ARAB UNITY SCHOOL | POLICY SUMMARY

Attendance Policy

Academic year 2026–27

Why attendance matters

Arab Unity School (AUS) works in partnership with parents to make sure every student attends regularly and arrives on time. Students are expected to attend every day the school is open unless absence is unavoidable. Regular attendance gives students the continuity they need to achieve well and take a full part in school life. Missing lessons interrupts the sequence of learning and reduces access to explicit teaching, modelling, guided practice and feedback, and gaps can make later learning harder even when missed tasks are completed at home. When a student is absent, the school will consider the effect on attainment and progress, identify the learning affected and provide support on their return.

Shared responsibility

Parents are responsible for regular attendance, punctual arrival and prompt explanations for absence. By signing the annual KHDA Parent–School Contract, parents accept the attendance and punctuality responsibilities set out in it. Attendance is expected on all days the school is open, including Fridays and the days immediately before and after holidays. Families should plan journeys around usual traffic, routine traffic, oversleeping and late-night family events do not justify persistent lateness, although exceptional disruption is considered individually. School leaders oversee the policy, teachers record attendance accurately, and attendance and pastoral teams keep records, contact families and coordinate support.

Attendance and safeguarding

Attendance is a safeguarding responsibility. Unexplained, repeated or prolonged absence may indicate a welfare concern and is investigated promptly, and staff do not wait for a numerical threshold before acting. Attendance is recorded in every lesson, FS and Primary classes include a physical headcount, and any difference between a student's recorded attendance and physical presence is checked immediately.

Our attendance standard

AUS aims for attendance of at least 96%, while recognising genuine illness and exceptional circumstances. The bands below guide monitoring and discussion. They do not, by themselves, decide sanctions or entitlement to absence.

Attendance	Classification
98% and above	Outstanding
96% to below 98%	Very Good
94% to below 96%	Good
92% to below 94%	Acceptable
90% to below 92%	Weak
Below 90%	Very Weak

Attendance rates are included in school reports and end-of-year reports, discussed at parent consultations where needed, and reported to KHDA as required. Leaders review attendance and lateness at individual, class, year and school level, looking for patterns such as Fridays, extended weekends and absence around holidays.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Every missed school day is recorded as an absence. The school, not the parent, decides whether an absence is authorised, using the explanation and evidence provided, and a parent's email or note does not automatically authorise it. Even authorised absence counts towards the attendance percentage.

- **Illness:** genuine illness is authorised with parental notification and medical evidence where required.

The full policy is available upon request.

- **Other leave:** rarely authorised except for medical reasons or emergencies. Unavoidable official government appointments, or approved representation of the school or the UAE, are considered individually by the Head of School, and appointments should be arranged outside school hours wherever possible.
- **Bereavement:** normally authorised for up to three school days, with any longer request referred to the Principal.
- **Term-time holidays:** always unauthorised, including travel to extend weekends, cheaper flights and birthday trips. Submitting a leave request does not mean approval has been given.

Reporting absence and requesting leave

Please tell the school promptly, through an official school channel, on each day of unexpected absence, giving the reason and likely duration. Unexplained absence is followed up by the school. For medical absence of one to three days, a written parental note is needed in the child's diary on return. For medical absence of more than three days, a DHA-approved medical certificate must also be attached, and the school may ask for further evidence where necessary. All other leave requests must be made in advance to the Head of School. If a student is reluctant to attend, please contact the school early so the cause can be tackled together.

Punctuality and persistent absence

Students must arrive at school and at lessons on time, and late arrivals must go through reception so that arrival is recorded accurately. Frequent or habitual lateness or absence without a valid medical or family reason leads to a staged response. Genuine illness is never treated as misconduct.

Stage	What happens
First incidents (the first three within a short period, such as a month or a term)	A written warning to the student and notification to parents. For absence, the days missed are recorded in the student's progress report.
Repeated incidents (up to five more)	Parents and the student meet the Principal or a designated representative and sign a written pledge not to repeat the problem.
Continued incidents	Further measures may be considered at the school's discretion, but only within the regulatory safeguards below.

Where attendance is declining, the relevant leader agrees an Attendance Improvement Plan with the student and parents, setting out barriers, actions, who is responsible, a review date and any learning support needed. Possible causes include illness, anxiety, bullying, additional needs, transport difficulties or family circumstances, and support may involve pastoral staff, the counsellor, inclusion staff or outside services. Persistent concerns are referred to the Head of School and then the Principal, with clear written communication to families.

Regulatory safeguards

Serious measures, such as suspension, an assessment penalty, a decision on re-enrolment or action over prolonged absence, are never applied automatically. Before any such step, the Principal must check current KHDA requirements, the approved Parent–School Contract and the nature of the absences and must obtain any required approval. No attendance percentage alone triggers automatic exclusion, conditional re-enrolment or referral.

Promoting attendance and catching up

The school promotes attendance through positive communication, clear routines and recognition of sustained attendance and improvement, handled sensitively and never encouraging a student to attend when unwell. Teachers help returning students identify essential missed learning and agree manageable next steps. The policy is reviewed annually and read alongside the KHDA Parent–School Contract and the school's safeguarding, behaviour, inclusion, assessment and complaints policies.

The full policy is available upon request.