



ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Lead: Assistant Principal
Review: August 2024

INTRODUCTION

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AY 2023-2024



Introduction

Learning takes place every moment of the school day from the first step taken into school each morning. Parents and teachers must work in partnership to ensure that children (unless ill) are present to enjoy and succeed in every aspect of school life. 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.

Attendance

The role of the parent in ensuring high levels of attendance is essential. At Horizon International School we hope to maintain close, effective and positive relationships with parents and ensure that effective communication links avoid any unexplained absences for our students. When attendance of a child is low, or causing concern, the school will notify parents and work with them to improve attendance in order to achieve 98% attendance which is rated as outstanding by the KHDA. Attendance is consistently monitored.

In alignment with current KHDA regulations, student attendance for the Academic Year is rated as the following:

UNSATISFACTORY 90% and below	ACCEPTABLE 92%	GOOD 94%	VERY GOOD/ OUTSTANDING 96% - 98%
15 days or more absent per school year	9 – 14 days absent per school year	5 – 8 days absent per school year	2 - 4 days or less absent per school year

Absence

If for any reason your child is absent from school, it is important that you contact the school to let us know. If possible, all appointments e.g. dentist, doctors should be made outside of school hours. In the event that time does need to be taken during school hours, an email should be sent to the form tutor/class teacher and the Reception notifying them of the details.

If your child is absent from school due to illness, the school should be notified before 7.45am for Primary and Secondary children and 8am for Foundation Stage by email or a telephone call to the Reception. Please also copy the class teacher/Form Tutor into the email. The school will ring home to check on a child's well-being if the school has not been notified. For absences of 2 days or more, a doctor's note is required; please provide a copy via the Reception.



Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is recorded when days are taken off when children are not ill, not receiving treatment, or on holiday without gaining prior approval from the Leadership Team. Unauthorised absence also includes having days off for birthdays and taking whole days off for medical/dental appointments unless this is absolutely necessary.

Unauthorised absences can be avoided by communicating with the school and being careful about keeping your child away from school unnecessarily. The Ministry of Education has regulations about the number of days' absence within the year.

Substantial unauthorised absences will lead to an attendance review meeting with a member of the Leadership Team. The percentage of authorised and unauthorised absences will appear on a student's file as it must be disclosed.²

At Horizon International School requests for non-educational absence during term time will normally be unauthorised. This is because:

1. Our primary responsibility must be as advocates for children's education, and therefore not to support absence from the classroom which will delay or impair individual and group progress.
2. We are judged strictly by KHDA for our attendance. 'Outstanding attendance' is judged as being 98%. Parents share responsibility with us for attaining this goal.
3. There is a strong correlation between poor attendance and educational attainment and performance.

However, we also acknowledge a different perspective, such as a need, as perceived by parents, to remove their children for family reasons.

Therefore, whilst we may not be able to 'authorise' the absence, we understand the motivation for it, and hope that parents understand the motivation for the school's position.

Leave of Absence

A leave request form needs to be submitted to Reception 10 days in advance for any planned absence during school term for your child. Any authorised absence is at the discretion of the Leadership Team. Absence during term time is strongly discouraged. Leave is approved at the discretion of the school keeping in view the attendance and punctuality records. It is not automatically granted as an authorised absence.

All children who attend a school Educational Visit or overnight excursion will be marked as present. There will be no authorised absence for any student in Years 10-13. For other year groups, absence will not be authorised if a child's attendance falls below 92%. Parents will be invited to discuss and review attendance which falls outside of the expected standard of the school.



Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. Your child is expected to arrive in school for Registration. Please see below the drop-off and start of the day timings that will be in effect for Foundation, Primary and Secondary in the 2023/24 Academic Year.

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary : | 7.30am - 7:45am |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primary : | 7.30am - 7:55am |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foundation Stage : | 7.30am - 7:55am |

Morning registration is an important part of the school day as the class teacher will provide pastoral care. If your child misses the start of the day, they will miss important learning and time with their class. Late arrival can also disrupt lessons and can be embarrassing for the child.

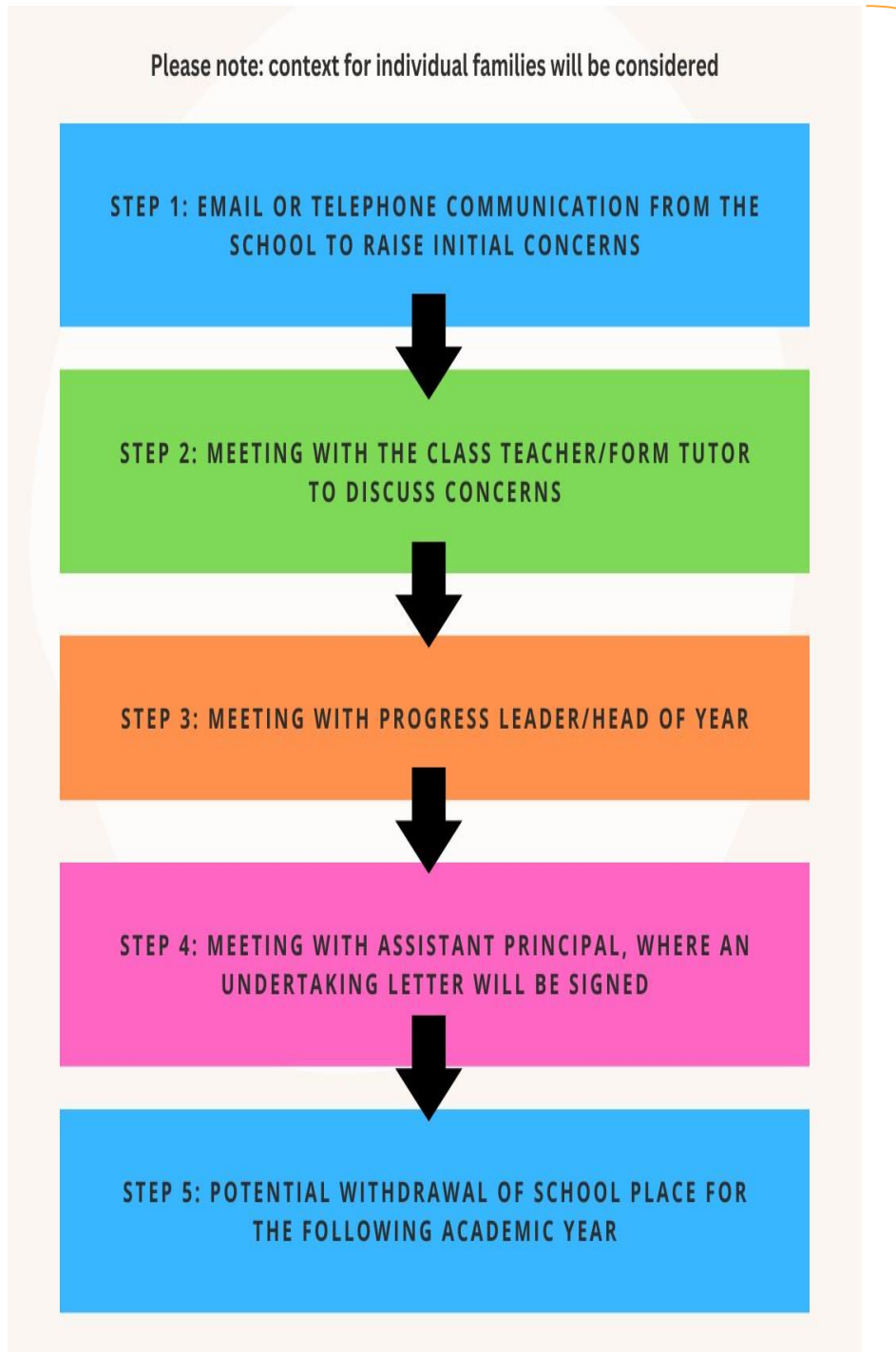
If your child arrives late at school for any reason, he/she must report to the Reception desk, before going along to the classroom. This is essential for health and safety. Children are given a slip so that the class teacher knows that Reception have logged the late arrival onto the system. This will ensure records are up to date in case of an emergency and will also ensure your child is awarded his/her attendance mark for that session.

Punctuality is monitored in a similar way to attendance i.e. students who arrive on time 92% of the time or less have unacceptable punctuality.

Late collection of pupils is also unacceptable. The traffic difficulties in Dubai are a known factor and it is a parent responsibility to ensure that you, or your driver, arrive in good time to collect your child. In exceptional cases, if there is a delay, the school should be notified. Parents are advised that if pupils are not collected on time, they will be contacted by telephone and asked for an approximate arrival time. If FS and Primary students are going to be collected more than 15 minutes late, they will be taken to Star Club and parents will be informed. In this case, parents will incur the cost of Star Club.

Action:

In cases of repeated tardiness and absenteeism the following steps will be taken:



Formal written communication will be sent each term if attendance or punctuality fall below the acceptable criteria of 92%.

Attendance and punctuality data are recorded and published in end of year reports for every student.