# Student Leave & Absence Policy

## 2026-2027

| Policy Information | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Created Date | August 2026 | Reviewed By | Principal |
| Review Cycle | One Year | Next Review | August 2027 |
| Principal | | | |
| Vice Principal | | | |
| Author of policy's role | **Senior Leadership Team** | | |
| Chair of Governors | | | |

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*"Every Child Matters"*

# 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Happy Home English School recognises that regular attendance and punctuality are essential to students' academic achievement, wellbeing, safeguarding and personal development.

The school is committed to maintaining accurate attendance records, identifying attendance concerns at an early stage, working collaboratively with parents and providing appropriate support and intervention.

This policy is implemented in accordance with applicable SPEA requirements, UAE education legislation and the school's approved procedures.

# 2.PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote regular and punctual attendance.
- Establish clear procedures for reporting and authorising absence.
- Ensure accurate and consistent attendance recording.
- Identify persistent, prolonged or unexplained absence at an early stage.
- Establish appropriate intervention and follow-up procedures.
- Support students returning to school following prolonged absence.
- Ensure appropriate communication with parents.
- Safeguard students whose absence may indicate welfare or protection concerns.
- Ensure compliance with applicable SPEA and UAE requirements.

# 3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND LEGAL COMPLIANCE

- **SPEA Compliance:** Policy aligned with applicable SPEA policies, regulations and directives.
- **UAE Compulsory Education Law:** Complies with **Federal Decree-Law No. 39 of 2022** concerning compulsory education.
- **Parent Responsibility:** Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their child's **regular and continued attendance**.
- **Attendance Monitoring:** HHES monitors attendance, lateness, persistent and prolonged absence.
- **Early Intervention:** Unexplained or persistent absence is followed up promptly with parents and appropriate pastoral intervention.
- **Escalation:** Serious or persistent attendance concerns are escalated to School Leadership and the relevant authority where required.
- **Legal Precedence:** UAE legislation and current SPEA requirements take precedence where any conflict arises.

# 4. ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

- Students are expected to attend school on all scheduled school days.
- Students are expected to arrive on time and remain in school for the full school day unless authorised to leave.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance and punctuality.
- Attendance will be recorded accurately each school day.
- The school will monitor attendance and punctuality at student, class and whole-school level.
- Parents are expected to cooperate with the school when attendance concerns are identified.

# 5. ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Absence may be authorised where there is a legitimate reason, including:

**A. Medical Reasons**

- Illness.
- Medical treatment.
- Hospitalisation.
- Medical appointments where attendance is not reasonably possible.

**Appropriate medical documentation may be requested**.

**B. Exceptional Family Circumstances**

- Bereavement.
- Serious family emergency.
- Other exceptional circumstances considered appropriate by the school.

**C. Official/Approved Activities**

Absence may be considered where the student is participating in an approved educational, sporting, cultural or other recognised activity.

**D. Other Exceptional Circumstances**

The Principal may consider other exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis, subject to applicable SPEA requirements.

# 6. LEAVE DURING TERM TIME

- Parents are strongly discouraged from taking students on holidays during term time.
- Holiday leave during school term will normally not be authorised, except in exceptional circumstances approved by the Principal.
- Parents should plan family holidays in accordance with the approved school calendar.
- Parents should not assume that submitting a leave request automatically means that the absence has been authorised.
- Parents should consider the academic impact of missed lessons, assessments and learning activities before requesting leave.

**7. LEAVE APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

- Parents must inform the school of any planned absence in advance, wherever possible.
- A leave request should be submitted through the school's approved communication channel/form. The request should clearly state:
    - ❖ Student's name and class.
    - ❖ Dates of absence.
    - ❖ Reason for absence.
    - ❖ Supporting documentation, where applicable.
- The school will review requests on a case-by-case basis.
- In emergencies or unexpected illness, parents should notify the school as soon as possible, preferably on the day of absence.

# 8. MEDICAL ABSENCE

- Parents should inform the school promptly when a student is absent due to illness.
- Medical documentation may be requested for prolonged or repeated medical absence.
- Where appropriate, the school may request medical evidence to support attendance records.
- Any sensitive medical information will be handled confidentially and shared only with staff who need the information to support the student.

# 9. UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Absence may be recorded as unauthorised when:

- No acceptable reason is provided.
- The required notification or documentation is not submitted.
- Leave is taken without school approval.
- A holiday is taken during term time without exceptional approval.
- Information provided to justify the absence cannot be verified.
- The leave request has been declined but the student remains absent.

**Step Ladder of Warnings:**

- ***3 days → Verbal Warning (SMS)***
- ***5 days → 1st Warning***
- ***10 days → 2nd Warning + Parent Meeting***
- ***14 days → 3rd Warning***
- ***15 days → Expulsion / MOE referral***

# 10. ATTENDANCE MONITORING AND INTERVENTION

The school will monitor attendance regularly and identify students whose attendance may affect their learning or wellbeing. **The school will monitor**:

1. Daily attendance.
2. Absence by individual student.
3. Repeated absence patterns.

4. Unauthorised absence.
5. Persistent lateness.
6. Prolonged absence.
7. Attendance trends by class/year group.
8. Students requiring pastoral or safeguarding support.

**Where concerns arise, the school may:**

- Contact parents/guardians.
- Discuss the concern with the Class Teacher/Head of Pastoral Team.
- Develop an attendance improvement/support plan where necessary.
- Monitor attendance following intervention.
- Escalate persistent concerns to School Leadership and/or relevant authorities where required by UAE/SPEA regulations.

# 11. MISSED LEARNING

Students are responsible for completing reasonable learning activities, assignments and assessments missed during an absence.

Teachers will provide appropriate guidance/support to help students catch up, particularly following authorised or unavoidable absence.

Repeated unexcused absences may result in exam ban.

# 12. EARLY DEPARTURE / MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

- Students will not be permitted to leave school during the school day without appropriate parental authorisation and school approval.
- Students must be collected by an authorised adult in accordance with the school's dismissal and safeguarding procedures.
- Parents may be required to provide supporting documentation for medical appointments or other approved reasons.

# 13. RESPONSIBILITIES

**Class Teachers**

- Record attendance accurately and promptly.
- Follow up unexplained absence through approved procedures.
- Identify patterns of absence/lateness.
- Inform the Head of Pastoral Team of concerns.
- Support students returning after absence.

**Parents/Guardians**

- Ensure regular attendance and punctuality.
- Notify the school promptly of absence.
- Submit leave requests and supporting documents when required.
- Avoid unnecessary term-time holidays.
- Support their child in completing missed learning.

**Students**

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Take responsibility for catching up on missed learning.
- Follow school attendance and punctuality expectations.

**Pastoral Team**

- Monitors attendance trends.
- Coordinates attendance interventions.
- Maintains appropriate records.
- Leads parent communication where concerns persist.
- Escalates serious cases to School Leadership.
- Coordinates with safeguarding personnel where required.

**School**

- Maintain accurate attendance records.
- Monitor attendance and identify concerns.
- Communicate appropriately with parents.
- Provide support and intervention where attendance becomes a concern.
- Follow applicable SPEA and UAE requirements**.**

# 14. RECORD KEEPING

The school will maintain appropriate records of:

- Daily attendance.
- Absence and lateness.
- Leave applications.
- Authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Medical/supporting documentation where applicable.
- Parent communications.
- Attendance intervention meetings.
- Attendance support plans.
- Follow-up actions.
- Escalation/referral records where applicable.

All records will be maintained securely and handled in accordance with confidentiality and data protection requirements.

# 15. POLICY REVIEW, AND COMPLIANCE

| Review Type | Frequency | Responsible Body |
|---|---|---|
| Annual Review | August | Principal |
| Consistency Audit | Termly | Head of Pastoral and Discipline |
| Stakeholder Feedback | June | Parent-Teacher Council |