

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Approved By:	Principal
Owned By:	Vice Principal (Pastoral)
Reviewed By:	Principal/CEO

Our Vision:

A British curriculum school, rooted in the values of the UAE, creating the leaders of tomorrow. A premium community school, empowering learners to achieve excellence and make a difference.

Our Mission: *Nurturing our community, empowering through excellence.*

Nurturing by including all learners, prioritising their safety and happiness, and promoting their character development rooted in the national values of the UAE. Empowering by providing an exciting, enriching, and ambitious learning experience where students excel by fulfilling and exceeding their academic potential.

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1 Rationale and Purpose

- 1.1 Good attendance and punctuality are the foundation for academic achievement, underpinning all aspects of personal development. Good attendance establishes a responsible attitude towards the opportunities available in school and is a fundamental expectation in the workplace. GEMS Al Barsha National School is committed to providing a full and effective educational opportunity for all students. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career.
- 1.2 It is therefore imperative that all students arrive at school on time every day and miss as few days of school as possible throughout the school year. Students who regularly miss school will have large gaps in their understanding and this will have a direct impact on their academic attainments and progress.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 All staff will be actively engaged in raising attendance and punctuality levels. This will involve fostering good relationships with students, being aware of the causes of poor attendance and ensuring that the curriculum is relevant and appropriate.
- 2.2 We place a high priority on conveying to parents and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents play a vital role in this and ensure that there are strong home school links so that we can work together whenever there is concern about attendance and/or punctuality.
- 2.3 If a student is absent from school for 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days within an academic year, the school reserves the right to exclude the student, ask them to repeat a year or withdraw the offer of a place for the following academic year.

3 Aims

- 3.1 Our school actively promotes and encourages students to arrive at school and lessons regularly and on time. All students must aim to achieve good attendance (94%). For classification of Attendance rates as per UAE School Inspection Framework see Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Ensure that staff, students, and parents are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.
- 3.3 Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the expectation and are valued by the school.
- 3.4 Raise awareness among parents and students of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- 3.5 Monitor attendance patterns and ensure consistency in dealing with regular absence.

4 Marking Attendance

- 4.1 Class teachers/form tutors mark students on the register through phoenix classroom by 7:45am. If the class teacher/form tutor is absent the cover teacher will complete this. If there is no access to phoenix by the cover teacher, a paper register will be completed and handed to the Head of Year /Pastoral Lead by 7:50am to be input onto Phoenix Classroom.

- 4.2 Students will be marked late from 7:45am at the relevant entrance points by Pastoral Leads and members of the Front of House team. Teaching Assistants or support staff walk Foundation Stage and primary students to class.
- 4.3 In the secondary phase, registers are taken at the beginning of every lesson.

5 Absence Procedures (Day 1)

- 5.1 Parents should communicate absence by email to attendance_gns@gemsedu.com copying in the class teacher/form tutor and before 7:40am. Once the email is received, the data team will amend the register accordingly. If a student is absent due to illness, they should be kept at home until they are fit enough to return.
- 5.2 Following morning registration, an absence list is provided by the data team to the Heads of School and Pastoral Leads. The data team provide a list from registration (FS1-Year 6) and registration and Period 1 (Year 7-13).
- 5.3 Absences are verified and an automated email from Phoenix is sent to the parents of students marked with an unauthorised absence.

6 Absence Procedures (Day 2-3) and Persistent Absence

- 6.1 On the second day of absence, the class teacher contacts parents in the Foundation Stage and primary phase. Pastoral Leads contact parents in the secondary phase. The class teacher/pastoral lead adds a note onto the register on phoenix classroom to confirm that communication has taken place.
- 6.2 Heads of School/SLT Members contact parents of students who have unauthorised absences for 3 consecutive days.
- 6.3 A medical certificate must be provided for students with absence of more than one day.
- 6.4 The class teacher/form tutor monitor attendance daily and alerts the Head of Year/pastoral team if attendance becomes a cause for concern or spots a pattern of absence.
- 6.5 Heads of Year and Pastoral Leads maintain an Attendance Watchlist and escalate actions and interventions to address concerns and promote good attendance. See Appendix 2.

7 Planned Absence

- 7.1 Planned absence during term time is actively discouraged by GNS due to the impact on a student's academic progress. A planned absence during this time may not be approved based on the student's current attendance record.
- 7.2 Medical appointments should happen outside of school hours.
- 7.3 Applications for planned absence should be submitted either by hand or email to the appropriate Head of School.
- 7.4 Permission will be given for valid reasons such as serious medical issues or family emergencies. The school will evaluate all other requests on a case-by-case basis.
- 7.5 Parents request planned absences using the Leave of Absence Request Form. See Appendix 3.

8 Punctuality to School

- 8.1 Students should arrive at school by 7:45am. Students will be marked as late on the register after this time.
- 8.2 Continued and persistent lateness is monitored by pastoral leads and Heads of Year with escalating actions and interventions put in place to address concerns and promote good punctuality. See Appendix 4.

9 Early Dismissal Procedures

- 9.1 Early departure from GNS is not acceptable without a valid reason.
- 9.2 Parents are encouraged to make medical appointments outside of school hours.
- 9.3 If the student uses the school bus service, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the bus company to inform they will not be using the service.
- 9.4 If a parent needs to collect their child early, an email to the Head of School and class teacher/pastoral lead 24 hours in advance is required. The email needs to include the date, time and reason for early collection. Heads of School will contact reception to confirm the early leave information for that day. The class teacher/pastoral lead record any incident of early collection onto Phoenix classroom and update the register accordingly with the correct attendance code.
- 9.5 Pastoral leads and Heads of Year monitor patterns of early collection and work with parents and students to address any concerns and promote good attendance.

10 Late collection

- 10.1 A sibling club is provided for students in FS, Year 1 and Year 2 who have older siblings in school to support with one collection of students. To be able to make use of the sibling club, the sibling club application form must be filled in and approved by SLT.
- 10.2 Students not part of sibling club should be collected no later than 1:20pm for FS1 and 2:30pm for FS2, Year 1 and Year 2. Students from Year 3 to 13 should be collected no later than 3:00pm.
- 10.3 Late students will be recorded on the late collection spreadsheet by class teachers/pastoral leads.
- 10.4 Pastoral leads and Heads of Year monitor patterns of late collection and work with parents and students to address any concerns and put the necessary support in place.

Appendix 1: UAE School Inspection Framework - Attendance Rates

Outstanding	98%
Very Good	96%
Good	94%
Acceptable	92%
Weak	90%
Very weak	Below 90%

Appendix 2: Escalation of actions and interventions to address continued and persistent absence

Attendance Percentage	Number of Days
3% of 182 days	5 days (a first letter of concern will be shared)
7% of 182 days	12 days (a second letter of concern will be shared)
11% of 182 days	20 days (a parent meeting to be conducted with the head of School)
15% of 182 days	27 days (a second meeting to be conducted with HOS and School VP with possible consequences, KHDA report could be formulated)
25 % of 182 days	45 days (a final meeting for parent/s with VP and School Principal with possible further consequences including repeating the year, a KHDA report will be formulated about the case)

Appendix 3: Leave of Absence Request Form

Leave of Absence During Term Time Request Form

Important Information for Parents

KHDA guidelines for attendance are as follows:

- 98% excellent
 - 96% good
 - 92% satisfactory
 - less than 92% unsatisfactory
-
- It is not automatic that the school will authorise leave of absence for a family holiday.
 - Requests for leave of absence should be sent to the school no less than 2 weeks prior to the leave.
 - Authorisation during exams and other important school events cannot be granted.
 - Any requests for extended leave, i.e. more than 5 school days, will result a discussion senior member of staff to look at options for ensuring continuity of education.
 - This form **MUST** be completed by the parent before requests will be considered:

Name of student(s):

Year & Class:

Dates of Proposed Absence: From..... To.....

Please confirm the reason for proposed absence in the below box

Total days requested on this occasion:

Total days taken previously this academic year:

What steps have you taken to minimise the impact of the leave on your child's learning?

Please confirm in the below box

Parent Signature:

Date:

Approval Granted By:

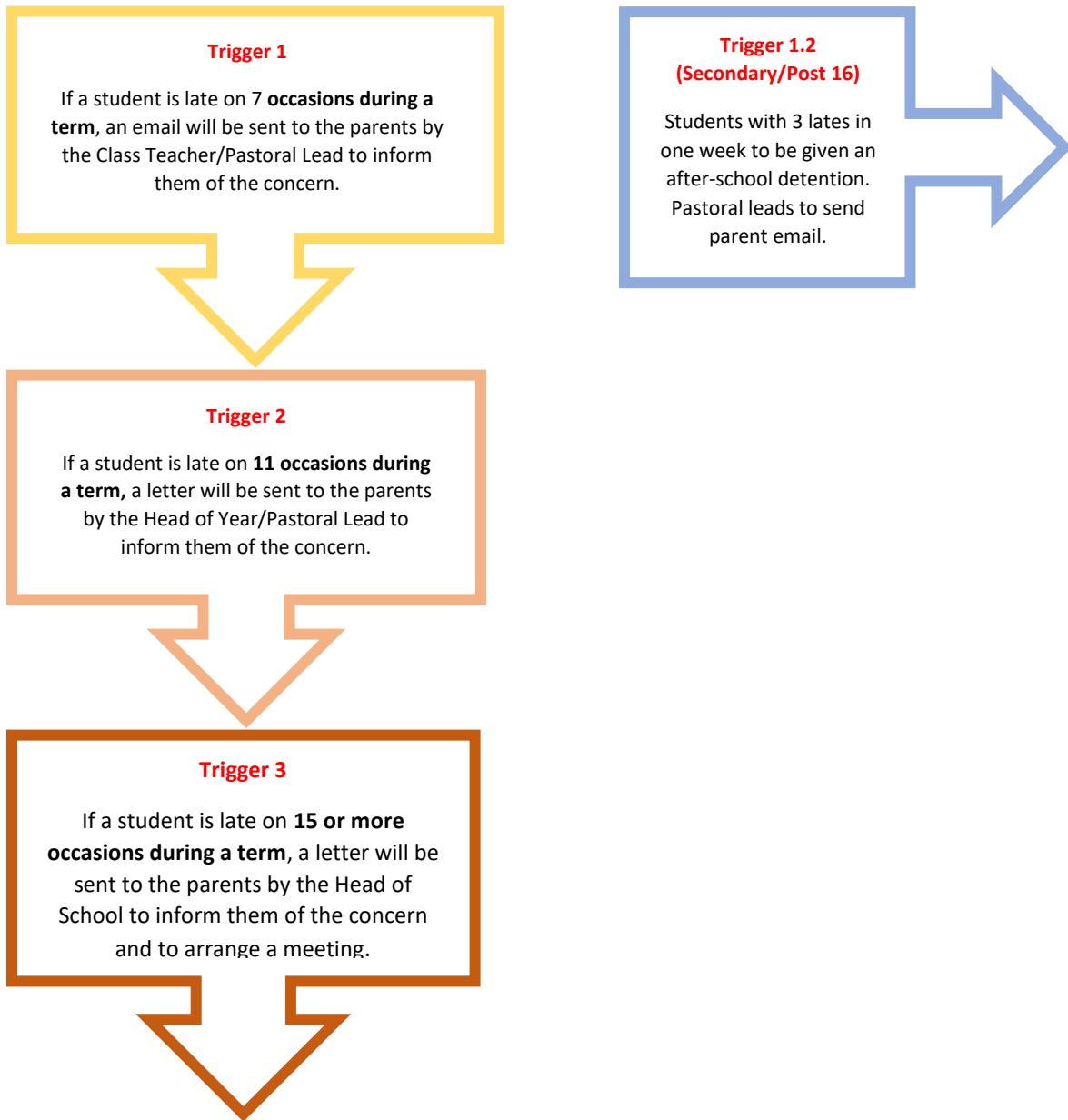
Head of School Signature:

Date:

CEO/Principal Signature:

Date:

Appendix 4: Escalation of actions and interventions to address continued and persistent lateness



Appendix 5: Rates of attendance and related rewards and interventions

100%	Half termly reward celebration for all children who have 100% attendance with certificates. 100% Ramadan attendance certificate.
98%+	Certificate given to students. Class teachers/form tutors to monitor and praise these students.
95-98%	Class teachers/form tutors to continue to monitor these students and encourage attendance.
90-94%	Class teacher to will email parents if pattern of absence is occurring and record on Phoenix. Attendance concern letter to be shared.
85-90%	Email sent to parents from HOY (warning letter 1), copying in the class teacher, if there is a pattern of absence or unauthorised absences and recorded on Phoenix (neutral concern).
Below 85%	Meeting with Class teacher and HOY/ form tutor and Pastoral Lead, recorded on Phoenix (possible neutral concern). Class teacher/HOY or Form tutor/Pastoral lead to phone parents and send confirmation email. In addition, warning letter 1 to be attached to email.
Attendance will be reported to parents recorded on children's school reports. In addition to this, an attendance dashboard is accessible to parents on the Phoenix Dashboard.	

Appendix 6: Attendance Codes

Parameter	Display Character
APPROVED LEAVE	O
DIGITAL LEARNING	D
EARLY LEAVE	L
EDUCATED OFF SITE	B
EDUCATIONAL VISIT	EL
LATE	L
LATE - SCHOOL TRANSPORT	L
LATE DUE TO PRE-AUTHORISED REASON	L
LATE-LATE PASS SCAN	L
MEDICAL APPOINTMENT	M
OTHER AUTHORISED CIRCUMSTANCES	O
PRESENT	/
PRESENT2	\
SESSION1	AM
SESSION2	PM
STUDY LEAVE	S
UNMARKED ATTENDANCE	-
WORK EXPERIENCE	W
ABSENT	A
END OF YEAR ABSENCE	Y
EXCLUSION/SUSPENSION	EL
ILLNESS	I