



Attendance Policy

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Rationale

At Emirates International School Meadows (EISM), we have extremely high expectations regarding students' attendance as this ensures that all students can fully benefit from their education and achieve their true potential.

Evidence shows that both lateness and poor attendance have a detrimental effect on a child's educational attainment and life chances. It may also make it more difficult for them to make firm social bonds with other children. The odd day off here and there soon mounts up as does late arrival resulting in missing lesson time in a morning and these have a significant impact on learning.

The National Foundation for Educational Research in the UK (www.nfer.ac.uk) has shown that there is a significant association between absence and attainment and that there is also evidence that there may be critical thresholds of absence linked to significantly lower performance outcomes. Furthermore, this is supported by the KHDA. The Parent-School Contract states that parents have a responsibility for 'promoting their child's attendance' and that continued 'absenteeism will result in disciplinary measures and will affect the student's chances of enrolment for the upcoming academic year.'

The Ministry of Education for the UAE also states that 'if a student is absent from school for 20 consecutive days or 25 nonconsecutive days' the school can remove the child's place. Additionally, Dr Malak Zaalouk, Unicef's regional education adviser, said that pursuing an education is the right of every child and this is supported by His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

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

It is the class/ form teacher's professional responsibility to accurately record daily attendance by filling in the electronic register at the beginning of each day by 7.50am.

- If a child is absent from school, the parents are responsible for communicating with the Primary and High School secretaries in order to let the school know the reasons for the absence.
- After two days absence, the parents must provide a medical certificate. If a medical certificate is not provided after two days, the child will be marked as an unauthorised absence.
- If no communication is received and the child is not in class when the register is marked then the child will be marked 'absent'.
- Any concerns about absence that do not fit this policy should be reported to the Safeguarding team.
- The Principal cannot authorise absences other than for medical reasons, therefore any other absence is unauthorised.

If this procedure and the timings are not adhered to by the Class/Form Teacher then Primary/High School Secretary should inform the relevant member of staff as follow up emails and phone calls will be made and will result in incorrect information being transmitted to parents.

- Registers are updated as parents inform the school with sickness information by the Primary and High School secretaries.
- An automated email is sent to all parents with absent children who have not communicated the student's absence with school at 9am.
- Any pertinent information about the reason for absence should be communicated to the Class/Form

Teacher.

- Class/Form Teachers should be vigilant with regard to poor attendance and/or punctuality and follow up with parents to discuss concerns where necessary and raising to the safeguarding team.
- The Bus registers for buses arriving after the close of class registers will be passed to Primary and High School secretaries for them to update the school attendance register.

Attendance monitoring

The Head of Pastoral in Primary School and High School will ensure termly attendance letters are issued for each student in Year 2 upwards. If a student's attendance is below 90%, a follow up meeting will be required with the parents to discuss strategies to improve the student's attendance.

Absence follow up

- Primary and High School secretaries will contact the parents of students who have not provided a reason for absence on the first day of absence.
- If the secretaries cannot contact the parents, an email will be sent.
- If the student does not attend for a second day, the Primary and High School secretaries will contact the parents and remind them that an appropriate medical certificate must be provided due to the absence being longer than 1 day. If the secretaries cannot contact the parents, an email will be sent.
- If the student is absent for 3 consecutive days without communication with the school or without an appropriate medical certificate, the Primary and High School secretaries will contact the Head of Pastoral (PS) or Head of Year (HS) and they will follow up with the parent and inform the relevant Head of School.
- If the student is absent for 5 consecutive days without communication with the school or without an appropriate medical certificate, the Primary and High School secretaries will contact the relevant Head of School and they will follow up with the parent and inform the admissions team and the Principal.
- If the student is absent for 10 consecutive days without communication with the school or without an appropriate medical certificate, the Primary and High School secretaries will contact the Principal and they will contact the parents; the KHDA and admissions team will also be informed.

Children leaving school early

When a child needs to leave school early, the parent is responsible for informing the school in advance of collection, preferably 30 minutes prior to collection. If parents collect their children early from school they must get an exit pass from the Primary Office (PS) or main reception (HS); the exit form must be signed by the relevant school secretary. If the child normally uses the bus, the parent should inform the bus provider. The exit pass must be shown to security on departure of the premises.

Clinic Procedure for students leaving school early

Primary School

1. Student is taken to the clinic.
2. If the student is picked up then the clinic will email the class teacher and inform the relevant secretaries.

High School

1. Teacher allows the student to leave the lesson and visit the clinic.
2. Student visits the clinic.
3. If sent home: student must visit the main reception to get an exit pass, this must be signed by the High School secretary.

Late Pickups – Primary School

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

Protocol will be followed:

- There will be two members of Primary Leadership on duty.
- Secretaries or SLT staff will contact parents.

- A member of SLT will then supervise the student until collected and will ask the parent the reason for the student being collected late, remind them of the pickup time.
- If the student still remains after 1.30pm (EY) or after 4pm (Y1-Y6) the Child Protection Association (CPA) may be phoned at the Principal's discretion.
- If students still remain after 2pm (EY) 4.45pm (PS & HS), the police may be phoned.
- Lates will be analysed at the end of each month by the Head of Pastoral who will contact those parents who are persistently late picking up after school and clubs (10 occasions or more per month). SLT will outline that if pick-up does not improve they will be asked to meet with the Head of School and they may report them to the Police.

Roles and Responsibilities

SLT

- The Principal and Heads of School ensure that the policy is implemented consistently across EISM.
- Ensure effective systems and protocols are put in place and implemented to track and manage attendance.
- Head of Pastoral engage with staff, parents and the wider community to raise student attendance.
- Revise and amend the policy, as required.
- Analyse weekly, termly and yearly attendance data.
- Promote and reward good attendance.
- Communicate any concerns that may account for student absence. Liaise with parents and other stakeholders to address attendance issues.
- Support SLT with the analysis of weekly, termly and yearly attendance data.
- Support vulnerable long-term absences of students.

Teachers

- Keep accurate and up-to-date records of student attendance by taking a formal register.
- Ensure that all students are registered accurately and registers are submitted on MSchool within 5 minutes.
- Promote a welcoming and safe learning environment which encourages attendance.
- Establish good and effective communication links with all stakeholders.
- Promptly inform the Year Leaders of students with poor lateness and attendance (Year Leaders then inform Head of Pastoral).
- Feedback to parents about student attendance and punctuality regularly and at parent, teacher conferences.

Administration

- Implement daily register checking of EISM morning registration and subject sessions.
- Ensure the 'Absence Follow Up procedure' is followed, ensuring daily contact is made.
- Carry out first/ second day calls, when a student doesn't arrive at school when no reason has been given.
- Contact parents after 8am if there are any attendance issues.
- 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

- Provide and support their children with a full-time education.
- Ensure children that are on Distance Learning are supported and supervised.
- Inform EISM of any absences prior to 7:30am on the day of absence.
- Provide an appropriate medical certificate on the second consecutive day of absence.
- Support EISM with students aiming for 100% attendance.
- Request leave of absence only if an exceptional circumstance (*See Authorised Absence/Leave*).
- Support EISM with attendance and punctuality concerns.

Authorised Absence/Leave

- Vaccination
- Illness (Parent/Guardian must provide sick note)
- 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
- Looking after other younger children within the family
- To get new uniform
- Non-essential travel (domestic and international)

Early Travel/Leave

The nature of an international school often results in families having to travel during the school term, or requesting early travel leave towards the end of the summer term. If this circumstance occurs, parents must email the Head of Pastoral, requesting leave from school at least 3 working days in advance of travel. Please note that even though early travel may be approved due to existing high levels of attendance, it will still be registered as unauthorised absence as the students are not in school, nor can distance learning be provided.

Links to other policies

Admissions

Gifted & Talented

Learning & Teaching

Inclusion

