



مدرسة كامبردج الثانوية
THE CAMBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL, ABU DHABI

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Adopted: 1st September 2017
Updated: 1st September 2021

With reference to ADEK Policy 54: Attendance
Corresponding to Article (59) of the Organising Regulations

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

PURPOSE:

At GEMS The Cambridge High School, Abu Dhabi we believe that regular and punctual attendance at School is essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. Good School attendance is a key factor in raising attainment and reducing social exclusion. Pupils should be at School on time (07:45am start) every day that the School is open, unless the absence is unavoidable and an acceptable reason is given by the set-time (See below). At CHS we work in partnership with parents and pupils to encourage excellent attendance and to offer support in removing barriers that may prevent pupils from coming to School. Pupils who have full attendance are more successful and confident in their studies. Those who are frequently absent not only have significant gaps in their own learning but also may hinder the learning of others because they need a disproportionate amount of support to help them catch-up. Parents are expected to contact School in the morning (no later than 07:45am) on the first day of their child's absence through one of the following communication channels:

CHS Reception - Tel: (02) 552 1621 info_chs@gemsedu.com

- Ensure any message is for the attention of your child/rens' Form Tutor and/or Phase Leader;
- We encourage Parents / Guardians to notify their child/rens' Form Tutor and/or Phase Leader directly as well;
- Only Parents / Guardians over the age of 18 can notify the school of a student's absence.

Parents are also expected to notify the School at an early stage of potential significant problems to enable early intervention work to take place before poor attendance becomes a habit.

AIMS:

Through this policy we aim to:

- Ensure the School's attendance is at least 97% attendance throughout the school, whilst promoting and celebrating students, sections and Year groups who obtain 98% (Outstanding – ADEK);
- Outline the steps the School will take to promote positive attendance and punctuality;
- Outline absence procedures for parents to follow.

PROCEDURES:

Monitoring and Recording of Attendance in school

Pupils' attendance is monitored through our registration system on *Phoenix Classrooms*. Form Tutors register pupils during Form time (now 07:45 – 08:00am) and Teachers at the beginning of each timetabled lesson (Lesson 1 now between 08:00 – 08:50am).

Students are marked as:

- Present
- Late (Students arriving after 08:00am will be considered late and an SMS message will be sent)
- Absent (X)

During periods where students are accessing lessons online, students are marked as:

- D (Distance Learning) OR
- Absent (X)

Late Attendance will be recorded and updated between 07:45am – 09:00am in the School reception by the School Social worker. Attendance will be recorded and the child/rens form tutor and phase leader will be informed of this late attendance to follow-up on the reason(s) why.

Each day, our Data Manager will monitor whether Tutor time and Lesson 1 (one) attendance is recorded and they will inform the SLT member of staff i/c Pastoral and Attendance if any registers are incomplete, whereby further support and advice can be offered to staff to ensure all registers are complete for Daily eSIS attendance to commence by 08:30am and submit to the relevant regulatory bodies by no later than *09:30am (*this may be subject to change according to their own policy)

To ensure that the attendance of pupils remains high on the School's agenda attendance figures are discussed weekly during line management meetings between Phase Leaders/Deputy Phase Leaders, the school social worker and Inclusion team. These are presented at SLT Line Management meetings and at Senior Leadership Team Meetings, where summary figures allow the leadership team to keep up-to-date with short-term changes in attendance figures. Daily Attendance figures are shared with all Pastoral team members and SLT at the end of each day, as well as the Absence report for that day. Additionally, on a termly basis an analysis of termly attendance further informs strategic decision making.

Local Advisory Board (LAB) Members get a regular report on the termly School attendance figures as and where requested.

Promoting regular Attendance in school

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of School staff.

- **PUPILS:** Pupils are responsible for ensuring they are in School every day on time and are punctual to every lesson.
- **PARENTS:** A pupil's parents are fully responsible for ensuring the highest levels of attendance possible and not less than 97%. They are required to let the School know by 7.45am if their child will be absent on that day. They are obliged to provide the School with a full explanation as to why the pupil will not be attending. Failure to do so may lead the Front of house Staff to categorise the attendance as unauthorised. In accordance with UAE law, a pupil may be permanently excluded if he/she is absent from school for 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days within an academic year. In such cases, the School does reserve the right to exclude your child, ask them to repeat a year or withdraw the offer of a place for the following academic year.
- **FORM TUTORS/ CLASS TEACHERS:** Form Tutors/ Class / Subject teachers are responsible for encouraging pupils to attend the School daily and ensuring they have a high readiness for learning. Form tutors will review their register at the end of the week and send an email to/call the parents of any student who has had an unauthorised absence that week. Form tutors/ Class teachers are required to contact the parents of any student whose attendance is between 91 and 98 percent and provide support until their attendance increases.
- **SUBJECT TEACHERS:** Subject teachers encourage pupils to attend regularly through engaging lessons, good relationships and through ensuring plans are in place to enable pupils to catch-up after they have been away. Subject teachers provide positive challenge for those who do not have high levels of attendance. Subject teachers are expected to complete a class register at the start of every lesson, in the morning this must be completed by 7:50am (during Tutor Time) and by 8.05am (Lesson 1) as this is a legal requirement.
- **FRONT OF HOUSE STAFF:** Front of House Staff (Data Manager) are responsible for managing the daily registers, ensuring the School has taken a full register for Tutor Time and Lesson 1 by 8.05am and that a first day email is sent to parents by Front of House Staff (Social worker / Reception) who have not provided a reason for their child's absence by phone call before 7.45am. The member of Front of House Staff will also change codes from 'Absent' where a solid 'reason' has been given by a parent. They endeavour to follow up on emails where parents have not responded, doing everything in their power to ensure attendance is addressed.

- **DEPUTY-PHASE LEADERS:** Deputy Phase Leaders monitor attendance codes in line with national expectations and legislation. They monitor attendance trends identifying issues and areas for improvement. They provide day-to-day support to Front of House Staff where needed. They report on a weekly and termly basis to their Phase Leader and, where required, SLT i/c Pastoral and Attendance on the latest attendance figures. Deputy Phase Leaders create attendance and punctuality focus groups which include any pupil whose attendance has fallen between 81 and 90 percent. The Deputy Phase Leader speaks to the students in the focus group and contacts home via email. If the student is absent for a further three days the Phase Leader will organise a meeting with the parent.
- **PHASE LEADER:** The Phase Leader is responsible for pupils whose attendance falls below 80 percent. The Phase Leader must support the pupil and their family until their attendance increases. They will also monitor regular attendance through their line management meetings.
- **SLT I/C PASTORAL AND ATTENDANCE:** The SLT i/c (in-charge) must monitor attendance regularly through regular reports and line management meetings. They are also responsible for any pupil whose attendance falls below 71 percent. SLT must support the pupil and their family until their attendance increases.
- **PRINCIPAL:** If a child's attendance in the 71 percent and below category does not improve, the Principal will liaise with the SLT member of staff i/c Pastoral and Attendance and the GRE (Government Relations Executive) to consider whether the regulatory body needs to be contacted to raise any concerns about persistent absence from school.

Absence Procedures

If a pupil is absent a parent/carer must:

- Contact the School (see Page 3 - 4 above) as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- Send a note into School on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned the school.
 - Provide a doctor's note if they are ill for 3 days or more. If a pupil is absent we will:
 - Telephone/ Email parents/carers on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.
 - Contact parents/guardians every day thereafter if your child is still absent unless you have previously communicated a legitimate return date.
- Invite parents/guardians into the School to discuss the situation with our Phase Leader or SLT i/c of Attendance if absences persist.
 - For approved absence (medical, bereavement, unplanned travel) the Vice-Principal will determine the number of approved days of absence. Please note any absence beyond the 3-days absence (see illness reasons above for example) or the set agreed amount of time without a valid reason *may* be recorded as an unauthorized absence.

Student illness in school

- Students are not permitted to contact their parents/guardians directly to collect them from school if they feel unwell.
- In the event they do feel unwell, they must notify a member of staff and they will determine if the student should go to the Medical room to be examined by our Medical team.
- If the Medical team determine the student is unwell and unable to return to class, they will contact the parents/guardians directly and supervise the student until they are collected from Reception.

Student Registration

- Staff register pupils' attendance via *Phoenix Classrooms*.
- The first register of the day **must** be completed by 7.50am (Tutor Time) as the register is a legally binding document;
 - Registers must be taken every lesson thereafter, within the first 5 minutes of the lesson;
- In the event that *Phoenix Classrooms* is down, staff take a paper register which they return to their Phase Leader before 8.00am to then be recorded by the Phase Leader or Front of House when the software becomes available.
- Students who are late must register at reception on their way to lesson through our Social worker (07:45am – 09:00am). If a pupil arrives at your lesson and they haven't been registered on *Phoenix Classrooms* they must return to reception to be registered;
- In Primary, the form with the best attendance in each year group each week is awarded a **prize** (TBC by the Phase Leaders). The tutor group which wins **prize** the most number of times is rewarded at the end of term.
- Staff removing pupils from classes for other events must let the Phase Leader and other subject teachers (where relevant) know through a typed list in alphabetical order 24-hours in advance. Where circumstances occasionally mean a pupil is removed for an impromptu educational or wider well-being reason, the relevant staff will let the Phase Leader and other subject teachers (where relevant) know immediately to ensure the pupil receives a registration mark.

Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day they miss work and important information. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons and the learning of others. Detentions are set (Secondary) for persistent lateness and pupils who are late to lessons more than 5 minutes without a note or a valid excuse (Please see the **Behaviour for Learning Policy**).

How we manage lateness:

The Cambridge high School, ME 9, Shabia (Near Safer Mall), Mussafah, Mohammed Bin Zayed City, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Tel: (02) 552 1621 - Attendance & Punctuality Policy www.gemscis-abudhabi.com/en

- Form Time starts at 7.45am and we expect pupils to be lined up outside their class at 7.40am;
- The National Anthem will play at 8.00am. Registers will be taken before the national anthem. Late arriving pupils will be expected to report to the Social worker in reception, where a late mark will be recorded.

Our Social worker will oversee late arriving students from 07:45am – 09:00am, however Attendance will be expected to be finalised by 08:30am for Front of House to submit to the regulatory body by 09:30am so that Absence and Late SMS messages can be sent to parents/guardians.

- In FS2, KS1 and KS2 if a pupil is late, they will receive a LI (a documented warning). In Primary, the form with the best punctuality in each year group each week is awarded **prize** The tutor group which wins **prize** the most number of times is rewarded at the end of term. In KS3, 4 & 5 a pupil that is late less than 5 minutes will receive a LI (a documented warning). A pupil who is late more than 5 minutes will receive a 10-minute break time detention. Pupils will only be excused from the detention if a parent/ carer has contacted the School stating exceptional circumstances for being late and the School deems this as a valid reason. Pupils who take the bus cannot be marked late if the bus is late delivering them to School. In KS3, KS4 and KS5 if pupils are consistently (twice in a week) late to lessons less than 5 minutes they will receive a L2 on an accumulative basis (2 LIs= L2) and will, therefore, receive a 10-minute detention from their form tutor. If a pupil is late to lesson more than 5 minutes, then they will receive a L2 20-minute detention with their classroom teacher. If a pupil has an accumulation of persistent lateness parents will be asked to meet with the Phase Leader or SLT to resolve the problem. If you are having problems getting your child to the School on time, please contact your child's Tutor or Phase Leader.

Education off site

With regards to students attending Offsite events for educational purposes, it is the responsibility of the member of staff organizing the event to notify the concerned staff that the children will be absent for the period of time related to the event, ensure the children involved are reminded of their responsibility to catch-up on any work they will be missing and ensure the staff are recording this absence as **'E' – Educational Offsite Visit** on the registers and include a comment for what they are participating in.

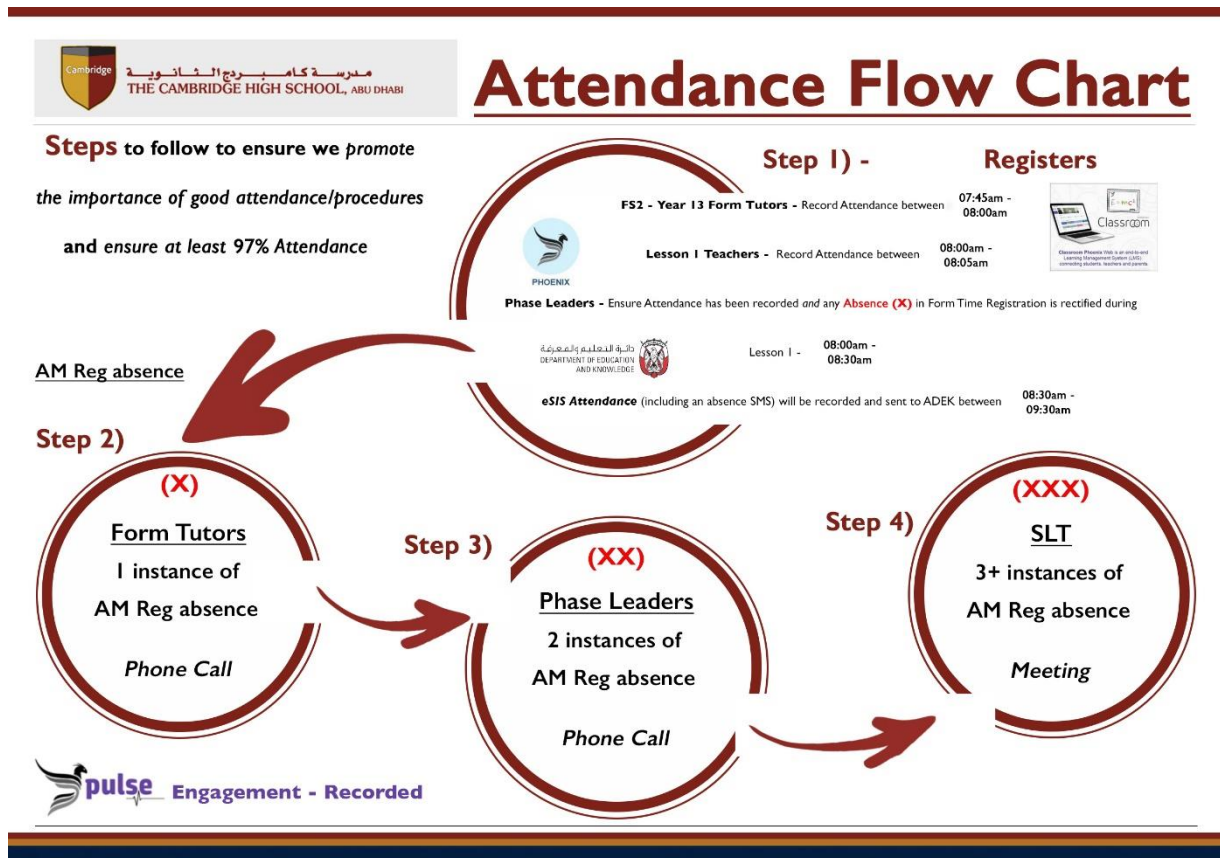
The data manager should also be copied into any correspondence regarding the above to ensure this is recorded on the registers for eSIS Attendance as well.

Holidays in Term Time

Taking holidays in term time will affect a pupil's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking their child away on holiday in School time. Remember that any savings made by taking a holiday in School's term time are offset by the cost to a child's education. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the School via the Vice-Principal Mrs. Kim Teakle-May (k.teaklemay_chs@gemsedu.com), or in excess of that agreed amount of time, will be classed as unauthorised. If a parent would like to request that their child takes a leave of absence during term time they must put the request in writing to the Vice-Principal (see email address above) who will inform them whether or not the leave of absence is granted.

Please note authorised absence from school during term time will not mean any reduction in school fees being afforded to parents / guardians if permission is granted.

RESPONSIBILITIES (timings due to be updated as a result of the change to the school day/week)



ADEK Policy on Attendance & Punctuality

Attendance is at least 98%. Students are punctual to school and lessons.

Levels of attendance are at least 98%. Students are punctual in arriving at school and for lessons throughout the school day. Students are aware of the need for good attendance, recognising the link between their attendance and achievement.

The school's approach is highly successful in promoting outstanding attendance and punctuality

The school keeps accurate records of attendance and punctuality. Systems for managing attendance and punctuality, including follow up of unauthorised absences and lateness, are exceptionally efficient and effective. Prompt and decisive action is taken when levels fall, and parents fully support the importance of maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality. Parents are contacted immediately when students fail to arrive when expected.

- *Students are expected to attend School on every school day as specified in the School calendar;*
 - *Teachers shall maintain a record of attendance by students for every lesson;*
- *Schools will maintain accurate daily attendance data for each student, including timely or late arrival to School;*
- *Parents / Guardians will make every effort to ensure that their children attend School every school day and arrive on time;*
- *If students need to be absent from School for a particular day, Parents/Guardians must inform the School accordingly;*
 - *When a student returns to School following an absence, Parents/Guardians must send a signed note to the School indicating the reason for the student's absence;*
 - *Students are responsible for completing all assignments missed during their absence;*
 - *Parents/Guardians should seek to ensure that family vacations take place during scheduled School holidays.*

All School staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure high levels of attendance and punctuality.

There will be an annual review of this policy by the SLT i/c of Attendance, Inclusion & Pastoral, along with the rest of the Senior Leadership and Pastoral Team to ensure the best possible support and measures are in place to ensure these high levels are maintained.