



## **Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

This policy has been produced for GEMS FirstPoint School, when 'The School' is referred to in this policy it is solely GEMS FirstPointSchool that is being referred to.

Review Cycle	1 Year
Last Review	August 2023
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## 1. Purpose

At GEMS FirstPoint School we believe that regular and punctual attendance at School is essential for Students to maximise their educational opportunities. Outstanding School attendance is a key factor in raising attainment and reducing social exclusion. Students should be at School on time every day that the school is open, unless the absence is unavoidable, and an acceptable reason is given. At FPS we work in partnership with Parents and Students to encourage excellent attendance and to offer support in removing barriers that may prevent Students from coming to School. Students who have full attendance are more successful and confident in their studies. Those who are frequently absent not only have significant gaps in their own learning but also may hinder the learning of others because they need a disproportionate amount of support to help them catch up. Parents are expected to contact School in the morning on the first day of their child's absence. Parents are also expected to notify the school at an early stage of potential significant problems to enable early intervention work to take place before poor attendance becomes a habit.

## 2. Aims

Through this policy we aim to:

- Keep the school's attendance above 98%.
- Outline the steps the school will take to promote positive attendance and punctuality.
- Outline absence procedures for parents to follow.

## 3. Procedures

### 3.1 Monitoring of Attendance in Normal Circumstances

Students' attendance is monitored through our registration system. Teachers register Students during Form time and at the beginning of each lesson. To ensure that the attendance of Students remains high on the school's agenda attendance figures are discussed during line management meetings between Heads of Year and SLT. On a half-termly basis an analysis of data further informs strategic decision making. Local Advisory Board Members get a regular report on the termly School attendance figures.

### 3.2 Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, students and all members of school staff.

#### **Students:**

Students are responsible for ensuring they are in school every day on time and are punctual to every lesson. A warning bell will sound at 7:25 reminding students, the National Anthem will start at 7:27am.

#### **Parents:**

Parents are fully responsible for ensuring the highest levels of attendance possible and not less than 98%. They are required to let the school know before 7.30am if their child will be absent on that day. They are obliged to provide the school with a full explanation as to why the student will not be attending, with relevant paperwork where necessary. Parents must email the schools attendance via email [attendance\\_fps@gemsedu.com](mailto:attendance_fps@gemsedu.com). Failure to do so will lead the attendance team to categorise the attendance as unauthorised. In accordance with UAE law a student may be permanently excluded if he/she is absent from school for 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days within an academic year. In such cases, the school does reserve the right to exclude your child, ask them to repeat a year or withdraw the offer of a place for the following academic year.

#### **Telephone Numbers:**

As there are times when we need to contact parents about school matters, including absence, we need to have accurate contact numbers at all times. Help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date number or email address. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

### **Holidays in Term Time:**

Taking holidays in term time will affect a student's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking their child away on holiday in School time. Remember that any savings made by taking a holiday in school's term time are offset by the cost to a child's education. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised. If a parent would like to request that their child takes a leave of absence during term time, they must put the request in writing to the Senior Leadership Team who will inform them whether or not the leave of absence is granted.

### **Form Tutors:**

Form Tutors are responsible for encouraging students to attend the school daily and ensuring they have a high readiness for learning. Tutors will be present inside their tutor room for 7:15am every day to welcome all Students. Registers must be taken every morning by staff during the registration period. No missing marks should be recorded by the school's systems administrator. Tutors must have regular conversations with students regarding their attendance and punctuality and have their SIMS homepage set up to track their class attendance daily. School systems administrator will review attendance Half Termly and send an email to the Secondary Heads of Year highlighting the students who have fallen below 96%.

Form tutors are responsible for updating SIMS comment banks every three weeks, sending letters of communication and making calls to parents supporting them regarding their student's attendance and punctuality data in the first instance. Where no improvements are made it is escalated through HOY, the Senior Leadership Team and finally where still no improvements have been made the Head of School.

### **Subject Teachers:**

Subject teachers encourage students to attend regularly through engaging lessons, good relationships and through ensuring plans are in place to enable students to catch up after they have been away. Subject teachers provide positive challenge for those who do not have high levels of attendance. Subject teachers must take a register on SIMS at the start of **every lesson**.

### **School Systems Administrator:**

The school systems administrators are responsible for managing the daily registers, ensuring the school has taken a full register by 7.50am and that communication is sent to parents who have not provided a reason for their child's absence by 8.30am. The school systems administrators are responsible for generating attendance and punctuality data on the SIMS systems, distributing reports half termly and disseminating the data to relevant staff.

### **Head of Year:**

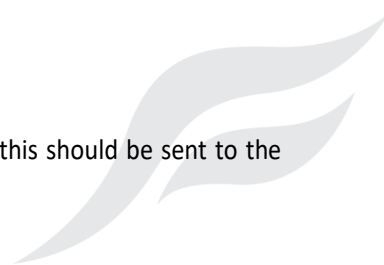
Heads of Year monitor attendance trends identifying issues and create strategic plans for improvement. They provide day to day support to school systems administrator where needed. They report on a weekly and half-termly basis to their line manager on the latest attendance figures. Heads of Year create attendance and punctuality focus groups which include any student whose attendance has fallen below 90%. The Head of Year works alongside the students in the focus group to address reasons for absences and puts actions in place to support the student and their families to improve attendance. Heads of year are responsible for sending letters of communication to parents regarding their child's attendance and punctuality data when no improvement has been made despite tutor interventions. They are also responsible for coordinating the communication of attendance and punctuality data within their teams in scheduled tutor meetings.

## **3.3 Absence Procedures**

### **If a student is absent, parent/carer must:**

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence via email to the attendance team on the following email [attendance\\_fps@gemsedu.com](mailto:attendance_fps@gemsedu.com)
- Provide evidence of the illness/reasons for absence of student sent to attendance, which will be recorded on school system.

- Provide a doctor's note for the student where there is a long-term absence, and this should be sent to the attendance team via email.



#### **If a student is absent the school will:**

- Send a text message to parents of absent students each day by 8.30am
- Invite parents/carers into the school to discuss the absence with a member of staff, including form tutors, Head of Year and SLT, where appropriate if absences persist.
- Record the attendance and punctuality record for each student and communicate this data with parents at regular intervals according to the school calendar.

#### **Registration procedures:**

- Staff register students' attendance via Sims every morning by 7.40am and every lesson thereafter.
- If Sims is not working, staff take a paper register, which they return to reception before 7.40am, and inform their Head of Year via email or face to face.
- Afternoon registers occur during lesson 5 of the day and must be taken by relevant members of staff.
- Staff removing students from classes for other events must communicate in advance with appropriate staff members including the Head of Year and school systems administrators by providing a list of students and reasons for changes. Where circumstances occasionally mean a student is removed for an impromptu educational reason, staff will let the Head of Year know immediately to ensure the student receives a registration mark.

### **3.4 Punctuality**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a student misses the start of the day, they miss work and important information. Late arriving Students also disrupt lessons and the learning of others. Restorative Reflections are set for persistent lateness and Students who are late to lessons more than 5 minutes without a note or a valid excuse (Please see the Behaviour for Learning Policy).

If a student is late after registration ends at 7.50am they must report directly to security where their mark will be amended. The administration team will record this as L on the SIMS register and take a record of the time of their entry. Students must then report directly to the lesson they are scheduled for to the class teacher.

#### **How we manage lateness:**

Registration begins at 7.30am and we expect students to be inside their tutor room at 7.25am ready for the National Anthem at 7.27am. Registers will be taken by form tutors and students will receive a late mark if they are not in class by 7.30am. If a student in KS3,4 or 5 is late less than 5 minutes they will receive a L1 (a documented warning on SIMS and this will be included on their academic reports. A student who is late more than 5 minutes will receive a 10 minute break time Restorative Reflection session with their form tutor. Students will only be excused from the Restorative Reflection session if a parent/ carer has contacted the school stating exceptional circumstances for being late and the school deems this as a valid reason. Students who take the bus cannot be marked late if the bus is late delivering them to School. In KS3, KS4 and KS5 if Students are consistently (twice in a week) late to lessons less than 5 minutes they will receive a L2 on an accumulative basis (2 L1s= L2) and will therefore receive a 20 minute Restorative Reflection session from their form tutor. If a student is late to lesson more than 5 minutes, then they will receive a L2 20 minute Restorative Reflection session with their classroom teacher.

If a student is consistently late to tutor time and lessons even after intervention and parental contact, students will be placed on punctuality report. A report which will need to be signed by parents daily and will be stored on the student's file.

If a student has an accumulation of persistent lateness parents will be asked to meet with the Head of Year/ Senior Leadership Teams to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to the school on time.

## 4. Responsibilities

The people responsible for attendance and punctuality are as follows:

Name	Role
Class Teacher / Form Tutor	Taking accurate registers/having learning conversations/communicating with parents.
Head of Year	Accurate tracking of data/learning conversations/communicating with parents.
Assistant Headteacher	Sharing key data with relevant parties/communicating with parents where concerns are not addressed and putting support plans in place.
Deputy Headteacher	Meeting with SLT/HOY to track and analyse key data trends.
Headteacher	Supporting with KHDA documentation.

All School staff are committed to working with parents and students as the best way to ensure high levels of attendance.

There will be an annual review of this policy by the Assistant Head of Secondary and the Executive Leadership Team.