



# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Updated: June 2025

Review date: May 2026



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### 1 Rationale

At Horizon English School, we believe that high attendance rates are a significant factor in maintaining the quality of education that we provide. If we are to maintain the continuity of education for our students, we are able to maximise their potential and prepare them for their next stage of education. Horizon English School and the KHDA expects the students in our school to have exemplary attendance and punctuality (98%) and will put in place appropriate procedures to encourage and support this.

We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, Horizon English School strives to make school a welcoming, happy, caring environment, which provides a rewarding experience for all children, meets their needs and enables them to thrive.

Horizon English School will monitor attendance and punctuality tightly and offer a range of support strategies to support these, including an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents and carers to provide attendance information, advice and support.

### 2 Roles and Responsibilities

#### 2.1 Parents

Horizon English School expects all students to be punctual and maintain high levels of attendance. Students should arrive at Horizon English School ready to learn, unless prevented from doing so by illness or other exceptional circumstances for which absence is authorised by the school.

Parents are expected to adopt an appropriate and responsible approach to their child/children's attendance and punctuality, and understand the potential consequences to their achievement, and social emotional progress, if they do not attend regularly and punctually.

It is a parent/carer's responsibility to know, understand and comply with the procedures of Horizon English School for reporting absence. Parents/carers are expected to know what absences are authorised; this is outlined in "Absence & Attendance" (*Appendix 1*).

Any absence, that is not due to sickness, will only be authorised at the discretion of the Senior Leadership Team at Horizon English School. Parents/carers should be aware that poor punctuality/attendance may result in questions and intervention, via the School.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform Horizon English School of any barriers to their child attending school so that the school can help remove these barriers. If the School is not informed of the reason for a child's absence on the first day, the school will follow up all absences with an appropriate level of response, this will include phone calls or emails. Due to this, it is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that all contact details are accurate and up to date.

If a child is sick, it is the responsibility of all parents/carers to inform the School's Attendance team on their child's first day and every day of absence by 7.40am, stating the reason for absence and the likely date of return. An email should be sent to: [nurse@horizonschooldubai.com](mailto:nurse@horizonschooldubai.com) or [info@horizonschooldubai.com](mailto:info@horizonschooldubai.com)

In order for sickness not to be recorded as unauthorised, the school will request for medical evidence if the child has more than 3 consecutive days off. This could include:

- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered, stamped by a doctor's surgery;
- Letter from a qualified medical professional;
- Medication prescribed by a GP;
- Copy of prescription;
- Print screen of medical notes;
- Letters concerning hospital appointments;

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- Slip with date, students name and surgery stamp, signed by GP Receptionist.

Medical evidence may also be requested, at the discretion of the School, if there is a pattern of non-attendance due to illness or medically related issues, for example 5 sickness days, at separate points, in one half term.

### 2.2 Class Teachers

Class teachers are expected to encourage good punctuality and set an example by not being late. It is the responsibility of all class teachers to formally take their class register, accurately and by 7.40. It is the class teacher's responsibility to contact parents whose children frequently arrive to school late.

Class teachers are expected to monitor their class attendance, identify patterns and report any concerns to Heads of Year/Safeguarding team, via CPOMS, who will then follow the appropriate channel – see section 3 for further details.

Teachers should support absent students, and those who are returning to school following an absence, by ensuring that adequate resources are provided for their positive re-integration.

### 2.4 Head of Years

Attendance & Punctuality should appear as an item on team meeting agendas to keep this as a priority for discussion weekly at a year group level.

### 2.5 Attendance Team (Attendance Team and Senior Leadership Team)

It is the responsibility of the school's administrative office to maintain the day to day running of attendance procedures and to regularly update procedures, in liaison with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Attendance Team.

It is the responsibility of the School's Attendance team to track and monitor all students' attendance and to implement the Persistent Absence Procedure (Appendix 2- amber and red letter procedural flow chart) and to ensure that students who are Persistent Absentees (below 90% attendance) are tracked and monitored and are referred to the Pastoral team or the Safeguarding team, where appropriate.

In all cases of absence, the School is responsible for making contact with parents/carers to confirm the nature of the absence.

The Attendance Team will support Horizon English School in raising the profile of attendance through publicity, including the use of notice boards, parent's attendance letters, newsletters and parent workshops.

### 2.6 Senior Leadership Team (Pastoral, Attendance and Safeguarding)

It is the responsibility of the SLT, Attendance Lead and Safeguarding Lead to oversee the implementation of Horizon English School's Attendance and Punctuality policy.

The SLT Leadership team will monitor, evaluate and review the policy and its impact annually. The Attendance Team, overseen by the SLT, will produce both a Half-Termly report on Attendance and will produce an annual report to the for Horizon English School and its governance on matters of attendance.

At Horizon English School, the SLT Lead (in collaboration with the Attendance Team) will meet with the Class Teachers and the Pastoral Team to discuss attendance issues and monitor the progress made towards the meeting of agreed attendance targets.

### 3 Absence from school

#### 3.1 Students with medical conditions

Any student with a diagnosed medical condition is expected to maintain full attendance at school unless advised by qualified medical practitioners that to do so would compromise either their medical condition, or their recovery.

Horizon English School understands that at times some students may need additional support in order to be able to attend school regularly when medical conditions impact upon their normal routines. Medical evidence will be requested by the school in order to ensure that the appropriate support can be put in place.

As part of Horizon English School's commitment to safeguarding, consent is expected to be granted by parents to enable the School to liaise with medical professionals and other associated external agencies, if necessary and where appropriate.

#### 3.2 Authorised and unauthorised absence

##### 3.2.1 Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when the school has ascertained that a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent telephones or emails the school to explain the absence and/or sends in a medical note if the absence is for more than 2 days.

Parents and carers do not have the authority to authorize absences but should seek the approval of Horizon English School's Head Teacher or relevant Senior Leadership Team member. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. (See appendix 1)

##### 3.2.2 Requesting leave

All leave requests should be completed on a Leave of Absence form (see appendix 3) and submitted at least 24 hours before the requested leave date to [absence@horizonschooldubai.com](mailto:absence@horizonschooldubai.com). SLT will then review the leave request, alongside the attendance policy, and inform parents as to whether the leave is authorised, or unauthorised.

##### 3.2.3 Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent. It is at the discretion of the Senior Leadership Team as to whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised (see appendix 1).

#### 3.3 Leave of absence in term time including Holidays

Holidays, except for travel in extenuating circumstances such as family bereavement, is not authorised at Horizon English School.

#### 3.4 Highlighting Attendance Concerns

The school has set the following indicators for cause of attendance concern:

In any 3 week period (Class Teacher)	Or across ½ term (Attendance team/Head of Phase)
3 separate days Or 2 absence periods extending to 4 or more days Or 1 absence of 5 or more days	6 separate days Or 3 periods of absence extending to 8 or more days

### **3.4.1 Stage 1: Class teacher responsibility (Head of Year informed)**

Where one of the above trigger points are activated, it becomes a cause of concern. This will lead to the class teacher talking to parents to alert them to the falling attendance and loss of learning for their child or children. This will also be recorded on CPOMS to alert the Head of Phase.

### **3.4.2 Stage 2: Phase lead responsibility**

If attendance falls below 90% for a term, for an unauthorised reason, a parental meeting will be arranged with the Phase Leader so that the attendance can be investigated and help can be offered to improve attendance.

If the attendance falls below 90% for a term, for an unauthorised reason, the SLT Attendance Lead, in collaboration with the Attendance Team, will initiate the attendance procedures and meet with parents.

## **4 Punctuality**

Every student is expected to be in their classroom at 7.40am for Phase 2 and 8.00am for Phase 1. Any student arriving to registration after the advertised time is late and class teachers are expected to mark them as such (see appendix 4).

Children arriving late will access the school through the main reception where parents will sign them via a register to record time, date and reason for lateness. It is essential that students are not questioned or receive any negative feedback from staff regarding their lateness.

Persistent lateness at the start and end of the day will be monitored by the Attendance Team. Any patterns or persistent lateness will be challenged by the Attendance Team, Pastoral Team or SLT with the parent, not the child.

A whole Horizon English School approach to Attendance and Punctuality is essential. It is the responsibility of ALL staff in Horizon English School to promote and encourage positive attendance and punctuality.

### **4.1 Highlighting Punctuality Concerns**

The school has set the following indicators for cause of punctuality concern:

Within 3 weeks	Within any ½ term period
3 late marks in a single week Or 6 late marks across a 3 week period	6 late marks recorded Or 10 late marks across a ½ term

### **4.1.1 Stage 1: Class teacher responsibility (Head of Year informed)**

Where a child activates the above trigger points, it becomes a cause of concern. This will lead to the class teacher talking to parents to alert them to the falling lateness and loss of learning for their child or children.

### **4.1.2 Stage 2: Head of Year responsibility**

Should a student again hit one of the trigger points then the Head of Year will request a meeting with the parents to highlight the concern to missing learning time. Support will be offered for punctuality and Safeguarding team alerted on CPOMS, if appropriate.

### **4.1.3 Stage 3: Assistant Headteacher Phase Lead Responsibility**

If punctuality continues to be an issue, a parental meeting will be arranged with the SLT Phase Leader so that the punctuality issue can be investigated and help can be offered to improve

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punctuality. At stage 3, all punctuality concerns are recorded on CPOMS for the attention of the safeguarding team.

### Appendices

#### Appendix 1: Absence & Attendance

##### 1.1 – Authorised Absence

If your child is absent from school due to illness, the school should be notified as soon as possible on the first day by email to:

- The school nurse on [nurse@horizonschooldubai.com](mailto:nurse@horizonschooldubai.com) or [info@horizonschooldubai.com](mailto:info@horizonschooldubai.com)

Please also copy the class teacher into this email. A member of our reception team will ring home to check on a child's well-being if the school has not been notified.

Up to 3 days of absence may be authorised per academic year in line with our ambitious vision for all children to achieve 98% attendance. Reasons for authorised absence include:

- Religious observance
- Family bereavement
- Attending an educational visit outside the classroom organised by third party.
- Secondary school tours

Requests over 3 days will be reviewed by SLT and further information from parents/carers may be required, such as doctors notes or medical records.

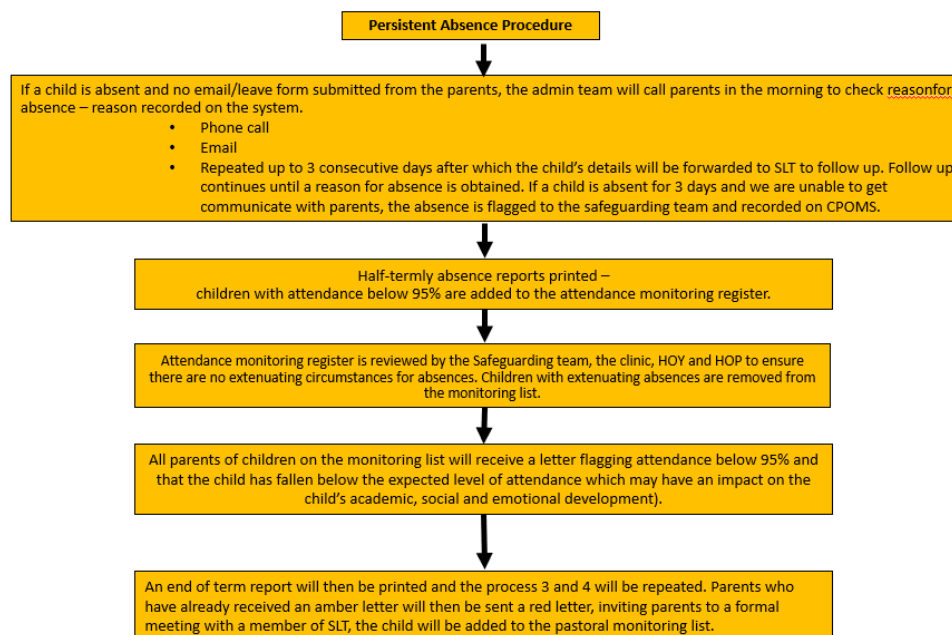
##### 1.2 – Unauthorised Absence

The following reasons are considered as unauthorised absence

- Shopping trips
- Unnecessary travel
- Visiting family or requesting when there are visitors in the family home
- Family events for example birthdays
- Tiredness (sleeping in)
- Other non essential reasons

#### Appendix 2: Persistent Absence Procedure and Communication

##### 2.1- Persistent Absence Procedure





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### UPDATE

#### 2.2 - Amber Letter - UPDATE

##### Term 1 Amber attendance letter

Dear **INSERT PARENT NAME**

As part of our care, guidance and support for all children at Horizon English School, we carefully monitor the attendance records of all children. Further to our analysis of our half termly attendance data, your child, **INSERT CHILDS NAME (FIRST NAME AND SURNAME)**, has been highlighted as having an attendance percentage of less than 90% for last half term.

The impact upon your child's education through lost learning time can be significant. As a school, in line with KHDA recommendations, we strive for **every child** to achieve an attendance figure of 98%. This provides optimal opportunities for children to develop socially, emotionally and academically, helping to ensure our Horizon students are happy and confident learners.



We acknowledge that attendance levels can fluctuate for a variety of reasons, including sickness, family emergencies and religious holidays. Nevertheless, we strive for all children to achieve 98% attendance to provide our learners with the best opportunities to flourish.

If you have any concerns about your child or would like support with their attendance, please contact your child's class teacher, phase leader or Head of Pastoral (Miss Vickers).

We will continue to monitor your child's attendance throughout the academic year and hope that as a team, we can continue to improve your child's attendance in school. If your child's attendance continues to be highlighted at below 90%, we will contact you next term to arrange a meeting to enquire as to how we can support you further.

Kind regards

Georgina Vickers  
Assistant Headteacher

Shelina Meghji  
Attendance Lead

#### 2.3 - Red Letter

##### Term 1 Red Attendance Letter

Dear **INSERT PARENTS NAME**

As part of our care, guidance and support for all children at Horizon English School, we carefully monitor the attendance records of all children. As previously communicated, we do have some concerns over the attendance level of your child, **INSERT CHILDS NAME (FIRST NAME AND SURNAME)**. Further to our analysis of Term 1 attendance, the attendance level for **INSERT CHILD'S FIRST NAME** continues to remain low and is currently falling below 90%.

We would like to arrange a time to discuss the attendance of your child with you in person. If the attendance level is not improved, we may see an impact on the academic achievement of **INSERT FIRST NAME** if **INSERT HE/SHE** continues to miss out on valuable learning time.

Please can we kindly request that you reply to this email, letting us know a convenient date and time you are available to come into school to meet with us. We are, of course, here in a supportive capacity and want to help in any way we can to improve your **INSERT SON'S/DAUGHTER'S** attendance at school.

Kind regards

### Appendix 3: Term Time Leave of Absence request form

#### Electronic Form Submission - Leave Form

Please reply directly to this email to confirm receipt of the form. Thank you.

Leave of Absence Form

#### Student Name

Student Name

#### Student Class

Y - Absence From School during term time

N - Early Pick up

N - Late Drop-Off

**Reasons for absence during term time/reason for early pickup during school hours and why it cannot be taken during holidays/after school hours**

N - Does this qualify as an emergency

**From Date:**

**To Date:**

**Number of School Days:**

**If your child is due to attend an after school activity please specify which one:**

**In case of Early Pickup/Late Drop-off, Specify Timings:**

### Appendix 4: Late Procedure- **UPDATE**

#### Late Procedures

