



**Attendance & Punctuality Policy**

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| **Approved by:** | **Ma’am Dolly Goraiwala** | **Date of approval: August 2022** |
| **Last reviewed on:** | June 2021 | |
| **Next review due by:** | June 2023 | |

**The Aim of this Policy**

Star International School, Al Twar aims to meet its obligations with regard to school attendance by:

* Promoting good attendance and reducing absences, including persistent absences,
* Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled,
* Acting early to address patterns of absence.

We believe that success in learning is strongly linked to regular attendance and appropriate participation in lessons and therefore we hold attendance and punctuality in extremely high regard. We will also support parents in performing their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

**Consultation:**

This policy was written by the Heads of School in consultation with all members of SLT.

**Monitoring and evaluation:**

All members of staff are responsible for using this policy to embed effective practice across the primary and secondary phases. Any issues or concerns arising from this policy should be brought to the attention of SLT.

# Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the KHDA and the Ministry of Education of the UAE.

KHDA guidelines for attendance are as follows:

* 98% excellent,
* 96% good,
* 92% satisfactory,
* Less than 92% unsatisfactory.

Any request for leave will be considered on an individual basis. Absences may be authorised in the following cases:

* Absence due to sickness, which may need to be supported with a medical certificate,
* Absence for one or two consecutive days, up to a maximum of seven days during an academic year, for which prior permission has been sought,
* Family emergency or death of a relative,
* Unavoidable travel abroad.

Student attendance is deemed unacceptable if the student is absent from school for no reason, or for an unacceptable reason for 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days.

**School 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,
* Be responsible for carrying 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 or provide the school with at least 24 hours’ notice,
* Endeavour to keep holidays out of term time,
* Inform the Attendance Officer of any reason or problem that may hinder their child from attending school,
* Work with the school to resolve issues where possible and ensure good attendance and punctuality,
* Ensure their child is punctual to school,
* Contact the school, either by email or telephone to the Attendance Officer by 07:40 on the first morning of absence, whenever their child is unable to attend school,
* In the event of the student contracting an illness or suffering an injury that would make an absence of 3 days or more likely, parents should inform the school immediately, and subsequently keep the school informed on progress.

# School procedures

**Attendance register**

The attendance register will be taken by the Class Teacher or Form Tutor during the registration period each day. It will mark whether every pupil is:

* Present,
* Unauthorised absence,
* Late.

**The Attendance Officer will then be responsible for any amendments, including:**

* Authorised absence,
* Late,
* Informing the School Nurse of children who have been reported as being sick, so the School Nurse can contact the parents to obtain further medical information and provide medical guidance/assistance where required.

See Appendix 1 for attendance codes.

**FS and Primary Campus:**

**Pupils must arrive at school by 07:30 on each school day.**

**The register for the first session will be taken at 07:35 and will be kept open until 07:45. At 07:45 all class registers must be closed and admin will be fully responsible for all amendments required.**

**Secondary Campus:**

**Pupils must arrive at school by 07:40 on each school day.**

**Form Tutors will open the register at 07:45 and will close the register at 07:55 each morning. Any pupils who are not present in the classroom at this time will be marked using the unauthorised absence code. A pupil who arrives after 07:45 will be required to sign in with reception (Attendance Officer), who will amend their register code to late.**

**Unplanned absence**

An unplanned absence may be due to illness or a family emergency. In these circumstances, the parents must notify the school by calling reception and speaking with the Attendance Officer before 07:40 on the first day of the absence.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor’s note, prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

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# Planned absence

The principal will not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the principal’s discretion.

We encourage parents to make all appointments and travel arrangements outside of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary; parents must apply for leave in advance to the Principal in order for it to be reported as an authorised absence.

**Procedure for applying for planned authorised leave:**

* Applications must be made in writing by filling out the leave request form at reception,
* The principal will review each application individually,
* If the leave is authorized you will receive written notice of this,
* Students will be responsible for catching up on any work missed during their absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** may include:

* Medical/dental appointments - provide the school with at least 24-hours’ notice,
* Visa/Passport appointments.
* Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parents belong.
* Absence for one or two consecutive days, up to a maximum of seven days during an academic year, for which prior permission has been sought,
* Family emergency or death of a relative,
* Unavoidable travel abroad.

**Following up absence**

If a parent/guardian has failed to report an absence to the school, the Attendance Officer will follow up the absences with a phone call and/or email on the first day of absence. As the absence has not been authorised following the correct procedure, the absence will be reported as unauthorised.

**Persistent lateness will result in the following actions:**

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| **Frequency** | **Action** |
| **The student is late 3 times or more within a week** | **30-minute lunchtime ‘Reflection’**  **Email Home** |
| **3 or more ‘Reflections’ due to lateness in a half-term** | **Parents and students are to be called to a meeting with the Head of Pastoral.**  **Parents and students are to sign a written pledge not to repeat the offense.**  **Lateness is to be noted in students’ progress reports.** |
| **Continued punctuality issues** | **At the discretion of the school, the decision might include one or more of the following:**   * **Community hours at the school or beyond.** * **Students are not allowed to participate in whole school events, trips, and student leadership opportunities.** * **A written notice announcing the refusal to re-enrol the student in the school for the following academic year.** |

**Reporting to parents**

Any concerns with attendance will be reported to parents on a regular basis by the Attendance Officer, Class Teachers, Form Tuor through Isams.

Absences and lateness will be reported on the student’s mid-term and end-of-year school report as:

**Attendance:**

Outstanding - 100%

Very good - Less than 100% but more than 96%

Acceptable - 96%

Unacceptable - Less than 96%

**Punctuality:**

Outstanding - No days late

Very good - Between 1 -4 days late per term

Acceptable - 5 days off per term

Unacceptable - More than 5 days off per term

**Legal sanctions**

In line with the Ministry of Education Law, the school can refuse to re-register students with 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days of absence without authorised permission.

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# Strategies for promoting attendance

* **Consistent, clear communication with parents and pupils about the importance of regular, prompt, attendance,**
* **Setting targets for improved attendance and sharing these with Governors (BOG), parents, and pupils,**
* **The accurate completion of registers at the start of each morning and afternoon session,**
* **Attendance cup (given out in our monthly Star ‘celebration’ assembly),**
* **Certificates for 100% attendance will be awarded each year during the school’s Annual Awards Ceremony,**
* **Teachers being good role models,**
* **Reward trips.**

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# Roles and responsibilities

**The Governing Board (BOG):**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

**The Principal:**

The principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors. The principal also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

**The Attendance Officer:**

* Are expected to take calls from parents about absences and record them on the school system,
* Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level,
* Report concerns about attendance to the principal,
* Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.

**Class Teachers/Form Tutors:**

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the Attendance Officer.

# Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SLT. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board (BOG).

# Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our Safeguarding and Child Protection and Behaviour/Relationship Policies.

**Appendix 1: attendance codes**

The following codes are to be used on school attendance registers.

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| **Code** | **Definition** | **Scenario** |
| **P** | Present (am) | The student is present at the morning registration. |
| **L** | Late arrival | A student arrives late and misses the registration. |
| **AA** | Authorised absence | The student has been given prior authorisation to be absent. |
| **UA** | Unauthorised absence | The student is absent without prior authorisation. |
| **SL** | Sick Leave | Student has authorised absence due to sickness. |