

## Attendance & Punctuality Policy

### Key contact details

Day to day reporting of absence.	Mr S Alibhai <a href="mailto:info@tawhid.org.uk">info@tawhid.org.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:salibhai@tawhid.org.uk">salibhai@tawhid.org.uk</a> Tel: 02088062999
SLT member responsible for attendance	Mr Yahya Rawat <a href="mailto:yrawat@tawhid.org.uk">yrawat@tawhid.org.uk</a> Mr O M Bilal Snell <a href="mailto:bsnell@tawhid.org.uk">bsnell@tawhid.org.uk</a> Tel: 02088062999 ex 205

We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the school community to strive for excellence and enjoyment in education. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and punctually.

At Tawhid Boys School our objectives are to develop an ethos which demonstrates to children, parents/carers and the wider community the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for effective learning and children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Why Regular Attendance is important:

### 1. Learning

We know from experience and from studies that regular absence and poor punctuality can have a detrimental effect on a child's learning. When a pupil is absent or arrives late it disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning not only of that pupil but also that of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in a penalty notice or prosecution.

## 2. Safeguarding

At Tawhid Boys School, we believe every pupil should be able learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. We respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn and participate in all school activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents/carers. Safeguarding is about offering early help and support to children and families and difficulties with attendance and lateness may be signs that something is worrying the child or that there are difficulties within the family. Poor or irregular attendance, persistent lateness, or children missing from education may be considered a safeguarding matter if this places your child at risk of harm.

Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school; safeguarding and promoting the welfare and life opportunities for children encompasses:

Attendance, Behaviour Management, Health and Safety, Access to the Curriculum and Anti-bullying, protecting children from abuse and neglect, online safety, radicalisation and extremism and CSE.

More information on safeguarding and the protection of children can be found in the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

In order to allow us to safeguard the children in our care it is important that parents and carers provide the school with their current contact details and provide at least three other contact numbers in case of emergency.

It is also important for parents to let school know of any specific vulnerability in relation to their child or home circumstances. If you are uncertain about what would be considered a vulnerability please speak with the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mr Mapara [umapara@tawhid.org.uk](mailto:umapara@tawhid.org.uk)

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

- The Form Tutors will monitor attendance and punctuality on a daily basis and contact parents for any concerns.
- The Attendance lead responsible will monitor attendance and punctuality weekly and raise any concerns with Form Tutors.
- The Attendance officer (SA) will send out SMS messages to parents of absent pupils.
- The SLT will provide Termly attendance and punctuality statistics for each year group for the Management's monitoring purpose.
- The Management will direct any further cause of action to ensure targets are met.

## **Registration**

Registers are completed twice a day Monday – Thursday and once on Friday morning. Guidance on completing the register is kept at the front of the register for reference. Tutors are to familiarise themselves with the correct codes. Teachers should use RED pen for present and Black pen for absent. Any codes should be entered in Black. Tutors must complete figures at the bottom of the page and ensure weekly totals are entered by the end of the week.

## **Attendance**

It is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances.

### **The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education**

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%). At KS4, pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 4. The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%)

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra familial harms, including crime (the proportion of children that had been cautioned or sentenced for any offence that had ever been persistently absent was 81% and for serious violence offence was 85%)

*Working together to improve school attendance Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities, August 24*

## Absence Procedures

### If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence by (8.30am) and give an expected return date. You need to call at least every day thereafter to advise school of your child's progress.
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us;
- Or, you can call into school and report to reception, who may arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.

If a student is persistently absent due to medical reasons, a doctor's certificate will be required upon request. Where such evidence cannot be produced and persistent absences continue if we feel we do not have the co-operation of the parent in this matter, the school will seek advice from the local authority and take appropriate action.

### If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone, text or email you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer and/or Attendance lead (Mr Rawat). if absences persist.
- Refer the matter to the Hackney Learning Trust's Education Attendance Service if attendance moves below 90%.

## The Law Relating to attendance and safeguarding

Section 7 of the Education act 1996 states that:

*the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:*

*(a) to age, ability and aptitude and*

*(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have  
either at school or otherwise*

Compulsory School Age: A child is compulsory school age after their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday until the last Friday of June in the academic year of their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Absence is divided into two categories: authorised and unauthorised.

### Authorised Absence

An authorised absence is where the school has either given permission in advance for the child to be absent or where an explanation offered is accepted as satisfactory justification for absence.

Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness, medical appointments (appointments should be made outside school times where possible)
- Unavoidable cause (which is expected to be an emergency and unavoidable)
- Days of religious observance
- Traveller child travelling for the purposes of parents' employment

### **Unauthorised Absences**

An unauthorised absence is where either no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is not considered acceptable by the school.

This includes:

- Parents / Carers keeping children off school to assist with translation
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a late mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time.

If an absence is recorded as unauthorised the school may refer this to the Local Authority's Education Service, in Hackney this is Hackney Learning Trust. The Local Authority can use various sanctions to promote regular attendance such as issuing a Penalty Notice Fine or initiate court proceedings.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes it can be that they are reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

### **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil is considered to be a 'persistent absentee' if they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

Persistently Absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our School Management system (Bromcom) and we monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA threshold or is at risk of moving towards that level is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

If your child has or is at risk of reaching the threshold for Persistent Absence you will be asked to provide evidence for any future absence. This may be medical evidence for illness which can be in the form of prescription, medicine packaging or hospital letter.

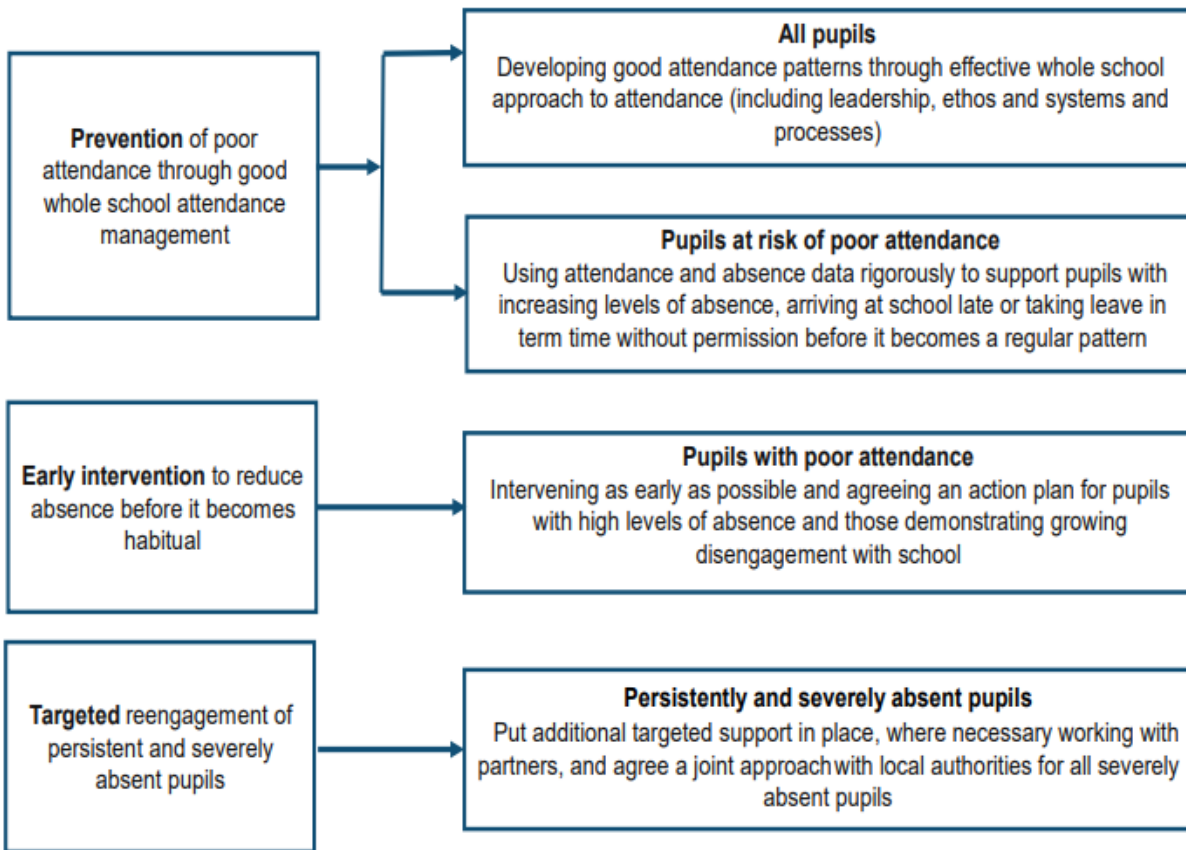
### **Severe Absenteeism (SA)**

A pupil is considered to be a 'severe absentee' if they miss 50% or more of their schooling across the school year for whatever reason. These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners. A concerted effort is therefore needed across all relevant services to prioritise them. All partners should work together to make this group the top priority for support – this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

If all avenues of support have been facilitated by schools, local authorities, and other partners, and the appropriate educational support or placements (e.g. an education, health and care plan) have been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect. Schools and local authorities should be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues in these cases and where these remain, conduct a full children's social care assessment. Further information is available in the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Severely Absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our School Management system (Bromcom) and we monitor all absence thoroughly. In all cases, Tawhid Boys School is expected to make patterns of both persistent and severe absence a focus of their regular data monitoring and identify pupils and cohorts who need targeted attendance support as quickly as possible. Both persistent and severe absence should also be central to school, trust, and local authority level strategies for improving attendance.

## Effective school attendance improvement and management



### Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

#### To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Provide parents / carers with details on attendance in the school Newsletter;
- Report to parents at least termly on how their child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through certificates and outings/events;

## Monitoring Persistent Absenteeism

### **Stage 1:**

The tutors will monitor the registers for attendance concerns. Attendance falling below 90% is a cause for concern. The attendance lead will approve a letter home informing the parents of the school's concern.

### **Stage 2:**

If intervention at Stage 1 does not resolve the concerns, a meeting will be held between the parents and a member of the SLT. Targets will be set and the child's attendance closely monitored on a daily basis. The child's admission maybe put on a probationary period.

### **Stage 3:**

If there is no further improvement in attendance, the SLT will contact the local authority and seek advice. The SLT will then inform the Management as to the next course of action. The Management may take the child off roll.

## Holidays during Term Time

It is extremely important that parents do not arrange family holidays during term time. Some severe disadvantages of taking leave during term time include:

- **Your child's education suffers**
- **Lessons are missed**
- **Continuity of school and any project work is lost which unnecessarily causes your child anxiety**
- **You are in breach of your legal obligation to send your child to school**

If this is unavoidable, it is the parent's responsibility to check dates very carefully to avoid missing vital elements of your child's lessons and examination courses. Any absence may be authorised by the School Development Committee, but only in exceptional circumstances. The Department for Education (DfE) expects us to discourage such practice.

Requests for absence at the start of a term and at a time when examinations are being taken are unlikely to be met with consent.

If you are unable to avoid requesting absence during School Term time, an application must be made on the school's official form to the School Development Committee **not less than 4 weeks** before the absence is due to start. A response will be sent to you within 14 days of receipt of your request.



Additional leave during Term time may be authorised with the following conditions:

1. At the discretion of the SDC, additional leave may be authorised up to a maximum of 5 school days only under special circumstances.
2. Pupils must be back on the first day of the new Academic Year, failure to do so may result in exclusion on return and may lead to pupil being taken Off role.
3. Leave may not be authorised at the beginning of the summer holidays
4. No additional leave may be granted to Year 11 Students.
5. No additional leave may be granted to Year 10 during GCSE Control Assessment period.
6. No additional leave may be granted to Students during Revision & Exam Periods.
7. Parents performing Haj must make suitable arrangements for their child to attend school. Additional leave may be granted if no such arrangements can be made.
8. For Haj each case to be assessed on individual merits.
9. Where leave has not been authorised by the School Management and the pupil has been absent, a penalty of £60 per day will be enforced for the full duration of the unauthorised leave period. All payments must be made in full on the day before the pupil can be readmitted into school.
  - a. Pupils not attending school events, such as trips and sports days will also be subject to the penalty.

Each application will be assessed on its own merits. The Managements decision is final

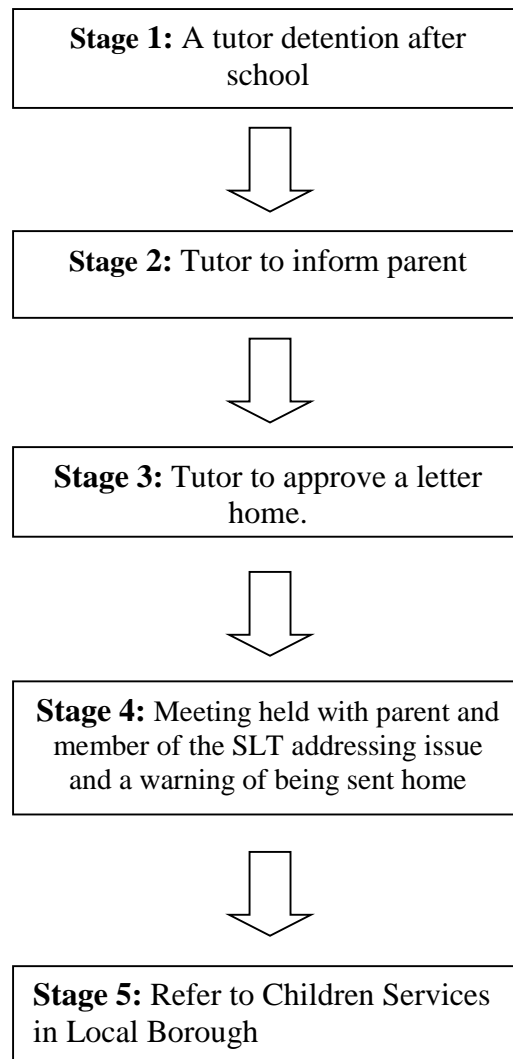
Where the application has been unsuccessful and parents have taken their child away, all absentees will be classified as unauthorised. The pupil will be excluded upon arrival. Parents are therefore strongly requested to confirm leave with the school before making any travel arrangements.

## **Lateness**

Punctuality is an important element of civilised behaviour, so a serious view will be taken of persistent lateness. If a student is late, the Form tutor will issue a detention on the date of the offence. Any student arriving after 8.15am is considered late. If there is an unavoidable reason for delay then parents should inform the school by telephone or letter, as soon as possible. If a pupil arrives after 11.30am or 12.00pm a code U will be given by the office staff.

## **Students arriving persistently late.**

The following diagram describes the procedures used by Tawhid Boys School for dealing with students who arrive persistently late.



Where persistent lateness continues, if we feel we do not have the co-operation of the parent in this matter, the school will seek advice from the Children's Services and take appropriate action. The SLT will then inform the Management as to the next course of action. The Management may take the child off roll.

## **Early drop off and Late Collection of children after school**

The school gates will open at 8.05-8.15a.m. Parents are not authorised to drop off their children early. The School is not responsible for the supervision of any children before 8.05 a.m.

The school gates are closed for lower School pupils at 3.05pm. Children are therefore expected to be picked up on time. The School is not responsible for the supervision of any children after 2.55pm. Any child in detention will be the responsibility of the staff holding the detention.

Children not picked up on time may wait in the school forecourt unsupervised. Parents persistently arriving late to collect their child will be referred to the head teacher.

## **Recording of concerns & Pupils Leaving the School**

All concerns regarding individual children as well as holiday request forms will be filed and kept with the school administrator in the main office.

### **Important:**

Pupils leaving forms will be kept with the Schools Administrator for future references. In the event of a child leaving under the School Leaving age, where details of new School have not been provided, details of the child will be notified to the local authority to safeguard the child and ensure provision of full time education has been made in the interest of the child. This is a statutory duty upon the School.

## **Children Missing from Education(CME)**

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The School will ensure its procedures for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, are rigorously implemented to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in the future.

The School will inform the Local Authority (LA), in line with LA procedure of any students who is going to be entered and deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been newly registered into the school;
- have completed their schooling at the age of 16
- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have been certified by the GP or medical practitioner as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- have been permanently excluded.

This will be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the student's name from the register.

The School will inform the Local Authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 5 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the Local Authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State, 10 school days). The School will work closely together with the Local Authority to fulfill its obligations as set out in the statutory Guidance for local authorities "Children Missing Education September 2016".

## **Local authority contact information**

Hackney Education Attendance Service  
School Attendance Officer  
Telephone: 020 8820 7288

Haringey Education Welfare Service  
Tel: 020 8489 3866  
Email: [ews@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:ews@haringey.gov.uk)

Islington Access and Engagement Service, AES  
Phone: 020 7527 3747  
Email: [pupilservices@islington.gov.uk](mailto:pupilservices@islington.gov.uk)

Pupil Attendance Service (Camden Learning)  
Ed Magee  
020 7974 1653  
E-mail: [pas@camden.gov.uk](mailto:pas@camden.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1: Stage 1 Attendance Letter

**Mr and Mrs**  
**<Address>**  
**London**  
**Postcode**  
**United Kingdom**

Date

Stage 1: Attendance Concern Letter

Dear Mr and Mrs <NAME>

**Student Name: <Name and Form>**  
**Attendance Percentage: <00.0>%**

At Tawhid Boys' School we have a strong focus on attendance to ensure that all students can make excellent progress.

In September 2015, the Government reduced the threshold for persistent absence from 15% to 10%. This means all students with attendance below 90% are now classed as persistent absentees. This is because 90% attendance is the equivalent of your son missing half a day of school each week.

This letter is to inform you that <NAME's> attendance has now fallen below 90% which means that he is currently classed as a persistent absentee. As I'm sure you're aware, NAME has missed a significant number of lessons and we are concerned about the impact this will have on his progress and achievement. You will find enclosed a copy of <NAME's> attendance certificate and a guide to understanding it. Please speak with <NAME> about how you can work together to improve his attendance.

We look forward to seeing an improvement in <NAME's> attendance next half term.

Yours faithfully,

Mr <Name>  
Year <x> Form Tutor

## Appendix 2: Stage 2 Attendance Letter

**Mr and Mrs**  
**<Address>**  
**London**  
**Postcode**  
**United Kingdom**

Date

## Stage 2: Attendance Concern Letter

Dear Mr and Mrs <NAME>

At Tawhid Boys' School we have a strong focus on attendance to ensure that all students make excellent progress. This letter is to inform you that **<Name>** has fallen well below the Schools target of 95%. **<Name>**'s Attendance is currently <00.0>%

This letter is to inform you that the School will no longer be authorising any absence due to illness unless you provide medical evidence. This stage is to deter any inappropriate condoning of absence by parents or those with parental responsibility. Should your son become ill please contact us to discuss what is acceptable as medical evidence. This may include appointment cards, prescriptions or notes from a pharmacist in lieu of a sick note, we do not wish you to incur a charge for providing this evidence so please do discuss with us if you are concerned. If your Son has a medical condition, or other extenuating circumstances which will impact on his attendance then please contact us to discuss putting the appropriate support in place.

If there is no further improvement in attendance, the head teacher will contact the Children's Services and seek advice. The Head Teacher will then inform the Management as to the next course of action. The Management may take the child off roll. Please confirm that you have received this letter by returning the slip.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/person with parental responsibility)

Yours faithfully,

Mr Rawat  
Deputy Head