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| POLICY TITLE: | Student Attendance Policy |
| Policy Number: | 93 |
| Applies to: | Al Karamah School and Training Institute |
| Version Number: | 07 |
| Date of Issue: | September 2021 |
| Date of Review: | February 2024 |
| Date of Next Review: | February 2026 |
| Author: | Senior Leadership Team - Karen Opondo-Mbai |
| Ratified by: | Governing Body |
| Responsible signatory: | Principal |
| Outcome: | To monitor the attendance of all students at AKS and AKTI. To action any attendance rates that are a cause for concern using our procedure. |
| Cross Reference: | Attendance Process Complaints Policy Safeguarding Policy |

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

At Al Karamah School and Training Institute we all have high expectations around student attendance. There is a clear link between regular attendance and educational achievement. If days are regularly missed, then continuity of learning and progress are significantly hampered as students find it difficult to catch up with missed work.

Where attendance at school is an issue the school must always consider any safeguarding concerns.

Absence rates above 10% are considered to be a cause for concern. We know that sometimes there are genuine reasons for absence. For this reason, the school distinguishes in its response to absence between authorized and unauthorized absences.

The aim of this policy is:

- To ensure that students are attending all classes and activities that result in their understanding of the curriculum and the subjects being taught.
- To ensure that unauthorised absences are dealt with firmly and effectively.
- To support students who are finding it difficult to attend school due to their autism or mental health and provide strategies to help parents transition students back into attending on a regular basis.

2. DEFINITIONS

Attendance refers to the total number of school days or sessions (half days) attended by the student during the school year based on the school calendar.

Absence refers to the days when students fail to attend school.

Persistent absence is when a child misses 10% or more of all possible school sessions regardless of whether this is authorized or unauthorized.

3. ATTENDANCE PROCESS

- Registers completed by 8.30am
- AHs review registers at 8.30am alerting teachers if any are incomplete.
- Parent liaison will follow up absence with a first day call between 9.00-10.00am each day and report any concerns to AHs.

Absence:

On the first day of absence parents should inform the school before 8 am by telephone or email stating the reason for absence and when the student is expected to return to school (if known).

School operates a First Day Calling system if parent fail to contact school on the first day of absence. Parent liaison will call from 9.00am to determine the reason for absence if one has not been provided.

If no reason for absence is provided then students absence will be marked as unauthorised.

If absence is due to sickness, a sick leave certificate must be obtained and saved in the student's record. Parent liaison will follow up on this.

Family Holidays / Absence requests in term time

Holidays during term are not usually granted; any applications for absence must be made in writing to the principal at least 10 days prior to this. AKS/AKTI cannot be held responsible for any financial costs incurred by families who book holidays without gaining consent from the Principal.

4. PROCEDURE FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

A fortnightly meeting takes place between Parent liaison and AHs to monitor any students who are persistent absentees or non attenders.

Patterns in absence will also be monitored in this s, for example, if a student is always absent on a Monday.

A list of the students who have 80% attendance or less will be shared with the Principal.

| Attendance Issue | Action |
|---|--|
| Student attendance at 90% | Trigger point for the class teacher to start examining a student's attendance, contacting parents and ensuring that records of these conversations are kept. AHT's will be notified if improvement is not evident or sustained. |
| Student attendance falls below 75% | A very clear improvement plan will be instigated and parents will be made aware that ADEK will be notified and their place could be at risk. |
| If a student reaches 20 consecutive days of absence | The student place may be withdrawn. |

At every stage we will provide clear and specific information about the rules and consequences of poor attendance to parents, students, and school staff.

Ramadan – we acknowledge that attendance may be affected during this period of fasting by some of our students due to fatigue and tiredness.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Principal:

- has overall responsibility for attendance

Vice Principal:

- holds AHT's to account for the reporting of absence in their areas and reports to the Governing body regularly regarding attendance, including practice, process, and policy.

Assistant Heads:

- Meets fortnightly with parent liaison to discuss students whose attendance is a cause for concern
- Ensure registers are completed on time and hold teachers to account for this.
- Contacts parents to support improvement.

Teachers:

- complete registers accurately by 8.30am

Parent Liaison:

- First day calling to parents for students not in school and where no reason for absence has been given
- Highlight any concerns with recording of attendance

6. IMPACT REVIEW

This impact of this policy is reviewed every 2 years by the Assistant Head (primary) and shared with the staff.

Appendix A

Level 1 attendance template

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| <p>Ref: 2022-AKS-0</p> <p>2022</p> <p>Dear Parent,</p> <p>I am writing the following letter as XXX's attendance has fallen below 90% at XX% and I wanted to bring this to your attention.</p> <p>As no doubt you are aware, attendance is a significant factor concerning a student's success. The more a student is absent, the increased chance he/she will fall behind with their progress and lose a connection with their peers.</p> <p>I will be contacting you in the next couple of days to discuss this further.</p> <p>Kind regards</p> <p>AHT</p> | <p>المرجع: 2022 / الكرامة / 00</p> <p>25 فبراير 2022</p> <p>عزيزي ولي الأمر ،</p> <p>.</p> |
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Appendix B

Level 2 attendance template

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| <p>Ref: 2022-AKS-084</p> <p>24 June 2022</p> <p>Dear Parent(s),</p> <p>I am writing the following letter as XXX's attendance has fallen below 83% at XX% and I wanted to make you aware.</p> <p>As no doubt you are aware, attendance is a significant factor concerning a student's success. The more a student is absent, the increased chance he/she will fall behind with their progress and lose a connection with their peers.</p> <p>We do understand that students get sick, have family emergencies, and things do come up.</p> <p>Please can I ask that we meet online or face to face to discuss this further. Ms Ruqyaya will be in touch to schedule this meeting as soon as possible.</p> <p>Kind regards</p> <p>AHT</p> | <p>1</p> |
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Appendix C

Level 3 attendance template

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| <p>Ref: 2022-AKS-0</p> <p>2022</p> <p>Dear Parent,</p> <p>I am writing the following letter as XXX's attendance has fallen below 75% at XX% and I wanted to make you aware.</p> <p>As no doubt you are aware, attendance is a significant factor concerning a student's success. The more a student is absent, the increased chance he/she will fall behind with their progress and lose a connection with their peers.</p> <p>We do understand that students get sick, have family emergencies, and things do come up.</p> <p>Please can I ask that we meet online or face to face to discuss this further. Ms Ruqyaya will be in touch to schedule this meeting as soon as possible.</p> <p>Should you have any difficulties in this regard can I please ask that you contact me directly.</p> <p>Kind regards</p> <p>AHT</p> | |
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Appendix D

Level 1 Discussion with Parent at 90%

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|------------------------------|--|
| Date/time of meeting: | |
| Venue: | |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Pupil name: | |
| Date of birth: | |
| School: | |

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|----------------------------|--|
| Present at meeting: | |
|----------------------------|--|

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|--|
| Discussion Points |
| |
| Action agreed |
| <p><i>EXAMPLES OF ACTION AGREED:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil will arrive at school by 8.30 a.m. every day. • Parent will inform the school on the first day of a sickness absence and provide a note upon pupil's return. • Parent will provide medical evidence for every sickness absence pupil may incur. • Are any issues preventing pupil from attending regularly, school staff will be informed? |

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|----------------------------|------|
| Attendance target: | 100% |
| Timescale for improvement: | |

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|--------------------------|--|
| Date for review meeting: | |
|--------------------------|--|

I confirm that this Attendance Action Plan was agreed by all present.

Signed: Parent(s)

Signed: School Representative

Appendix E Level 2 (below 83%) Level 3 (below 75%) (please circle)

Attendance Improvement Plan

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|------------------------------|--|
| Date/time of meeting: | |
| Venue: | |

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|-----------------------|--|
| Pupil name: | |
| Date of birth: | |
| Address: | |
| | |
| | |
| School: | |

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|----------------------------|--|
| Present at meeting: | |
|----------------------------|--|

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|---|
| Discussion Points: |
| |
| Action agreed |
| <p><i>EXAMPLES OF ACTION AGREED:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupil will arrive at school by 8.30 a.m. every day.• Parent will inform the school on the first day of a sickness absence and provide a note upon pupil's return.• Parent will provide medical evidence for every sickness absence pupil may incur.• Are any issues preventing pupil from attending regularly, school staff will be informed? |

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Attendance target: | 100% |
| Timescale for improvement: | |

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Date for review meeting: | |
|--------------------------|--|

I confirm that this Attendance Action Plan was agreed by all present.

Signed: Parent(s)

Signed: School Representative

Appendix F Attendance Leaflet (shared at the start of the academic year with all parents)



School Attendance

Information Leaflet for Parents

At Al Karamah School and Training Institute we all have high expectations around student attendance.

WHY IS GOOD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IMPORTANT?

Good school attendance gives your child the opportunity of success and helps develop skills for life. Your child should attend school every day unless there is an unavoidable cause such as illness.

Missing school damages a pupil's learning and grades and disrupts routines.



If your child attends school between 95% and 100%, they have the potential to achieve their best, educationally and socially.

◇ 10 days off per year = 94.7%

◇ Whilst 90% attendance might sound good ... * 90% = ½ day off each week per year * 90% = 1 month off school per year * 90% = 1 whole school year in career ... reducing continuity of education

WHY AM I BEING SENT THIS LEAFLET?

This leaflet is being sent to all parents, so they are aware of the need for their child to attend regularly and on time to achieve their best. It is

important parents promote regular school attendance, understand their responsibilities and the consequences of their child having absence from school.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL?

Telephone the school as early as possible on the first morning of each absence to give the reason. Ensure you follow the school's attendance policy with regard to your child's absence.



Call +971 2 4121999 or 0562193236 . Please give your full child's name and reason for their absence. Ring on each day of the absence.

Make routine dentist and doctor appointments after school or during school holidays. If you have to make an appointment during school time, help your child to be at school for most of the day and let the school know about the appointment.

You may be asked for medical documents or an appointment card if your child is regularly absent due to illness or dental/medical appointments. If your child has an ongoing diagnosed illness you are advised to inform the school and keep copies of letters from health professionals and also appointment cards or prescriptions

At Al Karamah School we have a robust approach to supporting parents with attendance:

A student at 90% or below attendance will be the trigger point for the class teacher to start examining a students attendance. The class teacher will be in contact to finds ways to improve attendance for that student recording this as part of our monitoring procedures.

A student at 75% or below attendance will have an attendance improvement plan in place outlining strategies agreed between parent and the school. The Assistant Head of the phase is involved at this stage. If there is no improvement when reviewed then further action will be taken by the school. Your child's place at the school will be at risk after 20 consecutive days of absence.

CAN I GET HELP IF MY CHILD IS NOT ATTENDING REGULARLY?

Yes, from your child's school. It is very important that you speak with the school at the earliest opportunity if you have any worries at all about securing your child's attendance. Request a meeting with your child's class teachers or a member of senior management.

It is well documented that absence and school refusal is high amongst students with autism.

At Al Karamah School we address issues with student attendance in a highly personalized and individualized way- reflecting on reasons for absence and how we can alongside the parents find solutions to absence, involving our highly skilled therapy team alongside teachers.

WHAT IF I WANT TO GO ON HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME?

Holidays in term time are not normally authorised except in exceptional circumstances. You must ask permission from the Principal and check the school policy.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS STRUGGLING TO ATTEND SCHOOL?



You must:

- Talk to your child - try to find out why.
- Meet with a member of school staff to discuss the situation and look for solutions.
- Try to understand what is happening for your child and help them resolve the problem.

Education is key to your child's future success so it is important to solve issues as quickly as possible.



We hope this leaflet gives you all the information you need about your child's attendance at Al Karamah School.

We understand that there can be tricky times and so we offer our full support with any attendance issue.

If there are problems, we will do everything that we can to make attending school as simple as possible whilst ensuring your child is happy and reaches their full potential.

If there are ever any problems, please do not hesitate to come and see us contact us below:

Karen Opondo Mbai karen.opondombai@alkaramahschool.ae- Assistant Head (Little Champions & Tiny Sparkles phase)

Matthew Croasdell Matthew.Croasdell@alkaramahschool.ae- Senior Teacher (Transition & Explorers Phase)

Eman Yousef eman.yousef@alkaramahschool.ae- Assistant Head Arabic

Paul South paul.south@alkaramahschool.ae- Assistant Head AKTI

Appendix G Leave of extended absence form

EXTENDED LEAVE APPLICATION FORM

Parents wishing to take their child out of school for any non-school related reason for more than three days must apply in writing to the principal.

The principal will look at all aspects of a student's school profile when determining whether a long-term absence will be approved or not. This will include consideration of the student's attendance record, academic progress, and the reason for the absence.

This form must be signed and dated by the student's parent. Extended leave application forms are also available on the school website or from the school reception.

Once permission has been granted, your child's absence will show on our attendance records as being notified and unjustified.

It is a school requirement that any child who is absent from school for 30 consecutive school days or more will be removed from the school roll.

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| EXTENDED LEAVE APPLICATION FORM (applies to three or more days) This form must be received by the school 10 days prior to the requested dates. | | | |
| Student's Name: | | Class: | |
| Current attendance: | Autumn | Spring | Summer |
| Leave Application date/s: | | | |
| Reason for Leave Application: | | | |
| Parent/Guardian Details: | | | |
| Parent email Address: | | | |
| Parent contact number: | | | |
| Signature: | | | |
| Internal Use Only Permission: Granted: Y / N | | Name: Signature: Date: | |