



GEMS Attendance Policy for GEMS Cambridge International School Abu Dhabi

Last Amendment: August 2019
Policy Review Date: August 2022

Rationale:

The Cambridge International School Abu Dhabi (CIA) believes that good attendance and punctuality are vital in enabling students to make the most of their learning opportunities and thus prepare them for the demand of their adult life. This is in accordance to Policy 54 (Article 59 of the Organising Regulations) of the Private Schools' Policy and Guidance Manual. As a school we will do all we can to maximise attendance for all students. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible. A parent or guardian may be at risk of committing child neglect and be subjected to a Safeguarding report to be logged if attendance falls below the recommended levels. A child who is absent without cause for more than five days will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the school: DSL – Sarah Oliver Browning.

To this purpose, we give high priority to conveying to parents/guardians and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents/guardians have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is a concern about attendance and punctuality.

Purpose:

To recognise that:

- Regular and punctual school attendance is vital if students are to benefit fully from the opportunities the school offers them
- Regular attendance makes learning easier
- The National Curriculum underlines the importance of continuity and progression in the learning process
- Students who develop good patterns of attendance and punctuality early on at school tend to continue in this pattern throughout their school life and beyond
- With good attendance and punctuality students will achieve better results, greater confidence, have increased self-esteem and develop useful skills for the workplace
- Students may become vulnerable through events such as bereavement, divorce or separation and we have support systems in place to guide our students

Expectations

We expect that all our **students** will

- Attend school regularly and attend all lessons
- Arrive on time to school and to all lessons
- Be properly prepared and equipped for the days learning
- Be fully involved in all lessons
- Follow correct procedures for attendance and punctuality
- Carry out any work provided by the school during an authorised absence period

We expect that **Parents/Guardians**

- Recognise their legal and safeguarding responsibilities for promoting good attendance.
- Place a high priority on attendance and achievement
- Not allow their child to have time off school unless it is unavoidable
- Endeavour to keep health appointments out of school hours where possible
- Endeavour to keep holidays out of term time
- Inform a member of staff (usually Tutor or Class Teacher) of any reason or problem that may hinder their child from attending school
- Work with the school to resolve issues and ensure good attendance and punctuality
- Ensure their child is punctual to school
- Contact school, either by email to the Tutor or Phase Leader, or by telephoning reception on the first morning of absence, preferably before 7.45am, whenever their child is unable to attend school
- In the event of the child contracting an illness or suffering an injury which would make an absence of 3 days or more likely, parents should inform the school immediately and subsequently keep the school informed on progress.
- Complete a leave of absence form for any unavoidable known term time absence

We expect the **Tutor/ Class Teacher** will

- Set an example by having good attendance and arriving on time to registration – Tutors should be in the tutor room by 7.30am
- Take the register at 7.45am after the National Anthem has played.
- Take the register verbally and with the class in silence apart from answering to their name
- Explain the need for and promote habits of regular attendance and punctuality with the group and individuals
- Accurately mark the register
- Ensure absence notes are received
- Record reasons for absence accurately on the register
- To contact home if a student is absent from school without a reason – **by the end of the first day of absence, email.**
- If there's no response by the end of the second day the Form Tutor/ Class Teacher calls home.
- Alert the Head of Year if a student has been absent for 3 days and parents have failed to contact school or answer email, or phone call requests. The HoY will then follow up.

- Alert the HOY regarding any concerns about absence and punctuality if action they have taken proves ineffective
- Keep a record of all intervention
- Celebrate attendance and punctuality appropriately for the year group e.g. Displays, certificates, letters home, etc.
- Refer to attendance and lateness when writing report using the following language

Attendance percentage	ADEC judgement
At least 98%	Outstanding
At least 96%	Very good
At least 94%	Good
At least 92%	Acceptable
Less than 92%	Weak
Less than 90%	Very weak

We expect the **Head of Year** will:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality within his/her year group to ensure targets are met
- Collate an attendance and punctuality data sheet at least monthly and give to tutors to discuss with their tutor groups during registration
- Use a monthly attendance display to raise awareness
- Ensure all tutors are familiar with and apply the policy consistently
- Provide support for tutors as required
- Monitor and supervise the work of their tutor team in promoting and ensuring good attendance and punctuality
- Use monthly data analysis to identify individuals and groups. The HOY will be looking for -
 - a) unauthorised absence
 - b) frequent short absences, particularly where a pattern emerges; e.g. every Thursday
 - c) Persistent lateness
- Assign the students into the following categories –

Attendance

96 – 100% - GREEN
 94 – 96% - ORANGE
 Below 94% - RED
 RED – HOY will decide on the best intervention method according to the individual circumstances of each student

Punctuality

96 – 100% - GREEN
 94 – 96% - ORANGE
 Below 94% - RED
 RED – HOY will decide on the best intervention method according to the individual circumstances of each student

Interventions may include:

 - A priority mentoring session with the tutor
 - The HOY meets with the students to discuss any issues
 - The school counsellor
 - Letter home outlining concerns

- A parents meeting with tutor/HOY/Pastoral leader
- Keep a record of all interventions and monitor improvements in attendance and punctuality

Lateness procedures

- A student is late if they arrive to registration after 7.45am (after the national anthem has played).
- If a student is late but the register is still open, the student will get a late mark
- If the students arrives after registration (later than 7.55am) then they must sign in at reception and receive a late mark and late slip, the lesson 1 teacher to register the student
- Tutors must check that students in their tutor group have signed in late and received a late slip
- Tutors must keep a record of students who have been late and follow the lateness procedure
- On-going problems will be referred to the Head of Year who will give a detention and discuss the problem with the student

Rewards

Students who have improved attendance and/or punctuality will receive a letter home

Students with 100% attendance and no lateness will be rewarded at the end of each term and tutor groups with the best attendance will also be rewarded.

Heads of Year will decide on appropriate rewards for their year group, which may include

- Certificates
- Mention in the school news letter
- Mention in a school assembly
- A letter home
- A gift certificate
- Prizes such as stationary items, or tutor group parties

Sanctions

GEMS Cambridge International School Abu Dhabi (CIA) takes safeguarding seriously. When a pupil does not attend school we will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason for absence and ensure proper safeguarding action is taken.

When a child is absent for an un-known reason, we will respond in the following manner:

- On the first day of absence, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9 a.m. the school will endeavour to contact them that day including calling all contact numbers and next of kin if appropriate.
 - If there is no response, the school will continue to try and contact the parent/carer..
- If it is difficult to make contact with families or attendance becomes an issue, the DLS will become involved and work with families to improve attendance and set future expectations.

- Failure to comply with the expectations set out, may result in: further action; a Safeguarding/Child Protection log will be made and a referral to the Abu Dhabi Child Protection Team will be made. This may result in further legal proceeding being taken against the family as outlined in:

Federal Law 3 Article 31

Every child has the right to education and will work on achieving equal opportunity for every child according to the laws in force. and Article 35.

Federal Law 3 Article 35

The person responsible for the care of the child is prohibited from subjecting him to ostracism, vagrancy, neglect or habit of leaving the child, not attaching the child to an educational institution or leaving the child Leaving the child in the event of absence from education without obligation during compulsory education stage.

Whoever violate the above shall be punished in accordance to Article 60 Federal Law 3 2016.