

EYFS and Primary Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Purpose and Rationale

Gulf English School recognises that regular attendance and good punctuality are essential for children's learning, wellbeing, safeguarding and long-term academic success. This policy sets out clear expectations and procedures for attendance and punctuality in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Primary Phase (Years 1–6).

The policy is informed by:

- The Department for Education (DfE) guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (England)
- The EYFS Statutory Framework (England)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Ministry of Education (MOE) regulations in Kuwait

The school is committed to working in partnership with parents to ensure that every child attends school regularly, arrives on time and benefits fully from their education.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote excellent attendance and punctuality across EYFS and Primary.
- Ensure safeguarding by knowing the whereabouts of every child at all times.
- Provide clear procedures that are consistent with MOE regulations.
- Support families early where attendance or punctuality becomes a concern.
- Reduce levels of unauthorised absence and persistent lateness.

Legal and Safeguarding Context

Regular attendance is a key safeguarding responsibility. Unexplained or persistent absence may indicate that a child is at risk and will be followed up promptly.

This policy aligns with UK safeguarding expectations set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, which states that schools must monitor attendance carefully and respond quickly to unexplained absences.

Definitions

Attendance: The extent to which a pupil is present in school and in lessons.

Punctuality: Arriving at school and lessons on time.

Authorised Absence: An absence approved by the school, normally supported by appropriate documentation (e.g. medical sick note).

Unauthorised Absence: An absence without required documentation, in line with MOE

regulations.

Persistent Absence: Attendance below 90% over a monitoring period.

Expectations and Responsibilities

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- Inform the school on the first day of any absence and provide the reason.
- Provide medical documentation when their child is absent due to illness.
- Avoid arranging holidays, appointments or travel during term time wherever possible.
- Work in partnership with the school to address any attendance or punctuality concerns.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day unless genuinely unwell or in exceptional circumstances.
- Arrive on time, ready to learn and appropriately prepared.

School

The school will:

- Maintain accurate daily attendance registers.
- Monitor attendance and punctuality closely.
- Follow up unexplained absences promptly.
- Apply MOE attendance procedures fairly and consistently.
- Offer support and early intervention where concerns arise.

School Start Time and Punctuality

- The school day for EYFS and Primary begins at 7.20am.
- All children are expected to be in school and ready for registration by this time.

Children arriving after 7.45am will be recorded as late.

Persistent lateness disrupts learning and will be monitored. Where lateness becomes a concern, parents may be contacted and meetings arranged to support improvement.

Absence Reporting Procedures

- Parents must notify the school on the first day of absence via email or Class Dojo.
- The reason for absence must be clearly stated.
- Medical documentation may be requested for frequent or prolonged illness.

Failure to inform the school of a child's absence may be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Attendance Arrangements

The attendance procedures for EYFS and Primary pupils are the same in terms of recording and classification of absences. The only difference is that EYFS pupils are exempt from the formal MOE attendance warning system.

Recording of Absences

- All absences must be explained by parents or carers.
- All absences are recorded on the school register and will appear on school reports.

Medical Absences

- A medical sick note must be provided for an absence to be recorded as an authorised absence (absence with excuse).
- If no sick note is provided, the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, even if a reason has been given, in line with MOE directives.

Ministry of Education Attendance Warning System

The Primary Department follows the official MOE attendance framework for unauthorised absences. EYFS pupils are exempt from the warning system. The system as per directives from the MOE are as follows:

- After 3 days of unauthorised absence: Verbal warning to parent
- After 6 days: First written warning
- After 12 days: Second written warning
- After 18 days: Third written warning and parent may be required to attend school to sign acknowledgement
- After 24 days: Fourth written warning and parent may be required to attend school to sign acknowledgement
- After 30 days: Fifth warning – further action may be taken in accordance with MOE regulations, including possible legal procedures

The MOE directives also state that all absences should be considered unauthorised unless a sick note is presented. The school will keep clear records of all warnings and communications.

Planned Leave During Term Time

- Parents are strongly discouraged from taking children out of school during term time.
- Requests for planned absence must be submitted in writing in advance.
- Any absence where a sick note is not provided will be recorded as an unauthorised absence in line with MOE guidance though as a school we may show understanding for the need for absence.

Monitoring and Early Intervention

Attendance and punctuality are monitored regularly by class teachers and senior leaders.

Where concerns arise, the school may:

- Contact parents to discuss attendance or lateness
- Arrange meetings to agree support strategies
- Refer to safeguarding or inclusion teams where appropriate
- Persistent absence may lead to meetings and attendance support plans to improve attendance.

Early support is prioritised in line with DfE guidance on improving attendance through partnership with families.

Rewards and Recognition

The school may recognise and celebrate:

- Excellent attendance
- Improved attendance
- Consistent punctuality

This may include certificates, class rewards or public recognition.

Safeguarding

Unexplained absences are treated as a safeguarding concern. The school will:

- Follow up promptly on any unexplained absence
- Escalate concerns in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Record concerns appropriately on the school's safeguarding system

Equal Opportunities

The school recognises that some children may face barriers to regular attendance. Attendance

procedures will be applied fairly and sensitively, in line with the school's Inclusion and SEND policies.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains compliant with MOE regulations and aligned with UK statutory guidance and safeguarding expectations.