

NEWTON INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY LUSAIL

<https://newtonschoools.sch.qa/campuses/newton-international-academy-lusail/>

An International community of learners striving for excellence and celebrating success



Newton International Academy Lusail

Attendance Policy

2026 - 2027



Last Review: August 2026

Next Review: June 2027

Reviewer: Policy Committee

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VISION

An international community of learners, striving for excellence, and celebrating success.

MISSION

We aim to provide the highest quality of education possible for all our students. In doing so, we aim to positively encourage each student to achieve academic excellence, celebrate diversity, develop critical thinking skills and become lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

To achieve this, we will provide a diverse education in a safe, supportive environment that promotes positive discipline and self-motivation. We will provide and maintain a trusting and caring atmosphere where teaching and learning is meaningful and developed. We will work in partnership with our staff, students, parents and wider community to achieve our vision.

AIM

The aim of this policy is to establish a clear and consistent whole school approach to attendance and punctuality across EYFS, Primary and Secondary at NIA Lusail.

The school aims to:

- Promote high levels of attendance and punctuality so that pupils can benefit fully from their education.
- Establish clear expectations for pupils, parents and staff.
- Ensure that attendance and punctuality are recorded accurately and monitored consistently.
- Identify patterns of absence or lateness at an early stage and provide appropriate support and intervention.
- Maintain effective communication with parents where attendance or punctuality becomes a concern.
- Ensure that unexplained, repeated or concerning absence is responded to promptly, including through safeguarding procedures where appropriate.
- Apply attendance procedures fairly and consistently while taking account of individual circumstances and appropriate support needs.

RATIONALE

Regular and punctual attendance is fundamental to pupils' academic progress, personal development and wellbeing. Consistent attendance enables pupils to access the full curriculum, maintain positive learning routines and develop strong relationships with teachers and peers.

Punctuality is equally important. Arriving at school and lessons on time ensures that pupils are ready to learn, reduces disruption and prevents the loss of valuable learning time.

NIA Lusail recognises that barriers to attendance may arise for a variety of reasons. The school therefore combines high expectations with appropriate support, early identification and communication with families. Attendance is monitored carefully so that emerging concerns can be identified and addressed before they become persistent. Maintaining good attendance and punctuality is a shared responsibility between the school, pupils and parents.

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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Maintaining high standards of attendance and punctuality is a shared responsibility between the school, pupils and parents.

The School will:

- Maintain accurate daily attendance and punctuality records using SIMS.
- Monitor attendance, absence, lateness and early departure patterns regularly.
- Follow up unexplained absences promptly and contact parents where necessary.
- Identify emerging attendance concerns and provide appropriate support and intervention.
- Communicate concerns clearly with parents and maintain appropriate records of actions taken.
- Escalate persistent or concerning attendance patterns through the appropriate phase leadership and safeguarding procedures where necessary.

Parents and Carers will:

- Ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time.
- Inform the school promptly when their child will be absent and provide an appropriate reason for the absence.
- Provide supporting documentation, including medical evidence, where required.
- Avoid arranging holidays, appointments or other non-essential absences during school time wherever possible.
- Keep the school informed of circumstances that may affect their child's attendance or punctuality.
- Work constructively with the school where attendance or punctuality concerns are identified.

Pupils will:

- Attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- Attend all scheduled lessons and school activities throughout the school day.
- Arrive at lessons promptly and prepared to learn.
- Follow the correct procedures when arriving late or leaving school early.
- Engage positively with any attendance or punctuality support put in place.

Phase Leadership Responsibilities:

- In EYFS, Class Teachers monitor attendance and punctuality, with oversight from the Head of EYFS.
- In Primary, Class Teachers and Heads of Year support attendance monitoring and follow up, with overall pastoral oversight provided by the Deputy Head of Primary (Pastoral).
- In Secondary, Form Tutors provide the first level of attendance and punctuality monitoring and follow up, with overall pastoral oversight provided by the Deputy Head of Secondary (Pastoral).
- Significant or persistent concerns may be escalated through the appropriate phase leadership to the Deputy Principal and Principal as required.

REGISTRATION AND PUNCTUALITY

All pupils are expected to arrive at school in sufficient time to be ready for registration and the start of learning.

- Registration begins at 7:00 AM across the school.
- Pupils arriving after the applicable phase registration time will be recorded as late in SIMS.
- In EYFS, the register remains open until 7:15 AM to accommodate EYFS arrival procedures.

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- In Primary and Secondary, pupils arriving after 7:10 AM must report to the appropriate Reception and sign in before proceeding to class or lessons. Their late arrival will be recorded in SIMS.
- Attendance and punctuality records will be monitored regularly to identify repeated or concerning patterns.
- Where punctuality becomes a concern, parents will be informed and appropriate support or intervention will be put in place.
- Persistent lateness will be escalated through the relevant phase pastoral leadership in accordance with this policy.
- Pupils arriving late must not proceed directly to class without following the appropriate sign in procedure, as the school must maintain an accurate record of who is on site.

REPORTING AND RECORDING ABSENCE

Parents and carers are responsible for informing the school whenever their child is absent and providing the reason for the absence.

- Parents should notify the school as early as possible on the day of absence through the appropriate school communication channel.
- All absences will be recorded in SIMS using the appropriate attendance code.
- Where a pupil is absent and the school has not received an explanation, the school will contact the parent or carer on the same day to establish the reason for the absence and confirm the pupil's well-being.
- Parents may be asked to provide supporting documentation where appropriate, particularly for prolonged or repeated absence.
- Absence due to illness for three or more consecutive school days should normally be supported by a medical certificate.
- Where the reason for absence has not been established, the absence will remain recorded as unexplained or unauthorised, as appropriate.
- Repeated, prolonged or concerning patterns of absence will be followed up by the relevant phase pastoral leadership.
- Where an unexplained absence or pattern of absence gives rise to a concern about a pupil's safety or wellbeing, the matter will be referred promptly through the school's safeguarding procedures.

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

All pupil absences must be recorded accurately. An explanation from a parent does not automatically mean that an absence will be recorded as authorised.

Authorised absence may include:

- Illness or medical circumstances that prevent a pupil from attending school.
- Medical or dental appointments that cannot reasonably be arranged outside school hours.
- Significant family emergencies or exceptional circumstances approved by the school.
- Religious observance where absence from school is necessary.
- Other circumstances approved by the appropriate school leader in accordance with school procedures.

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Unauthorised absence may include:

- Absence where no satisfactory explanation has been provided.
- Family holidays or non-essential travel taken during term time without approval.
- Absence for reasons that the school does not consider sufficient to justify missing education.
- Continued absence beyond an approved period without further communication or appropriate supporting information.

Where absence is foreseeable, parents should contact the school in advance and provide relevant information.

Approval should not be assumed until it has been confirmed by the school.

All authorised and unauthorised absences will continue to form part of the pupil's attendance record and will be considered when the school monitors overall attendance patterns.

EARLY DEPARTURE AND APPOINTMENTS

Pupils should remain in school for the full school day. Where an early departure is necessary, the school's sign out procedures must be followed to ensure that accurate records are maintained and pupils leave the premises safely.

- Parents should arrange medical, dental and other appointments outside school hours wherever possible.
- Where an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, parents should inform the school in advance and provide relevant information where requested.
- Pupils may only leave school during the school day with appropriate authorisation.
- Pupils must be collected through the appropriate Reception by a parent, carer or other authorised adult.
- All early departures must be recorded through Reception before the pupil leaves the school premises.
- Pupils must not leave directly from a classroom or lesson without completing the appropriate sign out procedure.
- Where a pupil becomes unwell during the school day, the School Nurse will assess the pupil, and appropriate arrangements will be made with the parent or carer where early collection is required.
- Repeated or concerning patterns of early departure will be monitored as part of the school's overall attendance procedures.

ATTENDANCE MONITORING, SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored regularly so that emerging concerns can be identified and addressed at an early stage. The purpose of intervention is to understand the reasons for absence, work with families and improve attendance wherever possible.

- Attendance data will be reviewed regularly at pupil, class, year group and phase level.
- Patterns of repeated absence, persistent lateness or frequent early departure will be identified and followed up.
- Where attendance begins to cause concern, the appropriate member of staff will contact the parent or carer to discuss the reasons and identify any support that may be required.
- In EYFS, attendance concerns will be monitored by Class Teachers with oversight from the Head of EYFS.

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- In Primary, Class Teachers and Heads of Year will support monitoring and follow up, with overall oversight from the Deputy Head of Primary (Pastoral).
- In Secondary, Form Tutors will support initial monitoring and follow up, with overall oversight from the Deputy Head of Secondary (Pastoral).
- Where concerns continue, parents may be invited to a formal meeting and an attendance improvement plan or agreed actions may be put in place.
- Significant or persistent concerns may be escalated to the appropriate phase leadership, Deputy Principal and Principal.
- Where attendance concerns indicate a possible safeguarding or welfare concern, the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed without delay.
- Any consideration of non-re-enrolment due to serious and persistent attendance concerns will be exceptional and will be referred through the Senior Leadership Team to Newton Group Higher Management for final consideration and approval.

TRUANCY AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM LESSONS

Truancy occurs when a pupil deliberately misses school, leaves the school premises, or is absent from a scheduled lesson or activity without appropriate permission. It is distinct from an absence that has been reported by a parent but has not been authorised by the school.

- Pupils are expected to attend all scheduled lessons and activities throughout the school day.
- Pupils must not leave the school premises during the school day without appropriate authorisation and completing the required sign out procedure.
- Where a pupil is found to be absent from a lesson or activity without permission, staff will establish the pupil's whereabouts promptly.
- Parents will be contacted where appropriate and the incident will be recorded and followed up.
- Repeated truancy will be addressed through the school's pastoral and behaviour procedures, with appropriate intervention and parental involvement.
- In Primary, concerns will be overseen by the Deputy Head of Primary (Pastoral), with support from the relevant Class Teacher and Head of Year.
- In Secondary, concerns will be overseen by the Deputy Head of Secondary (Pastoral), with support from the pupil's Form Tutor.
- Where the school cannot establish a pupil's whereabouts, or where the circumstances raise concerns about the pupil's safety or wellbeing, the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed immediately.

SUPPORT FOR PUPILS WITH SEND OR MEDICAL NEEDS

NIA Lusail recognises that some pupils with SEND, medical needs or other individual circumstances may experience additional barriers to regular attendance. The school will work with pupils and their families to understand these barriers and provide appropriate support.

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- Attendance expectations remain applicable to all pupils, while individual circumstances will be considered when concerns arise.
- Reasonable adjustments and appropriate support may be provided where a pupil's SEND or medical needs affect attendance or punctuality.
- The Learning Enrichment Department, School Nurse and relevant pastoral leaders may contribute to attendance support where appropriate.
- Parents should keep the school informed of any medical or individual circumstances that may significantly affect their child's attendance.
- Supporting medical documentation may be requested where appropriate.
- Where regular medical or therapy appointments are required, parents should arrange these outside school hours where reasonably possible.
- Where appointments must take place during the school day, the pupil's absence or early departure will be recorded accurately.
- Attendance concerns involving pupils with SEND or medical needs will be considered individually, with appropriate communication between the family and relevant school staff.
- Where an absence raises a safeguarding or welfare concern, the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed regardless of the pupil's additional needs.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE AND RAMADAN

NIA Lusail respects the religious and cultural commitments of its pupils while maintaining the expectation of regular attendance and punctuality throughout the academic year.

- Where absence is required for religious observance, parents should inform the school in advance wherever the date or circumstances are known.
- Requests for additional absence connected with religious travel or family arrangements should be submitted to the school in advance and will be considered in accordance with the school's absence procedures.
- Planned travel associated with religious or family commitments should, wherever reasonably possible, be arranged outside the school term.
- During Ramadan, normal expectations for attendance and punctuality continue to apply.
- Any temporary changes to the school day or timetable during Ramadan will be communicated to parents in advance.
- Absence and lateness during Ramadan will continue to be recorded and monitored in accordance with this policy.
- Individual circumstances affecting a pupil's attendance or wellbeing will be considered appropriately and sensitively.

POSITIVE RECOGNITION OF ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

NIA Lusail promotes a positive culture in which regular attendance and punctuality are recognised as important contributors to successful learning.

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- Pupils will be encouraged to take responsibility for their attendance and punctuality in an appropriate age manner.
- Good and improved attendance and punctuality may be recognised through the school's existing rewards and recognition systems.
- Recognition may take place at individual, class, year group, phase or House level, where appropriate.
- The school will recognise improvement as well as consistently high attendance so that pupils who have overcome barriers to attendance can also have their progress acknowledged.
- Recognition of attendance will be applied sensitively and will not disadvantage pupils whose absence is linked to genuine medical needs, SEND or other significant circumstances beyond their control.
- Pupils should not attend school when they are medically unfit to do so solely for the purpose of maintaining an attendance record.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS AND REPORTING

Accurate attendance records are essential for monitoring pupil attendance, identifying concerns and meeting the school's reporting responsibilities.

- Attendance, absence, lateness and early departures will be recorded in SIMS.
- Staff responsible for registration must ensure that registers are completed accurately and within the required time.
- Attendance records will be reviewed regularly by the relevant pastoral and phase leaders.
- Parents will receive information about their child's attendance and punctuality through school reporting processes and will be contacted where concerns are identified.
- Attendance information will be used to identify individual pupils and groups requiring additional support or intervention.
- Records of attendance concerns, parental communication, meetings and interventions will be maintained where appropriate.
- The school will provide attendance information to the relevant Qatar authorities where required in accordance with applicable regulations and reporting procedures.
- Attendance information will be handled confidentially and accessed only by staff who require it as part of their professional responsibilities.

POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that attendance and punctuality procedures are implemented consistently across EYFS, Primary and Secondary.

Attendance data, patterns of absence and punctuality concerns will be reviewed regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's procedures and interventions.

The policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier where changes to school procedures, applicable regulations or accreditation requirements make this necessary.