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**Ambassador International Academy, Mankhool**

# Attendance and Punctuality

# Whole School

**Date created:** October 2026

| **Review date:** | **Reviewed by:** | **Verified by:** | **Website upload** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **September 2027** | **Designated Safeguarding Lead** | **Principal/VP** | **Yes** |

## Purpose and Commitment

AIAM actively promotes and encourages 100% attendance for all students. Regular attendance supports academic progress, positive peer interactions, timely support from teachers, and students' social and emotional well-being.

Attendance and belonging are closely linked. Students who feel known, valued and safe at school are more likely to attend regularly, and repeated absence can in turn weaken friendships and connection to school (Allen & Dong, 2026). AIAM therefore addresses attendance through relational and supportive approaches first, while maintaining clear expectations and meeting KHDA requirements.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Homeroom / Form Teacher

- Keeps an accurate attendance register in the electronic attendance system (iSAMS).
- Looks for repeated absences or absences on key dates and informs the Grade Level Lead (GLL).
- Greets students on arrival and welcomes students back after any absence, helping them to catch up and reconnect with their peers.

**Subject Teacher**

- Keeps an accurate attendance register for every lesson taught.
- Uses the attendance alert function within 10 minutes of lesson start for students who are not present but were present for the previous session(s).

**Nurse**

- Refers students being sent home for family care to Reception for signing out and collection by parents.
- May receive telephone messages from parents/guardians regarding absence, which are then referred to Reception.
- Telephones long-term absentees to enquire about their progress.

**PA & Reception**

- Compiles daily absence lists from the iSAMS.
- Receives calls/checks online submissions from parents/guardians regarding absence.
- Emails/telephones in cases of unexplained absences.
- Passes early-leaver letters/notes to the Principal.
- Administers gate passes for students leaving during the day for appointments where prior parental/guardian permission has been given.

**Grade Level Lead**

- Investigate cases of absence referred by Form Teachers.
- Checks cases of a dubious nature.
- Follows up missing absence notes.
- Relays messages regarding student absences, where appropriate.
- Liaises with parents regarding student absences, where appropriate.
- Considers whether absence or lateness may be linked to wellbeing, friendship difficulties, bullying or a low sense of belonging, and refers to the School Counsellor where appropriate.

**All Teachers**

- Monitor repeated absences and lateness from lessons using the online attendance system and liaise with Form Teachers, GLLs/Pastoral/or Reception.

**Examination Team**

- Follows up problems/absences of students from public examinations, including contacting parents to obtain doctors' notes where required.
- For internal examinations, arranges with the relevant Head of Department for the sitting of papers for students absent on the original examination day.

**Definitions**

Approved Absence: An absence approved by the school for a legitimate reason following receipt of appropriate notification from the parent/guardian and, where required, supporting evidence.

Parents/guardians provide the reason and evidence for an absence; approval remains the responsibility of the school.

Unapproved Absence: An absence that has not been approved by the school, including where no satisfactory explanation has been provided, required supporting evidence has not been received, or the reason for absence does not meet the school's criteria for approved absence.

The Pastoral Leads will coordinate decisions regarding absence to ensure that approvals are applied consistently and equitably while minimising disruption to students' learning.

**KHDA Guidelines for Attendance**

| Rating | Attendance Percentage |
|---|---|
| Excellent | 98% or higher |
| Very Good | 96% or higher |
| Good | 94% or higher |
| Acceptable | 92% or higher |
| Weak | Less than 92% |
| Very Weak | Less than 90% |

All staff will be actively engaged in raising attendance levels. AIAM will give high priority to communicating the importance of regular and punctual attendance and will hold families accountable when attendance falls below expectations. Letters home and appropriate sanctions may be used where attendance does not meet the required standard.

Before sanctions are considered, the school will seek to understand the reasons for absence through a supportive conversation with the student and family. In line with the Wellbeing Policy, attendance concerns are addressed through relational approaches rather than punitive measures wherever possible, and sanctions are used as a last resort.

In accordance with UAE law, a student may be permanently excluded if absent from school for 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days within an academic year. In such cases, AIAM

reserves the right to exclude the student, require the student to repeat a year, or withdraw the offer of a place for the following academic year.
Any action relating to retention, non-re-enrolment, withdrawal of a student's place or permanent exclusion will be undertaken in accordance with applicable KHDA/MOE requirements and approval processes in force at the time. Parents/guardians will be formally informed of any such action and any applicable review or appeal process.

**Daily Registration**

Student attendance/absence is registered in the morning by the Form Teacher and by each class teacher throughout the day. Morning registration is conducted at 7:30 a.m – 7:50am. Students arriving after this time are marked as 'Late'.

*During the Holy Month of Ramadan, daily timings are modified in line with local Arabic/Muslim custom.*

**Electronic Attendance System**

AIAM uses an electronic registration and management information system (iSAMS) to record attendance for all lessons, extracurricular attendance and form times.

**Categorising Absence**

All absence will be recorded against a student's record. Unavoidable absences may be recorded as Approved Absence where the required explanation and/or evidence has been received. All other absences will be recorded as Unapproved Absence. Absence can only be approved by the Principal and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unapproved unless a satisfactory explanation and/or required evidence has been received.

**Approved Absence**

- Medical
- Illness
- Family Emergency/Bereavement

- Religious Leave: only in certain instances
- Exceptional Circumstances, such as extreme domestic issues or trauma, with careful consideration for multi-agency input
- Legal Meetings, including court appearances or children's hearings
- Exclusions from school linked to behaviour incidents

**Unapproved Absence**

A child is recorded as unapproved when away without prior knowledge and/or approval of the school. Absence is therefore unauthorised if a child is away from school without prior approval, even with parental support. Absence requests may also be unapproved if current attendance falls below expectations.

**Unplanned Absence**

**1.** Daily Absence

- Parents should submit the online absence form between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. to report their child's absence.
- Daily absence lists are collated from morning reports through the iSAMS by our Pastoral team.
- Daily absence lists are emailed to all Heads of Phases and are available to Homeroom / Form Teachers through the attendance system.
- Where a student is absent without prior notification, the school will contact the parent/guardian on the same school day to establish the reason for absence and confirm the student's whereabouts. Where contact cannot be established, or where there are concerns regarding the student's welfare or whereabouts, the matter will be escalated to the Pastoral Team and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the school's Missing Student and Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures. All relevant actions and communication will be recorded appropriately.
- On return, where required, students should provide a medical note to the Homeroom / Form Teacher or medical staff.

**2.** Late Arrivals

- Students arriving between 7:30 and 7:50 a.m. should go straight to their Homeroom / Form teacher.
- Students arriving after 7:50 a.m. must go to Security and sign in as LATE, then go straight to their lesson. Security will inform the school so attendance can be updated.

**3.** Early Departure During the School Day

- Students sent home during the school day by the Nurse must sign out in the Student Signing-Out Log at Reception.
- Reception records the departure in the appropriate register and pre-codes remaining sessions.
- An exit pass will be signed and given to the student and will be required to leave the school site

## Planned Absence

### **4.** Non-School-Sanctioned Absence

An application for early leave/planned absence must be made in advance to the Principal through the appropriate school administration process.

### **5.** School-Sanctioned Absences

For study leave, school trips and other sanctioned activities, the staff member responsible should provide the relevant student list to staff. Homeroom /Form Teachers verify which students are involved, and absence is pre-coded in the register by the PAs.

### **6.** Religious Observance

AIAM acknowledges and celebrates diversity within its community. Where religious festivals fall outside school holidays or weekends, parents may submit a written

request for authorised absence. Such absence will be authorised for up to a maximum of two days annually.

## 7. Medical Appointments

AIAM expects medical and dental appointments to take place outside the school day or during school holidays. Where this is not possible, parents/guardians must notify the school in advance through the online absence form and provide evidence of the appointment. In emergencies, the school should be informed as soon as possible thereafter. Where possible, students are expected to attend school before the appointment and/or return to school afterwards.

### Returning to School After Absence

A positive return to school helps students to reconnect quickly and reduces the risk of further absence. The school will provide:

- A welcome-back check-in from the Homeroom / Form Teacher on the student's first day back.
- Support to catch up on missed learning, so that the student does not feel left behind.
- For extended absence, including medical absence, a planned return meeting with the student and family, and where appropriate the School Counsellor or Inclusion Team, to agree a phased reintegration.
- Following a suspension, a reintegration meeting focused on repairing relationships and planning a positive fresh start, in line with the Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy.

## Attendance Follow-Up

| ATTENDANCE FOLLOW-UP & ESCALATION | | |
|---|---|---|
| **STAGE** | **ATTENDANCE / CONCERN** | **ACTION** |
| 1 | Attendance falls below **96%** | **Attendance Awareness – Letter 1.** Attendance highlighted to parents/guardians and student. Attendance monitored. |
| 2 | Attendance falls below **94%** | **Attendance Warning – Letter 2.** GLL/Pastoral Team reviews attendance and patterns of absence. Parents/guardians formally notified and attendance monitored. |
| 3 | Attendance falls below **92%** | **Attendance Concern – Letter 3.** Formal meeting with student and parents/guardians. An Attendance Action Plan will normally be established with agreed targets, support and a review date. |
| 4 | Attendance falls below **90%** | **Final Attendance Warning.** Formal meeting with parents/ guardians, student and relevant Senior Leader/Pastoral Lead. Existing interventions and barriers to attendance reviewed. Implications for progression/re-enrolment may be discussed, subject to applicable regulatory requirements. |
| 5 | Attendance falls below **80%,** or attendance remains a serious concern despite intervention | **Principal/SLT Attendance Review.** Formal review of the student's attendance, interventions and support. Further action may be considered in accordance with applicable KHDA/MOE requirements. |

**Note:** Attendance thresholds provide a framework for intervention but do not prevent the school from acting earlier where there is a concerning pattern of absence, a safeguarding or welfare concern, or a significant deterioration in an individual student's attendance.

## Attendance Action Plan

Where attendance falls below 92%, or where a concerning pattern of absence is identified regardless of the student's overall attendance percentage, the school may implement an Attendance Action Plan.

The plan will normally:

- identify barriers affecting attendance;
- establish an agreed attendance target;
- identify actions to be taken by the student, family and school;
- identify pastoral, wellbeing, counselling, inclusion or other support where appropriate;
- consider the student's sense of belonging, friendships and experiences of school, including any concerns about bullying;
- identify a named adult with whom the student checks in regularly;
- identify the staff member responsible for monitoring the plan; and
- establish a defined review date.

Attendance Action Plans will be developed collaboratively with the student and parents/guardians wherever possible and reviewed regularly until attendance has improved sufficiently or further intervention is required.

## Patterns of Absence and Safeguarding

Attendance will be considered both in terms of overall percentage and patterns of absence. The Pastoral Team will monitor repeated or concerning patterns, including absence from particular lessons or days, repeated absence adjacent to weekends or school holidays, and unexplained changes in attendance. The Pastoral Team will also review attendance data alongside student belonging and wellbeing survey data each term, as low belonging can be an early indicator of emerging attendance difficulties.

Where attendance or absence raises a concern regarding a student's welfare or safety, the matter will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Attendance concerns should therefore be considered as a potential indicator of a wider pastoral, wellbeing or safeguarding need and not solely as a disciplinary matter.

## Punctuality

Being on time shows respect, responsibility and readiness to learn. AIAM expects students to be punctual for registration, the start of the school day and every lesson.

### 1. Registration – 7:30 to 7:50 a.m.

- Students should arrive between 7:30 and 7:50, go straight to your Homeroom / Form Teacher.
- The Homeroom / Form Teacher will mark the student as PRESENT.

### 2. Late to School – After 7:50 a.m.

- If the student arrives after 7:50, the student should go to Security and sign in as LATE.
- They should then go straight to their lesson.
- Security will inform the school and the attendance can be updated.

### 3. Late to Lessons

- Students have 4 minutes of changeover time between lessons.
- If a student arrives 5 minutes or more late to class, they will be considered LATE.
- Students will be given an L1.
- This follows the Behaviour for Learning process.

### 4. Lates Are Tracked

If a student has 3 lates in one week, they will have reflection time at **lunch** to focus on improving their punctuality.

Reflection time is a supportive conversation to identify and remove barriers to punctuality, not solely a sanction. Staff should avoid repeatedly removing the same student from lunchtime clubs or activities that support their friendships and connection to school.

### Persistent Punctuality Concerns

Where a student repeatedly reaches the three-lates threshold, the concern will escalate through the Behaviour for Learning process. This may include:

- parent/guardian contact;
- a defined period of punctuality monitoring;
- an agreed punctuality action plan;
- intervention by the GLL/Pastoral Team; and
- where concerns persist, a formal meeting with parents/guardians and a member of Senior Leadership.

Persistent lateness will be considered alongside the student's wider attendance, behaviour and pastoral information so that any underlying barriers can be identified and appropriate support provided.

### Absence from a Public Examination

Parents/guardians should contact AIAM and the Examinations Officer as soon as possible. The Examinations Team should be informed immediately so that the appropriate procedures laid down by the relevant United Kingdom examining boards can be followed, including obtaining doctors' certificates where required.

### Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Missing Student Policy
- Student Supervision Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Community and Parental Engagement Policy
  Examinations Policy/Procedures, where applicable

### Reference

Allen, K.-A., & Dong, S. (2026). The science of belonging: Exploring the concept, drivers, barriers, and evidence-based solutions to cultivate belonging in K–12 education. Monash University, Faculty of Education, in collaboration with the International Baccalaureate.