



His Highness Prince Aga Khan Shia Imami Ismaili  
Council for the United Kingdom

8 January 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

**Re: Authorised Absence Request – Religious Observance (Code R)**

The Shia Imami Ismaili Council for the United Kingdom confirms the forthcoming official visit of His Highness Aga Khan V to the United Kingdom.

From 1 to 5 February 2026, His Highness Aga Khan V, the 50th hereditary Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims, will undertake an official visit to the United Kingdom. During this visit, Ismaili Muslims participate in a religious observance in the presence of His Highness Aga Khan V. This is scheduled for Monday 2 February and Tuesday 3 February 2026.

For Ismaili Muslims, this religious observance forms a central part of religious practice. We respectfully request that any absence requested by students to attend this event be supported in line with attendance guidance for religious observance (R code).

Details about the visit can be found [here](#) and more information about the Ismaili community and His Highness Aga Khan V can be found on the following page.

Should you need any additional details, please contact me at the details below.

Sincerely,

Amin Jamani  
Executive Officer  
Ismaili Council for the United Kingdom

## **The Ismaili Community in the United Kingdom**

The Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims, commonly known as the Ismailis, are a community within the Shia branch of Islam, one of the two principal interpretations of Islam, alongside Sunni Islam. With a continuous history of more than 1,400 years, Ismailis are united by a shared religious ethic that emphasises faith, intellectual engagement, compassion, and service to humanity.

Today, the Ismaili community numbers approximately 12 to 15 million people and resides in more than 35 countries across Central, South and East Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, North America, and Australia. Although culturally diverse, Ismailis share a strong sense of civic responsibility and are committed to contributing positively to the societies in which they live.

Ismailis actively embrace pluralism, promote peace and mutual understanding, and contribute generously through volunteer service, professional expertise, and material resources. Under the guidance of their spiritual leadership, the community has developed a well-established institutional framework that supports education, healthcare, housing, and social and economic development initiatives for the benefit of all, regardless of faith or background. <https://the.ismaili/us/about/ismaili-community>

## **Prince Rahim Al-Hussaini Aga Khan V**

His Highness Prince Rahim Aga Khan V was designated the 50<sup>th</sup> hereditary Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims on 5 February 2025, following the passing of his father, His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan IV, in accordance with Shia Imami Ismaili tradition. A direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, he serves as Chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network and is closely engaged with the work of The Institute of Ismaili Studies and the Ismaili community's social governance institutions, working with governments, international organisations, and civil society in support of marginalised and vulnerable communities. <https://the.ismaili/gb/en/about/his-highness-the-aga-khan>

Following his accession, Prince Rahim Aga Khan V was granted the title “His Highness” by King Charles on 10 February 2025, in keeping with a long-standing tradition accorded to Ismaili Imams (<https://www.royal.uk/news-and-activity/2025-02-10/the-king-is-pleased-to-grant-the-new-aga-khan-the-title-his-highness>). In 2025, His Highness Aga Khan V undertook a series of official visits marking the early phase of his Imamate, focused on strengthening partnerships with governments and institutions, advancing development initiatives, and engaging with Ismaili communities. Key visits took place in France, Kenya, Portugal, Uganda, and the United States, each combining diplomatic and development engagement with important religious occasions for the Ismaili community.

## **The Ismaili Imamate**

The Ismaili Imamate is a hereditary office in succession from the first Shia Imam, Hazrat Ali, whom Shia Muslims recognise as the divinely designated successor to Prophet Muhammad, with the Imamate continuing through his descendants. For Shia Ismaili Muslims, this line is upheld through Imam Ismail, son of Imam Jafar as-Sadiq, and today continues with His Highness Prince Rahim Aga Khan as the 50<sup>th</sup> hereditary Imam. In Ismaili tradition, the Imam provides religious guidance and leadership in improving the quality of life of the community and wider society. The Imamate is a non-political institution that works constructively with governments, including through formal agreements, and has its Seat in Lisbon, recognised by Portugal as the Diwan of the Ismaili Imamate. <https://the.ismaili/gb/en/about/ismaili-imamat>