

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

This document sets out a clear guideline for Parents and Students enrolled at either Islamia Girls' School or Brondesbury College (hereinafter referred to as the 'School') in relation to the School's attendance and punctuality policy and regulations. The policy aims to support Parents in their statutory and legal responsibility which is to send children to school regularly and punctually, properly dressed and in a suitable condition to learn (Education Act 1944). It also serves to state the measures the school will take to record attendance and punctuality.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. A key characteristic of our School is the consistent implementation of the discipline of daily practice. In maintaining this discipline, our School recognises that all people, in particular our Students, benefit from a regular and ordered life where key practices take place at set times daily. This level of self-discipline is reinforced within the teachings of Islam through the compulsory daily observations of Salah (Prayer) at set prescribed times.
- 1.2. Attendance and punctuality at School is linked to a Student being able to achieve better results due to non-disruption in the Student's daily learning. Lateness to class disrupts the Student's learning, the learning of the entire class and the teaching plan set by the class Teacher.
- 1.3. As a private independent School, we address issues of attendance and punctuality very strictly. This policy addresses all aspects surrounding this including lateness to School, lateness to class, appointments during the School day, truancy and holidays during term time.
- 1.4. It is the aim of our School to provide Parents, Students and Staff with clear guidelines as to what the School's expectations are and the consequences of non-compliance. Where there is ambiguity and a difference of opinion and/or interpretation, the Schools decision will be final.
- 1.5. This policy therefore promotes high levels of attendance and punctuality of Students at our School.
- 1.6. In order for Students to benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided by the School, Students must consistently maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality. Ineffective registration or poorly executed follow-up procedures can increase the risks of educational underperformance and cases of truancy, which can result in a negative affect on personal and/or social development among Students. A child going missing from School is a potential indicator of abuse and/or neglect and in itself may indicate that a Student is at risk of significant harm. Consequently, attendance and registration arrangements are vitally important and must be regarded as such by Parents, Students and Staff alike.

2. Statutory Framework

- 2.1. The legal framework governing School attendance is summarised in School attendance: Guidance for maintained Schools, academies, independent Schools and local authorities (July 2019), which has been published by the Department for Education (DfE) [School Attendance & Punctuality Policy - Appendix A *annexed and made part of this policy*]. The School also complies with guidance published by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) and advice published by the London Borough of Brent.

3. Responsibilities of Parents

- 3.1. Under the Education Act 1996, it is the legal responsibility of Parents with a child of compulsory School age (between the ages of 5 through to 16) to make sure that their child receives effective full-time education throughout the whole of academic year.
- 3.2. Parents are responsible for informing the School on any occasion when their child is unable to attend due to illness, or a medical appointment, providing a valid reason for their child's non-attendance. This should be done by:
 - Emailing admin@islamiaschools.com or secretary@brondesburycollege.co.uk or by
 - Telephoning 0207 372 3472 (IGS) or 0208 830 4522 (BC).
- 3.3. Notifications of absence or a Student's delay in arrival must be made to the School's Attendance Officer or the Form Tutor as far as possible in advance and at the very latest by 08:30 on each morning of absence, by which time Students must otherwise be on site.

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- 3.4. Parents seeking to take their child out of School for an exceptional reason, such as attending a funeral, must seek authorisation for the absence from the School in advance by emailing either the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School directly. The Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal will confirm whether the circumstances meet the definition of 'exceptional circumstances' for which leave of absence may be granted by the School.
- 3.5. Parents are not allowed to turn up to School without notice and request to take their child out of School early due to personal reasons unless there is a justifiable emergency which needs to be requested in writing from either the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School. A penalty of £50 for non-compliance will be issued by the School if Parents choose to ignore the School's policy.
- 3.6. Students are expected to be at School and receive an uninterrupted education for 190 days out of the academic year, including Target Setting Days and other School activities. This leaves 175 days (inclusive of weekends) open for Parents to book appointments during those times.
- 3.7. Where Parents fail to ensure that their child attends School regularly or is persistently late and/or absent, hence creating a disruption to their child's ongoing learning needs, the School has a duty to contact the Local Authority (LA) in Brent who can investigate the matter and ultimately take legal action against Parents, which may incur a financial penalty. Failure to enforce attendance is a safeguarding concern.
- 3.8. In the event that Parents are scheduled to be away from home overnight during term time, they are required to inform the School directly of the name and contact number of the temporary Guardian that has been nominated by the Parents during the Parent's time of absence from the home. This information should be provided in writing by email to the Form Tutor and the Attendance Officer by emailing admin@islamiaschools.com or secretary@brondesburycollege.co.uk. This information is crucial for the School to receive prior to a Parent's departure for safeguarding reasons and in the event that the School needs to make contact with the Parent due to any unforeseen emergencies.
- 3.9. At the end of each School day, Students are expected to make their way home directly and not loiter on the streets or in groups by the local shops and coffee houses or train stations. It is imperative that Parents take the safety and wellbeing of their child seriously. If Students are found to be loitering around aimlessly outside the school premises Parents will be informed and Student's will be addressed according to the School's Behaviour & Disciplinary Policy. Students who are waiting to be collected at the end of the School day must wait inside the School premises not on the streets or outside the School grounds.

4. Responsibilities of Students

- 4.1. Students have a responsibility to attend School when they are fit and well and to arrive at School in time for registration (morning and afternoon) each day during term time. If for any reason a Student needs to leave the School site during the School day their Parent must request for an early exit in writing to the Form Tutor and the Attendance Officer by emailing admin@islamiaschools.com or secretary@brondesburycollege.co.uk. This emailed request must be received by the School as far as possible in advance and at the very latest by 08:30 on the morning of the day of the early exit leave requested. The Attendance Officer will then update the School's system and notify the relevant Teachers regarding the authorised absence.
- 4.2. The School Reception will not allow any Student to exit the School site during School time without having received prior written consent from the Parents with a valid reason and having been authorised by either the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School in advance.
- 4.3. Failure to attend School regularly or punctually or failing to attend registration without a valid reason constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct and Student's will be addressed according to the School's Behaviour & Disciplinary Policy.
- 4.4. Students who are found to be loitering by their lockers or in the bathrooms during registration times will be marked in as being 'Late' (L). Registration takes place before or after a break, hence allowing Students to make their way to and from their lockers and/or the bathroom in good time if they manage their time correctly. Poor management of time is not a valid excuse and will not be accepted by the Form Tutor or the School.
- 4.5. All Students are issued with a personal copy of their School timetable at the start of each academic year. In addition, the School timetables are on display for all Year Groups in the School Reception and in the Staff Room as well as with all Teachers in their Classrooms.

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- 4.6. Students will be dismissed on time from each lesson by their Teachers and will be expected to move quietly and in an orderly manner to their next lesson where they will line up silently in front of their Classroom in preparation for their next lesson. Teachers will take the register of each academic lesson within the first 5-minutes of the arrival of Students into the Classroom. Any Student who arrives after this time will be marked in the register as being 'Late' (L). If a Student is unavoidably delayed by a Teacher en-route to the next lesson, the Student must remind the Teacher to send a message to the next Teacher informing him/her of the delay.
- 4.7. Students are not allowed to visit their lockers during lesson times. There are set times for book changes and the collection of stationary or PE kits which are:
- Before morning registration (to collect books for Period 1 and Period 2).
 - After Period 2 (to drop-off books and collect snack).
 - At the end of the morning Break (to collect books for Period 3 and Period 4).
 - After Period 4 (to drop-off books before Salah and Lunch).
 - At the end of Salah and Lunch (to collect books for Period 5 and Period 6 on Monday - Thursday).
 - After Period 6 (to collect bags and coats for the end of the day).

5. Responsibilities of the School

- 5.1. The School has a legal responsibility for taking and maintaining an accurate School Register of all Students twice each day throughout term time. This happens once at the start of the School day during the morning registration session and for a second time during the afternoon registration session. Failure to enforce attendance is a safeguarding concern.
- 5.2. Every entry in the School Register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made, including back-up copies. Teachers also take registers of each academic lesson. If a Student is absent regularly due to medical and/or other reasons such that attendance falls below 95%, the Attendance Officer will ask for any further absences to be accompanied by a doctor's note or other medical evidence to support the absence. The School will inform the LA of any Student who fails to attend School regularly without the School's permission. The School will also inform the relevant LA and/or Children's Social Care (CSC), as appropriate, immediately if:
- A single absence raises child protection concerns (see Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy).
 - A Student has any unexplained unauthorised absence(s).
 - A Student of compulsory School age is to be deleted from the School Register when the next School is not known. In this last case, the School is required to report the circumstances, as soon as possible after the grounds for deletion are met, to the LA in which the Student lives and in any event before the Student's name is deleted from the School's Register.

6. Attendance & Registration Procedure

- 6.1. Form Tutors have the primary responsibility for registering their tutees in the morning so that the Attendance Officer can follow up absenteeism and lateness thereafter. Form Tutors will take the Attendance Register at the start of each session of each School day during the Morning Registration Period and during the Afternoon Registration Period.
- 6.2. In the morning Students should be on the School premises by 08:30, so that they may place all their belongings in their allocated lockers and take out their folders in preparation for Period 1 and Period 2 including their stationary and Homework Diary and so that they are punctual for morning registration which begins at 08:45 (IGS) and 08:35 (BC) in their Form Rooms or in the Mosque during the weekly Assembly where Students will be expected to sit in their register order.
- 6.3. Students arriving late (after 08:45 (IGS) or after 08:35 (BC)) should go directly to the School Reception and sign in there. The register for the morning session closes by 08:50. Students arriving after this time will be marked absent for the morning session.
- 6.4. The Attendance Officer will contact Parents within 24 hours, and ideally on the same day, if a Student is missing from School without an explanation and if the Parent has still not responded to the School. In such cases, the School will implement the following procedure:

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- If there is no explanation for absence, a text message will be sent to the Parents by the School Reception in the morning, alerting them to their child's absence.
- If no contact is received from Parents to explain the absence, a phone call will be made to them.
- If there is still no contact, either the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School will issue an Unauthorised Leave Fine of £150 for each school day missed to the family and may escalate the matter to the LA.

6.5. Afternoon registration is taken between 13:10 - 13:40 by Form Tutors, depending on the time of year, given a slight difference in time between the Summer and Winter timetables.

6.6. The registration codes used within our School are as follows:

/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)
L	Late (before registers closed)
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code description)
U	Late (after registers closed)

6.7. Absences related to School activities will be recorded as follows:

P	Approved sporting activity
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
#	School closed to Students

6.8. Where the School receives clear notification from Parents, other absences will be fined at £100 per full-day of absence and £50 per half-day of absence and recorded as follows:

C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)
H	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness (not medical or dental etc. appointments)
J	Interview
M	Medical or dental appointments
R	Religious observance

6.9. If a Student has not been collected from School 10 minutes after the close of the School / Club day a telephone call will be made to the Parents to ascertain the situation. When a Student is collected late, Parents are required to sign the Late Collection Register which is held at the Reception Office. This register will be monitored and used to identify Students who cause us concern. Support can then be offered if this problem persists. In accordance with the School's policy, if a Student has not been collected after 60 minutes following the close of the School / Club day and Parents have failed to make contact with the School, the School will be obliged to make a referral to the LA.

6.10. If a Student moves School, Parents are directly responsible for informing the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School stating the reason for removing their child and the name of the new School that the ex-Student has been moved to. This is a legal requirement that must be fulfilled by Parents.

6.11. The School monitors attendance and punctuality closely by identifying Students whose attendance and/or punctuality percentage has dropped below 95%. In such cases, the School will implement the following procedure:

- A letter will be emailed to Parents from the School, indicating that their child's attendance and/or punctuality has dropped below 95% and that the School is monitoring their child.
- In the event that the Student's attendance and/or punctuality continues to decline and reaches 93%, the School will invite Parents to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer and the Form Tutor. A record will be kept of the interview with agreed actions for all parties to follow.
- In the event that Parents fail to attend the meeting and/or the Student's attendance and/or punctuality continues to decline and reaches 90%, the School will invite Parents to attend a meeting with either the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School. A record will be kept of the interview with agreed actions for all parties to follow. The Student will also be issued with a detention on each day of late arrival for 30 minutes.

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- Should a Student's attendance and/or punctuality continue to decline and reach below 88% due to the non-compliance of Parents, the School will issue a daily Absence and Late Arrivals Fine of £30 for each day that a Student continues to arrive to School late or is absent. The Student will also be issued with a detention on each day of an absence or late arrival for 40 minutes.
- The School may escalate the matter to the LA as a result of the School's concern with Students missing steady and uninterrupted education where legal proceedings will begin resulting in Legal Fines and the possibility of prosecution.

7. Appointments During School Time

- 7.1. Medical and/or dental appointments during School time is not encouraged by the School and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances where the request for such appointments is made in writing from the Parents along with evidence of the appointment from a registered clinic, hospital, surgery or dental practice.
- 7.2. Students are expected to be at School and receive an uninterrupted education for 190 days out of the academic year. This leaves 175 days (inclusive of weekends) open for Parents to book appointments during those times.
- 7.3. The School reserves the right to contact the registered institute to confirm the appointment and in cases where appointments are frequently booked during term times, the School will contact the institute officially to request that appointments are issued during the timetabled holidays, the dates of which are published on the School's website a few months in advance of a new academic year and are therefore known to Parents.

8. Holidays and Absence During Term Time

- 8.1. Holidays or absences during term time is expressly prohibited.
- 8.2. Absences from any School trip is strongly discouraged by the School unless there is a genuine reason why Parents do not wish to authorise their child from attending a certain trip. All trips are designed to reinforce learning objectives within lessons and create a sense of team spirit amongst Teachers, Students and their fellow peers.
- 8.3. In the event that Parents do not authorise their child to attend a particular trip Parents should provide an email of pardon and send it to the Trip Organiser and the Attendance Officer by emailing admin@islamiaschools.com or secretary@brondesburycollege.co.uk. This information is crucial for the School to receive prior to the trip. The Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School will make a decision as to whether or not the reason is valid and will inform the family of the final decision accordingly.
- 8.4. In the event that a Student is pardoned from a particular trip, the Student will still be expected to attend School as normal on the day of the trip failure of which result in the School automatically issuing an Unauthorised Leave Fine of £150 for each school day missed.
- 8.5. In exceptional circumstances and only where it is proven to be unavoidable by the Parent, a Student may be permitted by either the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School to be granted up to 10 days away from School during term time throughout the Student's lifetime at the School.
- 8.6. For permission to be requested, the requesting Parent seeking to take their child out of School for an exceptional reason, such as attending a funeral overseas, must seek authorisation for the absence from the School in advance by completing a Leave of Absence Form and emailing the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School directly. The Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School will then confirm whether the circumstances meet the definition of 'exceptional circumstances' for which leave of absence may be granted by the School however the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School is not obliged to agree to any request.
- 8.7. If either the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School grants permission, which must be in writing, this will be marked down as an authorised absence in the register and the absence will incur a financial penalty of £100 as an Authorised Leave Fine for each School day missed.
- 8.8. In cases where Parents take their child out of School without seeking permission from either the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School, including during the last week of the Academic Year, the School will issue an Unauthorised Leave Fine of £150 for each school day missed to the family and may escalate the matter to the LA.

- 8.9. The School reserves the right to instruct Parents to show their child's original passport to either the Headmaster/Headmistress or Principal of the School if there is some doubt as to whether or not a Student has been taken overseas during term time, including during the last week of the Academic Year for safeguarding purposes. Failure to enforce attendance is a safeguarding concern.

9. Rewarding Good Attendance and Punctuality

- 9.1. All Students who attain 100% in their attendance and punctuality during each term will be rewarded at the end of every term with a certificate. Students receiving such certificates will demonstrate that they have been punctual to School and to every class during that term.
- 9.2. All references including College and Sixth Form applications that are issued by the School, particularly when Students are in Year 11, will highlight this achievement for those Students who have consistently maintained high levels of attendance and punctuality throughout their lifetime at the School. This is a quality that is sought after by prestigious and highly esteemed educational establishments in addition to employers.