

Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Effective	21 August 2024
Author	Linda Elder
Reviewer	Tyler Lawrence
Approver	Karen McCord, Executive Principal
Due for review	01 August 2026
Version number	2.0

Board Approval: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Contents

Contents	2
Our Philosophy	3
Purpose of Policy	4
Policy Statement	5
Expectations	5
Monitoring Student Attendance	6
Record and Follow Up Student Absences	6
Communication about Attendance at AISD	7
Strategies to Deal with Persistently Low Attendance or Lateness	7
Academic School Calendar 2025-2026	9
Procedures	14
1. Student Absence	14
2. Late Arrivals	14
3. Late Collections	15
4. Student Early Departure	15
5. Sickness	16
6. Authorised/Planned Absence	16
7. Unauthorised Absence	17
Lateness	18
Absenteeism	19
Frequently Asked Questions For Parents	20

Our Philosophy

AISD actively promotes and encourages 100% attendance for all students. AISD expects all children enrolled to attend every school day. Any time a student is not attending or participating in their educational program it is considered an absence and must be explained.

If a student is absent one day per week, this quickly adds up to two months of missed school in a year. With two months of holidays to begin with, this means an extra two months results in $\frac{1}{3}$ of the year being missed learning time.

Attendance is a key component in student progress and achievement. Regular attendance and academic achievement are closely linked. Students who actively participate in their learning by attending all classes are more likely to:

- Enjoy a rewarding experience in which their knowledge, skills and abilities are developed
- Establish a responsible attitude towards the opportunities available in school
- Develop better time management skills
- Achieve better results in reading, writing, and maths assessment
- Make firm social bonds with other children and teachers

Our School aims to:

- Provide a safe, respectful and responsible learning environment where students have opportunities to engage in quality learning experiences and acquire values supportive of their lifelong wellbeing
- Acknowledge the importance of student wellbeing and achievement by encouraging high levels of attendance and punctuality. As such we strive to ensure each classroom a place where students want to be, where their imagination is ignited and their thirst for knowledge is satisfied
- Maintain a positive culture and ethos that creates a sense of belonging and self-responsibility, leading to improved student attendance, behaviour and achievement in which outstanding levels of attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by our school and the wider community
- Raise awareness for parents, carers and students about the importance of outstanding levels of attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education
- Provide support to parents, guardians and students when needed to encourage regular attendance.

Purpose of Policy

At AISD we believe that both attendance and punctuality are life skills students need to learn in order to become responsible adults in the future. It is a foundation for academic achievement as it underpins all aspects of personal development.

“Every day counts” is a Queensland initiative that strives to raise awareness of how important it is for students to be attending school every day. Every day counts promotes five key messages:

- To achieve their full potential all children should be enrolled at school and attend on time every school day
- Attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in our community
- Schools monitor, record and follow up student attendance
- Schools communicate and implement strategies to improve regular school attendance
- Truancy can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices

Every day counts... because children achieve better when they attend school all day, every day.

Every day counts... because going to school means getting a better chance at life.

Every day counts... because school helps children build social and emotional skills such as communication, teamwork and resilience.

Every day counts... because going to school is a legal requirement.

Similarly, KHDA promotes a 96% attendance policy as being Very Good.

KHDA Attendance and Punctuality Definitions	
Outstanding	Attendance is at least 98%. Student is punctual to school and lessons.
Very Good	Attendance is at least 96%. Student almost always arrives at school and to lessons on time.
Good	Attendance is at least 94%. Student usually arrives at school and to lessons on time.
Acceptable	Attendance is at least 92%. Student generally arrives at school and to lessons on time.
Weak	Attendance is less than 92%. Student consistently arrives late to school and/or to lessons.

Policy Statement

AIS Dubai actively promotes and encourages 100% attendance for all students. Our aim is to work with parents and students to ensure that students arrive at school and to lessons on time. We strive for attendance that is consistently outstanding for all students. The KHDA framework defines student attendance as follows:

AIS Dubai has a target of:

- 100% attendance for all students across all years
- 100% for arriving to school on time

Please note: In accordance with UAE law, a pupil may be permanently excluded if he/she is absent from school for 20 consecutive days or 25 nonconsecutive days within an academic year. In such cases, our school reserves the right to exclude your child, ask them to repeat a year or withdraw the offer of a place for the following academic year.

Expectations

We expect that all our **students** will:

- Attend school regularly and attend all lessons
- Arrive on time to school and to all lessons
- Be properly prepared and equipped for the day's learning
- Follow correct procedures for attendance and punctuality
- Be responsible for carrying out any work provided by the school during an authorised absence period

We expect that **Parents/Guardians** will:

- Ensure their child is punctual to school
- Understand and follow our school's attendance policy
- Not allow their child to have time off school unless it is unavoidable
- Endeavour to keep holidays and health appointments out of school hours where possible
- Contact staff for any reason or problem that may hinder their child from attending school
- Work with our school to resolve concerns where possible and ensure good attendance and punctuality

Monitoring Student Attendance

Understanding the attendance patterns and trends, enables staff to focus their attention on the times, days, individuals and groups of students for which non-attendance is an issue.

Attendance monitoring allows AISD to:

- Analyse absence and attendance information by student group, year level, and time period (term, semester and year to date)
- Investigate trends such as: days of the week with the highest levels of absenteeism, times of the year in which attendance is lowest (e.g. end of term, around public holidays), year levels, gender and cultural groups with the poorest attendance
- Review attendance data for the previous term to identify students with poor attendance and monitor these students
- Analyse reasons for attendance patterns
- Discuss attendance data with staff so that trends and students at risk can be identified
- Discuss and share attendance reports to all school staff on the attendance rates for all year levels and classes during scheduled meetings across the year
- Scheduling fun events and activities on days that have traditionally poor attendance
- Discourage families from taking holidays during school terms

Record and Follow Up Student Absences

AISD has high expectations for staff about accurate and consistent daily roll marking. Timely follow-up is a key preventative strategy in reducing absenteeism. It makes it difficult for students to miss school without being detected. It also enables parents who may not be aware that their children are absent to take action. 'Consistent and persistent' follow up is a key strategy employed by AISD and is viewed as a way to significantly improve attendance.

To record and follow up absences, AISD will:

- Ensure that parents understand methods to notify school of an absence - via the absence link in our weekly newsletter
- Phone parents seeking an explanation for unexplained absences if parents have not notified the school after 3 days of consecutive absence
- Meet with parents to discuss reasons for their child's levels of unexplained absences or lateness and to identify practical strategies for getting students to school on time

AISD promotes the importance of attendance with students, parents, staff and other members of our school community at every opportunity. Explaining the correlation between attendance and achievement is particularly powerful when convincing students and parents of the importance of consistent attendance. Discussion of attendance is important when a student first enrolls at a school. In case of attendance concerns and patterns, discussions with parents will be conducted throughout the year. This will begin with the teacher and if the pattern persists, the Head of School will also be involved.

Clear communication ensures attendance to help staff, parents/caregivers and students to understand their responsibilities is a critical component in ensuring regular attendance is encouraged.

Communication about Attendance at AISD

Includes frequent and consistent messages about the importance of attendance in all communications with our school community including parent orientation meetings, newsletters,

assemblies and at staff meetings - emphasising the importance of attendance at the beginning of each year, with reminders throughout the year.

Strategies to Deal with Persistently Low Attendance or Lateness

AISD understands that low school attendance is not beneficial for students or schools. It has been linked with many negative outcomes for students. Persistent non-attendance requires additional resources to re-engage students in schooling and to catch up on missed learning. This can involve learning and student support staff, and interagency collaborations. Supporting students and families to deal with barriers to school attendance can be part of improving attendance. Schools can be most effective when they understand the needs of their students, contemporary research into school attendance and effective practices that help to maximise attendance.

When attendance or lateness becomes persistent AISD utilises the Incentive Strategies from above as well as Connective Strategies and Sanctions.

Connective Strategies to encourage better attendance

- Individual or Family Counselling, mentoring and case management involving the class or nominated teacher, management, school counsellor
- Individual Contracts/Plans with short and long term goals that enable the student to express reasons for poor attendance and or late arrival
- Using data patterns and graphs to help parents and students to better understand attendance patterns
- Support for families such as referral to other community services for increased support
- Increasing parental involvement by improving communications – use of translators, home visits, classroom visits

School Response to Absences:

- Student not being permitted to attend school functions or sports activity
- Students receiving IE (Insufficient Evidence for Academic Reports)
- Request to find another school

Academic School Calendar 2025-2026

August 2025							September 2025							October 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31		

November 2025							December 2025							January 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	

Summary of Term Dates			
Legend	First Term	Second Term	Third Term
School Days - 182 School days	25 Aug 2025 - 5 Dec 2025	5 Jan 2026 - 13 Mar 2026	30 Mar 2026 - 03 July 2026
Student Free Days	Student Free Days 13 to 17 Oct 2025		
Government Public Holidays - These dates are subject to change	National Day 2 to 3 Dec 2025 TBC	Eid al-Fitr 19 Mar to 20 Mar 2026	Eid al-Adha 26 May to 29 May 2026
Term Break - Non school days	Winter Holidays 8 Dec 2025 to 2 Jan 2026	Spring Holidays 16 Mar to 27 Mar 2026	Summer Holidays From 4 July 2026

February 2026	March 2026	April 2026
---------------	------------	------------

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May 2026	June 2026	July 2026
----------	-----------	-----------

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Summary of Term Dates			
Legend	First Term	Second Term	Third Term
School Days - 182 School days	25 Aug 2025 - 5 Dec 2025	5 Jan 2026 - 13 Mar 2026	30 Mar 2026 - 03 July 2026
Student Free Days	Student Free Days 13 to 17 Oct 2025		
Government Public Holidays - These dates are subject to change	National Day 2 to 3 Dec 2025 TBC	Eid al-Fitr 19 Mar to 20 Mar 2026	Eid al-Adha 26 May to 29 May 2026
Term Break - Non school days	Winter Holidays 8 Dec 2025 to 2 Jan 2026	Spring Holidays 16 Mar to 27 Mar 2026	Summer Holidays From 4 July 2026

Early Years (PreKG & KG1) Weekly Routine

Arrival 7:30 - 8:45 am. Pickup 1:00 - 3:00 pm.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30 - 8:00	School is open for students to start arriving				
8:00 - 8:20	Wellbeing				
8:20 - 9:00	Session 1				
9:00 - 9:40	Snack (Session 2)				
9:40 - 10:20	Session 3				Session 3 9:50 - 10:25
10:20 - 11:00	Session 4				Session 4 10:25 - 11:00
11:00 - 11:40	Session 5				Student Pick Up 11:00
11:40 - 12:20	2nd Break (Session 6)				Extra-Curricular Activities 11:15 - 12:00
12:20 - 1:00	Session 7				
1:00 - 1:40	Session 8				
1:40 - 2:20	Session 9				
2:20 - 3:00	Session 10				
3:00	Student Pick Up				
3:15 - 4:00	Extra-Curricular Activities				

Junior Primary (Prep - Year 2) Weekly Routine

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30	Staff Arrival Student Access				
7:50	Student Arrival to Classroom				
8:00	UAE National Anthem				
8:00-8:20	Form Class				Session 1 8:00 - 8:40
8:20 - 9:00	Session 1				
9:00 - 9:40	Session 2				Session 2 8:40 - 9:15
9:40 - 10:20	Session 3				Session 3 9:15 - 9:50
10:20 - 11:00	1st Break (Session 4)				Session 4 9:50 - 10:25
11:00 - 11:40	Session 5				Session 5 10:25 - 11:00
11:40 - 12:20	Session 6				Student Pick Up 11:00
12:20 - 1:00	Session 7				Extra-Curricular Activities 11:15 - 12:00
1:00 - 1:40	2nd Break (Session 8)				
1:40 - 2:20	Session 9				
2:20 - 3:00	School Assembly	Session 10			
3:00	Student Pick Up				
3:15 - 4:00	Extra-Curricular Activities				

Upper Primary (Year 3 - Year 6) Weekly Routine

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30	Staff Arrival Student Access				
7:50	Student Arrival to Classroom				
8:00	UAE National Anthem				
8:00-8:20	Form Class				Session 1 8:00 - 8:40
8:20 - 9:00	Session 1				
9:00 - 9:40	Session 2				Session 2 8:40 - 9:15
9:40 - 10:20	1st Break (Session 3)				Session 3 9:15 - 9:50
10:20 - 11:00	Session 4				Session 4 9:50 - 10:25
11:00 - 11:40	Session 5				Session 5 10:25 - 11:00
11:40 - 12:20	Session 6				Student Pick Up 11:00
12:20 - 1:00	2nd Break (Session 7)				Extra-Curricular Activities 11:15 - 12:00
1:00 - 1:40	Session 8				
1:40 - 2:20	Session 9				
2:20 - 3:00	School Assembly	Session 10			
3:00	Student Pick Up				
3:15 - 4:00	Extra-Curricular Activities				

Junior Secondary (Year 7-9) and Senior Secondary (Year 10-12) Weekly Routine

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30	Staff Arrival Student Access				
7:50	Student Arrival to Classroom				
8:00	UAE National Anthem				
8:00-8:20	Form Class				Session 1 8:00 - 8:40
8:20 - 9:00	Session 1				
9:00 - 9:40	Session 2				Session 2 8:40 - 9:15
9:40 - 10:20	Session 3				Session 3 9:15 - 9:50
10:20 - 11:00	1st Break (Session 4)				Session 4 9:50 - 10:25
					Session 5 10:25 - 11:00
11:00 - 11:40	Session 5				Student Pick Up 11:00
11:40 - 12:20	Session 6				Extra-Curricular Activities 11:15 - 12:00
12:20 - 1:00	Session 7				
1:00 - 1:40	2nd Break (Session 8)				
1:40 - 2:20	Session 9				
2:20 - 3:00	Session 10				
3:00	Student Pick Up				
3:15 - 4:00	Extra-Curricular Activities				

Ramadan School Hours:

- Monday to Thursday are determined annually via parent survey
- Friday is 8:00am to 11:00am
- Drop off available 30 minutes before agreed start time

Students' absenteeism and lateness affect our:

- school's ability to provide effective educational services
- achievements of consistently absent or late students
- learning experiences of other students in our school, due to the disruption by late arrivals

Parents, students and our school must work together to maintain high attendance rates.

Procedures

1. Student Absence

Student's absenteeism and lateness

- Affect the achievements of consistently absent or late students
- Affect our school's ability to provide effective educational services
- Disrupt the learning experience of other students in our school

Our school expects all students, other than Early Years (Pre-KG & KG1) to be in their classroom by 8:00am everyday. (Note: School times change for Ramadan)

If a child is absent for any reason we require parents to:

- Complete our [online absence form](#) found at the top of the student newsletter
- Inform the school before 8:00am or the night before if possible
- Advise the reason for the child's absence and if possible the date expected to be back at school by.

2. Late Arrivals

It is an expectation that students arrive punctually to school ready to learn as we place a great importance on developing punctuality as a sign of respect towards others in the community. Naturally, we understand that there may be infrequent situations where delays are unavoidable.

School Timings:

- Our school is open for students to enter the building from 7:30am.
- Students are expected to be in their classrooms by **8:00am** for the National Anthem. During this time, all students should remain still and show respect.
- Primary and Secondary School mark their rolls by 8:10am at the latest (and for the Early Learning Centre, by 9:00am).
- **Note:** Reception areas lock at **8:10am**. After this time, all students should proceed to **Foyer D** to collect a late slip.

What to do if a student arrives late?

If a student arrives after 8:10am, they must go directly to Reception D or A to obtain an approved late slip:

- Reception D - Primary and Secondary School students

- Reception A - ELC students only

Reception staff will record the student's arrival and time in the attendance system, and the student will then proceed to class with their late slip and hand this to their teacher.

3. Late Collections

Parents have a duty of care to collect their children on time. Parents are expected to be at the collection area by 3:00pm Monday to Thursday, and by 11:00am on Fridays (Note: Ramadan hours differ).

What to do if you are going to be late for school pick up?

If a parent expects to be more than 10 minutes late, please notify Reception or the class teacher. After **3:15pm (on non Extra-Curricular Activity (ECA) days) and 4:15pm (on ECA days)**, all students will be moved to **Reception D** for collection.

4. Student Early Departure

Unless your child is part of our ELC, early departure from school is not acceptable without a valid reason. If it is essential for your child to leave school before the end of the day please follow the below guidelines. Please note a student is considered absent if he/she is absent from one or more sessions in one day, except for those Early Years students who have an approved arrangement to be collected early.

What to do if it is essential for your child to leave early?

- Complete our [online absence form](#) and note the early pick up time.
- Please arrive at school 10 minutes before your expected pick up time to allow enough time for a member of staff to collect your child from their class. Our school is large, so staff need time to collect your child and their belongings, so please be patient.
- Ensure that you have physically signed your child out of the school.
- Primary and secondary school students will be given a departure slip, signed by Reception staff, which they must present to the Security team to permit their exit from the school.
- Classroom teachers and/or Bus Carers must be notified of the students departure from school and that they will not be on the school bus, if applicable.
- Reception staff will update the online attendance system to reflect that the student is no longer on the school premises.

Student Early Departure due to Illness, Accident and/or Illness

Parents and/or guardians will be notified to collect their child from school due to illness, accident and/or injury. Necessary information will be provided to parents regarding their child's current condition and if it is advised they should seek further medical assistance.

This will be initiated by the School Doctor or School Nurse after health examination and/or screening tests are conducted. Teachers and other relevant staff will be included in this communication.

When a student leaves the school premises at the direction of either a parent or staff member

- Parents are required to complete the **Student Early Departure Form** at **Reception D**.
- Primary and secondary school students will be given a departure slip, signed by Reception staff, which they must present to the Security team to permit their exit from the school.
- Reception staff will update the online attendance system to reflect that the student is no longer on the school premises.
- Classroom teachers and/or Bus Carers must be notified of the students departure from school and that they will not be on the school bus, if applicable.

5. Sickness

If the reason for a student's absence is that they are unwell they should be kept at home depending on the diagnosis or symptoms. Children should be isolated as directed by the DHA and AIS Dubai Clinic Policies.

(See information sheets on 'Communicable Diseases' and 'Keeping your child and other kids healthy'.

[AISD - Communicable Diseases Parent Information - TimeOut](#)

[Keeping Your Child and Other Kids Healthy](#)

- A Doctor's certificate may be required, which may include a 'fit to return to school' depending on the illness.
- In the event of the student contracting an illness or suffering an injury which would make an absence of 2 days or more likely, parents should inform the school immediately, and subsequently keep the school informed on their progress.

6. Authorised/Planned Absence

A student will be marked as an authorised absence when:

- The parent has notified the school of the absence and the reason of absence.
- Additional days off school have been approved by the Principal.

Please Note:

- Parents should not automatically expect the school to approve all leave requests

- Planned absence from school is actively discouraged. Holidays and health appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours whenever possible.
- Parents can request additional time off school for their child by contacting the school or by using the [online absence form](#).
- The Executive Principal will consider each request on an individual basis.

7. Unauthorised Absence

- A student will be marked as an unauthorised absence when they are absent from school and have not informed the school, or given reason.
- Will be followed up with parents the morning of, by phone call, text message or an email by the teacher or administration team.

Lateness

This refers to being late to school at the start of the school day or being late to lessons within the school day.

Consequences and policies for handling lateness in primary and high school differ between our two subschool levels of education.

In case of repeated lateness, the following applies:

Frequency	Implications
Any lateness to school that is more than 20 minutes, or any lateness to classes throughout the day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lateness will be noted in the students' progress report.
Up to an additional three (3) instances of lateness in a short period of time, such as a month.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents and students are called to a meeting with the Principal or a designated person. ● Parents and students are to sign a written pledge not to repeat the offence. ● Students will be required to make up for lost time. ● Parents/guardians will be notified by the school when extended periods of unexplained absence from school by the student. ● Intervention will be sought for students who are chronically late.
Late to school (arriving after the National Anthem).	<p>At the discretion of our school, decisions might include one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The student's name will be recorded on file at the relevant front reception and a late slip will then be issued.. ● School staff will follow up with students with repeated absences and recorded as parent contact on iSams. ● Parents/guardians of persistent offenders will be contacted. A meeting will take place to develop a support strategy to address persistent lateness. Students may face detentions, withdrawal of certain privileges or daily monitoring. ● Documentation of persistent lateness will appear on reports/references.

Absenteeism

This refers to frequent or habitual absence from school or from lessons (truancy) without a valid medical or family related excuse.

In case of repeated absenteeism, the following applies:

Frequency	Implications
Multiple incidents of absenteeism in a short period of time such as a month or an academic term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written warning to notify parents. ● Absent days noted in the students' progress report.
Up to an additional three (3) instances of lateness in a short period of time, such as a month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents and students are called to a meeting with the Principal or a designated person. ● Parents and students sign a written pledge not to repeat the offence. ● Absent days to be noted in students' progress report.
Leaving school grounds without permission.	<p>At the discretion of the school, decision might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents/guardians notified. ● The student may spend their breaks under the supervision of School staff. ● Persistent offences will be treated as disobedience.

Frequently Asked Questions For Parents

Do I need to let the school know if my child has been away?

Yes – Parents should provide an explanation for their child’s absence before any known absence, or as soon as practicable after you are aware your child will be away. Complete our [online absence form](#) found at the top of the student newsletter. Parents should inform the school before 8:00am or the night before if possible, advising the reason for the child’s absence and if possible the date expected to be back at school by.

Can I take my child out of school for family or social occasions?

No – You should arrange leisure activities, visits to family and friends and shopping trips outside of school hours.

Does the occasional day away from school really affect my child’s education?

Yes – Research shows that higher student attendance is associated, on average, with higher student achievement.

What should I do if my child won’t go to school?

Contact your child's class teacher for advice in the first instance, and if ongoing, our school support team will meet with you to ensure positive intervention is received.