

## Attendance Policy

**Vision:** Grow - Flourish - Achieve

**Mission:** Growing Flourishing Achievers through an innovative and sustainable learning environment that fosters academic excellence with holistic development.

### Rationale:

The Authorities require that students attend school for a minimum number of school days. As per ADEK, it is not allowed to be promoted to the next year group if the student is absent for more than 15 consecutive days, or more than 30 days throughout the year.

GEMS Founders School Masdar City believes that regular 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. ADEK's commitment to good attendance as outlined in the Parent-School Contract has been taken into account in drawing up this policy.

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. 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.

### Aims:

Through this policy we aim to:

- Encourage our students to strive for a 100% attendance record
- Keep the school's attendance above 96%
- Outline the steps the school will take to promote positive attendance and punctuality
- Outline absence procedures for parents to follow

### 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 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 day's 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** 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 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, by emailing the Form Tutor/ Class teacher, 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 request via the Parent Portal.

## Authorised Absences:

The school shall authorise the following types of absences, provided they are supported by a signed letter from parents or official documents from appropriate authorities:

- Illness - (evidence – Medical leave certificate issued by a medical professional).
- Medical appointment scheduled prior to the absence.
- Bereavement of a first or second relative (evidence – Death Certificate)
- Umrah/Haj (evidence Visa or flight tickets)
- Authority appointment (passport/visa etc.) (evidence – Appointment letter).
- Official community task.
- Mandatory appearance before an official body.
- Essential urgent family travel for matters such as medical care, escort leave, or a death in the family.
- Attendance of conferences, competitions, and events, with the permission of the Principal (e.g., Model United Nations, sports events, Olympiads).
- Observation of religious holidays that are not defined as public holidays in the UAE.
- Government-approved school closures due to extreme weather

## Leave Applications

- Leave applications with this valid evidence will be approved by the school on the GEMS Parent Portal and will not be counted towards the 'unauthorised absence' record.
- All other reasons for leave would count towards the child's unauthorised leave allocation.
- Students who take uninformed leave for more than one month risk losing their seat through being 'Struck Off' the school's system.
- Parents who fail to co-operate with the school to ensure good attendance may have the school place withdrawn at the end of the academic year – As per Article 48 of the Bilo of Federal Law, concerning Private Education.

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

- Set an example by having good attendance and arriving on time to registration – teachers should be in their classroom 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, via email.**
- If there's no response by the end of the second day the Form Tutor/ Class Teacher calls home.
- Alert the Pastoral leader if a student has been absent for 3 days and parents have failed to contact school or answer email, or phone call requests.
- Alert the DSL absence after 4 consecutive days.
- Keep a record of all intervention
- Celebrate attendance and punctuality appropriately for the year group e.g. Displays, certificates, letters home, assemblies, newsletters etc.
- Refer to attendance and lateness when writing reports using the following language.

Attendance percentage	UAE Framework 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 Senior Leadership Team to:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality within his/her year group to ensure targets are met
- Ensure all tutors /class teachers are familiar with and apply the policy consistently

- Provide support for teachers as required
- Monitor and supervise the work of their team in promoting and ensuring good attendance and punctuality
- Use half-termly data analysis to identify individuals and groups. The Pastoral leader will be looking for:
  - a) unauthorised absence
  - b) frequent short absences, particularly where a pattern emerges; e.g. every Friday
  - c) Persistent lateness
- For students with persistent lateness/ absence the Pastoral leader will decide on the best intervention method according to the individual circumstances of each student. Interventions may include:
  - a) A priority mentoring session with the tutor
  - b) The Pastoral leader meets with the students to discuss any issue
  - c) The school counsellor to meet with the student
  - d) Letter home outlining concerns
  - e) A parent meeting with tutor/Pastoral leader/ Assistant Head
- The HofY will 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 student arrives after registration (later than 7.50am) then they must sign in at reception and receive a late mark they will be scanned or marked in at reception
- An email will be sent to parents to confirm that a student has arrived to school late.
- The lateness will be recorded and parents will be contacted as per the school lateness/punctuality flowchart in Appendix A. This is for both mornings drop off and afternoon collection.
- The school has a clear line of consequences for any student who is consistently late, with a final meeting being held with the Principal.
- The absence procedures and consequences of being consistently late are shared with all stakeholders at the start of the year as well as timely reminders throughout the year via various communications channels (e.g. Parent Handbook, newsletters and the school website)

### **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 newsletter
- Mention in a school assembly
- A letter home
- A gift certificate

- Prizes such as stationery items, or tutor group parties

### Monitoring and Communication

GFA shall identify students in Year 2 and above with unauthorised absence rates above 5% of the total calendar days outlined by ADEK as a "cause for concern".  
The school shall identify FS1 – Year 1 students' overall absence rates (including authorised and unauthorised absences) above 10% of the total calendar days outlined by ADEK, as a "cause for concern".

At the end of each month attendance data will be analysed by the Head of Pastoral. Students with attendance lower than 80% shall be highlighted and parents will be contacted. Please see flow chart below for attendance communication.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> month below 80% attendance

Form tutor to email parents making them aware of their child's current attendance percentage and enquire if there is a reason for low attendance.



#### 2<sup>nd</sup> month below 80% attendance

If there is not a significant improvement, PASTORAL LEADER will email parents to make them aware of attendance percentage.

\*PASTORAL LEADER to speak to form tutor first to see if there are any extenuating circumstances.



#### 3<sup>rd</sup> month below 80% attendance

If there is not a significant improvement, AHT will call parents to make them aware of attendance percentage and invite parents in for a meeting and to **sign Attendance Concern Notification Letter** (See Letter Template, Appendix A)

\*AHT to speak to form tutor first to see if there are any extenuating circumstances.



#### 4<sup>th</sup> month below 80% attendance

If there is not a significant improvement, DHT will call parents to make them aware of attendance percentage not improving.

\*DHT to speak to form tutor first to see if there are any extenuating circumstances.



#### 5<sup>th</sup> month below 80% attendance

If there is not a significant improvement, parents will be invited into school for a meeting with DHT/HOS to discuss poor attendance and implications.

\*DHT/HOS to speak to form tutor first to see if there are any extenuating circumstances.

## Appendix A

### Appendix (27) To the Ministerial Resolution No. (851) of year 2018 on the Code of Behaviour of Students in General Education Institutions Form No. (27)

#### Undertaking of the guardian on the commitment of their son/ daughter to school attendance

##### Written warning

Emirate: Abu Dhabi

School Operations Department: GEMS Founders School Masdar City

Council : ADEK

Sector : Private

School : GEMS Founders School Masdar City

I, the guardian of the student, ....., Grade ..... am aware that attendance is below 80% and do hereby undertake that my child shall comply with the school attendance, and not to be absent unless for an acceptable excuse. I am aware that the acceptable excuses are:

- Illness - (evidence – Medical leave certificate issued by a medical professional).
- Medical appointment scheduled prior to the absence.
- Bereavement of a first or second relative (evidence – Death Certificate)
- Umrah/Haj (evidence Visa or flight tickets)
- Authority appointment (passport/visa etc.) (evidence – Appointment letter).
- Official community task.
- Mandatory appearance before an official body.
- Essential urgent family travel for matters such as medical care, escort leave, or a death in the family.
- Attendance of conferences, competitions, and events, with the permission of the Principal (e.g., Model United Nations, sports events, Olympiads).
- Observation of religious holidays that are not defined as public holidays in the UAE.
- Government-approved school closures due to extreme weather

It is important to note that ADEK rules state that it is not allowed for a student to be promoted to the next year group if the student is absent for more than 15 consecutive days, or more than 30 days throughout the year.

% Attendance	Number of Approved Absence	Number of Unapproved Absence	Total Number of Days Absent

Head of Pastoral Signature :

Parent Signature:

Tel. Number:

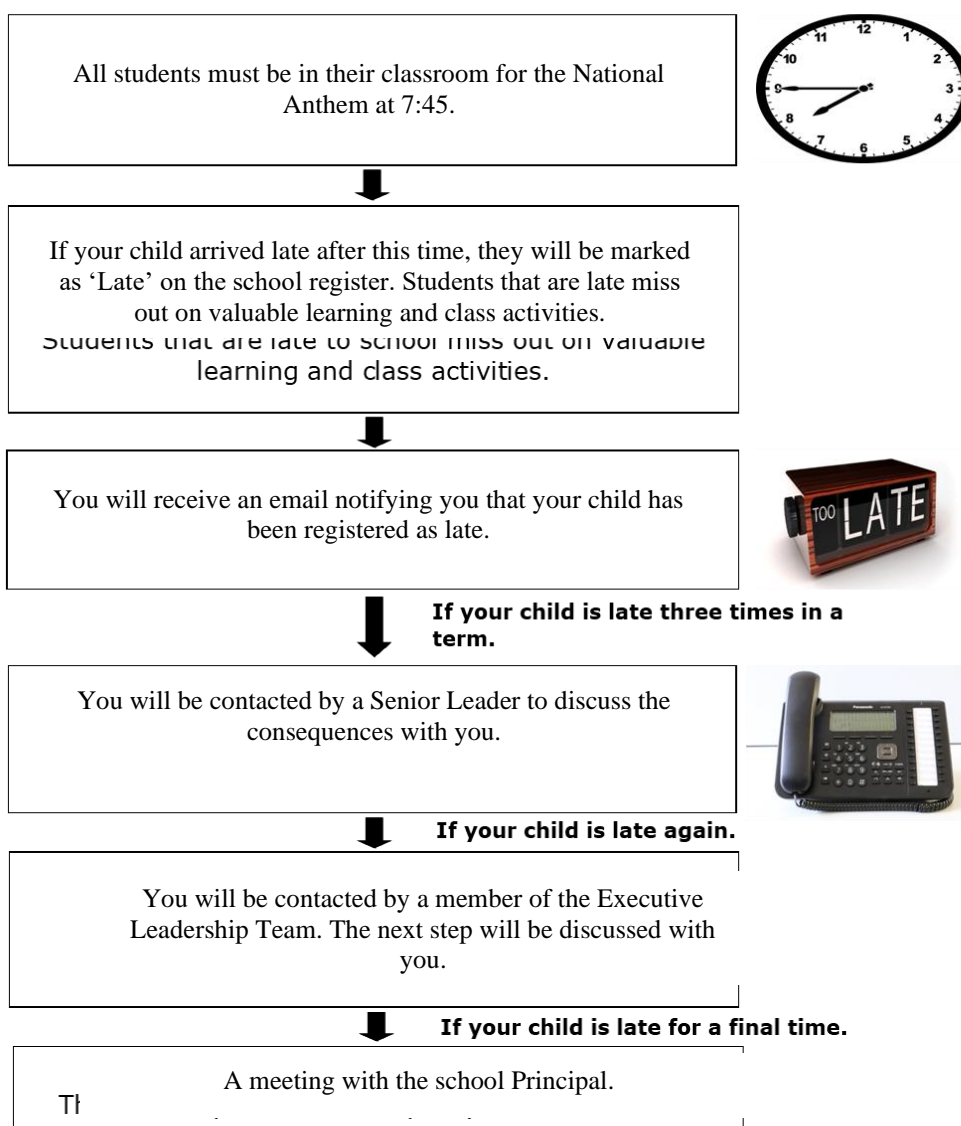
Contact Date:

Other members:

Name	Role	Signature

## Appendix B

### Attendance and Punctuality procedure—Morning



A meeting with the school Principal.



Signed .....  
Principal/CEO

Date 12/07/24

Next policy review date:  
12 July 2025