

## **GEMS Cambridge International Private School Sharjah** **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

**Last Amendment:** August 2023

**Policy Review Date:** August 2024

### **Rationale:**

The Authorities require that students attend school for a minimum number of school days. **As per SPEA, 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 Cambridge International Private School Sharjah (GCS) 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. SPEA'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.

### **Leave approval**

- Parents should be aware that leave will be approved for the following reasons only (with valid evidence)
  - Medical leave of child (evidence – Medical leave certificate issued by a medical professional).
  - Bereavement of a close family member (evidence – Death Certificate)

- Umrah/Haj (evidence Visa or flight tickets)
  - Authority appointment (passport/visa etc.) (evidence – Appointment letter).
- Leave applications with this valid evidence will be approved by school on the system 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 and SPEA 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 Head of Year if a student has been absent for 3 days and parents have failed to contact school or answer email, or phone call requests. The HofY will then follow up.
- Alert the HOY regarding any concerns about absence and punctuality if action they have taken proves ineffective
- 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.

<b>Attendance percentage</b>	<b>UAE Framework judgement</b>
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 **Head of Year** will:

- 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 HOY will be looking for:
  - a) unauthorised absence
  - b) frequent short absences, particularly where a pattern emerges; e.g. every Thursday
  - c) Persistent lateness
- For students with persistent lateness/ absence the HOY 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 HOY 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/HOY/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

**Appendix A**  
**GCS Student – Mid-term Emergency Leave Application**  
**(For Leave applications of more than 4 days)**

Student Name	Class	ID	Leave from (date)	Return to school (date)
Reason for leave:				

Dear GCS Principal,  
 Due to an emergency/unavoidable reason, we request term time leave for our child/children as above, as a special case. **We understand that:**

- **Insufficient attendance is a disciplinary issue.** Leave during term time is only approved in special cases (e.g. medical reason, death in the family, Haj etc.) and needs to be supported with documentary evidence as per the school policy.
- **Missed term exams** (except with appropriate documentary evidence) will be give '0' towards the Term Report, which would therefore be a pass mark only. If the child has documentary evidence for missed exams, then a continuous assessment mark will be given on the Term Report. As per SPEA, **attendance of T3 promotional exams is compulsory.**
- **School will process this leave form subject to no pending school fees.**

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

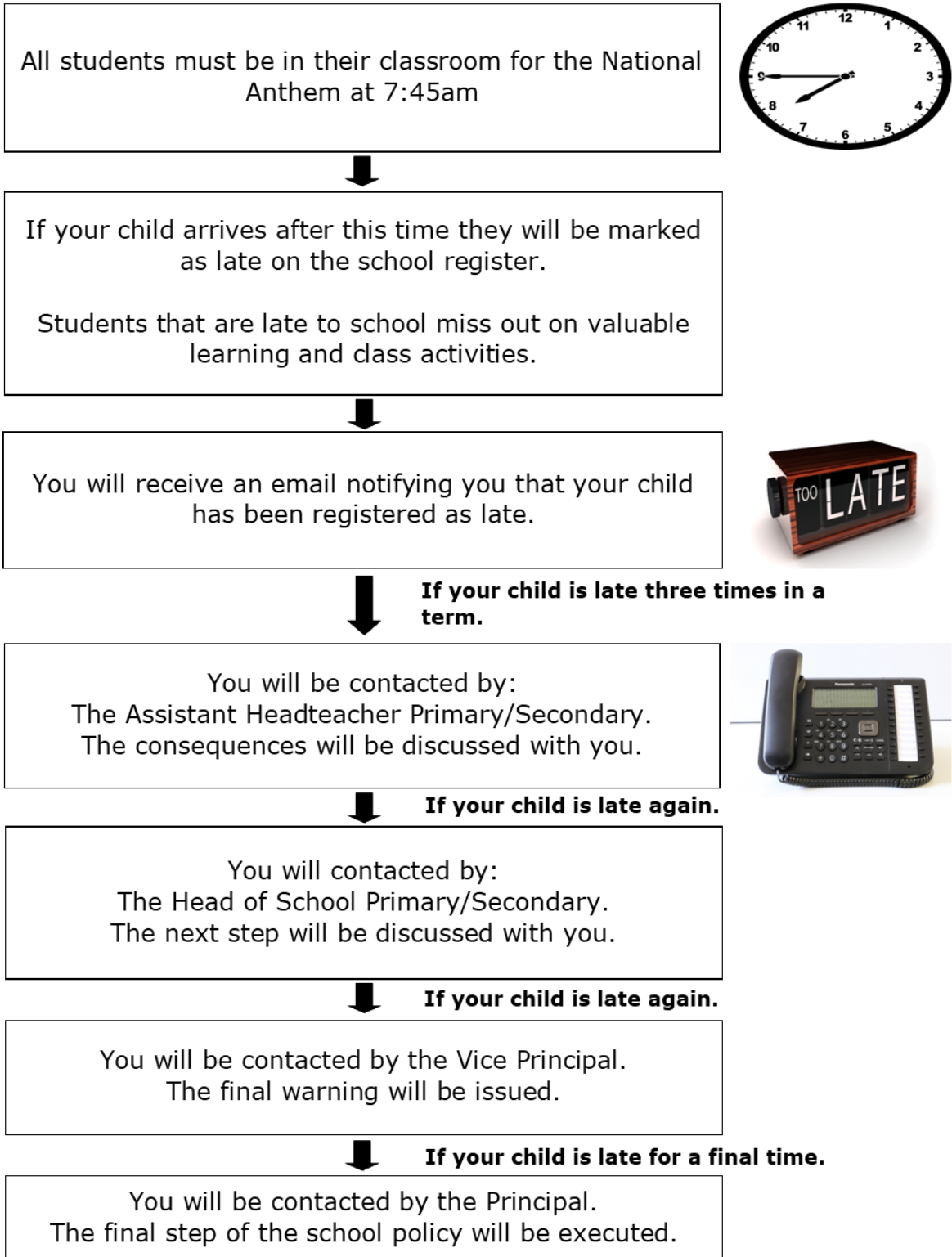
Parent contact details (in case of follow up): \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Cashier/Accounts Officer sign: (there are no pending fees)</b>	Date:
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✓	Principal comments:			
	<b>Leave is approved:</b> ○ Give continuous assessment mark for report grades.	<b>Leave is <u>not</u> approved</b> ○ Student to be given '0' marks for exams and pass grade (50%) for report grades.	To be failed in T3 SPEA and report data if continuous assessment grades are 'Fail'.	Inform SLT is absence continues beyond specified dates.
	Documentary evidence for absence attached.	No documentary evidence provided		
	Other evidence is attached.	Evidence attached is inadequate.		
Signature:				Date:

## Appendix B

### Attendance and Punctuality procedure—Morning



## Appendix C

### Attendance and Punctuality procedure—Afternoon

All students must be collected at 2:40pm.  
Students get very upset if their parent is not on time.  
Thank you for being on time!



If you do not collect your child on time, they will be moved to the late room.



Your child will be registered as being collected late and you will have to sign the relevant documentation when you collect them.



**If your child is collected late on three occasions in a term.**

You will be contacted by:  
The Assistant Headteacher Primary/Secondary.  
The consequences will be discussed with you.



**If your child is late again.**

You will be contacted by:  
The Head of School Primary/Secondary.  
The next step will be discussed with you.



**If your child is late again.**

You will be contacted by the Vice Principal.  
The final warning will be issued.



**If your child is late for a final time.**

You will be contacted by the Principal.  
The final step of the school policy will be executed.

