

Policy Title:

Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2016

1 Rationale:

Dubai British School Jumeirah Park believes that regular attendance is an essential pre-requisite of effective schooling. Students need to develop and maintain good habits of regular attendance and punctuality if they are to make the most of their time at our school.

The minimum expected attendance is 95% as attendance of less than 95% has been shown to compromise student attainment. If days are regularly missed, then continuity of learning and progress are significantly hampered as pupils find it difficult to catch up with missed work.

KHDA's commitment to good attendance as outlined in the Parent-School Contract has been taken into account in drawing up this policy.

2 Aims:

The aims of the DBSJP attendance and punctuality policy are:

- To encourage prompt arrival at school
- To encourage regular attendance
- To ensure that routines are in place for monitoring attendance and for early identification of any difficulties

3 Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for raising and promoting attendance is shared by parents, students and by all school staff. By co-operating and working together we can improve attendance and this in turn will raise achievement. All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality.

Parents are responsible for:

- Making every effort to ensure that their child attends school every day and arrives on time
- Informing the school on the first day of an absence if their child is unable to attend school
- Providing the school with a valid reason for all absences
- Scheduling family vacations to coincide with scheduled school breaks
- Helping students to understand the importance of going to school and showing disapproval of missing school
- Making all appointments outside of school time e.g. dentist / doctor. In the event of this not being possible, parents are asked to inform the school of the appointment prior to the appointment date. The school may request to see an appointment card.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Completing the register every morning by 8.00am
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by pupils and their parents
- Informing the Head of School where there are concerns and acting upon them
- Organizing an individual student monitoring and reward system for target students with poor attendance

- Emphasising with students the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Discussing attendance issues at parent/teacher conferences when necessary
- Setting an example by arriving promptly to lessons

Receptionists are responsible for:

- Checking that attendance registers have been completed by 8.15am and email teachers if they have not been completed
- Ensuring that unexplained absences are followed up with a phone call on the first day of an absence by 8.30am
- Updating iSAMS as necessary
- Ensuring that Late Slips are issued and the lateness is entered in iSAMS
- Providing requests from staff for information regarding attendance including running reports and statistics
- Monitoring individual attendance on a weekly basis where concerns have been raised
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by students and their parents and reporting concerns to teachers and senior leaders
- Sending warning letters to parents when requested to do so by the Head of School

Principal / Head of School or delegated senior staff, are responsible for:

- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Overall preparation and implementation of the attendance policy
- Processing holiday requests
- Promotion of attendance issues during assemblies and publications

4 Managing Attendance

Strategies for maximising attendance

- Individual certificates will be presented termly to pupils who have achieved 100% attendance that term.
- A congratulatory message will be sent to families if the whole class achieves 100% attendance for a week
- Attendance and punctuality will be promoted through assemblies and in monthly newsletters.
- If a child's attendance level drops below 90%, a warning letter will be sent to parents.
- If a child's attendance level drops below 85% parents will be asked to attend a meeting with a senior member of staff
- If a child's attendance drops below 80%, they are at risk of not being promoted at the end of the academic year or may not be re-enrolled in the school

Parents should be aware that absence can only be accepted for the following reasons:

- Sickness which should be proved by a medical certificate if after 2 days in length
- Approved Holiday or other family leave with a maximum of 5 days during one academic year
- Close family bereavement up to a maximum of 5 days
- Official meeting / business out of school which must be proven by a letter from the official body

Parents should be aware that it is unacceptable to take pupils out of school for the following reasons:

- Because it is their birthday

- To buy new shoes / clothing
- To visit a relative
- To entertain visiting relatives and friends
- To leave school early to travel for the weekend
- Other non-essential reasons

The following action will be taken by the school for non-attendance:

- If no explanation is provided by 8.00am, then a phone call will be made to ascertain the reason for the absence. If there is no reply, then a letter to request an explanation will be sent
- Students whose attendance falls below 90% in a given half term with no justifiable reason, will receive a warning letter
- If attendance does not improve, then a meeting will be arranged with a senior member of staff
- Pupils with frequent “odd days” off from school will have their attendance patterns carefully monitored
- Pupils who are absent from school for a prolonged period without good reason (more than one week) will have their situation investigated
- 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 or not promoted to the next grade level

Term Time Holiday or Exceptional Circumstances

Parents considering taking their child out of school during term time should complete an application form obtained from the school Reception, at least two weeks in advance. The application does not, in itself, guarantee that the request will be authorized.

As part of their application parents will be expected to demonstrate a willingness to make arrangements that cause least disruption to their children’s learning.

The Head of School will consider each individual application taking into account:

- The student’s current absence record
- The number of previous similar requests
- The year group the student is in
- Proximity to major assessments

The Head of School is within her rights to turn applications down. Such a decision will have been made in the best interests of the student’s educational progress and attainment and with due regard to their previous attendance record. In such a case, the absence will be marked as ‘unauthorized’.

Parents taking their children out of school during term time without the Head of School’s authorization not only damage their children’s educational opportunities but also risk of losing the children’s place at the school.

5 Punctuality

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they not only miss learning time but also the direct teaching that occurs at the start of the day. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons and entering the class once the lesson has started can be embarrassing for the child.

How we manage punctuality:

We expect students to be in school in good time for the start of the school day.

Registers are marked and the National Anthem played to mark the end of registration. Your child will receive a late mark if they are not in class by 8.00am. Students who arrive late must sign in at the Reception desk and provide a reason for the lateness. A Late Slip is issued which must be handed to their teacher.

Primary consequences

- If Students are frequently late, parents will be informed and asked to encourage good punctuality
- If lateness persists, a warning letter will be sent to parents
- Parents of students with a persistent late record will be asked to meet with a senior member of staff to resolve the problem.
- Detention may be issued if there is no improvement to punctuality

Secondary consequences

- Late once in a half term: verbal warning from the tutor
- Late Twice in a half term: written warning from the tutor
- Late 3 times in a half term: tutor detention and a letter to parents
- Late 6 times in a half term: Head of Secondary detention and meeting with a senior member of staff to resolve the problem

5 Applicable to:

All families and staff

6 Related Documents

KHDA Parent-School Contract

7 Implementation Date: September 2016