



# **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

September 2022

## Introduction

Every opportunity at Royal Grammar School Guildford Dubai is a learning opportunity, from the first step taken into school each morning and beyond. Parents and all staff at RGSGD must work in partnership to ensure that children (unless ill) are present and on time to experience, have fun and thrive every aspect of school life. At RGSGD it is our expectation that children attend all school days throughout the year, and we will work with parents to ensure their full understanding and support of this

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 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

The Ministry of Education for the UAE also states that 'if a student is absent from school for 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive 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.

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.

## What parents need to do if a child is sick?

- Illness: If a child is sick, parents should email the absence team at [absent@rgsgd.com](mailto:absent@rgsgd.com) and copy in their child's class teacher, 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.
- If a child is absent from school, and we have had no indication of the reason, we contact a parent via telephone, to ascertain the reason for their child's absence.

\*Covid-19: If your child displays any symptoms related to Covid-19, must follow the DHA quarantine period. For further information, see the DHA guidance documents.

The Principal cannot authorize absences other than for medical reasons.

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. The register must then be saved and closed.

The following attendance codes should be followed:

iSAMs Attendance Codes	Code Explanation
N	No Reason Yet Provided For Absence [N]
I	Illness with approved note*
M	Medical/dental appointment
G	Family Holiday (Not agreed)
L	Illness with no approved note
B	New student enrolment but not started
Q	COVID close contact- isolation/absent (Office to mark OOS)
V	Educational visit or trip (Office to mark OOS)

\*If a message is received from the parent to say child is sick – mark as 'illnesses'. 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 – this will be marked as 'time away from school'. The teacher and or the absence team will need to ensure there is a comment with details.

## Punctuality

William Shakespeare famously said, "Better three hours soon than a minute late". Thus implying that one would rather be early and wait than be late. The importance of punctuality, if taught to children at a young age, will help them in the long run. From self-confidence to better preparedness in the academics.

All children should enter the school at the designated drop off points at the designated times as set out below:

Year Group	Early Bird Timing: Must be pre-booked via SOCS	School timings
EYFS	7:00am to 7:30am	7:30am – 7:50am

Years 1 and 2	7:00am to 7:30am	7:30am – 7:50am
Years 3 and 4	7:00am to 7:30am	7:30am – 7:50am
Years 5 and 6	7:00am to 7:30am	7:30am – 7:50am
Year 7	7:00am to 7:30am	7:30am – 7:50am

All gates will be closed at 7:50am following the National Anthem and children arriving after this time will be marked as late.

If a child is persistently late (10 or more occasions) the parents will be contacted by the class teacher. If lateness continues then the parents will be invited to meet with the Assistant Head Teacher or Deputy Head for the phase.

Children arriving to school after 7:50am should enter by the main school gate and register at the main reception before going to class. Children in EYFS and Key Stage 1 will be escorted to class by our designated carers.

If KS2 or KS3 children arrive after 7:50am they will be marked in by the main reception and reminded about where their class is.

- Children sign in at reception and take a yellow “signed in” slip with them to class and give this to their class/subject teacher. The additional layer ensures both reception and the class teacher are monitoring children who are present.

#### **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 the teacher, absence team and the clinic team in case of illness. ([absent@rgsgd.com](mailto:absent@rgsgd.com) and [clinic@rgsgd.com](mailto:clinic@rgsgd.com))
- The absence team will ring the parents of absent children and update the registers.
- Any pertinent information about the reason for absence should be communicated clearly.
- Class Teachers or Tutors will 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 the absence team for them to update the school attendance register.

#### **Procedure for Managing Pupil Absence and Lateness at RGSGD**

Episodes of persistent lateness and absence will be managed as follows:

When this procedure is followed records will be 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 iSAMS, whenever a meeting takes place. Such documentation should also be uploaded to the child’s iSAMS record for future reference. (Copies of the Meeting record sheet and the pledge are in TEAMS - 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 or Tutor, to ensure that records are kept and cross check that contact has not been made.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> day of absence, the Assistant Head of section will inform the Principal who 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, the bus company must be 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 reception staff 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 designated after school care room for the child's phase.

**If children still remain after 5:00pm, and we are not able to contact the parents or carer the police may be phoned (see below).**

**Review date:** August 2023

### **Letters examples**

To the parents of

10 DAYS ABSENCE.

At Royal Grammar School Guildford Dubai, we do our utmost to ensure children in our care are given every opportunity to succeed.

Good attendance habits start at an early age. At RGSGD we ask for your support to ensure your child goes to school regularly and on time. This helps them develop a positive view of school and the importance of attendance.

Your child has been recorded as having had ten or more days absent this academic year. We understand that there are times when such absences are unavoidable. However, as a school we also have a responsibility to work closely with families to ensure that children's attendance is as close to 100% as possible. The school attendance records are monitored annually during the KHDA inspection.

We would be extremely grateful if you could ensure that xxxxx attends as regularly as possible from now on and we are here to support this if you need a meeting.

Please note that 15 days' absence in a year may trigger a meeting with xxxx (Class Teacher) and or xxxx (Head of Year x).

Thank you, as always, for your understanding and support in this matter. If you have any further queries, please contact your child's teacher directly.

Kind Regards

Absence team

To the parents of

15 DAYS ABSENCE.

At Royal Grammar School Guildford Dubai, we do our utmost to ensure children in our care are given every opportunity to succeed.

Good attendance habits start at an early age. At RGSGD we ask for your support to ensure your child goes to school regularly and on time. This helps them develop a positive view of school and the importance of attendance.

Evidence shows that poor attendance has 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.

Furthermore, we are supported in this 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.'

Xxxx (name of child) has been recorded as having had fifteen or more days absent this academic year. We understand that there are times when such absences are unavoidable. However, as a school we also have a responsibility to work closely with families to ensure that children's attendance is as close to 100% as possible.

Because of our concerns about xxxx attendance we will contact you at the start of next week to arrange a meeting to discuss the situation with myself and xxxxxx (Class Teacher).

It is extremely important that you attend this meeting and also ensure that Xxxx (name of child) attends as regularly as possible from now on.

Kind Regards

XXXX

Assistant Head Teacher or Year 7 Progress Lead

To the parents of

20 DAYS ABSENCE.

At Royal Grammar School Guildford Dubai, we take the issue of children's attendance extremely seriously. Evidence shows that poor attendance has 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.

Furthermore, we are supported in this 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.'

Xxxx (name of child) has been recorded as having had twenty or more days absent this academic year. We understand that there are times when such absences are unavoidable. However, as a school we also have a responsibility to work closely with families to ensure that children's attendance is as close to 100% as possible.

Because of our concerns about Xxxx (name of child) attendance I would like to arrange a meeting to discuss this situation.

It is extremely important that you attend this meeting and also ensure that Xxxx (name of child) attends as regularly as possible from now on.

Kind Regards

XXXXX

Deputy Head of Prep or Deputy Head Senior

To the parents of

## 25 DAYS ABSENCE

At Royal Grammar School Guildford Dubai, we take the issue of children's attendance extremely seriously. Evidence shows that poor attendance has 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.

Furthermore, we are supported in this 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.'

Your child has been recorded as having had 25 or more days when they have been absent from school. As this is now having a direct impact on the progress of your child's learning it has been raised as a concern.

I am contacting you because of our concerns about xxxx attendance would like to arrange a meeting with me to discuss this situation.

We understand that there are times when such absences are unavoidable, however as a school we also have a responsibility to work closely with families to ensure that children's attendance is as close to 100% as possible.

It is extremely important that you attend this meeting and also ensure that xxxxxx attends as regularly as possible from now on.

Kind Regards

Principal