a pupil not granted leave) the following conditions must be satisfied:
 - at no time was the absence authorised by the Headteacher
 - the pupil has been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than twenty school days
 - the Headteacher, or governors, must be satisfied that the pupil is not unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable absence by making reasonable enquiry
 - both the Headteacher and the Local Authority have failed after reasonable enquiry to locate the pupil
- Where a Headteacher has not granted the pupil any leave, and the school suspects that the parents may have taken their child on unauthorised term time leave, the school should immediately contact/write to the parent(s) to ascertain the reason for absence. The parent(s) must be advised that the pupil may lose her place, that the absence will be unauthorised (use code G) and that the Local Authority may issue a penalty notice. The school and then the Children Missing Education Team (CME Team) will make reasonable enquiries *within 10 school days to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil before de-registration is considered. If the pupil hasn't returned after 20 school days of continuous unauthorised absence, then de-registration could take place on the 21st day of unauthorised absence. (Pupils cannot lawfully be removed from the school register until 20 school days continuous unauthorised absence after the agreed return date and only once reasonable enquiries have been made by the school and LA to ascertain the whereabouts of the child).



- Where a pupil's return is later than agreed and the pupil is removed from roll, schools may require parents to re-apply for their child's place and be interviewed by the Headteacher.
- 'Reasonable Enquiry' (for schools):
 - check with all members of staff who the pupil may have had contact with.
 - check with the pupil's friends, siblings and known relatives at this school or other schools.
 - make telephone calls to any numbers held or identified.
 - send a letter to the last known address and record the outcome.
 - undertake a home visit

6. Appendix 2

The attendance information for the school relies on efficient and prompt returns on absent pupils being made in period 1 and in period 5. The teaching staff for these periods must prioritise this task. All staff are expected to encourage good attendance and punctuality; this may include subject teachers taking a register of attendance at individual lessons.

For absences:

- Telephone calls are required in the morning
- A written explanation must be provided when the student returns.
- If the student fails to bring in a written note, the form tutor/secretary will provide them with a blank absence note (included in the register) which must be handed back the next day.
- If this note is not handed back the next day (i.e. the 2nd day back after the absence), the student will receive a 45 minute detention.

For prolonged days of absence:

- A medical note must be provided.
- If it is not, parents will be called in for a discussion
- Any pupil found truanting will be interviewed and appropriate sanctions applied to help them avoid this behaviour.

For non-attendance:

- Contact the parents on the 1st day by telephone.
- If contact cannot be made for two days, a letter will be sent home on the third day.
- If non-attendance continues for five days, a medical note must be provided (if this is the reason). If no medical note is provided, parents will be called in to discuss the prolonged absence. If the student returns after five days with no written explanation, she must come in with her parents for a discussion before rejoining lessons.
- If the student fails to attend for more than two weeks in any six week period then the social services will get involved and home visits made.
- If the student or parents/carers fail to respond the matter will be discussed further with a view to a formal referral.

From 2013 amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) 2006:

- Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Exceptional circumstances include:



- death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil
 - life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
 - parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)
 - leave for armed forces personnel who are prevented by operational duties to take their leave at any other time
 - leave of absence already granted by a previous school or local authority (granted within the last six months and supported by documentation from the previous school).
- Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.
 - Pupils with 85% or less attendance (or those who have missed at least 38 or more sessions) between September and the Easter holidays are counted as persistent absentees, whether their absence is authorised or not.
 - Headteachers should record the number and frequency of absence taken for this purpose throughout a pupil's school career in order to assess the potential impact on a pupil's education of any proposed further term time leave.
 - When parents request permission to take their children out of school during term time where there are exceptional circumstances, an application form should be completed and submitted to the school at least two weeks before they are due to leave. Parents must contact the school and allow the school to consider their application before booking flights or leaving the country, even when unforeseen events occur (e.g. family bereavement)
 - Headteachers should also take into account the following circumstances:
 - the pupils current absence record
 - the number of previous similar requests
 - the year group the pupil is in
 - proximity of major tests/exams
 - the time of the academic year proposed
 - the duration of the absence and its impact on continuity of learning
 - As part of their application for leave in term time in exceptional circumstances, parents/carers will be expected to demonstrate a willingness to make arrangements that cause the least disruption to their children's learning.
 - Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interests of the pupil nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. School and school friendships and relationships can provide pupils with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background to life during times of upheaval. However, where the Headteacher judges there to be genuine and exceptional reasons for a pupil to be absent during term time, they may agree to a period of leave and have the right to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Granting such a block of leave should be an absolute exception. The Local



Authority suggests that if parents apply for leave for their child and the Headteacher is minded to grant leave, where possible the leave should be wrapped around the school holidays and that there should be no more than 3 consecutive school days approved.

- The Headteacher and Governing body are within their rights to turn such applications down and refuse authorisation for parents/carers to take their children out of school during term time. Such a decision will have been made in the best interests of the pupil's educational progress and attainment and with due regard to their previous attendance record
- A home/school contract or agreement, stating the date of return, must be agreed and signed by the parent/carer and Headteacher.
- Failure to agree a home/school contract, or non-return by the agreed date, places the parents/carers at risk of being issued a penalty notice or the pupil at risk of losing her school place. The parent/carer must be informed in writing of this prior to departure.
- If the school decides not to agree to the request and the parents/carers take their children on unauthorised leave, a decision must be taken by the Headteacher as to whether it is appropriate to follow the removal from roll procedures or the penalty notice procedures, or neither. Please note that removal from roll is not applicable for pupils with a Special Educational Needs Statement or if a pupil is the subject of a child protection plan without the agreement of the Local Authority.
- A penalty notice may not be issued if the Headteacher has authorised any of the leave or if the child has been deleted from the school roll, or the school intends to remove the child from the school roll.
- If a pupil takes unauthorised leave in term time without the Head Teacher's Permission, it will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised. This may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice and legal action being taken or the child losing their school place. If they are issued with a penalty notice, each parent will be fined a minimum of £60 or £120 depending on how soon payment is made. If that fine is not paid, they may be required to attend Court and this could result in a fine for each parent of up to £1000 per child. If the child does not return to school within 20 school days, the pupil may be deleted from the school register on the 21st day i.e. they will no longer have a place at the school.