

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



**Al Shoumoukh
International Academy
2025-26**

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Introduction

At Al Shoumoukh International Academy, we recognize that regular and punctual school attendance is important for academic success. Students need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. The school recognises its responsibilities to ensure students are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Children who are persistently late or absent from school soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning, which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age-related learning expectations.

Aims and Objectives

This policy ensures that all staff and parents of our school are fully aware of, and are clear about, the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy, we aim to:

- Improve students' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Encourage all students to be ambitious and to strive for 100% attendance across an academic year.
- Achieve a minimum of 70% attendance for all students, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school community.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and students of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Work in partnership with students, parents, carers and staff so that all students realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which students feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in students a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers and form tutors, in promoting good attendance.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents, carers and students.
- Ensuring parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, carers, students and staff on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting students who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school that are preventing good attendance.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.
- Contacting parents on the phone, by the end of the third day, when a child misses three consecutive days without the school having been informed beforehand.

Procedures

Our school will undertake the following procedures to support good attendance:

- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, parents, carers and students.
- Have consistent and systematic daily records that give detail of any absence and lateness.
- Follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- Strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.
- Work with parents to improve individual student's attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure all staff are aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Principal with responsibility for monitoring attendance.

Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

Class teacher

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/carers.
- Informing the Principal where there are concerns and acting upon them.
- Informing the parent/carer in writing and invite them in for a meeting if their child's attendance falls below 90%.
- Emphasizing with their class groups the importance of good attendance and promptness.
- Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation, which should be noted on school recording system.
- Sending weekly class % totals to the Administration so certificates can be printed and shared in assembly.

Principal

The Head of Year/Form Tutor is responsible for:

- Monitoring the year group attendance at the end of each month.
- Identifying trends in absenteeism.
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence, including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised.

Administration Staff

Staff in Reception are responsible for:

- Checking attendance registers every morning.
- Initiating a standard text message to the parent/carer of a child who is absent from school.
- Adding individual notes on the recording system stating the reason for the absence, once known.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence.
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home early.

- Engaging the parents in conversations about the importance of attending full school days and not exiting school before dismissal time.
- Contacting the Head of Year/Form Tutor following the request from a parent/carer for their child to leave early during the school day if parents do not response positively as advised by the Administration Staff.
- Sending the Leadership Team daily attendance totals for each stage.

Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.
- Contacting the school Reception on the first morning of absence by phone, email or through the school app.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments during school time through phone, email or Communication Book. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence, the school requires evidence from the doctor or dentist (appointment card/letter).
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

Attendance Process

Attendance Process is completed on school records till 9:30 am in the morning, which is the school's data recording system.

Each Class teacher is accountable for keeping an accurate record of attendance on school recording system. Any student who is absent from morning attendance must be recorded as absent on the school recording system.

Lateness

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning which teachers are not able to make up. Missing the start of lessons, where new objectives are shared and new learning moments take place may impact significantly on the amount of progress that is made during the lesson.

Once the school gate is closed at 07:20, the only way to get into school is via the school Reception. Any student who comes into school this way from 07:20 will be marked as late (Tardy) in the attendance record. Records are kept of those students who are late, this is documented on the electronic register for each student.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness, parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

Absences

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify the school of their child's absence, it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence. All absences are recorded on the data recording system with notes explaining the reason for the absence. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence.

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, a text message is sent through School WhatsApp Group (Dear Parent, your child has been recorded absent from school today, please contact SIA on the school official number. Thank you). Reception staff check each class on a daily basis, to identify those students who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware of the reason why the child is absent and we will contact the parent/carer to check the reasons for the child's absence.

Illness

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work. Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness-related absence. This evidence could be a doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

Addressing Attendance Concerns

As an ambitious school, all students should target 100% attendance across an academic year. It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the Principal to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. We rely upon parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore, where there are concerns regarding attendance, parents are always informed of our concerns. Initially, concerns about attendance are raised with parents via messages that are sent home. There will be opportunities for the parent/carer to discuss reasons for absence and support to be given by the school with the aim to improve attendance. Where a child's attendance record does not improve over a period of time, then the school has a responsibility to inform the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. Should a child's attendance fall below 60%, it is expected that they will repeat the year, unless there are extenuating circumstances such as a serious medical condition, in which case the discretion is left with the Principal of the school.

Leaving the school during the day

If a child has to leave the school for any reason during the school day, they must first have a written note by their parent/carer in their Communication Book, so the slip below can be signed by their Class teacher. This must be stamped by a member of the Reception team as they leave and must be shown to security in order to leave via the school entrance gate. Any students leaving the school before 13:25 will be noted down on the 'exiting school' recording documents at Reception.