

The English College, Dubai



THE ENGLISH COLLEGE
D U B A I

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

2020/21

1. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE

Attendance is a foundation for academic achievement and it underpins all aspects of personal development. It establishes a responsible attitude towards the opportunities available in school and further education and it is the basis for the world of work. The English College is committed to providing a full and effective educational opportunity for all pupils. It is the policy of the school to celebrate success. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Our school actively promotes and encourages 100% attendance for all pupils. Our aim is to ensure that pupils arrive at school and to lessons on time. We strive for attendance that is consistently outstanding for all groups of pupils. KHDA grades and defines student attendance as follows:

<u>KHDA Definitions</u>	<u>% Attendance</u>	<u>Days absent</u>
Outstanding	98%	No more than three days
Very Good	96%	No more than seven days
Good	94%	No more than eleven days
Required Development	92%	No more than fifteen days
Weak	Less than 92%	Fifteen or more days

- NOTE: 'absent' includes both authorised and unauthorised days off school. The only days off school which do not count as an absence are absences of educational value e.g. trips and exams.

3. STAFF ARE ACCOUNTABLE

All staff will be actively engaged in raising attendance levels. This will involve fostering good relationships between pupils and staff, being aware of the causes of poor attendance and ensuring that the curriculum is relevant and appropriate. We will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents play a vital role and there is a need to establish strong home school links so that we can work together whenever there is concern about attendance.

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 non-consecutive days, within an academic year. In such cases, the school does reserve the right to

exclude a child, ask them to repeat a year or withdraw the offer of a place for the following academic year.

4. Student Absenteeism

- We require parents to inform us of any impending absence or immediate absence (before 7:40 AM on the day in question, or the night before if possible) by email to the address absence@englishcollege.ac.ae. A doctor's certificate may be required, which may include a 'fit to return to school' letter depending on the illness. The school nurse will keep a record of these.
- All unauthorised absence will be followed up by email or by telephone call from the receptionist. An unauthorised absence is when a student is absent and the school was not notified.
- A student will be marked as an authorised absence when:
 - a) The parent notified the school before hand
 - b) The parent had approved additional days off school (see below*)
- PLEASE note, authorised absences still count as a day of absence. The only time a student can be not at school and it does not count as an absence is when the student is on an educational trip/event or sitting an academic examination.
- We will reward 100% attendance with termly certificates in assembly. Students with 100% attendance for the whole school year are celebrated in our annual awards evening in June.
- *Parents can request additional time off school for their child. In order to do this, they must notify the receptionist and complete the 'additional holiday request form'. The head of school will then consider each on an individual basis, however the school discourages any absenteeism from school and even if approved, this is still recorded as an absence.
- Depending on the reasons for absence, staff will endeavour to assist absentees in catching up with missed work without disrupting the learning of other class members. However, students should take an active role in catching up on work missed.
- The Heads of School, in consultation with the staff, will undertake systematic monitoring of attendance. They will be looking for:
 - Unauthorised absence;
 - Frequent short absences with possible patterns, e.g. every Thursday absent;
 - Persistent lateness
- Parents will be informed about attendance problems as follows:
 - *7 days absence: admin notifies DHoS who investigates reasons for absence. If appropriate, DHoS asks admin to send [letter 1](#) out to parents to notify them of absence.*
 - *11 days absence: admin notifies DHoS who investigates reasons for absence. If appropriate, DHoS asks admin to send [letter 2](#) out to parents to notify them of absence. Parents must sign and return slip to acknowledge receipt of letter 2.*

- *15 days absence: admin notifies HoS who investigates reasons for absence. If appropriate, HoS arranges a meeting with parents and during the meeting gives [letter 3](#). Parent signs to acknowledge letter 3 in the meeting.*
- *This is all recorded in a central sheet, as this evidence will be required as per KHDA rules.*
- *This happens as soon as the student triggers these days - not at the half term*
- When a student has been absent for 7 days (cumulatively not consecutively), the administration team will notify Heads of School who will investigate the circumstances and, if deciding the reasons for absence are not warranted, will request the Administration team to send the standard letter home. If absences persist, the Head of School will follow up with a phone call with a reference to KHDA attendance requirements (Section 5 of the Parent Contract with KHDA and the School). A half term review of attendance should also be undertaken, with any student with an attendance lower than VERY GOOD 96%, being investigated and the above process followed.
- Students who become sick during a school day do not count as a day of absence. Students who feel sick/ill will report to the nurse and parents may be called if warranted.
- Students being absent from school during the day i.e. parents taking their child out of school for a dentist appointment, is highly discouraged. The English College asks parents to avoid (unless completely unavoidable), taking students out of school before the end of the school day.

5. Lateness:

- Students must be through the school gates by 7:40AM. At 7:40AM the school gates are closed and any student arriving after must sign in with security. The security guard will give the list of names to the receptionist, who will issue a negative on classcharts. Classcharts will then automatically notify parents that the child was late.
- If a child is late three times over a four week period, classcharts will issue a detention with the form tutor and notify parents, form tutor, Deputy Head of School and Head of School.
- If a child is late six times over an eight week period, classcharts will issue a detention with SLT, which takes place after school on a Thursday. Parents, form tutor, Deputy Head of School and Head of School are automatically notified. A member of the leadership team will also call to ensure the parent understands.
- All late students from years 7-13 must arrive through the secondary entrance. All late students from years fs-5 and year 6, must arrive through the primary entrance.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Heads of School will be responsible for the school's policy and procedures, and may delegate aspects of its day to day implementation and management to a designated member of the school's leadership team.

- All staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed, and consistently and fairly applied.
- The Heads of School and staff will ensure there is no differential application of the policy and procedures on any grounds, particularly ethnic or national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexuality.
- Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance and punctuality of their child both inside and outside the school.
- The MIS School Register is a formal document and should be marked with accuracy at the beginning of the morning registration session. Lesson attendance should also be marked in the first 5 minutes of each lesson.
- The register information is used by school administration staff to contact parents about absence. As stated above, the receptionist will call home based on the morning registers.
- If a teacher has a student missing for a lesson, who was marked present for previous lessons, the teacher should email the receptionist and leadership team for that year group immediately. This could potentially be a serious child protection issue.
- It is essential therefore that class teachers and tutors ensure that register records are accurate. If there should be a fire in school, an inaccurately marked register could result in a life being lost.

7. SUPPORT FOR PUPILS WITH ATTENDANCE PROBLEMS

- Pupils will be monitored by the Form Tutor, Class Teacher, Deputy Head of School and Head of School.
- If a student's attendance falls below very good 96%, the pupil will be monitored and given a target and time limit for improvement. However, professional judgment must be applied with the situation and timeframe. For example, a student who misses the first day of school would have a 0% attendance.
- If no improvement is shown the parent will be contacted by telephone or letter or an invitation will be offered to discuss the situation in school. Joint strategies may be devised between parents, pupils, and staff. A time limit and targets will be set for improvement.
- Special programmes may be negotiated with pupils experiencing attendance problems using curriculum support, from Tutors, Class teachers, SENDCO, Deputy Heads of School and Heads of School.
- According to the KHDA rule of 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days within an academic year, The English College will insist on a formal meeting at this point. This has now become grounds for exclusion/repeating the academic year.
- Children with long term illnesses or with mental health concerns, including school phobia and social anxiety, will be supported by the school. Contact with parents and the pupil will be maintained. As far as is possible, work will be sent for the pupil and sent home. The school will work with the family and KHDA to try and assist the student to the best of our ability.

- Heads of school and Deputies receive weekly attendance figures from the admin staff. Poor attendance is acted on at least once every half term, if not sooner. However, each case is treated with professional judgement. To support this, attendance is a regular agenda item for pastoral meetings.