



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Approved by:	Dolly Goraiwala	Date of approval: May 2020
Last reviewed on:	May 2020	
Next review due by:	May 2021	

The
Aim
of
this

Policy

Star International School, Al Twar aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We believe that success in learning is strongly linked to regular attendance and appropriate participation in lessons and therefore we hold attendance and punctuality in an extremely high regard. We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Consultation:

This policy was written by Head of Primary in consultation with all members of SLT.

Monitoring and evaluation:

All member of staff are responsible for using this policy to embed effective practice across the primary and secondary phases. Any issues or concerns arising from this policy should be brought to the attention of SLT.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the KHDA and Ministry of Education of the UAE.

KHDA guidelines for attendance are as follows:

- 98% excellent
- 96% good
- 92% satisfactory
- Less than 92% unsatisfactory.

Any request for leave will be considered on an individual basis. Absences may be authorized in the following cases:

- Absence due to sickness, which may need to be supported with a medical certificate.
- Absence for one or two consecutive days, up to a maximum of seven days during an academic year, for which prior permission has been sought.
- Family emergency or death of a relative.
- Unavoidable travel abroad.

Student attendance is deemed unacceptable if the student is absent from school for no reason, or for an unacceptable reason for 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days.

School 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 day's learning
- Be fully involved in all lessons
- Follow correct procedures for attendance and punctuality
- Be responsible for carrying out any work provided by the school during an authorised absence period

We expect that Parents/Guardians will:

- 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 Class Teacher/Form Tutor or Head of Year) of any reason or problem that may hinder their child from attending school
- Work with the school to resolve issues where possible and ensure good attendance and punctuality
- Ensure their child is punctual to school
- Contact school, either by email to the Class Teacher/Form Tutor or Head of Year, or by telephoning reception on the first morning of absence, before 8:40 a.m., whenever their child is unable to attend school
- In the event of the student 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.

School procedures

Attendance register

The attendance register will be taken by the class teacher during registration period each day. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Unauthorised absence
- Late

Admin will then be responsible for any amendments, including:

- Authorised absence
- Late

See appendix 1 for attendance codes.

Pupils must arrive in school by 7:40 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 7:30 and will be kept open until 7:40. At 7:40 all class registers must be closed and admin will be fully responsible for all amendments required.

Unplanned absence

An unplanned absence may be due to illness or a family emergency. In these circumstances, parent must notify the school by calling reception before 7:40am on the first day of the absence.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

The principal will not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the principal's discretion.

We encourage parents to make all appointments and travel arrangements out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary; parents must apply for leave in advance in order for it to be reported as an authorized absence.

Procedure for applying for planned authorized leave:

- *Applications must be made in writing by filling out the leave request form at reception.*
- *The principal will review each application individually.*
- *If the leave is authorized you will receive written notice of this.*
- *Students will be responsible for catching up on any work missed during their absence.*

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** may include:

- Medical/dental appointments
- Visa/Passport appointments

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong
- Absence for one or two consecutive days, up to a maximum of seven days during an academic year, for which prior permission has been sought
- Family emergency or death of a relative
- Unavoidable travel abroad

Following up absence

If a parent/guardian has failed to report an absence to the school, Admin will follow up the absences with a phone call on the first day of absence. As the absence has not been authorized following the correct procedure, the absence will be reported as unauthorized.

Lateness and punctuality

Form teachers will close the register at 7:40 each morning. Any pupil who is not present in the classroom at this time, will be marked using the unauthorized absence code. A pupil who arrives after 7:40 will be required to sign in with reception, who will amend their register code to late.

Persistent lateness will result in the following actions:

Frequency	Action
The first five (5) incidents of lateness in a short period of time such as a month or an academic term	Written warning to student and notify parents. Lateness will be noted in the students' progress report.
Up to an additional three (3) instances of lateness in a short period of time, such as a month	Parents and student to be called to a meeting with the principal or a designated person by the principal. Parents and student to sign a written pledge not to repeat the offence. Lateness to be noted in students' progress report.
Any additional incidents to the above	At the discretion of the school, decision might include one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community hours at the school or beyond. • Detention during school break or after school hours. • A written notice announcing refusal to re-enroll the student in the school for the following academic year.

Reporting to parents

Any concerns with attendance will be reported to parents on a regular basis by class teachers via Class Dojo. Four incidents of absenteeism in a short period of time such as a month or an academic term will result in an official written warning to parents. An additional three instances of absenteeism in a short period of time will result in the parents and the student being called to a meeting with the principal or head of department. Parents and student will be asked to sign a written pledge not to repeat the offence.

Absences and lateness will be reported on the student's mid-term and end of year school report as:

Attendance:

Outstanding - 100%

Very good - Less than 100% but more than 96%

Acceptable - 96%

Unacceptable - Less than 96%

Punctuality:

Outstanding - No days late

Very good - Between 1 -4 days late per term

Acceptable - 5 days off per term

Unacceptable - More than 5 days off per term

Legal sanctions

In line with Ministry of Education Education Law the school can refuse to reregister students with 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days of absence without authorized permission.

Strategies for promoting attendance

- Consistent, clear communication with parents and pupils about the importance of regular, prompt, attendance.
- Setting targets for improved attendance and sharing these with Governors, parents and pupils.
- The accurate completion of registers at the start of each morning and afternoon session.
- Attendance cup (given out in our monthly Star 'celebration' assembly).
- Certificates for 100% attendance will be awarded each year during the school's Annual Awards Ceremony.
- Teachers being good role models

Reward trips

Prize draws – 100%

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

The principal

The principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The principal also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the principal
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

Admin staff

Admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SLT. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are to be used on school attendance registers.

Code	Definition	Scenario
P	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late and misses registration
AA	Authorised absence	Student has been given prior authorization to be absent
UA	Unauthorised absence	Student is absent without prior authorization
SL	Sick Leave	Student has authorised absence due to sickness