

School Attendance Policy

Al-Noor Voluntary Aided Primary School



Approved by:	Governing Board	Date: May 2023
Last reviewed on:	N/A	
Next review due by:	May 2024	

Children that excel at Al-Noor Primary School attend school every day, punctually and ready to learn.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We believe in giving every child the best opportunity to achieve highly at school and that good school attendance is essential for this.
- 1.2 We believe it is our duty to do all we can to enforce good attendance and encourage parents to consider the effects of school absence on their children's welfare.
- 1.3 If a child is often absent from school it has a damaging effect on his/her development, motivation, levels of concentration and academic progress. It is shocking to note that:
 - 90% attendance over a school year = 4 weeks' absence that year;
 - 90% attendance over 7 years of schooling = almost a year's absence (28 weeks);
- 1.4 This policy has been written with reference to the statutory regulations detailed governmental advice on school attendance¹

2. Expectations and daily routines

- 2.1 The school gate opens at 7.45am on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and 7.30am on Thursday. The school day ends at 3.00pm daily. A senior leader will be at the school gate meeting and greeting children and parents in the mornings.
- 2.2 The school gate closes at 8.05am on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. On Thursday it closes at 7.50am. Pupils arriving after the gate has been closed are required to enter the school through the school office and parents are required to sign their child in, using the school's electronic signing-in system.
- 2.3 Class staff take the register each day in the morning and in the afternoon. The attendance register is a legal record that is completed according to legal requirements.
- 2.4 Registers are taken before assemblies on Mondays and Wednesdays for KS2 classes. On Thursday mornings, for years 1 to 6, registers are taken in the playground/park and digitised upon entry to school after Tag Rugby.
- 2.5 The codes used in registers are depicted in appendix 1 to this policy.
- 2.6 The school uses Integris' online attendance register; each class has its own tablet on which staff record attendance. Alternatively, staff use classroom computers too. In the event of internet or computer failure, printed class lists are available from the school office on which to record attendance and transfer to Integris later on.

¹ Working together to improve school attendance, Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, May 2022.

- 2.7 Each class attendance list is printed off after the register closes, to be used in the case of an emergency evacuation. The attendance log on the school's electronic signing-in system is also printed.
- 2.8 The morning attendance register closes at 8.30am and the afternoon register closes at 1.30pm. Pupils who arrive late but before 8.30am (or 1.30pm) are marked as late in the attendance register. The attendance of children coming to school after these times has to be recorded on the attendance register as unauthorised absences this is why their parents are required to sign them in at school, using the electronic signing in system in the school's reception area.

3. Absences

- 3.1 No authorised absence is permitted in school term time. School term dates are sent to parents in advance of each academic year and made available on the school website for parents to refer to at any time.
- 3.2 No period of leave, whether for holidays or other reasons, is permitted during school term time. Leave will also never be permitted just before or after a scheduled school holiday.
- 3.3 If unauthorised leave is taken during school term time, a penalty notice will be issued per parent per child.
- 3.4 All medical appointments should be booked outside of school hours whenever possible, to avoid all unnecessary absences and disruption to learning. In the event of an unavoidable absence due to a medical appointment, evidence of the appointment must be provided to the school office in advance of the appointment.
- 3.5 Parents are required to call the school to explain absences on the first day of an absence and on each day of absence thereafter. If a call is not received by the school, the school attendance officer, Ms N. Afzal, will call home or, if she cannot make contact with parents, she will send a text message requesting the reason for the absence.
- 3.6 Parents are expected to provide evidence of illness, for a continued absence of five days or more.
- 3.7 The school has a local authority appointed Education Welfare Officer, whose role is to support the school in ensuring no child is unnecessarily absent and all children have an excellent school attendance record. The Education Welfare Officer also conducts home visits where parents have not made any contact with the school to provide reasons for an absence.

4. Working with Parents

- 4.1 The school is required to take action to improve the school attendance of any child whose attendance is poor. For this reason, it writes to parents to alert them about their child's attendance record if it drops to concerning levels. The school will issue colour coded letters at the end of each term to inform parents of their child's latest attendance figures. A red

letter would be used for an attendance rate below 90%, an amber letter for an attendance rate between 91% - 95% and a green letter for 96% - 100%

- 4.2 If there is no improvement by the end of the first term and attendance has further fallen to 92.5%, the Attendance Officer will write to parents reminding them of the school's pupil attendance expectations. The school will consider the individual circumstances of each case and offer parents support to help improve their child's attendance where appropriate. Parents will also be informed that further supporting evidence will be required for any future absences, in addition to the usual school letter/email to explain the absence.
- 4.3 If a pupil's attendance drops to amber before the first letters in an academic year are sent to parents, at the end of the first term, the school will notify parents and ascertain the reasons for this. Parents will be reminded of the need to ensure their child attends school regularly. If the attendance rate continues to drop and reaches 90%, parents will be required to meet with a senior leader.
- 4.4 The barriers to good attendance will be discussed and measures put in place to remove school barriers to help parents improve their child's attendance. If barriers to good attendance stem from outside of the school, access will be provided to wider support services. Such support services include: services such as the NHS, mental health services, Early Help, parenting support and Social Services. Parents will also be advised that further drops in school attendance will result in the involvement of the school's Education Welfare Officer and the local authority support team, who will require evidence of all future absences, if appropriate.
- 4.5 If attendance continues to drop, the Education Welfare Officer will write to parents and arrange a meeting to explore the support given, the progress made and whether other support is necessary. The Education Welfare Officer will work with the school and local authority support team to provide further support where appropriate.
- 4.6 If attendance does not improve despite all the support measures used to improve a child's attendance, the school, Education Welfare Officer and local authority may be required to resort to legal sanctions such as penalty notices, parenting orders, parenting contracts or prosecution.
- 4.7 The following categories of absences require the school (the School Attendance Officer after consulting with the headteacher) to contact the local Education Welfare Services Department without resort to the above:
- Pupils who have been absent without authorisation for ten days or more;
 - Pupils who are about to be deleted from the admission register due to withdrawal for any reason
 - Pupils who have been withdrawn by parents because they no longer live locally;
 - Pupils suffering serious long-term illness;
 - Pupils in custody;
 - Pupils who have been permanently excluded.

5. Parental Role

- 5.1 It is essential that, as far as possible, pupils maintain full attendance throughout their programme of study.
- 5.2 It is also important that parents discuss any problems regarding attendance with their pupil's class teacher or the headteacher, who will be able to offer advice and guidance.
- 5.3 Parents must report any forthcoming absences due to appointments in advance with accompanying evidence to the Attendance Officer.
- 5.4 Parents must report any sudden illnesses by ringing or emailing the school office by 8.30am in the morning of the absence on 0208 597 7576, absences@al-noorprimary.org.uk, clearly explaining the reason for the absence, including any symptoms. This must be done daily for each day of absence.
- 5.5 Parents must apply for leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances in writing to the headteacher and wait for a reply before making bookings and arrangements (see paragraph 6.1).
- 5.6 School attendance is also important because the law requires it. Parents are legally responsible for making sure their children receive a full-time education. For most people this means registering the child at school and making sure they attend. Failing to ensure children's regular attendance at school is a legal offence.

6. Acceptable reasons for pupil absence

- 6.1 **Illness**
Parents are expected to provide medical evidence for a continued absence of five days or more.
- 6.2 **Medical appointments**
Parents are expected to arrange appointments as much as possible during school holidays, at weekends or after school hours. There will be times when this isn't possible but parents are requested to try to give as much advance warning as possible and take the appointment letter or card into school.
- 6.3 **Religious festivals**
The school is closed during all Muslim and national holidays. Pupils from other religions will be given up to 3 days leave for each religious festival requiring absence.

7. Holidays

- 7.1 Redbridge Local Authority state that leave of absence during term time should not be granted unless in the most exceptional of circumstances. Governmental legislation informs this view. Holidays during term time are not permitted at Al-Noor Primary School but discretion (of the headteacher) will be applied to requests for leave in genuinely exceptional

circumstances. Leave of absence taken without the headteacher's permission could result in a penalty notice. If the headteacher grants a leave request it will be for the headteacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school

8. Punctuality

- 8.1 If a child arrives late (after 8.10am) 3 times in a 3-week period parents will receive a phone call from the school
- 8.2 If a child arrives late (after 8.10am) 5 times in a 5-week period parents will receive a letter from the school to notify them
- 8.3 If a child arrives late (after 8.30am) 7 times in a 6 week period a Penalty notice is issued.
- 8.4 A member of SLT will be present at the school office monitoring and speaking to parents and children who arrive late regularly.

9. Late collection

- 9.1 The school day finishes at 3.00pm. Children must be collected from their child's year group playground space at this time. Children who are not collected from the playground by 3.15pm when the school gate is closed will be taken to the school office by their class teacher and will need to be signed out by parent/guardian when collected, with a record made of time of late collection and reason.
- 9.2 On the first occasion parents will be reminded about arriving on time to collect their child. On the second late collection parents will be charged pro-rata at an hourly rate of £20.00. This will be invoiced to the parent.
- 9.3 School staff recognise and understand that on rare occasions, due to exceptional unexpected circumstances a child may not be collected on time. In these circumstances a parent/carer must communicate with the school to ensure school staff are kept informed of the estimated collection time for the child. However, it is unacceptable for children to be regularly collected late.

After school clubs

After school clubs finish at 4.00pm or 4.15pm depending on what you have signed up for. Children should be collected from main school office at this time.
Children collected late more on more than three occasions will be removed from the clubs with no refund.

10 Child Missing from Education (CME)

- 10.1 The London Borough of Redbridge defines Children Missing Education (CME) as:

- A child of statutory school age (5-16) living in Redbridge not on roll at a registered school, alternative provision or in receipt of Elective Home Education (EHE)
 - A child who has stopped attending school in Redbridge and moved away from their last known address with their destination unconfirmed or unknown, including those young people believed to have left the UK.
- 10.2 A child going missing from education is potentially an indicator that s/he is suffering abuse or neglect. Staff members must carefully follow the school's procedures, as outlined here and in the pupil attendance policy, for dealing with children that are absent for long periods, or are absent without explanation, particularly on repeated occasions, to help assess the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help reduce the risk of him/her going missing in future.
- 10.3 The law requires the school to have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils will be placed on both registers. The school will place pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupils will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school will notify the local authority at the earliest opportunity to prevent the child from going missing from education.
- 10.4 The admission register will be kept accurately and up to date. The school will regularly encourage parents to inform it of any changes whenever they occur to help the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.
- 10.5 When a parent notifies the school that a pupil will live at another address, the school will record in the admission register:
- the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live;
 - the new address; and
 - the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.
- 10.6 Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools will record in the admission register:
- the name of the new school; and
 - the date on which the pupils first attended or is due to start attending that school.
- 10.7 The Pupil Attendance Officer, will inform the local authority, as soon as the school is informed and before deletion, of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations², including if the child:
- has been taken out of school by his/her parents and is being educated outside the school system e.g., home education;
 - has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school;
 - has been certified by their GP, consultant physician or hospital, as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to return to school before the end of year six; or,
 - has been permanently excluded.

This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points – when the pupil has completed the final year of education

² The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

- 10.8 The Pupil Attendance Officer, will also inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days, as close as conveniently possible to the 10th day of absence. The CME online referral form must be completed at:

<https://eforms.redbridge.gov.uk/children-missing-education-referral/cme@redbridge.gov.uk>

- 10.9 The school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii). The school will also consider whether it is appropriate to highlight any contextual information of a vulnerable child who is missing education, such as any safeguarding concerns.

11. Monitoring and Review

- 11.1 School attendance is tracked on a daily, weekly and termly basis. It is also tracked for individual pupils. Poor attendance is responded to as set out above. Good attendance is rewarded through publicity in weekly assemblies and school bulletins. The best class receives a trophy and 10 Dojo points (see behaviour policy). Improvements in individual attendance are also acknowledged with reward and praise in assemblies.
- 11.2 The headteacher monitors and reviews the effectiveness of this policy with the support of the School Attendance Officer, senior leaders, school staff, parents and pupils.
- 11.3 Summary attendance and absence data is tracked and shared with school governors on a termly basis.
- The proportion of authorised absences for the previous academic year (whole year, first two terms)
 - The proportion of unauthorised absences for the previous academic year (whole year, first two terms)
 - The proportion of total absences for the previous academic year (whole year, first two terms)
 - The proportion of total absences due to illness and for holidays for the previous academic year (whole year, first two terms)
 - The proportion of pupils absent for 10% or more over the first two school terms and the whole year, in the previous academic year (the percentage of persistent absentees at the school)
 - The reasons for persistent absences for the previous academic year.
 - The proportions of persistent absence for each pupil characteristic group: gender, SEND, ethnicity, FSM, first language and year group.
- 11.4 This policy will be reviewed every year or as the need arises, for example due to changes in legislation or in response to feedback received on the effectiveness of the policy during the course of each year.

Details of school contact

Ms Nazia Afzal
Office manager/attendance & admissions officer

Ms Someera Butt, Headteacher
Senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in the school

Version History	Date
PAP.19-20.1	28/01/20
PAP.22-23.1	04/10/22
PAP.22-23.2	04/10/22
PAP.22-23.3	05/05/23

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness

M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day