



Rochdale Islamic Academy
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BOYS' SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Reviewed: September 2024

Next Review: August 2025

Responsible: Mr Arif Pirbhai (Head)

Governing Body Approved: September 2024

Approved: Mr Sohail Ahmed (Chair of Governors)

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rochdale Islamic Academy aims to encourage every student to achieve the highest possible levels of attendance in order to take full advantage of the learning experiences available to them. We recognise the very strong link that exists between a student's level of attendance and their achievement. This link is shared with students and parents at every opportunity.

We aim for 100% and ask for 95% as a minimum.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

A student is required by law (under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act and Regulations of 2006 and 2010) to attend regularly at the school where they are registered. The school is required to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence.

It is expected that the parent/carer will contact school to inform them concerning absence. However, it is for the school to judge whether the explanation given is satisfactory justification for the absence. Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and Section 105 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 empowers LA officers, Head-teachers, and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school, and for parental failure to ensure that their child is not in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of an exclusion.

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude to any special educational needs that they may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A prosecution can take place against any person that has parental responsibility for the child's education or who has care of the child. Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children are properly educated.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of everyone (students, parents, governors and all staff) in the school to improve the attendance and reach the annual targets set by the LA and DfE. This is achieved by a close partnership between the LA, parents and support agencies.

STUDENTS

All students are expected to attend all their lessons regularly and punctually. Where there are difficulties, support will be offered from Tutors, Pastoral Managers, and the Attendance Improvement Officer. Good attendance will be rewarded regularly with awards. Poor attendance will be monitored closely, and parents contacted.

School starts at 8:00am however the school is open from 7:45am. Students are expected to be in their class by 7:55am at the very latest so that they can start their lessons promptly. Students who arrive late are greatly disadvantaged because they miss starting the day with their peers and the beginning of form and lessons. This can mean that they are often unsettled and confused about tasks. It is essential that you ensure that your child arrives at school on time to prevent disruption to your child's own learning and that of others.

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education.

If a student is late for more than 3 occasions, an after-school detention will be issued. It is not optional. If concerns persist, a conversation will take place with the student, attendance officer and a member of the Senior Leadership Team and contact will be made with a parent/ carer. Ongoing concerns will result in a meeting with a parent/carers in school.

PARENTS/CARERS

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, on time and properly equipped for learning. They are expected to notify the school promptly on the designated attendance telephone number if their child cannot attend. Any absence will be considered unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received. The school staff will contact a parent on the first day of absence if no reason has been provided. Parents are discouraged from making medical/dental appointments during school time, if at all possible, and only expected to remove their child from school for the minimum period when this is unavoidable. School will require evidence if pupils are out of school for medical appointments and interviews.

SCHOOL

Attendance is the responsibility of all, but especially that of the form Tutors and Attendance Officer, who closely monitor and regularly communicate with parents, students and staff. The school employs a whole range of strategies to encourage good attendance (Awards, Certificates) and punctuality and promptly follows up absences and lateness. A careful log will be kept of all enquiries regarding moving schools.

UNAUTHORISED FAMILY HOLIDAYS

Headteacher receives request form from parent to grant permission for leave during term time as a result of a proposed family holiday or Headteacher is notified that a family has taken a holiday without seeking prior permission; Headteacher considers whether the request could be considered to fall under the heading of *exceptional circumstances*.

Headteacher must notify the parent, in writing, of their decision to refuse to grant permission for leave/code the absence as unauthorised and warning them that this refusal places the parent(s) at risk of having their child removed from the school Roll.

Headteacher to await the response of parent(s) and, if the family holiday goes ahead, during term time, then the period of absence (of 5 days or more) must be clearly recorded as '**G**' on the official attendance register (thus ensuring that it is recorded as an unauthorised family holiday); or the student will be taken off Roll. A penalty notice will be issued.

If request is not being made as a result of 'exceptional circumstances' OR family have already taken a holiday without seeking the prior approval of the Headteacher, then the period of absence must be clearly recorded as '**G**' on the official attendance register (thus ensuring that it is recorded as an unauthorised family holiday); or the student will be taken off Roll. **A fine of £50 per day, per child, will be issued.**

EXTENDED LEAVE DURING TERM TIME

Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress, we therefore strongly recommend that you do not arrange holidays in this period. Regular attendance in Years 10 and 11 is particularly important in preparation for GCSE exams. Therefore, no requests for holiday absence will be authorised in years 10 and 11.

The school will allow 5 days leave during term time in reasonable circumstances. Each request for absence will be dealt with on an individual basis; parents **MUST** consult the school prior to booking holidays. A penalty notification may be given for holidays longer than five days or for holidays taken without permission. Depending on the duration or how often holidays occur without authorisation, the child may also face permanent expulsion from school. You are strongly advised to complete a holiday request form and return it to the school for consideration and authorisation before booking any holidays.

IMPROVING ATTENDANCE

The schools Attendance Improvement Officer monitors absences. A monthly meeting takes place and students causing concern are discussed and referred for follow-up action when the school requires intervention and support. Students whose attendance is below 90% are reviewed weekly and the officer works with the student and their parents where there is a high or persistent absence.

REGISTRATION

Registration takes place at 8.00am and 12.30pm. In the morning, phone calls are made for absences from 8:15am (when registration ends). The attendance officer notes in the system whether the parent made the call or if the admin made the call. They also note down the reason of the absence. A note must be provided the day your child returns to school from the parent, this must be dated and signed by the parent. If there was a doctor's appointment, a doctor's note must be provided.

If a student fails to arrive before registers have closed, he should report to the General Office and sign the late book. The register entry will read 'late'. If a student is regularly late parents are contacted and the student is put on attendance report. Arrival more than 30 minutes after registers have closed without an acceptable reason can result in a student being marked as unauthorised. Students late to school regularly or without a good reason will receive a detention after school. Detentions are on

Mondays and Thursdays. The detention lasts for 30 minutes regardless of how late the student was the day before.

Tutors take registers in their form rooms and will notify the Office of any concerns. Further registers are taken in every lesson thereafter. Absences for half a day (one session) is coded according to category.

The Attendance Officer monitors the registers closely and follows up any incorrect procedures or inconsistencies.

AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

It is essential that all staff follow the same criteria when deciding whether or not to authorise an absence.

The role of the Attendance Officer is key in this issue and ensures consistency of practice. The school decides on how absence is recorded following the latest guidance from the DfE (see Good Practice Guide for Secondary Schools – Attendance Matters E.W.S and he keeps up to date with “Attendance matters”).

HOLIDAYS

Parents are clearly told by the school that the Headteacher will only authorise a family holiday during term time in exceptional circumstances.

The Headteacher will notify the parent in writing of their decision to refuse to grant permission and will code as unauthorised if the circumstances are not “exceptional”. A letter agreed in Local Group is used by all local schools. Parents who disregard this and still take their child on holiday unauthorised receive a further letter to ask them to ensure their child has good attendance for the rest of the year (minimum 95%).

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

1. Rochdale Islamic Academy will provide an environment in which students feel safe, valued and welcome. Our ethos must demonstrate that students feel their presence is important and that it is vital for their achievement and progress. Students need to know they will be missed, and any absence will be followed up.

2. Students who feel vulnerable and experience difficulties attending class or have friendship problems will be supported and given strategies to help them cope. The Pastoral Managers will be the key member of staff involved liaising closely with the Tutors.
3. A varied, and flexible curriculum will be offered to all students. Special provision will be made for identified students and a mentoring scheme exists to promote confidence and well-being.
4. A clearly defined and consistent approach to positive behaviour management exists to provide a fair system and support for all students especially those who have difficulties, focusing on rewarding the positive.
5. Every effort will be made to ensure that learning tasks are matched to students' needs and support is available whenever possible.
6. Attendance data will be produced and monitored regularly and analysed in order to identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievements and support and inform policy/practice.
7. High attendance will be recognised and awarded every term.
8. Students whose attendance is a cause for concern will be monitored closely.
9. Parents will be reminded regularly (via newsletters, letters home etc.) of the importance of regular attendance.
10. Students who have been absent for an extended period of time, or who are experiencing serious attendance problems, will have individually tailored programmes to support them.
11. School staff will liaise with other services/agencies that may assist students who are experiencing difficulties.
12. Pastoral Managers, SENCO, the Attendance Improvement Officer, and assistant head teacher will have regular meetings where attendance issues are discussed.
13. Discussion on transfer (with primary and upper schools) will identify students who require extra support or pastoral support programmes involving a multi-agency plan.
14. The Head will report to the Governing body at least annually on attendance matters. Process for Requesting Penalty Notice(s).

PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Overall, the majority of our pupils arrive at school well before the bell rings for the start of the day. It is imperative that pupils arrive at school on time each day; pupils arriving late miss out on valuable learning during assembly/Taaleem time. To overcome persistent punctuality issues the school has reviewed its punctuality policy and will apply the following policy.

1st late - Verbal warning & note on ClassDojo to parents.

2nd late – 2nd verbal warning & note on ClassDojo to parents.

3rd late - After school detention

4th late - Meeting with parents & attendance report

5th late - Temporary Exclusion

Persistent 'lates' may result in permanent exclusion or referral to external authorities.