



The Apple International Community School

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

2026-2027

POLICY INFORMATION

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Approved By	Principal – Ms Pretty



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01- PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for promoting and monitoring consistent attendance and punctuality among all students at The Apple International Community School (AICS), Dubai. This policy has been revised to ensure full alignment with the requirements of the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB), and the relevant UAE federal legislation governing compulsory education, so that every student benefits fully from their learning and is safeguarded against the risks associated with poor attendance.

02- SCOPE

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Apple International Community School from FS to Year 11, and is binding on parents/guardians, class teachers, subject coordinators, the attendance officer, the school counsellor, and members of the Senior Leadership Team. It operates alongside, and does not replace, the obligations set out in the Parent-School Contract signed with KHDA.

03- LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This policy is written in accordance with the following legal and regulatory requirements:

- UAE Federal Decree-Law No. 39 of 2022 on Compulsory Education, which obliges parents and legal guardians to enrol their children in school and to ensure their regular attendance throughout the compulsory education period.
- The KHDA Parent-School Contract, which states that attendance is mandatory for all students on all days the school is officially open.
- The DSIB School Inspection Framework, under which attendance and punctuality are formally assessed and directly influence the school's overall KHDA rating.
- The UAE Ministry of Education Procedural Guide on School Attendance and Absence, which introduces stricter escalation measures including parental warnings after unexcused absence, double-counting of absence on Fridays and days adjoining public holidays, and referral to the relevant child-protection and educational authorities where absence exceeds specified limits.

Non-compliance with compulsory education requirements may result in a written warning being issued by the Ministry of Education or another educational authority, and, where non-compliance persists, the matter may be escalated to the Public Prosecution in accordance with federal law. AICS works in partnership with parents to prevent matters from reaching this stage.

04 – ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS AND KHDA BENCHMARKS

Regular attendance is essential to students' academic progress, wellbeing, continuity of learning and successful participation in school life. Attendance is monitored closely by AICS in accordance with applicable KHDA/DSIB expectations and the commitments set out in the AICS Parent–School Contract.

AICS Attendance Expectation

As stipulated in the AICS Parent–School Contract, all students are expected to maintain a minimum attendance rate of 94% during the academic year. Parents are responsible for supporting regular and punctual attendance and for ensuring that absence is limited to genuine and unavoidable circumstances.

While 92% represents the minimum acceptable attendance threshold, AICS sets a higher school expectation of 94% attendance. Attendance falling below 94% will therefore be monitored by the school and may result in appropriate follow-up and intervention. Attendance below 92% will be treated as a significant attendance concern requiring formal review and action in accordance with this policy.

Based on a 180-day school year, the attendance benchmarks are:

Attendance Benchmark	Minimum Attendance	Approx. Maximum Days Absent (180-day year)
Outstanding	98%	3 days
Very Good	96%	7 days
AICS Parent–School Contract Expectation / Good	94%	10 days
Minimum Acceptable Threshold	92%	14 days*

Below Acceptable	Below 92%	Significant concern requiring intervention
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**The number of days is approximate because attendance percentages may be calculated using sessions/days actually available for attendance.*

AICS encourages all students to work towards Very Good (96%) or Outstanding (98%) attendance, wherever possible.

Attendance below 94%

Where a student's attendance falls below the 94% expectation stated in the Parent–School Contract, the school may:

- review the student's attendance record and reasons for absence;
- communicate concerns to parents/guardians;
- request supporting documentation where applicable;
- agree an attendance improvement plan or other appropriate intervention;
- monitor the student's attendance over an identified review period; and
- escalate persistent or unexplained absence in accordance with applicable KHDA requirements and school procedures.

Attendance below 92%, persistent absence, or patterns of unauthorised absence will be considered a serious attendance concern and may require further escalation.

Attendance directly affects continuity of learning. Even apparently small percentages of absence can result in a significant number of missed lessons and learning opportunities over the course of an academic year. Therefore, regular attendance and punctuality are considered a shared responsibility between the student, parent/guardian and school.

Attendance is recorded and monitored for every enrolled student from Foundation Stage to Year 11, in accordance with applicable attendance requirements.

05- PUNCTUALITY REQUIREMENTS

PUNCTUALITY AND LATE ARRIVAL

AICS recognises punctuality as an important part of regular attendance, student responsibility and continuity of learning. Students are expected to arrive at school on time, on or before 7:30am and be ready for the start of the school day. Punctuality is recorded and monitored alongside attendance in accordance with school procedures and applicable KHDA requirements.

What Counts as a Late Arrival

A student who arrives at school after 7:30 a.m. will be recorded as Late.

Students arriving after 7:30 a.m. must report to the designated school entry/reception point, where their arrival time will be recorded before they proceed to class. This ensures that attendance records remain accurate and that the school is aware of all students present on site.

Parents/guardians are expected to ensure that students arrive sufficiently early to enter the school, reach their classroom and be ready for learning on time.

Monitoring and Response to Lateness

- All incidents of lateness will be recorded and monitored by the school. Where lateness becomes repeated or persistent, AICS will use a progressive approach aimed at improving punctuality and addressing any underlying barriers.
- Initial incidents of lateness will be recorded and monitored.
- Where a pattern of lateness is identified, the student may be reminded of punctuality expectations and parents/guardians may be contacted.
- On the fifth incident of lateness within a month, a written warning will be issued to the student and parents/guardians, and the concern regarding tardiness will be reflected in the student's progress reporting, where applicable.
- If lateness continues, parents/guardians may be required to attend a meeting with the Principal or designated member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the reasons for persistent lateness and agree appropriate actions.
- A **punctuality support plan and/or written commitment/pledge** may be implemented where required.

- Persistent unresolved lateness may be escalated in accordance with the school's attendance and behaviour procedures. Where appropriate, the student may also be referred to the **school counsellor or relevant pastoral/wellbeing team** to identify and address barriers affecting punctuality.

Where there are exceptional circumstances, medical needs, transport-related concerns or other documented factors affecting punctuality, these will be considered appropriately before further action is taken.

Persistent attendance or punctuality concerns will not automatically result in refusal of re-registration. Where the School considers that refusal of re-registration may be necessary, any such decision will be subject to prior KHDA approval and applicable regulatory requirements.

Impact on Learning

Late arrival results in lost learning time and can disrupt both the individual student's learning and that of the wider class. Repeated lateness will therefore be treated as an attendance and punctuality concern and addressed through monitoring, parent partnership and progressive intervention.

06- AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Absences are classified as follows:

- **Authorised Absence:** genuine illness (supported by a medical certificate for absences of two or more consecutive days), bereavement, religious or official observance, or exceptional circumstances approved in advance by the Principal.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** family travel or holidays taken during term time, absence without prior notice to the school, or absence for which no satisfactory explanation is provided.

Patterns of absence immediately before or after weekends, school holidays and public holidays will be closely monitored. Where such absence is unauthorised or persistent, the School will apply the appropriate intervention and escalation procedures in accordance with current KHDA and applicable UAE regulatory requirements.

07- REPORTING ABSENCE AND LATE ARRIVAL

- Parents/guardians must notify the form tutor and section head by email before 7:30 a.m. on the first day of absence, stating the reason for the absence.
- A medical certificate must be submitted for any illness-related absence lasting two or more consecutive school days.
- Where a student is absent without prior notice, the school will contact parents on the same day as a safeguarding measure, in accordance with KHDA safeguarding expectations.
- Where a student misses an assessment due to absence, the matter will be managed in accordance with the School's Assessment Policy and applicable promotion and retention requirements. Appropriate consideration will be given to documented medical or exceptional circumstances.

08- MONITORING, INTERVENTION AND ESCALATION

Attendance is monitored on a rolling basis and acted upon according to the following escalation stages:

- **96%–94% attendance:** Attendance may be monitored where a declining pattern or other concern is identified. Parents/guardians may receive an advisory communication to support improvement towards the school's Very Good attendance benchmark.
- **Below 94% attendance:** Formal parent notification and review of the reasons for absence; an Attendance Improvement Plan may be implemented where appropriate.
- **Below 92% attendance:** Formal escalation to the Principal/designated SLT member and appropriate intervention in accordance with applicable KHDA requirements.
- **First unexcused absence:** a written warning is issued to parents, in line with Ministry of Education guidance.
- Where a student records 15 unexcused absences within an academic year, or reaches other applicable regulatory thresholds, the School will initiate the required escalation procedures and refer the matter to the relevant educational and/or child-protection authorities, where required. Any decision concerning repetition, non-promotion, demotion or other change in year-level placement will be subject to applicable KHDA requirements and approval processes and will not be determined solely

by the student's attendance percentage.

- Where a student's absence reaches 20 consecutive school days, 30 non-consecutive school days, or another applicable regulatory threshold within an academic year, the School will follow the required escalation and referral procedures. Any subsequent decision concerning promotion, repetition, demotion, continued enrolment or re-registration will be subject to applicable KHDA requirements and approval processes.

09- LEAVE REQUESTS DURING TERM TIME

AICS strongly discourages family travel and holidays during term time, as this directly affects a student's attendance percentage and continuity of learning. Any request for leave during term time must be submitted in writing to the Principal at least two weeks in advance using the school's official Leave Request Form.

Approval of a leave request by the School does not necessarily mean that the absence will be excluded from the student's official attendance calculation. Attendance will be recorded and classified in accordance with applicable KHDA requirements and the School's attendance procedures.

10- COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Parents are informed of their child's attendance and punctuality on an ongoing basis. A same-day notification is sent for every unexplained absence, and a summary of attendance and punctuality is included in each termly report. Where a student's attendance falls, or is at risk of falling, below the School's expected attendance level or applicable regulatory benchmark, parents/guardians will be notified promptly and appropriate support and intervention will be initiated.

11- APPEALS PROCESS

Parents who disagree with an attendance-related decision, including the classification of an absence or the outcome of an escalation stage, may submit a written appeal to the Principal within five school days of being notified. Appeals are reviewed by an appeals committee, with a final decision communicated to parents within 14 days.

12- ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Parents/Guardians: ensure their child attends school punctually every day the school is open and report absences promptly, in line with the Parent-School Contract and UAE Federal Decree-Law No. 39 of 2022.
- Class Teachers: record attendance and punctuality accurately every lesson and raise concerns with the attendance officer promptly.
- Attendance Officer/Registrar: maintains accurate daily records, follows up on unexplained absence, and reports patterns of concern to the Senior Leadership Team.
- School Counsellor: supports students and families where attendance or punctuality concerns relate to wellbeing or safeguarding.
- Senior Leadership Team/Principal: oversees escalation, approves leave requests, and liaises with KHDA and the Ministry of Education where required.

13- REVIEW AND REVISION

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains aligned with KHDA and DSIB requirements, the UAE Ministry of Education's procedural guidance, and the needs of AICS students and families