



Al-Ashraf Secondary School for Girls

Attendance policy

1. Introduction

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills which will equip them for life.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which pupils, staff, and parents can work in partnership.

The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage punctuality and good attendance and Head Teacher/Senior Manager will liaise with home about a pupil's attendance when this is appropriate.

Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such with awards such as certificates and prizes.

2. Principles

Pupils should come to school every day

i) A pupil should only be absent if the reason is "unavoidable." Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by parents), as either authorised or unauthorised.

This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

ii) Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness or other unavoidable causes.

iii) Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given.

This includes:

- going shopping
- minding the house
- looking after siblings
- attending weddings
- airport trips
- truancy
- absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark

iv) Some pupils need encouragement to attend regularly. Any problems are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the pupil. It is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from school. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving problems together.

v) If problems cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the pupil to the school Education Social Worker.

vi) Parents or pupils may wish to contact the Education Social Worker themselves to ask their advice. They are independent of the school and can be contacted at the local education authority.

3. Procedures

If a pupil is unfit for school, parents should contact the school on the first day in person or by telephone; otherwise the school will contact the parents.

Absences will not be authorised unless the reasons are valid. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which are unavoidable in school time, provided parents ring the school.

Please make all effort to make non-urgent medical/dental appointments out of school hours or during lunchtime, as missing lessons interrupts teaching and learning.

4. Holidays and other circumstances in which a pupil could be absent

All holiday leave and other circumstances for absence in term time are at the discretion of the Head Teacher. Provided the request is made in advance in writing by the parent looking after the pupil, **leave for up to twenty days once during a pupil's school career may be granted, provided the pupil's attendance record is otherwise satisfactory.** Leave may be refused where pupils have already missed a lot of work in the past or at crucial times of the year (e.g during exams).

Flights must not be booked before leave is unauthorised.

Parents are strongly urged not to plan holidays in Year's 9 –11 as these are important years for their daughter. The Head Teacher/Deputy Head will consider request for leave during these years on a case-by-case basis.

Requests for leave beyond twenty days a year will not be granted except in exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis such as **Fardh Haj** where a maximum of 25 days will be allowed.

If parents fail to comply with the above and take unauthorised leave or take leave above 20 school days, the pupil will be taken off the school register and will have to re-apply with the current registration fee. The school also has a right to drop the pupil down a school year if teachers feel she is not capable of continuing in that Year due to the work missed.

The school will report to the (LA) Local Authority/social services any unexplained absences of 10 consecutive days or more or frequent, recurrent absences and lates which are unexplained.

5. Lateness

Pupils must attend on time to be given a mark for a session. Parents are expected to ensure that children are present at registration. Pupils need to arrive before 8.45 am and 1.45 pm after which the register will be closed. Pupils who arrive after the registration period will be marked in late. Three recurring lates will warrant an immediate detention and the privilege of going home for lunch will be taken away for the rest of the term.

Parents will be notified if there is a recurring pattern of lates.

6. Missed Work

It is expected that in all cases of absence, pupils will catch up with work missed at the earliest opportunity.

7. Special Circumstances

It is recognised that there may be circumstances when a pupil may arrive late for a period of time because of transport difficulties or because of prolonged illness. The school would adopt a flexible approach in these instances and work with the pupil and parents to help in any way possible.

8. Rewards

- i) The school will celebrate 100% attendances by presenting pupils with award certificates and prizes as appropriate.
- ii) A high level of attendance would merit a strong and supportive reference from the school to future employers & sixth form colleges.

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