



Attendance Policy

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Authors	Dionne McKinstry Georgia Marston Ian Ward	PS Deputy Head HS Deputy Head Principal
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Rationale

At Emirates International School Meadows (EISM), we have high expectations for student attendance so that every student can benefit fully from their education and achieve their potential.

Evidence shows that poor attendance and lateness can negatively affect educational attainment, future opportunities and social relationships. Even occasional absence or late arrival can accumulate and result in significant lost learning time.

Research from the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) identifies a significant association between absence and attainment, with higher levels of absence linked to lower performance. KHDA expectations reinforce the importance of attendance. The Parent-School Contract states that parents are responsible for promoting their child's attendance and that continued absenteeism may result in disciplinary measures and affect re-enrolment for the following academic year.

The UAE Ministry of Education also states that a student who is absent for 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days may lose their school place. EISM therefore regards regular attendance as essential to every child's right to education.

DSIB guidelines for attendance are as follows:

98% Outstanding
96% Very Good
94% Good
92% Acceptable
Less than 92% Weak
Less than 90% Very weak

Procedure

Class/Form Teachers are professionally responsible for recording attendance accurately in the electronic register at the start of each day, by 7:50am.

- If a child is absent, parents/guardians must inform the relevant Primary or High School secretary of the reason by 7:30am on the first day of absence.
- For a second consecutive day of absence, parents/guardians must provide a medical certificate. Without this, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- If no communication is received and the student is not present when the register is taken, the student will be marked absent.
- Any concerns about absence that do not fit this policy should be reported to the Safeguarding team.
- The Principal can only authorise absence in accordance with the authorised absence criteria below; all other absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If registers are not completed accurately and on time, the relevant Primary/High School secretary will follow-up with the Class/Form Teacher to prevent incorrect absence notifications being sent to parents.

- Primary and High School secretaries will update registers when parents/guardians provide information about illness or absence.
- At 9:00am, an automated email will be sent to parents/guardians of absent students where no reason for absence has been provided.
- Relevant information about an absence should be communicated to the Class/Form Teacher.
- Class/Form Teachers should monitor poor attendance and/or punctuality, discuss concerns with parents/guardians where appropriate and escalate safeguarding concerns to the Safeguarding Team.
- Bus registers for buses arriving after class registers close will be provided to the Primary and High School secretaries so that attendance records can be updated.

Attendance monitoring

The Heads of Pastoral in Primary and High School will ensure that termly attendance letters are issued for students in Year 2 and above whose attendance falls below 92%. Parents/guardians will be invited to discuss strategies to improve attendance.

Absence follow-up

- Primary and High School secretaries will contact parents/guardians when no reason has been provided on the first day of absence.
- If telephone contact cannot be made, an email will be sent.
- On the second consecutive day of absence, the secretaries will remind parents/guardians that an appropriate medical certificate is required. If telephone contact cannot be made, an email will be sent.
- After three consecutive days of absence without communication or an appropriate medical certificate, the secretaries will notify the Head of Pastoral (Primary) or Head of Year (High School), who will follow-up with the parent/guardian and inform the relevant Head of School.
- After five consecutive days of absence without communication or an appropriate medical certificate, the relevant Head of School will follow-up with the parent/guardian and inform the Principal and Admissions Team. KHDA will also be notified where required for safeguarding purposes.

Children leaving school early

Parents/guardians must inform the school in advance when a child needs to leave early, preferably at least 30 minutes before collection. An exit pass must be obtained from the Primary Office (Primary) or Main Reception (High School) and signed by the relevant secretary. Parents/guardians must also inform the bus provider where applicable. The exit pass must be shown to Security when leaving the premises.

Clinic Procedure for students leaving school early

Primary School

1. Student is taken to the clinic.
2. If the student is collected, the clinic will email the Class Teacher and inform the relevant secretaries.

High School

1. The teacher permits the student to leave the lesson and attend the clinic.
2. Student visits the clinic.
3. If the student is sent home, they must report to Main Reception to obtain an exit pass signed by the High School secretary. A student may only leave with a parent/guardian or another authorised adult where the parent/guardian has provided permission by telephone or email.

Late Pick-ups – Primary School

Students not collected within 15 minutes of the end of the teaching day will be escorted to the Primary Office.

The following protocol will apply:

- There will be two members of Primary Leadership on duty.
- Secretaries or SLT staff will contact parents.
- A member of SLT will supervise the student until collection, establish the reason for the late collection and remind the parent/guardian of the correct collection time.
- If a student remains after 1:30pm (EY) or 4:00pm (Years 1–6), the Child Protection Association (CPA) may be contacted at the Principal's discretion.
- If a student remains after 2:00pm (EY) or 4:45pm (Primary/High School), the police may be contacted.
- Late collections will be reviewed monthly by the Head of Pastoral. Parents/guardians who are persistently late (10 or more occasions in a month) will be contacted. If there is no improvement, they may be required to meet with the Head of School and the matter may be referred to the police where appropriate.

Roles and Responsibilities

SLT

- The Principal and Heads of School ensure that this policy is implemented consistently across EISM.
- Ensure effective systems and protocols are in place to track and manage attendance.
- Heads of Pastoral engage with staff, parents/guardians and the wider community to improve student attendance.
- Review and amend the policy as required.
- Analyse weekly, termly and yearly attendance data.
- Promote and reward good attendance.
- Communicate and investigate concerns that may account for student absence, liaising with parents/guardians and other stakeholders as appropriate.
- Support the analysis of weekly, termly and annual attendance data.
- Support vulnerable students experiencing long-term absence.

Teachers

- Keep accurate and up-to-date records of student attendance by taking a formal register.
- Ensure all students are registered accurately and registers are submitted on Toddle (Primary) or MSchool (High School) within five minutes of the required registration time.
- Promote a welcoming and safe learning environment which encourages attendance.
- Establish good and effective communication links with all stakeholders.
- Promptly inform Year Leaders of concerns regarding lateness or attendance; Year Leaders will escalate concerns to the Head of Pastoral where appropriate.
- Provide parents/guardians with regular feedback on attendance and punctuality, including at parent-teacher conferences.

Administration

- Implement daily register checking of EISM morning registration and subject sessions.
- Ensure the Absence Follow-up Procedure is followed and daily contact is made where required.
- Make first- and second-day contact where a student is absent and no reason has been provided.
- Contact parents/guardians after 8:00am where attendance concerns require follow-up.
- Report daily attendance data.
- Record and monitor lateness and communicate with SLT if there are any concerns.
- Provide efficient communication with all teaching staff and SLT.

Parents/Guardians

- Ensure their child receives and attends full-time education.
- Ensure students undertaking Distance Learning, where authorised, are appropriately supported and supervised.
- Inform EISM of any absence by 7:30am on the day of absence.
- Provide an appropriate medical certificate from the second consecutive day of absence.
- Support the school's expectation that students aim for 100% attendance.
- Request leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances (see Authorised Absence/Leave).
- Work with EISM to address attendance and punctuality concerns.

Authorised Absence/Leave

- Vaccination
- Illness (parents/guardians must provide a medical certificate where required)
- Religious observances
- Family bereavement
- Educational assessments
- External exams
- School excursions
- External competitions
- Gifted and talented representation
- Exclusion from school

Unauthorised Absence/Leave

- Birthdays
- Illness of a sibling
- Day trips/holidays
- Caring for younger children within the family
- Purchasing new uniform
- Non-essential travel (domestic and international)

Early Travel/Leave

As an international school, EISM recognises that families may occasionally need to travel during term time or request early leave towards the end of the academic year. Parents/guardians must email the Head of Pastoral at least three working days before travel to request leave. Even where the school acknowledges the request due to otherwise high attendance, the absence will remain unauthorised because the student is not in school. Distance learning will not be provided during unauthorised leave.

Links to other policies

Admissions

Gifted & Talented

Learning & Teaching

Inclusion

Visits and Trips

Behaviour

Missing Child