

# Kwun Tong Government Secondary School

## School Policy on Student Attendance

### **1 Purpose of the School Policy on Student Attendance:**

- 1.1 To cultivate students' punctuality in attending school and participating in various school activities, to foster students' time management skills and self-discipline, and to inculcate a positive attitude and value towards schooling.
- 1.2 To provide appropriate support to students with attendance problems or at-risk students as early as possible.

### **2 Strategies to be Adopted under the School Policy on Student Attendance:**

- 2.1 The school provides a balanced curriculum and formulates well-designed teaching and learning strategies to cater for the learning needs of students with different abilities and aptitudes. Students must attend various learning activities organized by the school, such as classes, assemblies, quizzes, uniform tests, exams, swimming gala, sports days, speech day, student development day, student activity day, parent day, life-wide learning day, post-exam activities, etc.
- 2.2 Students are expected to attend school punctually, without tardiness, early dismissals, or unexplained absences. If they cannot participate in school or group activities on time due to illness or other reasons, they should complete the leave application process beforehand.
- 2.3 The school adopts a cross-disciplinary collaboration and integrated guidance and discipline approach to collectively address at-risk students/marginal dropouts.
- 2.4 Early intervention is taken to address truancy, unexplained absences or irregular attendance.
- 2.5 The school makes good use of the community resources available for dropouts with behavior problems or other aspects beyond the school's handling capacity.
- 2.6 The school strengthens parent education and home-school co-operation to enable parents to understand the school policies on student attendance and support their children in meeting the requirements.
- 2.7 The school sets up support systems and develops pastoral support plans to enable returning students to catch up on learning and re-integrate within the school.
- 2.8 The school organizes school activities to build trusting relationships between teachers and students, values students' individuality, recognizes and celebrates their contributions, addresses their concerns, and strengthens their sense of belonging or ownership to the school.

### 3 Handling of Student Leave:

| Situation      | Parents/Guardians   | School  |
|----------------|---|---|
| Sick Leave     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents should call the school office between 7:30 to 8:05 am on the day of absence and submit a parent letter upon return.</li><li>• A parent letter and medical certificate should be submitted if a student is absent for two school days or more.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If a student is absent for two school days or more, the school requires a medical certificate and a parent letter. Otherwise, it will be considered as unexplained absence, and a warning letter will be issued, along with a minor offence.</li></ul>  |
| Personal Leave | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents must submit a written leave request to the Principal at least three school days in advance, stating the reason for leave, date, and duration. Photocopies of relevant supporting documents should be attached for verification.</li></ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The class teachers should note (personal leave) in the attendance column of eClass; the school office does not need to call parents.</li><li>• At the beginning of the school year, a notice will be issued reminding parents that leave should not be taken on school days. Even after the yearly exams, students must attend post-exam activities. Parents should not take leave for their children for travel or family visits during school days to avoid affecting their studies. Unauthorized absence will be considered as unexplained absence, and a warning letter will be issued, along with a minor offence.</li></ul> |

### 4 Procedures for Reporting Student Dropouts and Other Student Movements:

- 4.1 The school strictly adheres to regulations and reports cases of student absences and dropouts to the Education Bureau.
- 4.2 If a student has a persistent non-attendance issue, the class teacher should report the case to the school and meet with the student to show concern and understand the situation. If the situation persists, the case would be referred to the counselling and guidance team or the school social worker for follow-up.
- 4.3 If a student continues to take sick leave for many school days without providing a medical certificate, or has unauthorized absences, or the school is unable to reach the parents, the school will send a registered letter to the parents requesting an explanation for the student's absence.
- 4.4 Guidelines on Absences, Work Allocation, and Detailed Regulations:

| No. of Absent Days                                 | Responsible Persons  | Duties and Handling Methods  |
|--|--|--|
| Absence for one day or two consecutive school days | Class Teachers   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact the parents for any absence of one day to show concern and inquire about the reason.</li> <li>• One school day of absence: In the cases of a valid reason (such as illness or a sudden family emergency), the students must submit a leave application letter or the parents should record the leave application in the student's handbook upon return.</li> <li>• Two consecutive school days of absence: In the cases of a valid reason (such as illness or a sudden family emergency), the students must submit a leave application letter and medical certificate or relevant supporting documents upon return.</li> <li>• If there is no valid reason, the class teachers should follow up to understand the reason for absence and advise the students to return to school.</li> <li>• A medical certificate must be provided during uniform tests and exams if a student is absent for one school day due to illness.</li> <li>• If a student is found absent without a valid reason, it will be considered as unexplained absence, and a warning letter will be issued, along with a minor offence.</li> <li>• If a student applies for personal leave, the class teachers should note (personal leave) in the eClass attendance column.</li> </ul> |
| Absence for three to six consecutive school days   | Class Teachers   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform the Assistant Principal responsible for student affairs, discipline master/mistress and teacher i/c of Counselling &amp; Guidance Team.</li> </ul>   |
|  | Discipline Master/Mistress   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a student is absent without a valid reason, disciplinary action will be taken according to school regulations.</li> </ul>  |
|  | Teacher i/c of Counselling & Guidance Team   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the students' situation and assist.</li> <li>• Notify school social workers and schedule a meeting with the parents to understand the students' situation.</li> </ul>  |
| Absence for seven consecutive school days or more  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Principal</li> <li>• Discipline Master/Mistress</li> <li>• Teacher i/c of Counselling &amp; Guidance Team</li> <li>• Class Teachers</li> <li>• School Social Workers</li> <li>• Teacher i/c of STIMS</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The class teachers should inform the teacher i/c of STIMS immediately.</li> <li>• Notify Education Bureau and refer the cases to school social workers.</li> <li>• The Non-attendance Cases Team of Education Bureau will work closely with the school to assist the students to resume school as quickly as possible.</li> <li>• If the Education Bureau finds the cases to be exceptional, an attendance order may be issued to the parents according to the Education Ordinance.</li> </ul>  |
| Long-term consecutive absences                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Principal</li> <li>• Class Teachers</li> <li>• Discipline Master/Mistress</li> <li>• Teacher i/c of Counselling &amp; Guidance Team</li> <li>• Teacher i/c of STIMS</li> </ul>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Non-attendance Cases Team of Education Bureau will work closely with the school to assist the students to resume school as quickly as possible.</li> <li>• Handle the procedures for student withdrawal or deregistration from school.</li> </ul>   |

| Situation                                       | Responsible Person   | Duties and Handling Methods   |
|---|--|---|
| Class resumption of the non-attendance students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Principal</li> <li>• Discipline Master/Mistress</li> <li>• Teacher i/c of Counselling &amp; Guidance Team</li> <li>• Class Teachers</li> <li>• School Social Workers</li> <li>• Teacher i/c of STIMS</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform the Education Bureau.</li> <li>• Provide guidance and follow-up on the students' learning and psychological condition.</li> <li>• Social workers and class teachers should understand the cases and recommend a plan for class resumption.</li> </ul>   |
| Withdrawal Application                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Principal</li> <li>• Class Teachers</li> <li>• Teacher i/c of Record Card</li> <li>• Teacher i/c of STIMS</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The class teachers receive the written request for withdrawal from the parents. The withdrawal letter should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ the reason for the student's withdrawal, such as transferring to another school (must specify the school's name), going overseas for further education, emigration or work;</li> <li>➤ the last class attendance date.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The class teachers should complete the "Record of Withdrawal of Student".</li> <li>• Teacher i/c of STIMS: Inform the Education Bureau and report departure cases via CloudSAMS or by the eForm.</li> </ul> |

**Remarks:**

- Students absent for 7 consecutive school days or more: As per Education Bureau's requirements, the school (Teacher i/c of STIMS) should report student non-attendance cases without delay to the Education Bureau on the 7<sup>th</sup> school day of the students' continuous absence, regardless of the reasons for absence.
- The reporting procedures are as follows:
  - Through the Attendance Module in CloudSAMS, prepare Form A to report the case, select an appropriate reason for departure/absence from school, and submit the data to the Education Bureau.
- Non-attendance/dropout and departure cases should be reported via CloudSAMS or eForm.
- When reporting cases, the school should submit the personal data of the students and parents to the Education Bureau for investigation and follow-up on the non-attendance/dropout and departure cases.
- The school is required to prepare Form B in the Student Module of CloudSAMS (for CloudSAMS schools) or complete eForm B (for non-CloudSAMS schools) and submit the relevant information to the Education Bureau within 10 school days from the first day of class resumption of the non-attendance students.
- At the beginning of September, schools should count the number of students enrolled and report to the Education Bureau on paper.
- The school does not provide a deferment of study option.
- Application for withdrawal of study: parents should submit a written application for withdrawal. The withdrawal letter should specify the reason for withdrawal and the last school day of the students.

- 4.5 The school will provide teachers with the latest guidelines on absences, work allocation, and detailed regulations, so there is no need to convene a crisis team meeting on absences.
- 4.6 The class teachers and counselling teachers will accompany the school social workers during home visits.
- 4.7 The school will upload the student attendance policy to the school website for parents' reference, and a notice will be issued at the beginning of the school year to inform them of the policy.

| Acceptable Reasons for Absence  | Unacceptable Reasons for Absence   |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Illness</li> <li>2. Reasonable personal leave: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bereavement</li> <li>• Immediate family celebration</li> <li>• Identity card registration</li> <li>• Court summons</li> <li>• Reporting to the police station</li> <li>• Sudden family emergency</li> <li>• Public examinations, professional tests (such as Putonghua proficiency tests, piano exams)</li> <li>• School-approved special events, such as interviews</li> </ul> </li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Truancy</li> <li>2. Persistent non-attendance citing illness without providing a medical certificate</li> <li>3. Returning to hometown or traveling during school days</li> <li>4. Unwillingness to attend school or laziness</li> <li>5. Absence due to tardiness or incomplete homework</li> <li>6. Handling matters that can be done outside of school hours</li> </ol> |

## 5 **Handling of Dropout Cases (according to the “Education Ordinance – Enforcement of Attendance Order”):**

- 5.1 The school reports dropout cases.
- 5.2 School social workers and counselling staff will intervene in handling the cases and provide counselling and support services.
- 5.3 The Non-attendance Cases Team will consider issuing a warning letter to the parents concerned if the dropout students fail to resume schooling without any reasonable excuse from the parents after counselling and support.
- 5.4 Subject to individual case circumstances and progress, the Non-attendance Cases Team will issue a reminder should the absence persist. The warning letter and reminder(s) require the parents to bring the student back to the original school or a specified school suitable for the student.
- 5.5 If there is no sign of improvement in the student's persistent non-attendance without reasonable excuses from the parents to justify non-compliance with the requirements of the warning letter and reminder(s), the Education Bureau will serve an attendance order, subject to case circumstances and progress.
- 5.6 The Non-attendance Cases Team must ensure that the parents understand the consequences of non-compliance with the requirements of the warning letter and the reminder(s), which is the issuance of an attendance order under Section 74, Education Ordinance (Cap. 279). The penalty, on conviction, for failing to comply with an attendance order is a fine at Level 3 (HK\$10,000) and three months' imprisonment. This should be conveyed to the parents.
- 5.7 When the warning letters/reminder(s)/attendance orders are issued, the Student Guidance Personnel should work with the Non-attendance Cases Team to continue following up on the case.

## **6 Reference Documents:**

- 6.1 Education Bureau “Education Ordinance”
- 6.2 Education Bureau “School Administration Guide”
- 6.3 Education Bureau “CloudSAMS User Manual - Student Attendance - Suspected Dropout”
- 6.4 Education Bureau Circular No. 21/2024 “Upholding Students' Right to Education”
- 6.5 Kwun Tong Government Secondary School “Policy and Procedure Manual”

## **7 Responsible Persons:**

- Assistant Principal in charge of student affairs
- Teacher i/c of STIMS
- Discipline Master/Mistress
- Teacher i/c of Counselling & Guidance Team
- School Social Worker