



Rawdah Montessori Primary School Staff Attendance and Absence Management Policy

Version: 1.1

Reviewed: October 2025

Next Review Due: October 2026

1. Introduction

Rawdah Montessori Primary School values the dedication and professionalism of its staff, recognising that consistent attendance is vital to maintaining high standards of education, pupil welfare, and the smooth operation of the school.

This policy sets out expectations and procedures for staff attendance, reporting absences, and managing leave in accordance with Islamic values of responsibility, honesty, and integrity, while ensuring compliance with employment law and statutory guidance.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the **Disciplinary Policy**, **Grievance Policy**, **Flexible Working Policy**, and **Staff Wellbeing Policy**.

2. Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Ensure the smooth operation of the school through reliable and consistent staffing.
- Promote fairness, consistency, and accountability in managing attendance.
- Support staff wellbeing while maintaining high educational standards.
- Provide a clear framework for managing both authorised and unauthorised absences.
- Ensure compliance with statutory requirements, including the provision of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) and family-related leave.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, including:

- Teaching and non-teaching staff
- Part-time and full-time employees
- Contractors and agency staff (where contractually applicable)
- Long-term volunteers

4. Principles

- Staff are expected to maintain regular and punctual attendance.
- Absence should be kept to the minimum necessary and reported in accordance with this policy.
- The school will support staff who are unwell or experiencing personal difficulties, balancing compassion with operational needs.
- All absences will be managed confidentially and respectfully.
- The school will monitor attendance patterns to identify and address any causes for concern early.

5. Reporting Absence

5.1 First Day of Absence

Staff must inform the **Headteacher** (or their designated line manager) of their absence by **7:30 a.m.** on the first day of absence.

- **Method:** A telephone call is preferred. A text message or WhatsApp is not acceptable for formal notification.
- **Information Required:** The reason for absence and the expected duration.
- **Contact Number:** [Insert School Contact Number]

5.2 Ongoing Absence

- Staff must maintain regular contact with the school (at least every **3 working days**) to update on their condition and expected return date.

- For absences exceeding **7 calendar days**, a medical certificate (Fit Note) must be provided. After this point, the school may require further Fit Notes for extended periods.

5.3 Failure to Report

Failure to report absence in accordance with this procedure may result in the absence being recorded as **unauthorised** and may lead to disciplinary action under the **Disciplinary Policy**.

6. Authorised Absence

The following types of absence are considered authorised, provided they are reported and approved in accordance with this policy:

Type of Absence	Notes
Personal Illness	Must be reported daily unless a longer-term pattern is agreed.
Medical Appointments	Should be arranged outside working hours where possible. If unavoidable, time off must be approved in advance.
Bereavement / Compassionate Leave	Discretionary paid leave may be granted by the Headteacher.

Type of Absence	Notes
Religious Observance	Staff may request time off for religious festivals (Islamic or other faiths) in line with the school's agreed list.
Jury Service / Public Duties	Must be supported by official documentation. The difference between jury service pay and normal pay may not be made up.
Family-Related Leave	Maternity, paternity, adoption, and parental leave will be granted in line with statutory entitlements and the school's Family Leave Policy.
Pre-Approved Training / CPD	Must be agreed in advance with the Headteacher.

7. Unauthorised Absence

Absence will be deemed unauthorised in the following circumstances:

- Failure to report absence in accordance with Section 5.
- Taking leave without prior approval (including term-time leave).
- Absence for a reason not considered valid by the school.
- Persistent lateness or patterns of absence that suggest avoidance of work (e.g., frequent Monday/Friday absences).

Unauthorised absence may result in:

- Loss of pay for the period of absence.
- Formal action under the **Disciplinary Policy**.

8. Punctuality

- Staff are expected to arrive in good time to prepare for their duties. The school day begins at [Insert Start Time].
- Repeated lateness will be recorded and discussed in supervision or appraisal meetings.
- Genuine, occasional lateness due to unforeseen circumstances will be handled with understanding, but persistent lateness may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

9. Return-to-Work Interviews

A return-to-work interview will be conducted by the line manager or Headteacher after **every period of absence**, regardless of duration.

The purpose of the interview is to:

- Welcome the employee back.
- Confirm the reason for absence and ensure it is properly recorded.
- Discuss any support or adjustments that may be needed.

- Reinforce attendance expectations.

Return-to-work interviews are a supportive measure, not a disciplinary step, but they help to identify any emerging patterns early.

10. Managing Short-Term Persistent Absence

The school monitors attendance patterns using a combination of:

- **Trigger Points:** e.g., 3 separate absences in a rolling 3-month period.
- **The Bradford Factor:** A scoring system that highlights patterns of short-term absence. This is used as a supportive tool to identify staff who may benefit from an informal discussion or occupational health referral, not as a punitive measure.

If a trigger point is reached, the Headteacher will invite the staff member to an informal meeting to explore any underlying issues and agree on a support plan.

11. Managing Long-Term Absence

11.1 Staying in Touch

The school will maintain regular, sensitive contact with staff on long-term sick leave. The frequency and method of contact will be agreed with the employee and reviewed as appropriate.

11.2 Fit Notes (Medical Certificates)

After 7 calendar days of absence, a Fit Note is required. The school may request further Fit Notes periodically. If the Fit Note declares the employee "may be fit for work," the school will consider reasonable adjustments to facilitate a return.

11.3 Occupational Health Referral

Where an employee is absent for a prolonged period (typically 4 weeks or more), or where there are recurring absences, the school may refer the employee to **Occupational Health** for an assessment. The report will inform any decisions about adjustments, phased returns, or long-term capability.

11.4 Phased Return

Where appropriate, the school may support a phased return to work. This could involve:

- Reduced hours (with full pay, at the school's discretion).
- Adjusted duties.
- Temporary workplace adjustments.

11.5 Capability Procedure

If, after a reasonable period and appropriate support, an employee remains unable to return to work and no further improvements are expected, the school may consider the **Capability Procedure** (as part of the Disciplinary Policy). This is a last resort and will only be used after full consideration of medical evidence and consultation with the employee.

12. Leave Requests

12.1 Advance Requests

All requests for leave (including annual leave, training, or personal reasons) should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher at least **2 weeks in advance**.

12.2 Term-Time Leave

Leave during term time is **normally discouraged** and will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**. Examples of exceptional circumstances may include:

- Close family weddings.
- Serious illness of a close relative.
- Unavoidable religious observance not covered by the school's agreed festival list.

Staff should be aware that term-time leave is not an entitlement and will be approved only at the Headteacher's discretion.

12.3 Emergency Leave

In the case of an emergency (e.g., sudden illness of a child or family member), staff should notify the Headteacher as soon as possible on the day. Emergency leave is normally unpaid unless otherwise agreed.

13. Sick Pay

13.1 Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

Eligible employees will receive SSP in accordance with government guidelines.

13.2 Occupational Sick Pay (OSP)

The school may, at its discretion, offer Occupational Sick Pay in addition to SSP. Details of the school's sick pay scheme are set out in the **Contract of Employment** and the **Staff Handbook**. The school reserves the right to withdraw OSP if there are concerns about absence management.

14. Confidentiality

All matters relating to staff absence, including medical information, will be treated confidentially and stored securely in line with the **Data Protection Policy**. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis (e.g., with payroll, HR, or occupational health).

15. Monitoring and Review

Attendance records are monitored regularly by the Headteacher and reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the Governing Body to ensure fairness, consistency, and alignment with legal requirements and the school's Islamic ethos. The review will take into account:

- Absence data and trends.
- Feedback from staff.
- Changes in legislation or statutory guidance.

Review of Policy Dates

REVIEW DATE	REVIEWED BY	SIGNED OFF (Name & Role)
Feb 2026	Governing Body	Chair: Sohaib Tanvir
Next Review Due:		
Feb 2027	Governing Body	Chair:
	Headteacher	Headteacher: