



Gulf British Academy

Attendance Policy

Whole School Approach

Introduction

At Gulf British Academy, we believe that the majority of pupils want to attend school to learn and that their achievements and progress are directly influenced by attendance, motivation and involvement.

Pupils suffer when these are unsatisfactory. This attendance policy is part of a larger framework of policies for managing and organising the school in order to ensure that all pupils have the right to equal access to the curriculum and are not denied opportunities as a result of their own, or others, poor or non-attendance.

Aims

As a school, our aims are:

- To support pupils by valuing, noting and rewarding their attendance.
- To communicate with parents that their role in promoting good attendance and punctuality is important to both their child's and the school's success.
- To maintain effective procedures to record and monitor pupil attendance.
- To identify and respond swiftly to issues affecting pupil absence, supporting children and their families if the need arises.
- To meet our statutory obligations (MoE) in relation to the attendance management of pupils.

Roles and responsibilities

- The Head of School will have a general oversight and responsibility for attendance and will communicate the importance of attendance and punctuality to pupils, parents, staff, and the School Counsellor.
- Class teachers have day-to-day responsibility for recording and monitoring children's attendance.
- The Administration Department and the School Counsellor will work with the Head of School to monitor patterns of attendance at least once each term.

Promoting good attendance

- Teaching and support staff frequently comment and praise good attendance.
- Good attendance is encouraged and celebrated through the termly presentation of certificates of attendance to those children with a 100% attendance record. This is an important feature of end-of-term/year assemblies.
- Through the school's various communication channels, parent evenings and letters, parents will be informed of their responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- All staff are expected to set an example themselves by being punctual and dismissing classes on time.

Recording attendance

An accurate, consistent and rigorous system of registration throughout the school is in place. This ensures that pupils are aware that registration is taking place and is significant. The following practices are followed by school staff:

- Registration is completed by class teachers using a Google Drive based electronic register at the beginning of each morning. The register is open for all concerned staff to be able to follow up with lates and absences.
- Unexplained absences are promptly followed up by the School in order to ascertain both the pupil's safety and reason for their absence.

- Pupils leaving the school after registration or returning later following a medical visit, etc., will be recorded in a book kept for such purpose at the school office. All parents must be made aware of this when taking children out of school during the school day because an accurate record of who is on the premises is required for Health and Safety purposes.

Categorising absence

Only the school, within the context of the law, can approve absence, not parents. The school remains alert to emerging patterns of 'authorised absence'.

When the school is satisfied a pupil is absent by reason of illness, etc., the absence is treated as **AUTHORISED**. In order to authorise an absence, notification must be received from the parent.

Parents are required to contact the school on a daily basis if the illness lasts longer than one day.

Monitoring attendance

If a pupil has not arrived in class when the register closes, and no prior explanation for their absence has been given, the Administration Department will telephone the parent or carer to ascertain the safety of the pupil and the reason for the absence.

The Administration Department will inform the class teacher of the outcome of the query by recording the response on the class register.

Should attempts to contact home be unsuccessful, the matter will be reported to the Head of School who will determine subsequent actions.

Parents will be notified when their child's attendance falls below the expected level.

If a child has less than 85% attendance in a school year, the school reserves the right to consider non-registration for the next academic year.

Punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school by 07:00 am.

Pupils who arrive after the register has closed are required to sign the 'late book', which is kept in the school's reception.

Should a pupil be late on three occasions within a single week, a letter will be sent home to request greater punctuality.

Persistent lateness will be monitored by the Head of School, Administration Department and the School Counsellor.

If three or more lateness letters are sent home within a single school term, a support plan will be put in place in order to set agreed targets to improve punctuality.

Leave of absence

In order to request a leave of absence, parents must complete a Gulf British Academy request form, which is available from the school office.

ONLY TRULY EXCEPTIONAL CASES CAN BE AUTHORISED

The Head of School will consider the following:

- The nature of the event.
- Whether the correct advance notice of six weeks has been given.
- The pupil's record of attendance. Leave of absence cannot be given for pupils with less than 90% attendance within the current academic year.

The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as exceptional:

- Service personnel returning from active employment.
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production of the company policy.

- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

This is not an exhaustive list and the Head of School will consider individual circumstances. If the Head of School feels that there may be exceptional circumstances that do not fit the criteria, they may refer to the local authority for advice.

The decision of the Head of School is final. Parents who take a child on leave in term time without permission of the school risk being issued with a penalty notice fine for unauthorised absences.

All requests for a leave of absence must be made in writing as far in advance as possible and at least six weeks before the first date of the period of leave being requested.

Parents or carers must obtain permission before making any arrangements for leave in exceptional circumstances, otherwise the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Reviewed:	September 2019
To be reviewed:	Annually by September
Responsibility:	Head of School/KS1/KS2 Coordinators