مدرستنا الثانوية الإنجليزية ، الشارقة - بنات
Our Own English High School, Sharjah-Girls

GEMS EDUCATION

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Rationale:

Our Own English High School, Sharjah (Girls)-OOS believes that regular attendance is an essential pre-requisite of effective schooling. Students need to develop and maintain good habits of regular attendance and punctuality if they are to make the most of their time at our school.

The minimum expected attendance is 95% as attendance of less than 95% has been shown to compromise student attainment. If days are regularly missed, then continuity of learning and progress are significantly hampered as pupils find it difficult to catch up with missed work.

SPEA's commitment to good attendance as outlined in the Parent-School Contract has been taken into account in drawing up this policy.

Aims:

The aims of the OOS attendance and punctuality policy are:

- To encourage prompt arrival at school
- To encourage regular attendance
- To ensure that routines are in place for monitoring attendance and for early identification of any difficulties

Roles and Responsibilities:

The responsibility for raising and promoting attendance is shared by parents, students and by all school staff.

By co-operating and working together we can improve attendance and this in turn will raise achievement. All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality.

Parents are responsible for:

- Making every effort to ensure that their child attends school every day and arrives on time.
- Informing the school on the first day of an absence if their child is unable to attend school
- Providing the school with a valid reason for all absences.
- Scheduling family vacations to coincide with scheduled school breaks.
- Helping students to understand the importance of going to school and showing disapproval of missing school.
- Making all appointments outside of school time e.g. dentist / doctor. In the event of this not being possible, parents are asked to inform the school of the appointment prior to the appointment date. The school may request to see an appointment card.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Marking the attendance every morning by 7:45 a.m.
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by pupils and their parents.
- Informing the line manager where there are concerns and acting upon them.
- Organizing an individual student monitoring and reward system for target students with poor attendance.
- Emphasising with students the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Discussing attendance issues at parent/teacher conferences when necessary.
- Setting an example by arriving promptly to lessons.

Principal / Head of School or delegated senior staff, are responsible for:

- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Overall monitoring of school attendance.
- Overall preparation and implementation of the attendance policy.
- Processing holiday requests.
- Promotion of importance of attendance during assemblies and publications.

Managing Attendance:

Strategies for maximising attendance

- Individual certificates will be presented termly to students who have achieved 100% attendance that term.
- Attendance and punctuality will be promoted through assemblies and in monthly newsletters.
- If a child's attendance level drops below 90%, a warning letter will be sent to parents.
- If a child's attendance level drops below 85% parents will be asked to attend a meeting with a senior member of staff.
- If a child's attendance drops below 80%, they are at risk of not being promoted at the end of the academic year or may not be re-enrolled in the school

Parents should be aware that absence can only be accepted for the following reasons:

- Sickness which should be proved by a medical certificate (if after 2 days)
- Close family bereavement up to a maximum of 5 days
- Official meeting / business out of school which must be proven by a letter from the official body

Parents should be aware that it is unacceptable to take pupils out of school for the following reasons:

- Because it is their birthday
- To buy new shoes / clothing
- To visit a relative
- To entertain visiting relatives and friends
- To leave school early to travel for the weekend
- Other non-essential reasons

The following action will be taken by the school for non-attendance:

- If no explanation of absence is provided by 8.00 a.m., then a phone call will be made to ascertain the reason for the absence. If there is no reply, then a letter to request an explanation will be sent.
- Students whose attendance falls below 90% in a given half term with no justifiable reason, will receive a warning letter.
- If attendance does not improve, then a meeting will be arranged with a senior member of staff.
- Pupils with frequent "odd days" off from school will have their attendance patterns carefully monitored.
- Pupils who are absent from school for a prolonged period without good reason (more than one week) will have their situation investigated.
- 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 or not promoted to the next grade level.
- Parents considering taking their child out of school during term time should complete online application. The application does not, in itself, guarantee that the request will be authorized.
- As part of their application parents will be expected to demonstrate a willingness to make arrangements that cause least disruption to their children's learning.
- The leave approving person will consider each individual application considering:
    - The student's current absence record
    - The number of previous similar requests
    - The year group the student is in
    - Proximity to major assessments
- The Head of School is within her rights to turn applications down. Such a decision will have been made in the best interests of the student's educational progress and attainment and with due regard to their previous attendance record. In such a case, the absence will be marked as 'unauthorized'.

- Parents taking their children out of school during term time without the Head of School's authorization not only damage their children's educational opportunities but also risk of losing the children's place at the school.

Punctuality

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they not only miss learning time but also the direct teaching that occurs at the start of the day. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons and entering the class once the lesson has started can be embarrassing for the child.

- Students must be present in the school campus before the commencement of the Assembly. Attendance at the Assembly is mandatory.
- All students have to be present on the first and last working day of each Term.
- Irregularity in attendance will be viewed seriously and could result in detention. If a student's frequent absence is found to be wilful or is not supported by a note of absence from the parent/guardian this would be reported to SPEA for the necessary action.

Leave and Absence

- Late comers will not be admitted to the class without the written permission of the Supervisor.
- Prolonged absence on medical grounds should be supported by a Medical Certificate.
- Prior sanction must be sought from the teacher(1-5days)/ Supervisor (6-15 days)/ Principal (16-30 days) through the online leave application in GEMS Parent Portal.
- Students suffering from contagious or infectious diseases must refrain from attending school until the completion of the quarantine period. They will not be permitted to attend school until they produce a Medical Certificate of clearance.
- Fees for the current month and the leave period must be paid before proceeding on leave.

Please note the Students Leave Policy as per MOE directives:

Article 18: Absence is considered 'excused' in the following cases:

- Illness that is documented by a doctor's report certified by official medical authorities
- Travel outside the UAE for the purpose of accompanying a relative of first degree relation during medical treatment under condition of proof [via an official accredited document] for a period not exceeding one month [30 days] during the academic year. Evidence of being outside the country must be testified by the UAE's embassy in that country.
- Death of a relative for a maximum period of 3 days
- Absence for a period of 1 or 2 consecutive days up to a maximum of 5 days during an academic year for reasons accepted by the school administration