



## ISLAMIYAH SCHOOL

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

#### INTRODUCTION

“Reducing absence from school is a key priority nationally and locally because missing school damages a pupil’s attainment levels, disrupts school routines and the learning of others.” (Education Welfare Service)

On the basis of national and local information, it is also clear that extended leave of absence from school can be damaging: It can result in insufficient coverage of the national curriculum and pupils failing to achieve expected grades or realise their potential in SATS and GCSE examinations.

**“Children of compulsory school age have to attend school for 190 days per year (which leaves another 175 for weekends and holidays). (Education Welfare Service)**

#### Why are term-time holidays so rarely allowed?

*Missing lessons can harm your child's learning:*

- *Pupils suffer a break in the continuity of their learning or miss important topics.*
- *Pupils lack confidence due to the fact that they have missed mid-topic information and are unable to understand or catch up – much of the work missed is never made up, which puts pupils at a disadvantage at exam time.*
- *Your child’s results and progress suffers when they are not in school*
- *Disruption to your child’s learning, friendships and social development.*

*One child's term-time holiday can have a negative impact on their classmates. The time a teacher spends helping one child catch up would have been better-spent teaching the entire class.*

*When your child attends school punctually and on a regular basis, they take an important step towards reaching their full potential, and are given the greatest opportunity to learn new things and develop their skills. Those attending regularly usually leave school with more qualifications and access to greater employment opportunities.*

## 1.0

An approved leave of absence from school for a period not more than ten (10) consecutive school days.

## 2.0

The Head Teacher reserves the authority for final approval of all leaves of absences.

## 2.1

The Head Teacher also reserves the authority to make exceptions to the policy as it deems necessary and in the best interest of the School.

## 3.0

Leave will not be granted during Yr 9 to Yr 11, as it may hinder the pupils' development and their academic progress. *Holiday leave taken in term time will result in automatic withdrawal of pupil from school roll.*

## 4.0

Parents do not have an automatic right to take their child out of school for a holiday.

## 4.1

Parents must not book any flights or holidays before getting permission from the School. By law, parents must have permission in advance; if they go without permission they are breaking the law and could be issued with a penalty notice or the child will lose her place in the school.

## 4.2

Fixed Penalty Notices will be used in a range of situations where unauthorised absences occurs, such as:

- Truancy.
- Parentally condoned absence without good reasons.
- Excessive holidays in term time
- Unwarranted delayed return from an extended holiday (without school agreement).
- Refusal to abide to terms set down by the school.
- Persistent late arrival at school.

## 5.0

### **How to apply for permission**

1. Parents/Guardians need to contact the school to arrange a meeting to discuss their plans and get an 'application for holiday absence from school' form. All sections of the form should be completed, with the date of your child's return to school clearly entered.
2. The School will consider a number of factors before granting permission. These include:
  - Your child's attendance record;
  - Whether or not your child is due to take any major examinations;
  - Term Fees are up to date
  - The reasons for wanting to take leave during term time;
  - The amount of leave requested
  - The likely impact on your child's education – the child's ability to catch up on their education.
  - Frequency of previous or similar requests.

## 6.0

### **Fixed Penalty Notice - (After Authorised Absence is granted)**

If your child fails to return by the agreed date, the following will be implemented:

- A student, who does not return to school on the day agreed after being granted leave of absence from the school, will pay £100 Penalty Notice for each day of their absence after the expected return date.
- If the absence is more than ten days (20 school sessions) after the return date given, the student will lose her place in the school.

## 6.1

### **Fixed Penalty Notice - (After Unauthorised Absence)**

- A student, who does not begin School on the day it is opened for a new term or absent during term time without notifying the school, will pay £100 Penalty Notice if she does not return within three days.
- A student, who does not return to school within seven days of the school opening for a new term or absent during term time without notifying the school, will pay £150 Penalty Notice, if she does not return within 7 days.
- A student, who fails to return to school within ten days (20 school sessions) of the school opening for a new term or absent during term time without notifying the school, will lose her place in the school.
- There will be a £100 penalty fine each day for any leave of absence taken over 10 days.

## 6.2

Any student, who is taken out of school during term time without prior permission, will be removed from the school roll with no guarantee of re-admission.

### 6.3

Any parent/guardian, who has a Penalty Notice to pay, will have to pay the penalty first before the school fees are paid or before the child can resume the term.

### 7.0

All Students will not be automatically granted leave of absence under any circumstances.

- The School has a right to withdraw a child from exams if holidays are taken during Years 9, 10 & 11.

### 8.0

Procedure for making a request for 'leave of absence' from school for your child:

- DO NOT book flight tickets until the school has been contacted and permission has been granted.
- A written application should be made to the Head teacher at least 14 school days in advance (retrospective applications will not normally be considered and could trigger an automatic penalty notice).
- A 'holiday request' form must be obtained from the school office and all details must be filled in.
- The specific date and timing of the absence must be agreed in advance and in consultation with the Head teacher or her designated person.
- There should be no more than a maximum of 10 days leave of absence granted for holiday in term time over the course of a pupil's secondary education.
- Parents/Carers will receive a reply from the school within 7 school days.
- Parents have the right to appeal to the Board of Governors

### 9.0

The School will respond in writing to all requests for leave of absence, stating the reasons for the decision made. Letters approving a request will clearly state:

- The expected date of return
- That the parents should contact the school if anything delays their child's expected return, and
- The action, which will be taken if the pupil fails to return when expected, e.g. issued with a penalty notice.

Similarly, a letter refusing a request will always explain the reasons for the refusal and what actions will be taken if the parents ignore the decision and keep the child off school anyway, e.g. possible removal from the school-roll.

## 10.0

- Prolonged 'unauthorised absence' from school will be reported and investigated by the Children's' Education Welfare Team.
- The school will liaise with the local authority over safeguarding issues relating to 'missing pupils' who fail to return to school within ten school days of the agreed return date.
- The school will circulate 'Movement of Children' enquiries to other Local Authorities when a pupil is removed from a school's admission register because she has failed to attend school within ten school days of their expected return date.

Finally, we will continue to promote the importance of ensuring regular school attendance to parents, strengthening the message that:

**EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS AND EVERY CHILD MATTERS -**

**Reducing absence from school is a key priority of Islamiyah School**

Policy Updated: October 2017

To be reviewed: October 2018

Head Teacher: Mr Y. Seedat