



## Policy: Attendance and lateness

### Academic Year 2022 - 23

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Written By:	SLT
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**Vision:** To be a welcoming and diverse international school that nurtures students to acquire, articulate and establish the necessary skills and knowledge to become a citizen in a global environment.

**Mission:** To create an inclusive environment of responsibility, respect and tolerance, based on Qatari values, for all members of the school community. To deliver an in-depth consistent learning program, which provides opportunities to display their learnings.

**Objectives:** Spectra Global School helps individuals to become life-long learners with **STEPS**.

We provide

**S-STIMULATING** environment for learning.

**T-TRANSPARENT** vision helps us to communicate easily.

**E-EMPATHY-** towards others helps us to learn life skills lessons and values of the country that we are growing.

**P-PROGRESS** to achieve and attain better.

**S-SUSTAIN** with what we do and maximize it.

**Rationale:**

In line with our school Objectives, this policy has been written to ensure that we provide a **Stimulating** environment for our students and adults with **Transparency**. To **Sustain**, we need to be **Progressive** and attain what we are capable of and ensure that we remain human and **Empathetic** with one another.

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them at SGS. Spectra Global School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school on our school website.

This policy has been written in conjunction with The Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Qatar

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the school together with other professionals will ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A student that has 95% attendance may sound good, however, this means they miss the equivalent of **3 MONTHS** of school over 5 years.

**Aims and Objectives**

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and Management in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this Policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by good attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 95% (although our target is 97%) attendance for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognized as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.

- Ensure that our policy applies to the Foundation stage as well in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents and staff so that all pupils realize their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognizing achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognize the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils and staff on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

### **Definitions:**

#### **Authorized absence**

- An absence is classified as authorized when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones or email the school to explain the absence ([info@spectraschools.com](mailto:info@spectraschools.com)).
- Only the school can make an absence authorized. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorized.

#### **Unauthorized absence**

- An absence is classified as unauthorized when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorized if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

### **Procedures**

Our school will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

- To maintain appropriate registration processes.
- To maintain appropriate attendance data.
- To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- To have consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness.
- To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- To inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
- To strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.
- To work with parents to improve individual pupils attendance and punctuality
- To refer to the student services any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- To report attendance statistics to MoEHE where requested.
- All staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Management Team with responsibility for monitoring attendance.

### **Responsibilities**

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

#### **Class teacher/ Home room Teacher/ Form Tutor**

Class teachers are responsible for:

- 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 children and their parents/ carers.
- Informing the Management Team where there are concerns and acting upon them
- Providing background information to support referrals
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns
- Emphasizing with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness
- Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation which should be via Class dojo
- Discussing attendance issues at focus groups / leaders meetings / SMT meeting or discuss it with student's services where necessary

#### **Senior Leadership Team**

The SLT is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Trends in authorized and unauthorized absence
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- Making referrals to the student services.

- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the school's student services
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

### **Administration staff**

Staff in the School Office are responsible for:

- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence
- Ensuring the Absence record in Fedena is completed.
- Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been made.
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home
- 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 children and their parents/ carers and reporting concerns to the SMT
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance

### **Parents**

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist. (Appointment card/letter)
- Making requests for authorized absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorized.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

### **Registration**

For the month of Ramadan: timing is subject to change based on the recommendations made by the MoEHE.

Summative Assessments: School timings during Summative Assessments also change.

Normal school time: All the school doors open at 6.30am and students are required to attend registration at 07.00am. This time is sufficient for all pupils to come into their classroom.

We are required to monitor children's punctuality and attendance. On-going lateness (after the class register has been taken) is classified as an unauthorised absence and this is contrary to directives issued by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Qatar.

We understand that there may be rare occasions when you are unavoidably late due to unforeseen circumstances. On these occasions please make sure that you contact the school office to inform us when you will arrive.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any pupil who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning.

All attendance records are documented using the Fedena Attendance module.

### **Lateness**

Once the doors are closed at 07.10am the only way to get into school is via the Main gate (Gate 1). Any pupil who comes into school this way from 07.15am onwards will be marked as late in the attendance record and will need a late slip from the main reception. Records are kept of those pupils who are late, this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L).

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later will be marked in from the time of arrival. This should be accompanied by the medical note from the doctors. The absence/lateness will then be recorded as a medical absence (Attendance code M).

Children who are persistently late, miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

**Please Note:** Every 4 lateness's will be taken as 1 day of Absence and please also consider that the MoEHE has a limit to the number of absence a child cannot exceed. This will normally lead to students repeating the academic year again and may result in not being admitted for the following year.

### **Absences**

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence.

All absences are recorded as either authorized or unauthorized absences on the system. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's

absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorized or unauthorized. The SMT has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorized or unauthorized.

### **First Day Contact**

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check all of the registers from 8am on a daily basis, to identify those pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for the child's absence.

### **Illness**

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact student services to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some support at home.

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note or appointment card.

### **Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday**

With immediate effect only the Student Services have the right to authorize absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year if special circumstances exist. This will then be signed off, if granted, by the Vice Principal and Principal.

### **Addressing Attendance Concerns**

The school expects 100 % attendance; however, we have set the whole school target to 97%.

The Student Services officer will check and monitor attendance on a regular basis. She carries out regular register checks to identify children with low attendance (usually below 90%). Then there will be a referral process.

### **Awards for Attendance**

The students are awarded with the 100% attendance certificates at the end of the Academic year to encourage them to attend school on regularly.