



المدرسة الأمريكية الخليجية
AMERICAN GULF SCHOOL



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Attendance, Lateness and Absences Policy and Procedures



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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Policy

This Attendance Policy outlines the expectations and procedures regarding student attendance at American Gulf school regular and punctual attendance is fundamental to student success and academic achievement. It ensures students benefit fully from the curriculum, participate in classroom activities, and develop essential learning habits. This policy is developed in conjunction with, and adheres to, the guidelines and regulations set forth by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and SPEA in the United Arab Emirates regarding student attendance and truancy.

1.2 Alignment with UAE Education Regulations

This policy complies with the UAE Ministry of Education and SPEA regulations (September 2025), which set thresholds and procedures for monitoring attendance, addressing lateness, and managing absenteeism.

1.3 Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to all students enrolled at American Gulf School their parents/guardians, and all school staff members involved in student attendance monitoring, reporting, and support.

2. Guiding Principles & School Ethos

2.1 School Mission and Values

IB Mission

To this end the organization works with schools, governments, and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

American Gulf School Vision

We aim to create an environment where everyone aspires to build a peaceful world, to grow through intercultural understanding and respect, and to succeed in the 21st century.

American Gulf School Mission

To provide a safe, friendly learning environment where our learners follow an innovative evolving 21st-century curriculum that promotes design thinking skills. We will focus on nurturing academic excellence through fun and engaging lessons that will encompass our values in our internationally minded future leaders.

2.2 Expected Attendance and Code of Conduct

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and school activities regularly and punctually. This includes:

- Arriving at school before the official start time.
- Being present for the full duration of each school day.
- Attending all lessons, assemblies, and compulsory school events.

2.3 IB Learner Profile and Character Development

Attendance and punctuality reflect the attributes of being principled, balanced, and reflective, preparing students to be responsible global citizens.

3. Attendance Regulations

3.1 Excused Absences

An absence may be considered excused if it falls under the categories recognized by the UAE Ministry of Education and is supported by appropriate documentation. Examples of excused absences include:

- Illness: When a student is unwell and unable to attend school. A medical certificate from a licensed doctor must be provided on the same day.
- Medical Appointments: Pre-arranged medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside school hours. Proof of appointment (e.g., appointment card, doctor's note) should be provided in advance where possible, or upon return.
- Family Bereavement: In the event of the death of an immediate family member.
- Official School Events/Activities: Participation in approved school-related excursions, competitions, or events. These are usually pre-approved by the school administration.
- Approved Absence for Religious Observances: As per MoE guidelines for specific religious occasions.
- Other Circumstances: Any other exceptional circumstances explicitly approved by the school administration, in line with Ministry of Education directives.

3.2 Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is any absence not approved by the school and/or not supported by valid documentation as per the MoE SPEA regulations. Examples include:

- Absence without prior notification or valid reason.
- Absence for reasons not recognized as excused by the school.

- Failure to provide the required documentation for an excused absence within the specified timeframe.

3.3 Procedures for Absence

Notification: Parents/guardians must notify the school of a student's absence by 7:30 via email to supervisor@ags.ae or the school's attendance platform. The reason for absence must be clearly stated.

Documentation: the parents/guardians must provide the necessary supporting documentation (e.g., medical certificate, signed letter) to the supervisor@ags.ae on the same day. Failure to provide documentation may result in the absence being recorded as unexcused.

3.4 Absence Thresholds

In line with MoE/SPEA regulations (September 2025):

- Per Term: Students may not exceed 5 unexcused absences.
- Per Academic Year: Students may not exceed 15 unexcused absences. Surpassing this limit places the student at risk of repeating the academic year or facing MoE-directed consequences.
- Holiday Adjacency Rule: An unexcused absence immediately before or after an official holiday counts as two days.
- 20-Day Rule:
 - 20 consecutive unexcused absences → student is withdrawn from the school register; re-enrollment requires MoE/SPEA approval.
 - 20 cumulative unexcused absences (non-consecutive) → student may also be subject to withdrawal, as mandated by MoE/SPEA.

The school will communicate warnings and interventions progressively to parents/guardians as absence thresholds are approached, ensuring transparency and compliance.

3.5 Early Departure

The school expects students to remain for the full duration of the school day. Early departure disrupts learning and will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, such as:

- Verified medical appointments.
- Family emergencies.
- Other exceptional reasons approved by the Head of School.

Procedures:

- Parents/guardians must submit a written request (or official school communication) at least one day in advance where possible.
- In emergencies, parents must notify the school before arrival for pick-up.



- Students will only be released to parents/guardians or authorized adults listed on the student's emergency contact form.
- All early departures must be logged at reception, with both student and parent signatures recorded.
- No early dismissals after 12:30 PM unless in emergency cases approved by school leadership.

Repeated requests for early departure without valid justification will be treated as unexcused absences and may contribute toward the student's attendance threshold.

4. Tardiness and Punctuality

Punctuality for school and individual classes is a key expectation. Students are considered tardy if they are not in their designated classroom at the official start of the school day or at the beginning of any lesson. Consistent tardiness disrupts learning for the students and their peers.

4.1 Procedures for Tardiness

- Arrival at School: Students arriving late to school must report to the school reception to sign in and obtain a late pass before proceeding to class. The reason for tardiness will be recorded.
- Late to Class: Students arriving late to individual classes must report directly to the teacher, who will record the tardiness.
- Parental Notification: Parents/guardians will be notified of instances of tardiness, particularly if it becomes a recurring issue.

4.2 Intervention for Repeated Tardiness

- Initial Instances: Verbal warning to the student and parent notification.
- 3–5 instances per semester: Formal warning issued; meeting with parents/guardians and student may be arranged to address causes and agree on strategies.
- Persistent (5+ instances): Escalated to school administration; further formal communication outlining possible disciplinary action and academic impact.
- Reporting: Chronic tardiness may be reported to SPEA/MoE in line with regulations.
- Safeguarding: If lateness forms part of a wider concern for student welfare or neglect, the Safeguarding Lead will act in accordance with MoE and UAE child protection laws.

5. Monitoring, Reporting, and Intervention

5.1 Daily Recording and Parent Notification

- Lesson-by-Lesson Recording: Attendance is recorded at the start of every school day and at the beginning of each lesson to ensure accurate tracking.



- Centralized System: All attendance data is logged in the school's electronic platform, which is monitored daily by supervisors and administration.
- Immediate Parent Notification:
 - Parents/guardians are notified the same day of any unexcused absence or tardiness through SMS, email, or the school's official communication platform.
 - Notifications clearly state the number of absences/tardiness to date, the threshold limits set by the Ministry, and the potential consequences if patterns continue.
- Documentation Reminder: Notifications include a reminder to submit supporting documents (e.g., medical notes) on the same day to have the absence recorded as excused.
- Escalation Alerts: When students approach 3–5 unexcused absences or repeated tardiness, parents are specifically warned that the case will escalate to a formal Attendance Improvement Plan (see Section 5.2).
- Transparency: Parents can access their child's attendance record at any time through the school's parent portal.

5.2 Tiered Intervention Model

Consistent or unexplained absences and tardiness hinder academic progress and will be addressed through a tiered intervention model in line with Ministry regulations:

Tier 1 – Immediate Warning

- Trigger: First unexcused absence or instance of tardiness.
- Response: Verbal warning to the student and immediate notification to parents/guardians, reminding them of the attendance requirements.

Tier 2 – Escalated Response

- Trigger: 3–5 unexcused absences or repeated tardiness.
- Response: Formal written notification to parents/guardians, followed by a meeting with the student, parents, and building supervisor to identify causes and agree on an Attendance Improvement Plan.

Tier 3 – Serious Intervention

- Trigger: Chronic absenteeism (10–15 unexcused absences per year) or persistent tardiness.
- Response:
 - Escalation to school principal and senior leadership.
 - Formal reporting to SPEA/Ministry of Education.
 - Activation of child protection protocols if attendance issues raise concerns about neglect or student well-being.
 - Possible disciplinary measures, including:
 - Academic consequences for missed instruction.

- Exclusion from certain school activities.
- Probationary status.
- Retention or Ministry-directed action in cases of 15+ unexcused absences in the academic year.

5.3 Chronic Absenteeism

Defined as 10+ unexcused absences per semester. For interventions, refer to Section 5.2.

5.4 Student Removal

- 20 consecutive or 20 cumulative unexcused absences → student enrollment may be withdrawn as per MoE/SPEA rules.

6. Attendance and Punctuality During Examination Periods

Attendance during examination periods is mandatory and critical for academic assessment.

6.1 Mandatory Presence

Attendance during examination periods is mandatory and critical for academic assessments. Students are expected to be present for all scheduled examinations. Absence from an examination will generally result in a grade of zero for that examination, unless an excused absence is formally approved.

6.2 Excused Absences During Examination Period

In cases of genuine and unavoidable circumstances (e.g., severe illness, family bereavement), an absence from an examination may be excused.

6.3 Notification of Absence During Examination Period

Parents/guardians must notify the school immediately (ideally before the examination begins) of the student's inability to attend.

A valid medical certificate from a licensed doctor (for illness) or other appropriate official documentation must be submitted to the school administration within 24 hours of the missed examination.

The decision to grant an excused absence and the arrangements for a make-up examination will be at the sole discretion of the school administration, in consultation with the relevant academic department. Make-up examinations will be different in format or content from the original.

6.4 Unexcused Absences During Examination Period

Absence from an examination without an approved excused reason and proper documentation will be considered an unexcused absence and will result in a grade of zero for that examination. Further disciplinary action may be taken as outlined in Section 11.

6.5 Punctuality for Examinations

Students must arrive punctually for examinations, allowing sufficient time to settle before the examination commences. Late arrival to an examination will result in reduced examination time. In severe cases of tardiness, particularly if it disrupts the examination process for other students, the student may be denied entry to the examination hall. The school will inform parents/guardians of any instances of tardiness during examinations.

7. Attendance and Graduation Requirements

- Students must maintain a minimum of 92% attendance to fulfill requirements for graduation as per SPEA regulations, however the school expects all student attendance to be at least 97%+.
- For IB students, 240 hours for HL and 150 hours for SL are mandatory.
- Students falling below 92% attendance may be required to attend make-up sessions on weekends or during non-school days.

8. Attendance Recognition and Awards

American Gulf School emphasizes the importance of consistent attendance and punctuality as critical factors in student achievement, wellbeing, and engagement. As such, we formally recognize and reward students who demonstrate exemplary attendance habits.

Recognition will be provided termly and annually through certificates, school-wide announcements, house points, and other age-appropriate incentives. Students may also be recognized for notable improvement in attendance. This system reinforces our commitment to fostering a culture of responsibility and academic excellence.

Attendance Category	Percentage
Outstanding	97% and above
Very Good	96%
Good	94%
Acceptable	92%
Weak	<92%
Very Weak	<90%



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9. Conclusion

American Gulf School is committed to fostering an environment where every student can achieve their full potential. Regular attendance is a critical component of this commitment and is a shared responsibility among students, parents, and the school. By working together and adhering strictly to this policy, which is fully aligned with the directives of the UAE Ministry of Education, and SPEA we can ensure that all students receive the continuous and high-quality education they deserve.

