



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 FirstPoint School that is being referred to.

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Table of Contents:

- 1. **Purpose**.....Error! Bookmark not defined.
- 2. **Aims**3
- 3. **Procedures**.....3
 - 3.1 Monitoring of Attendance in Normal Circumstances..... 3
 - 3.2 Promoting regular attendance..... Error! Bookmark not defined.
 - 3.3 Absence Procedures 5
 - 3.4 Punctuality 6
- 4. **Responsibilities**.....7



1. Purpose

At GEMS FirstPoint School we believe that regular and punctual attendance at school is essential for students to maximise their educational opportunities. Good 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:

- Promote positive attendance for all students at FPS.
- 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

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. This includes 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 to remind students that their school day starts at 7:30. The National Anthem will finish at 7:30am and students are expected to be in their Form Room for registration at this time.

Parents: Parents are fully responsible for ensuring the highest levels of attendance possible for their children. 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 an explanation as to why the student will not be attending. If the student is absent for more than 1 consecutive day, then parents are required to provide the school with a doctor's report, otherwise the absence will not be authorised by the school. In accordance with UAE law



and with the 'Parent-School contract', a student may be unregistered from the school if they are absent from school for 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days within an academic year. In addition, for such cases, the school also reserves the right to ask a student 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. It is the parents responsibility to ensure the school always has an up-to-date number and email address.

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 support their child's learning by not taking holidays during term time. 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 Head of Primary/Head of Secondary who will inform them whether or not the leave of absence is granted.

Form Tutors/Class Teachers:

Form Tutors and Class Teachers are responsible for encouraging students to attend the school daily and ensuring they have a high readiness for learning. Registers are taken every morning by staff during the registration period. There should be no missing marks in the school's registration system. Form Tutors and Class Teachers must have regular conversations with students (or their parents in the Primary School) regarding their attendance and punctuality and have their SIMS homepage set up to track their class attendance daily. The School Absence Team will also update codes from 'N' (unauthorised absence) where a legitimate reason has been provided by a parent via email. School systems administrator will review attendance Half-Termly and send an email to the Heads of Year, highlighting the students who have fallen below 96%.

Form Tutors and Class Teachers are responsible for sending letters of communication to parents if they are concerned about a student's attendance or punctuality.

Subject Teachers:

Subject teachers encourage students to attend their classes punctually. Teachers will provide stimulating and inspiring learning environments for students to work in and ensure they build excellent relationships with every child in their class. Teachers are also required to provide work for students who are absent, to ensure they catch up with anything that has been missed. Teachers are responsible for providing positive challenge for those who do not have high levels of attendance. Teachers take a register on SIMS every lesson.

School Attendance Officer

The School Attendance Officer is responsible for managing the daily registers, ensuring that all staff have completed a full register by 7.40am each morning. They are also responsible for tracking and monitoring attendance and punctuality and collaborating with the Heads of Year to ensure effective communication



with parents. Communication with all parents who have not informed the school of their child's absence will be completed by 8:30am and sent to parents who have not provided a reason for their child's absence. The School Attendance Officer is responsible for generating attendance and punctuality data on the SIMS systems, distributing regular attendance and punctuality reports, and disseminating the data to relevant staff.

Head of Year:

Heads of Year monitor attendance trends identifying issues and areas for improvement. They provide support to the School Attendance Officer where needed. They report on a weekly and half-termly basis to their line manager with all relevant attendance figures. Heads of Year create attendance and punctuality focus groups which include any student whose attendance has fallen below 92%. The Head of Year works alongside the students (and their parents) in the focus group to address reasons for absences and puts actions in place to support the student and their families with improving their attendance. Heads of Year are responsible for sending letters of communication to parents regarding their child's attendance and punctuality data. They are also responsible for coordinating the communication of attendance and punctuality data within their teams in scheduled tutor meeting.

3.3 Absence Procedures

If a student is absent, parents are required to:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence via email to the students Form Tutor or Class Teacher.
- Provide evidence of the illness/reasons for absence to be recorded on the school system.
- Provide a doctor's note if they are ill for 2 days or more.

If a student is absent the school will:

- Send a text message to parents of absent students each day by 8.30am
- Contact parents every day thereafter if a child remains absent, unless parents have previously communicated a legitimate return date.
- Invite parents into school to discuss the absence with members of staff, including Form Tutors and Class Teachers, Heads 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 are to be completed by the Class Teacher or the specialist staff teaching period 5.



- If students are involved in a school event, then the leader of the event must communicate in advance with appropriate staff members including the Head of Year and School Attendance Officer, by providing a list of students who are attending the event.
- Where circumstances occasionally mean a student is removed for an impromptu educational reason, the appropriate member of staff will inform the Head of Year to ensure the student receives an appropriate mark in the register.

3.4 Punctuality

It is important that all students have a positive punctuality record. Research suggests that positive punctuality improves student learning, and therefore the school will encourage all students to be on time to school each morning, and on time to every class they have on their timetable.

Students who arrive late to lessons also disrupt the learning of others. Restorative reflections (for Secondary students) 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). Parents may also be contacted by the Class Teachers or Heads of Year for persistent offenders.

If a student arrives late to school but arrives before the end of registration (7:50am) they can go directly to registration and their teacher will mark them as late to school. If a student arrives later than 7:50am, they are required to report directly to the reception desk who will provide them with a late note and update the school registration system. Upon receiving this note, students must report directly to their timetabled lesson and hand the late note to the Class Teacher.

How we manage lateness:

Registration begins at 7.30am and students are to be lined up outside their tutor rooms/Classrooms prior to the start of the National Anthem 7.28am. Registers will be taken by Form Tutors and Class Teachers and students will receive a late mark if they are not in class by 7.30am. If students in the Secondary School are late they will receive a documented warning on SIMS and this will be included on their academic reports. A student who is late by more than 5 minutes will receive a 10-minute break time Restorative Reflection session with their Form Tutor. Students who take the bus cannot be marked late if the bus is late transporting them to School. If students continue to arrive late to lessons, they will receive a L2 on an accumulative basis (2 x L1 = L2) and will therefore receive a 20-minute Restorative Reflection session from their Form Tutor or Class Teacher, if appropriate.

If a student has an accumulation of persistent lateness, parents will be asked to meet with the Head of Year/ Assistant Headteacher to resolve the problem. Parents are encouraged to contact the Head of Year if they are having problems getting their 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.

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