



DOHA ENGLISH SPEAKING SCHOOL

Learning Together • High Expectations • Celebrating Success

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Attendance Policy

Reviewer(s)	Assistant Head
Approver(s)	Head of School
18 Sept	18 September 2024
To be Reviewed	18 September 2026
Current Version	v1.1
Applicable to	Whole School

Version	Date	Reason for revision
v1.0	19 April 2020	New Policy
v1.1	24 Oct 2020	Conversion to Google Doc

POLICY STATEMENT

At DESS we pride ourselves on ensuring all children can achieve their full learning potential. By missing out on lessons, children are vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school. Therefore, in order to access the full curriculum, and give children the best chance of success, DESS requests that all pupils attend school as close to 100% as is possible, barring legitimate illness. It is essential that parents see themselves as working in partnership with the school in order to emphasise the importance of attendance and punctuality with our students.

When children are absent from school, or arrive late, gaps are created in their education which often result in them finding it difficult to 'catch up' with the learning they have missed. Whilst DESS endeavours to support absent children once they return to school, this cannot be to the detriment of other students within the class. Therefore lesson materials will not be provided during or following an absence unless under exceptional circumstances and agreed with the class teacher prior to the absence of the child.

PUNCTUALITY

If a child is late each day by just five minutes they will lose the equivalent of 3 full days over the year. Furthermore, arriving 15 minutes late each day is the same as being absent for two weeks of the year; for this reason it is imperative that children are punctual.

Parents should ensure that their child arrives at school on time, in full uniform and ready to learn to ensure a prompt start to the school day. Parents should deliver their child to school via Gate 1 (main gate), Gate 3, Gate 4, Gate 5 or via the Parent Car Park, to the school playground where there will be adult supervision from 7.00.a.m. onwards. The whistle is blown for all children at 7.15 a.m. and registration closes at 7.30 a.m. Lessons start at 7.30 a.m. Teachers are not able to edit the register once it has been closed therefore any children arriving after the register closes will need to collect a late slip from the school office and take it with them to their class teacher. Parents will be informed via the school app if their child has arrived after the register is closed.

Punctuality is closely monitored by all members of staff at DESS. If children are persistently late (four lates over a two week period) parents will receive a or letter from the class teacher, which serves as a polite reminder to them to ensure their children arrive at school on time in the future. If punctuality does not improve, parents will receive a further letter from the year lead and then a phone call from the Head of School. Finally, you will be required to attend a meeting with the Head of School or Principal. If punctuality still does not improve, the Governing Body will be informed and could result in the loss of the child's place at DESS.

END OF SCHOOL DAY COLLECTIONS

In order to ease congestion and to allow parents to collect younger siblings, we have a staggered end time to the school day.

	Sunday – Wednesday	Thursday
Foundation Stage One	1.30pm	12.30pm
Foundation Stage Two	1.45pm	12.45pm
Key Stage One	1.55pm	12.55pm
Key Stage Two	2.00pm	1.00pm

We offer a variety of school and privately run Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs) for Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils from 2.15 pm until 3.15 pm Sunday to Thursday.

If not attending an ECA, Key Stage 2 children will be dismissed from the classroom at 2.00 pm in order to meet their parents/guardians on the shaded playground. All Key Stage 1 children who are not going to a club must be collected from the playground by a parent or guardian who must have a DESS ID Card (*contact the school office for more information*). If parents wish for their child to be collected by another adult then they must inform the school office or class teacher in advance. Furthermore, if a parent is going to be late to collect a child they must inform the school office so that a message can be passed to the class teacher. EYFS children should be collected from their classroom.

Children who are not collected from school by 2.15pm will be taken to the school office and parents will be contacted.

If children are collected late from school on three or more occasions over a four week period, the parents will receive a letter from the Head of School or Principal. If late collections persist, a second letter will be issued and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will call the parent to discuss the matter further. Persistent disregard to this can result in the loss of the child's place at school.

INFORMING THE SCHOOL OF ABSENCE

When a child is absent from school, the following process should be followed:

1. The parent can either telephone on 44592750, email (secretary@dess.org) or speak directly to the School Office on each day of absence before 8am.
2. If a child is absent and the School Office has not been notified, then the parents will be contacted requesting that they inform the school of the reason why their child is absent. If a parent fails to contact the school on each day of absence, the child will receive an unauthorised absence mark. This mark cannot be altered retrospectively.
3. If a child is absent from school due to sickness, the school office must be notified each day otherwise the child will receive an unauthorised absence mark. After the third day of sickness the school requires a Doctor's certificate to cover the full absence period in order for the child to receive an authorised absence note.

4. If the school nurse sends a child home due to illness then the child will receive an authorized absence mark if they have been in school less than 60% of the day or leave before 11.30am (11.00am for FS1). If more than 60% of the day has been completed or leave after 11.30am (11.00am for FS1) they will receive a present mark.

APPOINTMENTS

We ask that all appointments, where possible, are arranged outside of the school day. However, we understand that there may be circumstances in which this is not possible. If an appointment is arranged during school hours parents must provide an appointment card showing the date and time of the appointment.

If a child must attend an appointment during the school day and the parent is able to provide an appointment card then the child will still receive a present mark if they were in school for 60% or more of the school day (more than 4 hours or 3.5 hours in FS1). If a child is signed out at any point during the day and has not completed 60% of the school day (less than 4 hours or 3.5 hours in FS1) then they will receive either an authorised or unauthorised mark depending on the reason for the absence and the documentation provided by the parent.

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

If a parent wishes their child to miss school then they must complete and return an [Absence Request Form](#). The School Principal will then look at the child's previous attendance percentage and also when the absence is requested, before deciding whether the absence will be authorised or unauthorised. Any absences will be displayed on both the Termly and End of Year Reports. Parents should also be aware that if their child leaves DESS and requests a transfer to another school, DESS will provide details on the child's attendance at the school.

CONTINUED ABSENCE

The teacher will monitor any continued absences. Class attendance is available on the school pupil management system and the teacher will check for any patterns, i.e. long weekends, absence on swimming days etc. If concerned;

1. The class teacher will telephone the parent
2. Following the telephone call, if there is still no improvement, a letter will be sent home from the Year Group Leader
3. If absenteeism continues, then a member of the Senior Leadership team (SLT) will arrange a meeting to take place with the parents
4. If absenteeism continues after a meeting with the parent and a member of the SLT, the Board of Governors will be informed and this could result in the loss of the child's place at DESS

If teachers have a concern regarding a pupil's absence or they do not accept the explanation of an absence as genuine or acceptable, they must first liaise with their Year Group Leader who will then raise the matter with a member of the SLT. It will be at the SLT and Governors' discretion as to how each situation is dealt with, in line with the school guidance and attendance policy mentioned above.