

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of last review:	July 2018
Date of next review:	July 2019
Approved by:	Rabia Education Trust

At Rabia Girls' School, we believe:

- Regular school attendance and punctuality is essential if our pupils are to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them.
- Time is a very valuable and important concept which we need to nurture and develop within our pupils.
- The importance of regular attendance and being punctual needs to be impressed on our pupils as part of their preparation to be successful in their adult life.

We acknowledge that irregular and late attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment, pupils suffer a loss of experiences that cannot be entirely regained and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

This policy seeks to ensure that all staffs and parents are aware of attendance and punctuality matters in school.

This policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued;
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality;
- Ensuring that attendance / punctuality is monitored effectively and reasons for absences / lateness are recorded promptly and consistently.

Parental Responsibility

Parents have the prime and legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually and stay in school for every lesson after they have registered.

Parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually.

This will be done under the 1996 Education Act and aims to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children.

Parents will:

- Provide up to date contact numbers and change of address
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time, with breakfast, is appropriately dressed, with their planner and in a fit condition to learn and benefit from the education offered to them.

- Give a reason for any lateness;
- Offer a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence or on the first day of absence;
- Keep requests for absence to a minimum;
- Work closely with the school to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance;
- Not take holidays during term-time and be aware that requests for holidays during term time will be refused except in special/exceptional circumstances;

School Responsibility

Our School has a responsibility to provide education and promote regular attendance of all statutory school age children.

The Attendance and Pupil Support Service is the department at the Local Authority who is responsible for pupil absence. As well as providing guidance and support through its officers, may take a parent to court for not fulfilling their duty under section 444 of the Education act 1996.

The school will:

- Give high priority and positively support punctuality and regular attendance
- As a statutory responsibility record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for both the morning and afternoon sessions in the register of attendance.
- Do registration once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- Record in the register whether a pupil is present or absent. If absent, record whether absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- **Absences which are not notified by parents will be followed up by a phone call from school and if parents are unable to be contacted a letter will be sent home requesting reason of absence.**
- Develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absences, patterns of absences with effective monitoring and intervention;
- Develop effective strategies to promote and maintain attendance and punctuality;
- Encourage open communication channels between home and school;
- Encourage children to have a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality so that they can retain this into adult life.
- Adequately provide for pupils with difficulties

Strategies to encourage and maintain high standards of attendance and punctuality

- New parents are introduced and made aware of our attendance and punctuality policy
- Letters concerning poor attendance and punctuality are sent out
- Individual Parents will be called into school to meet with the Head/SMT if there are more than three late arrivals within a six-week period
- Attendance certificates are awarded to children for full attendance
- Punctuality is promoted through class rules
- A record of attendance and punctuality is also given on the written school report.

Recording

The class teacher will do the register of who is present and absent from school at **8.35am**. Any late pupils should then enter the school through the main entrance and report to office where it will be recorded. All staffs need to be aware that any child arriving late **MUST** register at the office for purposes of fire regulations.

Register is again taken at the start of the afternoon session.

Reasons for absence may be offered verbally by phone but must be followed by a letter on the child's return to school. The school may then decide if it wishes to authorise the absence or record it as an unauthorised absence.

This decision will be made within the guidance set out in the 1996 Education Act which identifies the following reasons as acceptable reasons for an authorised absence:

- The child is ill or is prevented from attending by unavoidable cause;
- The child is absent on days exclusively set apart for religious observance;
- The child is absent 'with leave'. ie. leave being granted by the school, only in special circumstances
- A reason for a period of absence is always required. The school will contact parents who have not offered a reason.

Monitoring

The senior management team will review the attendance of all the pupils on a termly basis and any pupils identified as a cause for concern having less than 90% attendance on a more regular basis. A letter will be sent to the parents of any pupil identified as having attendance problems informing them of the school's concerns and offering support to resolve any problems that may be impeding a child from attending.

The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored and if after a two-week period there appears to be no improvement the parents of the pupil will be invited to a meeting with the head teacher to discuss the issue and hopefully resolve any issues preventing the pupil from attending. If the parent/s does not attend the meeting or after such meeting the attendance of the pupil does not improve a formal referral to the EWO will be made.

Requests for Leave of Absence

If parents wish to request a period of leave they are required to complete an absence permission form. If the request is denied, the school will inform the parent of the reason. Leave of absence will **not** be offered to pupils for family holidays except under special/ exceptional circumstances and will not be authorised for more than 10 days in 1 academic year.

Aim:

This policy works, together with related policies and documents:

- Recognises the needs for immediate open honest communication between home and school.
- Views students as individuals and acknowledges that throughout a student's time at Rabia School a certain amount of absence may be inevitable and/or justifiable.
- Acknowledges that the school alone can determine whether absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Prevents students from having any prolonged break in schooling since it will have a significant detrimental effect on their achievement.
- Makes 'good attendance and punctuality' a priority for details regarding registration, which encourages and supports all students to strive for the best attendance they can achieve and recognises this wherever possible through appropriate reward systems.
- Ensures that student absences and poor punctuality are kept to a minimum through effective management, sanctions and rewards.
- Ensures that the school recognises the individual needs of the student when planning reintegration following exclusion/significant periods of absence.

- Makes referrals where necessary, and work under guidance from external agencies to address individual/group/whole school attendance issues.
- Reflects the current DfE legislation and guidance, and Ofsted requirements.

Introduction

At Rabia Education Trust we believe that full and regular attendance at school is a vital factor in achieving a successful education. We believe that our policy on attendance will help parents support our attempts to provide the best possible education for the children. The reinforcement of punctuality and full attendance has a powerful impact on educational progress. Parents/Carers have a moral, social and legal obligation to ensure their child(ren) attends School punctually on a daily basis.

This document explains the school's policy on:

- a) Information about Authorised and Un Authorised holidays.
- b) Request of leave of absences
- c) Holidays during term time
- d) Punctuality Procedures
- e) Lateness/absences actions.

Parents/carers are required to inform the school if their child is absent. If possible, in advance in writing and signed by the parent/carer. If not possible in advance then the parent must ring the school office (RGS: 01582-493-239) before 8.50am on the same day to give the required information and an intended return date.

When a child is unwell, parents are requested to inform the school by telephone, word of mouth or in writing. Parents are contacted on the first day of absence if no reason is given by 9.30am that morning. If any reason for absence is given other than illness parents are encouraged to bring their child to school as soon as possible. A clear indication of a return date to school is requested in all cases. If parents cannot be contacted by phone a letter is sent.

Requests for term time leave must be submitted on the School's relevant application form which can be asked from Admin office, well in advance of the proposed date (This must be done prior to bookings being made). Term time leave will only be considered under exceptional circumstances for up to 10 days in an academic year. After this period, if originally granted, a further absence may result in the school removing the students name from the school roll.

In order to meet whole school targets for attendance any unauthorised term time leave will be referred to the Education Welfare Service and may result in further action being taken against both parents. (This action could include issuing penalty notice warning letter, fixed penalty notice or instigating criminal proceedings in Magistrates Court.)

Examples of Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

Examples of Authorised Absences	Examples of Unauthorised Absences
Illness, medical or dental appointment. Provided the school is satisfied the illness and appointments are genuine.	Where a student arriving at school when registration has closed and is unable to give an acceptable reason.
Special occasions as agreed with the school as an authorised absence*	Additional days taken for special occasions or days other than those specified by the school.
	Shopping during school hours
	Going to the airport to meet or say goodbye to relatives.
	Looking after brothers or sisters
An agreed period for family bereavement*	Absence for more than the agreed period.
Religious observance days, the number and timing of each will be determined by the school eg one day for each Eid festival**	Additional days taken other than those specified by the school.
Off-site activities eg participation in educational festivals, representative sporting event during school time*	Attendance at any event without prior agreement with the school.
Term time leave, as agreed by the school in accordance with the guidance given in this document*	Term time leave without prior authorisation by the school.
	Several medical related absences unsupported by medical note and where attendance is below 87%

Request for leave of absence during term time

Guidance notes for parents/carers

The school acknowledges that any prolonged break in schooling has a significant detrimental effect on a student's achievement. However the school is conscious that many of our school community have family abroad, and understand that these links should be maintained. Therefore it is only in exceptional circumstances that the school will authorise a request for leave.

Parents/carers must complete the 'Request for leave of Absence during term time' form and wait for the Head Teacher's reply, prior to making any bookings. The Head Teacher will reply in writing within 5 days of receiving the request form, unless further clarification is required in order to make a decision.



The school will endeavour to be sensitive to personal circumstances and will consider a number of factors when deciding on whether to authorise a request. Thus, please be aware of the following points before completing the request form.

- Term time leave will only be considered under exceptional circumstances for up to 10 days in an academic year.
- No student may have more than 2 periods of leave (each up to 10 days) authorised during their time at Rabia School.
- The student must have 95% attendance in the previous 12 months or academic year to be considered for authorised holidays.
- No leave of absence will be granted for the sole purpose of taking a holiday.
- No leave of absence will be granted in the first 2 weeks of the school year (i.e. beginning of September).
- No leave of absence will be granted if it coincides with important dates on the school calendar (e.g. exams, parent consultation evenings, option choice selection period). Please feel free to ring the school to check important calendar dates prior to completing the request form.
- No leave of absence will be granted during Year 11 and very rarely in Year 10 since many GCSE subjects now have 'controlled conditions' exams at regular intervals throughout Year 10 as well as Year 11.
- No leave of absence will be granted in backdates.

If the school does not authorise the leave requested then the student's non-attendance at school will be recorded as unauthorised. This may lead to a referral to the Education Welfare Service and

subsequent action (e.g. prosecution for non-school attendance) or even removal of the student from the school roll.

Punctuality Procedures

- School door opens at 8:25am and door closes at 8:40am
- 'Registration' begins at 8:40am with the teacher in charge.
- Students arriving after 8:45am are recorded as 'late'
- Students arriving after 8:45am must sign with the Office.
- Afternoon registration is after lunch break at the start of their afternoon lesson. 12.25pm-12.30pm for Primary and 1.25pm-1.30pm for Secondary.

Lateness Actions:

Lateness (i.e. after 8.45am) is the equivalent to an unauthorised absence and will be monitored by the EWO in addition to the school staff.

Various sanctions will be used to address lateness in line with the school's strategy to improve punctuality. Sanctions will be used from the school's published list of Disciplinary Penalties but are likely to include:

- Calls & Letter to parents, removal of privileges/free time.
- An after school detention will be issued on each late.
- If your child becomes late 3 time during each half-term, the attendance officer will pass student details to SMT.
- At the discretion of SMT, your child's details could be forwarded to Education welfare officer.

Absences Actions:

- RG/BS attendance officer will refer the names of students who had taken unauthorised absences to the SMT immediately.
- Unauthorised absences will directly be forwarded to the Education Welfare Officer at the discretion of SMT.
- Parents should be contacted immediately about the consequences of unauthorised absences.
- Parents should provide satisfactory evidence (e.g. Prescription or Appointment Letter), if your child's medical leave extends 3 days period.
- If a child becomes absent due to medical reason for more than 5 days anytime during the each term. SMT will call a meeting with the parents to discuss their child's attendance.