



مدرسة جيمس رويال دبي الخاصة  
GEMS Royal Dubai School

# ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

GRDS 2020-21

Review Date: February 2021  
Jenny Evans Assistant Principal



At GEMS Royal Dubai School we take the issue of children's attendance and punctuality extremely seriously. Evidence shows that both lateness and poor attendance have a detrimental effect on a child's educational attainment and life chances. It may also make it more difficult for them to make firm social bonds with other children. The odd day off here and there soon mounts up, as does late arrival resulting in missing lesson time in a morning, and these have a significant impact on learning. The National Foundation for Educational Research in the UK ([www.nfer.ac.uk](http://www.nfer.ac.uk)) has shown that there is a significant association between absence and attainment and that there is also evidence that there may be critical thresholds of absence linked to significantly lower performance outcomes. Furthermore, this is supported and endorsed by the KHDA. The Parent School Contract states that parents have a responsibility for 'promoting their child's attendance' and that continued 'absenteeism will result in disciplinary measures and will affect the student's chances of enrolment for the upcoming academic year.'

The Ministry of Education for the UAE also states that 'if a student is absent from school for 20 consecutive days or 25 nonconsecutive days' the school can remove the child's place. Additionally, Dr Malak Zaalouk, Unicef's regional education adviser, said that pursuing an education is the right of every child and this is supported by His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

The DSIB guidelines for attendance are as follows:

Attendance %	DSIB guideline
≤ 98%	Outstanding
96 – 97%	Very Good
94 – 95%	Good
92 – 93%	Acceptable
90 – 91%	Weak
≥ 90%	Very Weak

Therefore, all parents should ensure that their child is at school on time every day of the school year except for during a period of illness. The reason for an absence must always be communicated to the school. If a child is sick, parents should email their child's class teacher, reception and the clinic team to explain the absence. After 48 hours absence a sick note is required from the doctor.

Absences of more than 48 hours without the support of a sick note will be marked as unauthorized. The Principal cannot authorize absences other than for medical reasons.

**Covid-19: If you child displays any symptoms related to Covid-19, has been identified as a close contact with a Covid-19 positive case, or has just returned from overseas travel they must follow the DHA mandatory 14 days quarantine period. For further information, see the DHA guidance documents.**

It is the Class Teachers professional responsibility to accurately record daily attendance by filling in the electronic register at the beginning of each day by 7:50am for KS2, 8:15am for KS1 and 8:45am for Foundation Stage. The register must then be saved and closed.



The following mark scheme should be followed:

<b>Phoenix Classroom Attendance Code</b>	<b>Code Explanation</b>
<b>Present</b>	Child is physically present in school
<b>Absent</b>	Child is not in school nor engaging in remote learning (no known reason for absence)
<b>Digital Learning</b>	Child is engaging in remote learning
<b>Excluded</b>	Child is excluded from school
<b>Late</b>	Child arrived to school after the registers were closed (see times stated above)
<b>Illness</b>	Child has approved medical leave/parent has informed us that their child is sick *
<b>Approved Leave</b>	Child is absent from school and/or remote learning with approval from the Principal
<b>Time Away From School</b>	Child has an approved reason (unrelated to illness) not to be engaging in learning *

\*If a message is received from the parent to say child is sick – mark as ‘illness’. This applies for two days.

\*If the child is still away after two days but no sick note is received – mark as absent. The Class Teacher must then email parent to remind them that a doctor’s note is required.

\*If there is a message from parents that the child will be away for any other reason – mark as ‘time away from school’. Teacher/FOH writes comment in remarks box.

If this procedure and the timings are not adhered to by the Class Teacher then Front of House staff should inform the Year Group Leader and the SLT line leader as a follow up SMS and/or phone call will be made and will result in incorrect information being transmitted to parents.

If KS2 children arrive between 7:45 and 8:00am:

- Children sign in at reception and take a yellow “signed in” slip with them up to class. The child is not late but this additional layer ensures both reception and the class teacher are monitoring children who are present.

If children arrive late:

- Children sign in at reception and are issued with a green late card to show the class teacher.
- Children arriving late in class without a late slip will be sent back to Reception to sign in and collect one. The receptionists will then update the register.

FoH monitoring attendance:

- Registers are updated as parents ring in with sickness information. All emails received from parents explaining reasons for absence MUST be forwarded to Front of House staff and the clinic team in case of illness.
- Front of House staff ring the parents of absent children and update the registers.
- Any pertinent information about the reason for absence should be communicated to the Class Teacher and clinic if relevant.
- Class Teachers should be vigilant with regard to poor attendance and/or punctuality and follow up with parents to discuss concerns where necessary.



- The bus registers for buses arriving after the close of class registers will be passed to Front of House staff for them to update the school attendance register.

**Punctuality:**

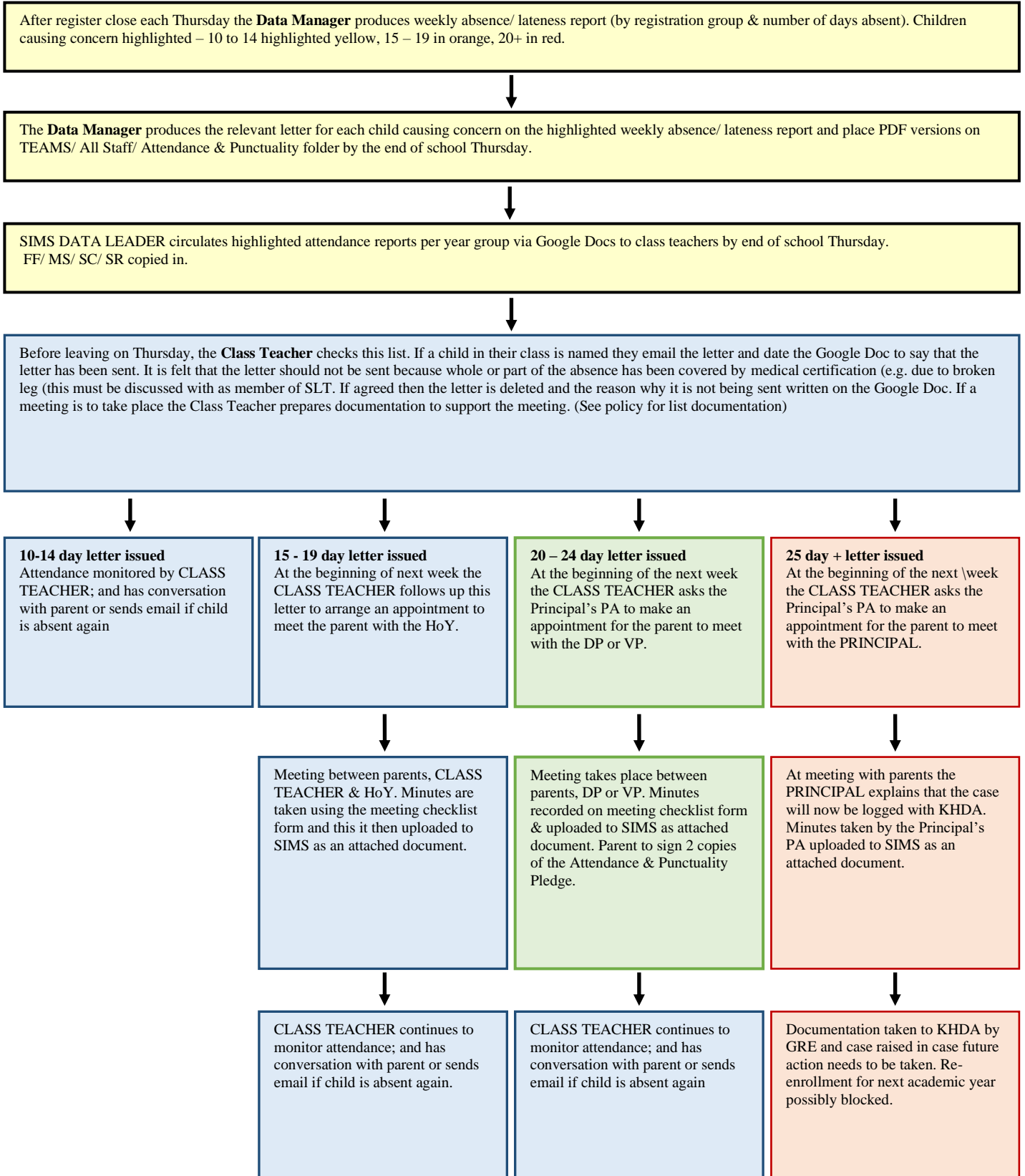
Children need to be at school in order to enter the school through the designated area or to access the Foundation Stage/Year 1 learning areas. The FS and Year 1 doors will be open from 7:30am for sibling drop off and children in Year 2 to 6 will enter school building via their designated drop off points.

Children arriving to school after 7:50am (KS2), 8:15am (KS1) and 8:45am (FS) should enter by the main school gate and register at the Front Desk before going to class. Children in FS should be escorted to class by the parent/carer in accordance with the school's 'No Child Alone' policy. Bus children who are late will be escorted to FS and KS1 by the bus conductor.



Episodes of persistent lateness and absence should be managed up as follows:

### Procedure for Managing Pupil Absence and Lateness at GRDS





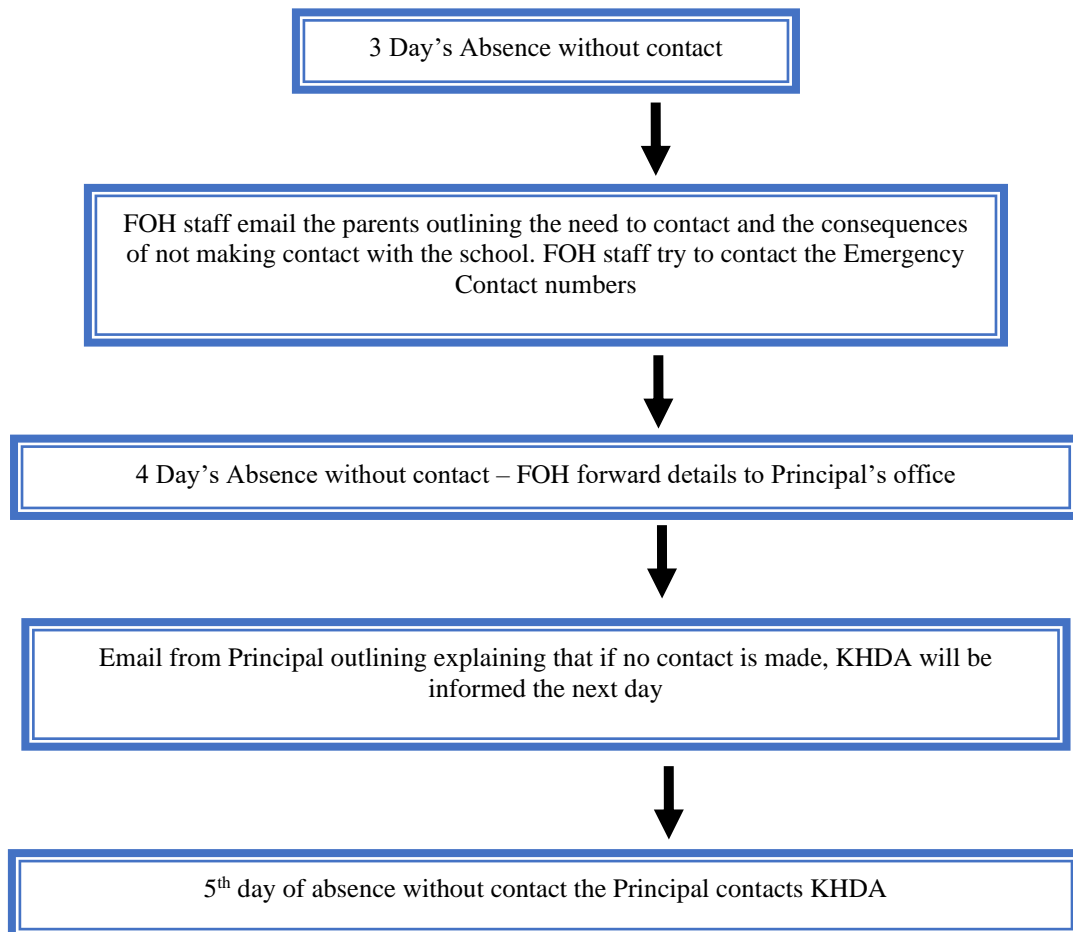
The KHDA clarified that a child missing more than 25% of the academic year (43 days) would not be automatically promoted to the next academic year. Principal writes every 5 days after the 25 day.

When this procedure is followed it is imperative that records are kept of all communications so that if a case needs to be escalated to the KHDA there is an evidence trail of what the school has done to encourage punctuality and attendance. This documentation includes emails, meeting notes and signed pledges which should also be made available, along with the attendance record from SIMS, whenever a meeting takes place. Such documentation should also be uploaded to the child's SIMS record for future reference. (Copies of the Meeting record sheet and the pledge are in TEAMS/All Staff/Attendance and Punctuality).

#### 5 Day Absence without Contact

When children are absent from school for 5 days or more without contact with the parents, the following procedure should be followed. It is the responsibility of the reception staff, in conjunction with the class teacher, to ensure that records are kept and cross check that contact has not been made.

On the 5th day of absence, the Principal is required to email KHDA to inform them that parents have not made the school aware of the reason for absence. KHDA will contact the parents directly and Child Protection may be contacted.





### **Children leaving school early:**

If parents collect their children early from school they must fill in an exit pass at reception before their child will be collected from the classroom by a member of admin staff. The teacher will sign the exit pass as the child is collected. As the child is handed over to the parent by the reception team, parents will be given an exit slip to hand to the guard on leaving the premises. If the child normally uses the bus, STS are informed that the child has gone home. Details of children going home early are recorded in the Exit Log, kept at the front desk, before being transferred to the Phoenix register. This register is then analysed at the end of each month by the Front of House team and any child regularly missing time will be noted and parents requested to attend a meeting with a member of SLT.

### **Late Pickups**

Children not collected 10 minutes after the designated pick up time will be escorted to the late room where the Late Room Protocol will be followed:

- There will be two members of staff on duty.
- Children who have not been collected by the designated time are handed over to the Late Room staff. The teacher/TA handing over must write the child's name and class on a post-it which the Late Room staff members then post on the door.
- When a child is collected by the parent/carer the post-it is removed from the door.
- If children remain at school after 3.00pm Sun-Wed and 1.45pm Thurs, they will be escorted to reception and handed over to Front of House staff with the remaining post-its so that names of these children can be entered into the late register log. Front of House staff will contact parents. A member of SLT will then supervise the child until collected and will ask the parent the reason for the child being collected late, remind them of the pickup time and ask the parent/carer to sign and write the time of collection.
- Parents cannot collect their children while they are being escorted from the Late Room.

**If children still remain after 12:45 (FS1) or after 3:30pm (FS2-Y6) from Sunday to Wednesday, the police may be phoned at the Principal's discretion (see below). If children remain after 12:45 (FS1) or after 2pm (FS2-Y6) on a Thursday, the police may be phoned.**

**If children still remain after 4.45pm, the police may be phoned (see below).**

- The Late Room register will be analysed at the end of each month by the Front of House team and a member of SLT will contact those parents who are persistently late picking up after school and clubs (3 occasions or more per month). SLT will outline that if pick-up does not improve they will be asked to meet with the Principal and he may report them to the Police.
- This will be reviewed a month later by the Principal and if required a formal meeting held and actions outlined which may include referral to Dubai Police as below.

**Dubai Police - childcare**

Lt Ali Al Shahi – 050 655 9994

Capt Mohamed Al Olaiqi – 050 595 1612



**Review date:** June 2021 or earlier if Covid-19 measures come to an end.

**Addendum: Travel during term time**

There may be times when a family needs to travel for a short or an extended period during term times within the academic school year, 2020/2021. In the current COVID-19 context in which RDS offers the options of face to face or remote learning as long as the student is engaging in their learning each day remotely their attendance will be registered as a remote learner for the duration of their time away from the school site. On days where there is no engagement with learning the student will be recorded as absent.

The option of remote learning is subject to change and is reviewed each half term and/or in line with any changes announced by the local regulators, including KHDA and MOE. We cannot guarantee that the remote option will be available for each term of the academic year. If a student was unable to present themselves at school should remote learning no longer be an option this would be recorded as unauthorized absence and impact on attendance records for the student.