



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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0.1	Attendance and Punctuality Policy	Final	Phase Leaders	Principal/Vice Principal	August 2024	August 2026	August 2027
Regional Director		Principal		Vice Principal			
Head of Foundation Stage		Head of Primary		Head of Secondary			

POLICY STATEMENT

Newlands School believes strongly in the importance of good attendance and its links to student attainment and progress, as well as developing a positive attitude towards learning. The school has high expectations of attendance for all students, whilst recognizing that there may be unavoidable circumstances which could cause a student to be absent or late.

Evidence shows that both lateness and poor attendance have a detrimental effect on a child's educational attainment and life chances. It may also make it more difficult for them to make firm social bonds with other children.

The National Foundation for Educational Research in the UK (www.nfer.ac.uk) has shown that there is a significant association between absence and attainment and that there is also evidence that there may be critical thresholds of absence linked to significantly lower performance outcomes. Furthermore, this is supported by the KHDA.

The Parent School Contract states that parents have a responsibility for 'promoting their child's attendance' and that continued 'absenteeism will result in disciplinary measures and will affect the student's chances of enrolment for the upcoming academic year.'

The Ministry of Education for the UAE also states that 'if a student is absent from school for 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days' the school can remove the child's place. Additionally, Dr Malak Zaalouk, UNICEF's regional education adviser, said that pursuing an education is the right of every child and this is supported by His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

Parents are requested to inform the school about any absence, lateness or early leave in advance.

This policy allows Newlands School, to meet the obligations that are set out by the governing bodies to ensure the following:

- Ensuring that every student has access to full-time education
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Acting, where necessary, to address any patterns of absence

This policy also provides clear guidelines and support to our parents to ensure that they are aware of their duty in promoting regular and punctual attendance of their children.

Newlands School, in conjunction with the KHDA, is required to monitor all students' attendance, regardless of the age of child or year group and is expected to achieve targets of at least 98% attendance throughout the academic year.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

- Arrive at school by **07:30am** each day.
- Move promptly between lessons and maintain punctuality to all lessons.

- Engage with attendance support plans when required.

Parents / Guardians

- Promote daily attendance and punctuality as a legal and contractual responsibility.
- Inform school of absence **before 07:30am** on each day.
- Provide medical documentation for absences of 3 days or more (or earlier if requested).
- Avoid scheduling holidays or travel during term time.
- Attend meetings and engage with attendance improvement plans when required.

Class Teachers / Tutors

- Accurately record attendance and punctuality on Paradigm at the start of each day/lesson.
- Follow up on daily absences and lateness.
- Record reasons for absence in Paradigm.
- Identify patterns of absence early and share concerns promptly with the Attendance Officer.
- Foster an environment where students feel safe and motivated to attend school everyday.

Attendance Officer

- Complete daily attendance checks and safeguarding follow-ups.
- Ensure accurate application of attendance codes.
- Produce weekly and termly attendance reports for Phase Leaders and Vice Principal.
- Communicate effectively with parents regarding absence, lateness and follow-up requirements.
- Monitor Emirati Students and Students of Determination in collaboration with Inclusion Team.

Phase Leaders & Pastoral Team

- Lead early intervention and improvement planning.
- Conduct parental meetings as needed.
- Track attendance of vulnerable groups and monitor reintegration support.

Principal & Vice Principal

- Authorise all exceptional or discretionary absences.
- Review significant attendance concerns.
- Report attendance information to KHDA and governing bodies.

School Governing Board

- Receive regular attendance reports and hold leadership accountable for implementation of policy.

GUIDELINES FOR ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to extend their potential and therefore we expect children to attend school every day. The attendance for all children is monitored daily, AM on Paradigm and AM / PM on Manual registers.

Each child's attendance is summarised in line with KHDA guidance as:

Outstanding Attendance is at least 98%

Very Good Attendance is at least 96%

Good Attendance is at least 94%

Acceptable Attendance is at least 92%

Weak Attendance is less than 92%

Very Weak Attendance is less than 90%

As there are typically 182 days in a school year, each day accounts for 0.55%. If a student has just 4 days off per term their attendance will be less than 94% (Good).

A student's non-attendance to school is classed as an absence regardless of whether it is authorised or unauthorised.

ABSENCE

When a child is absent, parents should contact the school before 07:30 am on the first day of absence informing the school of the reason for absence using the following channels:

- Telephone call to reception on 04 282 1200
- E-mail the class teacher or a message on Class Dojo/ E-praise

Absence recording:

When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the Paradigm register. Teachers use different codes to show the nature of the absence on the register. A reason for absence should always be provided by the parent, so that the school is aware of the reason and can provide any required support.

As part of our safeguarding procedures, the school will endeavour to contact the parent, or other emergency contacts, if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence.

It is the responsibility of the parent / guardian to inform the school of each day of absence and whether the absence will extend to include more than one day.

1. AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Authorised absences are still marked as absent and affect attendance percentage. Attendance is solely based on being present or absent, and not on the reason. These reasons are however logged for our reference and would determine potential support, concerns or sanctions moving forward.

As a first step, parents must contact the homeroom teacher/tutor with their declaration for absence and provide the dates and reasons for absence.

Absence may be authorised for reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

- Educational activity or visit organized by the school
- Sports activity organized by the school
- Illness: Parents can self-report for the first 2 days. From the third day of medical absence, parents should submit, by email to the school reception, a doctor's note, which will then be shared with the School Clinic for their review and follow-up as appropriate.

Paradigm will trigger an automatic email to notify you that your child has not registered for school today, and if not already, the reason for absence must be reported to your child's teacher.

2. UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Absence for other reasons, except from the above 'authorized absences', are marked as absent and considered unauthorized. Unauthorised absences will be monitored and may be addressed with the parent/guardian.

Paradigm will trigger an automatic email to notify you that your child has not registered for school today, and that the reason for absence must be reported to your child's teacher.

If a student has more than 20 consecutive days or a total of 25 days absence in an academic year, the school reserves the right to review the student's re-enrolment for the next academic year.

EARLY PICKUPS

Should a student need to leave school before the end of the school day, parents are required to inform the school in advance either by email/telephone or Class Dojo/ E-praise. Parents are required to sign their child out with the reception staff prior to leaving and complete the early leave online form.

Early leave is recorded on Paradigm by the reception desk, and informed to the teachers for updating the manual register.

Any early pickups authorised by the school clinic is recorded on the clinic log, and updated on Paradigm by the reception desk.

Parent lanyards must be worn for identification purposes. If a parent lanyard is not available then the parent will be required to provide a valid UAE ID at the security gate.

In the absence of prior notice being provided to both the teacher and the reception staff, parents will be required to wait in reception until a member of staff is available to fetch the child and bring them to reception.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment, where possible.

If the medical appointment is during the school day and the child comes to school before the appointment an early pickup request will need to be made directly to the teacher and the reception staff. This request needs to be made either by email/telephone or Class Dojo/ E-praise directly with the teacher. The teacher/teaching assistant will then make sure that the child is ready in reception by the agreed time requested by the parent.

Parents need to inform the class teacher and the school reception, by email/ Class Dojo/ E-praise should their child be absent due to a medical appointment i.e Dental / Doctor / Specialist.

LATE ARRIVALS

Students are required to arrive at school by the times identified in the School Handbook. Punctuality is a necessary trait that children need to acquire and therefore the school requests parents to support their children in arriving on time at the school and being collected on time at the end of the day.

Year Group	Arrival	Start of School Day	Gates Close	End of School Day	ECA End
EYFS	07:00-07:45	07:30	07:45	13:30	N/A
Year 1 – Year 13	07:00-07:30	07:30	07:40	14:30	15:20

From Year 1 – 13, a student is deemed late if they arrive after 07:30am. All other access gates are closed at 07:40am, and late students will be redirected to the Main Reception. Teachers will record students who have not attended their class by 7:45am as absent. Students arriving after 7:45am through the main reception will have their attendance updated by the reception staff to 'late'. Parents will receive automatic Paradigm updates for both absent and then late arrival.

A parent is deemed late to collect their child if they arrive after 3pm Monday – Thursday and after noon on a Friday. Parents should ensure all children are collected by 3:30pm at the latest on ECA days.

If a child is not collected by 12:30 pm on a Friday, as per the parent-school contract, an approved fee of 80AED will be charged and added to the parent's account.

The School will also take weather, significant traffic incidents, and any other extenuating circumstances into account when they occur and not register students that may be affected by them in the late register. No bus students will be registered as late if they have travelled by bus to the school.

3. MONITORING AND REPORTING

The school will, under the supervision of the Phase Leaders and the Pastoral Team, ensure that students' attendance is closely monitored. Each case will be considered and analysed individually in regular attendance meetings; significant concerns will be reported to the Principal and Vice-Principal; and further appropriate actions will be taken to reduce absenteeism and tardiness.

The school is committed to maintaining regular communication with the parents, and to working alongside to ensure that students attend school regularly and on time.

4. ATTENDANCE LETTERS AND PROCEDURE

Attendance meetings will be held between relevant members of staff including (but not limited to) the Principal, Vice-Principal, Heads of Department, Phase Leaders, Pastoral staff and other key stakeholders, as appropriate, to discuss attendance and lateness issues; and to work towards developing and implementing strategies to improve attendance.

5. MANAGING LATENESS AND ABSENTEEISM

All Parents are required to sign a KHDA parent-school contract upon joining the school and have an obligation to adhere to the measures put in place with regards to attendance and punctuality. In managing lateness and absenteeism, the school will demonstrate sensitivity to the particular needs of Students of Determination and their parents.

Below is the implemented procedure for the management of lateness and absenteeism.

Frequency / Offence	Action /Implications to Parents
Unauthorized Absence	
First four (4) instances of absence within a term without a valid medical or family-related excuse. Trajectory of 93% annual attendance	• Written Warning 1 - Notification sent to parents and students from the Pastoral Team to improve attendance. • Highlight concern for current report detailing % of late arrival and total days late/absent. • Communicate KHDA requirements and school policy. • Communicate parental responsibility. • Implement any necessary support measures.
Additional three (3) instances within a term (total 7 absence days in a term). Trajectory of 88% annual attendance	• Written Warning 2 - Serious concern letter sent to parents from Phase Head. • Parent notified and may be requested to attend a meeting • Written undertaking to be signed by a parent to improve attendance/ attendance improvement contract put in place. • Implement any necessary support measures.

	Instances noted on student file and report.
Any further incidences	- Written Warning 3 - Final written notice to announce re-enrollment risk if no improvements are made. - Meeting with the Principal or Vice-Principal. - Relative authorities informed if appropriate.
Late Arrival/Early Pick-Up	
First four (4) instances of lateness/early pick-up within a term Trajectory of 93% punctuality.	- Written Warning 1 – Notification sent to parents and student from the Pastoral Team to improve punctuality. - Highlight concern for current report detailing % of late arrival and total days late. - Communicate KHDA requirements and school policy - Communicate parental responsibility - Implement any necessary support measures.
Additional Three (3) Instances within a Term (total of 8 late days in a term). Trajectory of 88% punctuality.	- Written Warning 2 - Serious concern letter sent to parents from Phase Head. - Parent notified and may be called to a meeting - Written undertaking to be signed by a parent to improve on Punctuality/ punctuality improvement contract put in place. - Implement any necessary support measures. - Instances noted on student file and report.
Any further incidences	- Written Warning 3 - Final written notice to announce re-enrollment risk if no improvements are made. - Meeting with the Principal or Vice-principal.