



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Academic Year 2026 - 27

	Name	Title	Date
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Reviewed by	Caroline Pendleton-Nash	CEO	28/07/2026
Approved by		Governing Body	
Next review	August 2027		

1. Context, Aims and Regulatory Framework

Queen Elizabeth's School, Dubai Sports City recognises that regular and punctual attendance is an essential foundation for every student's academic progress, wellbeing and safety. Attendance is everyone's responsibility, and the school works in partnership with parents to secure the highest possible attendance for all students.

This policy is written to comply with the requirements and expectations of the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) and the UAE Ministry of Education, and with the school's statutory child-protection duties under UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 (Wadeema's Law). It reflects KHDA, BSO and COBIS expectations for attendance monitoring and student welfare.

This policy should be read alongside the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Inclusion (SEND)
- Positive Behaviour
- Pastoral Care and Student Welfare
- Admissions
- Emergency and Crisis Management
- Distance Learning
- School Clinic SOPs (Stay Home if Unwell; Medication Management)

The aims of this policy are to: promote a culture in which excellent attendance and punctuality are expected and valued; register and monitor attendance accurately through iSAMS; identify and remove barriers to attendance at the earliest stage; safeguard students, including through the prompt identification of children missing from education; and meet the school's reporting obligations to KHDA.

2. Expectations of Students and Parents

Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school every day that the school is open, arrives on time, and is collected promptly at the end of the day. The school asks parents to support attendance by:

- ensuring their child understands the importance of attendance and punctuality and knows the school routines;
- avoiding medical, dental and other appointments during the school day wherever possible;
- not taking holidays or extended trips during term time (these will not be authorised - see 5.4);
- notifying the school of any absence promptly and on each day it continues (see Section 5); and

- speaking to the school early about anything that may affect their child's attendance, so that support can be put in place.

Students are expected to attend all timetabled sessions, registrations, assemblies and co-curricular commitments punctually and ready to learn. The school's standard hours, registration times and gate arrangements are published to families each year; students arriving after the close of the morning register are recorded as late (see Section 7).

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body - holds the school to account for attendance, receives attendance data at least termly, and ensures this policy is reviewed annually.

Principal - holds overall responsibility for attendance, authorises (or declines) requests for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances, and ensures KHDA reporting obligations are met.

Deputy Head (Pastoral) - SLT attendance lead - has strategic oversight of attendance across the school, leads the graduated response to absence, and reports to the Principal and Governors.

Heads of Year / Form Tutors - monitor daily attendance and punctuality for their students via iSAMS, make first contact with families about emerging concerns, and keep accurate records.

Attendance Registrar / Academic Services Coordinator - manages the day-to-day operation of registration in iSAMS, runs routine reports and alerts, follows up missing registrations, and prepares KHDA returns.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - oversees attendance concerns that carry a safeguarding dimension, including children missing from education, and leads liaison with KHDA and other authorities.

Director of Inclusion - supports students whose attendance is affected by medical needs, disability or SEND, ensuring reasonable adjustments and health-care planning are in place.

School Clinic (nurse and doctor) - advises on illness-related absence, exclusion and return criteria (Section 6), and maintains students' medical records in line with the clinic SOPs.

Reception - operates first-day contact for unexplained absence and records all notifications from parents.

4. Registration and Monitoring through iSAMS

Attendance is recorded electronically in iSAMS, the school's management information system. Every student is registered at a minimum twice daily - once in the morning and once in the afternoon - and attendance is also taken at each lesson and registered co-curricular activity so that students can be accounted for throughout the day.

The morning register is the official record of attendance for the first session; the afternoon register is the official record for the second session. Registration windows are published to staff each year, and staff complete registers promptly and accurately using the codes at Appendix A.

The iSAMS alert function flags any missing or incomplete registrations to Heads of Year and the Attendance Registrar, who follow these up the same day. At the end of each day a designated member of staff checks that the central iSAMS record is complete and correct.

Registers are legal records. Where the reason for an absence was not known at the time the register was taken, the entry may be amended once the reason is established; any amendment preserves the original entry and records the amended entry, the reason, the date and the name of the staff member making it, and is made no later than five school days after the session. Attendance records are retained securely in line with the school's data-protection arrangements and KHDA requirements.

5. Reporting Absence and Requesting Leave

If a student is going to be absent, parents must notify the school before the start of the school day, and on each subsequent day of absence, giving the reason. Notifications should be made through the school's official channels (parent app, email or Reception).

First-day contact. If a student is absent and no notification has been received, Reception will contact parents on the first morning to establish the student's whereabouts and safety. Where a student cannot be accounted for, the matter is escalated to the Head of Year and, if necessary, the DSL, and the school's Missing Child procedures are followed.

Planned absence (for example a medical appointment that cannot be arranged outside school hours) should be requested in advance with supporting evidence where relevant, and is recorded as authorised (code M). Only the Principal may authorise leave of absence for exceptional circumstances (code C).

Term-time holidays are not authorised. Holidays taken during term time will be recorded as unauthorised absence (code G). Families are asked to plan travel within the published school holidays.

6. Illness, Medical Absence and Return to School

Absence due to genuine illness is authorised (code I). To protect the health of the whole school community, and in line with the School Clinic 'Stay Home if Unwell' procedure and Dubai Health Authority (DHA) guidance, students must remain at home when unwell and only return when they meet the criteria below.

Keep your child at home if they have...	Returning to school
Fever (37.8°C or above); persistent cough; sore throat or runny nose (unwell); eye infection (e.g. conjunctivitis / pink eye); skin rash of unknown origin; vomiting or diarrhoea (more than two episodes in 24 hours).	Symptom-free for at least 24 hours without medication (including fever-free without medication). A medical clearance certificate is required after certain contagious illnesses - for example chickenpox, measles or COVID-19. Unwell students are isolated in the health room until collected, and parents must notify the School Nurse of any illness or exposure and provide medical documentation on request.

If a student is assessed by the School Nurse and considered a possible source of infection, parents will be contacted to collect them promptly and may be asked to have the child seen by a doctor. Students with an infected sore or wound may attend only if it is covered by a sealed dressing. Head lice are managed in line with the clinic's Head Lice protocol; parents are asked to inspect their child regularly and inform the School Nurse.

Where illness is prolonged, the school will treat it as medical absence and work with the family, the School Clinic and the Inclusion team to support continuity of learning. Students with ongoing medical conditions are supported through an Individual Health Care Plan and, where medication is required, in line with the clinic's Medication Management procedure.

7. Punctuality and Lateness

Punctuality is an important habit and a safeguarding matter, as the school must know who is on site. Students arriving after the morning register has opened are recorded as late (code L); students arriving after the register has closed are recorded as an unauthorised absence for that session (code U) unless there is an acceptable reason.

Persistent lateness is monitored through iSAMS and addressed through the same graduated, supportive response used for absence (Section 8), beginning with the Form Tutor / Head of Year and involving parents.

8. Monitoring Attendance and the Graduated Response

Attendance data is analysed through iSAMS at individual, class and year-group level on a weekly, half-termly and annual basis to identify patterns early. The school intervenes on any developing pattern of absence - not only on persistent or severe absence - so that students can be supported before difficulties become entrenched.

The school applies the following categories and responses. Thresholds are indicative and are always applied with sensitivity to the reasons for absence; the school does not take a punitive approach where a student or family is facing genuine difficulty.

Attendance	KHDA rating	Max days absent (of 180)	School response
98% and above	Outstanding	Up to 3	Recognised and celebrated through tutor time, assemblies and reporting.
96% - 97.9%	Very Good	Up to 7	Routine monitoring by the Form Tutor / Head of Year via iSAMS.
94% - 95.9%	Good	Up to 11	Monitored; the Form Tutor / Head of Year makes early contact with parents where a pattern is emerging.
92% - 93.9%	Acceptable	Up to 14	Stage 1: parents contacted, barriers identified and actions agreed; recorded in iSAMS.
Below 92%	Below acceptable (raises concern at KHDA inspection)	15 or more	Stage 2: attendance meeting with parents; individual attendance support plan; DSL informed; Inclusion team involved where a medical / SEND need exists. Sustained or severe absence escalates to a formal SLT-led plan, safeguarding review and escalation to KHDA.

Where absence is linked to a medical condition, disability, SEND or a mental-health need, the ambition for attendance remains the same, but additional and individualised support is provided in partnership with parents, the Inclusion team and the School Clinic, including reasonable adjustments and, where appropriate, a phased return.

9. Children Missing from Education and KHDA Reporting

A child going missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, can be an indicator of a wider safeguarding risk. All prolonged or unexplained absence is treated as a potential welfare concern and referred to the DSL.

Mirroring the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy: where a student has **not returned to school five school days after an authorised absence**, or is **absent**

for ten consecutive school days without authorisation, the school will co-operate with, and make enquiries jointly with, the KHDA as to the student's whereabouts.

The school also notifies the KHDA when a student's name is added to or removed from the admission register outside the standard transition points, and issues leaving / transfer certificates as required. The school will share attendance information with KHDA and other authorities where it is legally required or necessary to safeguard a student.

10. Attendance, Safeguarding and Welfare

Attendance and welfare are closely linked. Staff remain alert to absence as a possible sign of a safeguarding concern - including neglect, exploitation or a mental-health need - and report any such concern to the DSL in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Information about individual students is shared on a need-to-know basis and handled in line with the school's privacy and data-protection arrangements.

During any approved school closure or period of remote learning, attendance continues to be taken for scheduled online sessions in line with the Emergency and Crisis Management and Distance Learning policies.

11. Promoting and Recognising Good Attendance

Good attendance is habitual, and the school builds it through a positive culture: high expectations communicated consistently to students and parents; regular reporting of attendance to families; recognition and celebration of strong and improved attendance through tutor time, assemblies and the house system; and staff training so that the whole school takes a consistent, supportive approach.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if KHDA requirements or the school's circumstances change, and is approved by the Governing Body. Attendance performance is reported to the Governing Body, which monitors trends and the impact of the school's strategies.

Appendix A - Attendance and Absence Codes (iSAMS)

The following codes are used to record attendance in iSAMS. Whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised determines how it is treated for monitoring and KHDA reporting.

Code	Meaning (recorded in iSAMS)
P	Present in school for the session
L	Late - arrived after the register opened but before it closed (present; punctuality flagged)
U	Arrived after the register closed - recorded as an unauthorised absence for that session
E	Present off-site on an approved educational visit, trip or examination
V	Present at an approved sporting fixture or representative activity
I	Absent - illness (authorised)
M	Absent - medical or dental appointment, with evidence where requested (authorised)
R	Absent - religious observance (authorised)
C	Absent - exceptional / compassionate circumstances approved in advance by the Principal (authorised)
Q	Unable to attend - access, transport not provided by the school, or public-health direction (authorised)
H	Authorised whole-school closure or approved remote-learning day
X	Not required to attend (e.g. below compulsory school age; staggered start)
O	Absent - reason not yet established (treated as unauthorised until confirmed)
N	Absent - no acceptable reason provided (unauthorised)
G	Holiday taken during term time and not authorised by the school (unauthorised)
T	Absent without leave / truancy (unauthorised)