Attendance Policy 2026

Approved by:	Mel Hitchcocks	**Last reviewed on:**	August 2026
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RATIONALE

At the British International School of Ljubljana (BISL), we strive to promote an ethos and culture where each pupil feels valued and secure, which encourages good attendance. Regular and punctual attendance at school is crucial: students need to be in school and on time for the maximum number of days and hours if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Students who are late miss a significant amount of information and social learning, as well as the introduction to the day's curricular activities. A student whose attendance is only 90% each year will, for instance, miss the equivalent of a whole term of learning over their time in Key Stage 3 (from Year 7 to Year 9), which clearly impacts on their progress and their ability to meet learning expectations.

Whilst it is the parents/guardians who have the responsibility for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance, the staff at BISL are committed to work together with them to ensure that all students are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits.

1. Aims

This policy sets out the expectations and procedures to promote and ensure a minimum of 95% attendance for all students. It makes clear the framework of responsibilities and processes so that all staff, students and parents/guardians are fully aware of the actions necessary to ensure attendance meets this level.

Through this policy, we aim to:

- ensure that all students realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence or lateness;
- create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued;
- raise the awareness of the parents/guardians, as well as of the students, of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education, from Pre-School to the Sixth Form.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues and responsibilities among all staff, students and parents/guardians;
- equipping students with the life skills needed to take responsibility for their good attendance and punctuality, appropriate to their age and development;
- fostering a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which students feel safe, secure and valued, where they can be confident of support should they experience difficulties at home or at school which prevent good attendance;
- consistently monitoring attendance and implementing procedures for the identification, reporting and review of cases of poor attendance or persistent lateness; maintaining effective means of communication between parents/guardians, students and staff.

This Policy should be considered in conjunction with, and with reference to:

- BISL Parent Handbook;
- BISL Positive Behaviour Policy;
- Group and BISL Safeguarding Policy;
- BISL Concerns & Complaints Policy;
- BISL Terms & Conditions;

2. Definitions

2.1 Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as 'Authorised' when a student has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent has telephoned the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can make an absence authorised - parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

2.2 Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as 'Unauthorised' when a student is away from school without the permission of the school. If a student is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent, the absence is unauthorised.

3. Attendance and Attainment

It is a legal requirement in both the UK and Slovenia for children to attend school and there is a direct correlation between attendance and student's attainment. Students with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%). At KS4, pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% (Working Together to Improve Attendance, DfE guidance 2024).

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Regular attendance at school is an essential requirement for educational success. All members of the school community have a responsibility for ensuring the students' full attendance, so that they are in a position to realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence or lateness, and should be aware of the consequences of absence, as laid out in this Policy.

In Slovenia, there is a legal obligation for all children from the age of 6 to 15 to be enrolled in full-time education. Students may not be absent for more than 5 days without medical certification and may face investigation by Social Services and the Inspektorat RS zasolstvo in sport (Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia for Education and Sport) and may be fined.

At BISL, our expectation is that attendance will not fall below 95%. Where attendance difficulties exist or a student's attendance falls below 95%, staff and parents/guardians must work together in developing and implementing strategies to address this poor attendance. Should parents fail to support the school in this, they may be in breach of the school's published Terms & Conditions.

4.1 Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for school attendance and the authority to decide whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

4.2 Weekly attendance monitoring

The Phase Leaders are responsible for the weekly monitoring of student attendance across the school - including the tracking of specific students about whom attendance concerns have been raised - and for the identification of trends in authorised or unauthorised absence.

Phase Leaders will contact parents and lead discussions with parents/guardians where concerns are raised about absence, liaise with other professionals if necessary, particularly

form tutors and class teachers, and provide background information to the Principal if concerns are ongoing.

4.3 Teaching Staff

Teaching staff routinely monitor the attendance and punctuality of students. Each Class Teacher/ Form Tutor has the responsibility for ensuring an accurate record of daily attendance and must complete the register in iSAMS between 07:50-08.20. Secondary teachers must register each class and from Term 2 Primary Teachers are expected to register students between 12.50-13.20.

Class Teachers/Form Tutors should follow up on initial absences with requests for explanation, which should be noted in iSAMS, and are responsible for keeping an overview of class and individual attendance - looking particularly for trends such as high levels of absence, patterns of absence and/or unusual explanations for absence offered by students or their parents/guardians. They should liaise with the Phase Leader and provide background information where there are concerns. If a meeting with parents is required, these should be conducted with the Phase Leaders, who will then take over the monitoring of absence of that particular student.

All teaching staff should model good practice in terms of their own attendance and punctuality and should emphasise to the students the importance of good attendance and promptness.

4.4 Registering absence or lateness.

Reception staff are responsible for recording SMS messages from parents/guardians about lateness or absence, inputting this data into iSAMS and informing the Class Teacher/ Form Tutor, and for contacting parents/guardians of absent children where no contact has been made.

Students who arrive after 07.50 should be registered as late and the time of arrival noted on iSAMs. If a student arrives to Lesson 1 but has not been registered for form time, they should be registered as late with the time of arrival noted on iSAMs. Sixth Form students leaving site at break and lunchtimes must sign out/in and students needing to leave site during the day to attend an appointment must go to the admin office for a sign out pass. Students should

only be given a sign out pass if an email or phone call has been received from parents explaining the reason for their absence.

Parents can request an absence via the parent portal on ISAMs. Requests are checked daily by the Principal and once a decision is recorded on ISAMs this is automatically reflected in the register.

4.5 Students

Each student has a duty to ensure that he/she attends school punctually and regularly.

Students are expected to be in school before 07:50, so as to be on-time for registration/Assembly. Students arriving after 07:50 are recorded on iSAMS as "Late."

It is the student's responsibility to catch up work missed due to absence as quickly as possible. Teachers may be consulted regarding work for the student to 'keep up' whilst away, but students and parents may not assume that staff will be able to give additional time to cover the work they have missed upon their return.

4.6 Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians have a legal duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives full-time education suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude and are expected to support the school's Attendance Policy. They have a duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that their child is punctual, i.e. arrives at school before 07:50, and to inform the school by SMS to +386(0)40 486 548 as soon as possible if their child will be late or absent. They should also inform the school in advance of any planned appointments or other absence during school time. Requests can be made via the Parent Portal.

Parents/guardians whose child appears reluctant to attend school should discuss the matter promptly with their child's Class Teacher/Form Tutor or the Director of Student Welfare to ensure that both they and the student receive maximum support so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

5. Procedures

The school day for students starts at 07:50 and ends at 14:50 for all students. After school clubs end at 15:40 and extended supervision for early years students ends at 16.30.

5.1 Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Students should arrive at school between 07:30 and 07:45. If on foot, they should enter the school by the gate which closes at 07.50. Once the gate is closed, students should enter the school through the main entrance. Early years students should enter school at the early years entrance. If arriving by car, parents should drop their children off in the residents car park or directly outside the school. Students arriving after 07:50 must be registered as late and the time of arrival recorded. Parents/guardians should inform reception via SMS to +386(0)40 486 548 as soon as possible if their child will be late.

- Students who attend extended supervision (early years only) until 16.30 s h o u l d b e c o l l e c t e d f r o m the early years entrance by 16.30.

Please note that it is important that students are collected from school on time. Parents/guardians should inform reception via SMS or telephone call to +386(0)40 486 548 if they will be late picking up their children.

5.2 Registration

Students are expected to arrive at school before 07:50, so as to be in time for registration. Students should not be dropped off at school before 07.30 to ensure that there are adequate staff available to supervise them.

It is important that an accurate record of each student's attendance and punctuality is kept, and each Class/Form Teacher has the responsibility for ensuring this. Class Teachers/Form Tutors must complete the register in iSAMS between 07:50-08.20.

5.3 Lateness

Where students are persistently late, the Class Teacher/Form Tutor or the Phase Leader will contact the parents/guardians to advise them of the concerns and arrange to meet with them to support and advise them in improving the students' punctuality. Parents/guardians whose child appears reluctant to attend school should discuss the matter promptly with their child's Class Teacher/Form Tutor/Phase Leader or the Director of Student Welfare to ensure that both they and the student receive maximum support so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

5.4 Leaving/Returning to school during the day

Unless in a supervised activity, students may not leave the school site before the end of the school day unless they have permission from their parents and their Class Teacher/Form Tutor has been informed. Reception is to be made aware of such cases and the students are required to sign out. Students in Years 12 and 13 are permitted to leave school during break and lunchtimes and should return to school on time. Sixth Form students leaving site are required to leave school via reception for signing in and out. Any student returning to school later in the day should sign in again at reception.

5.5 Late Pick-Up

All students should leave or be picked up from school by 15.40 unless they are attending extended supervision or a club run by an external provider.

Parents/guardians should inform reception via SMS or telephone call to +386(0)40 486 548 if they will be late picking up their children. A pick up email address pickup@britishschool.si has been set up to allow parents to contact the school in the case of a change in arrangements for the collection of their child. Parents should notify the school via the pickup email by 2pm if pickup arrangements need to change. From 15.40, students who have not been picked up will be supervised by the senior leader on late duty until their parent/guardian arrives. Where parents/guardians are persistently late in collecting students at the end of the school day, the Principal will contact them to address this.

5.6 Absence

Students should attend school every day, and at BISL we expect a minimum level of attendance of 95%. If a student is not in school, he/she is marked as “Absent”.

That said, if a student is unwell, he/she should not attend school, in order to minimise the risk of infection to others and because the ability to concentrate on his/her learning will be impaired.

Prolonged, excessive or unauthorized absences will be brought to the attention of the Director of Student Welfare or the Principal.

5.6.1 Notification of Absence

Parents are required to send an SMS message giving the student’s name, Class/Form and the reason for absence to reception (+386(0)40 486 548) as soon as they know their child will not attend school. This will suffice as a record of absence and is recorded into iSAMS by admin staff and forwarded to the Class Teacher/Form Tutor.

5.6.2 First Day contact

Admin staff check the iSAMS register in the morning 08:00 and 08:30 and send the list of absent students to Class Teachers/Form Tutors. If a student is absent but no SMS or verbal communication has been received from the parent/guardian, Admin staff will contact the parent/guardian before 10am to get the explanation for the absence and anticipated return date and communicate this knowledge to class teachers/form tutors.

5.6.3 Extended or Recurring Absence

When students have an illness or injury that means they will be away from school for a prolonged period, the Class Teacher/Form Tutor should be notified in order to enable the school to assist with any necessary arrangements which may be required. The school will do all it can to send material home, so that the student can keep up with his/her schoolwork.

5.6.4 Prior Notification of Absence

Requests for absence in term time should only be made if absolutely necessary, and are not automatically authorised. Parents/guardians should send an e-mail or completed Leave of Absence Request form (see Appendix 1) to the Class Teacher/Form Tutor as early as possible and at least three days before the proposed absence, clearly stating the reason why absence is requested. Parents can also request a leave of absence for their child through the parent portal. This enables approval decisions and any further action, such as preparing work, to be carried out promptly. The Principal has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

5.6.5 Family Holidays during Term-time

Because of the impact on learning, we strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time. Only in exceptional circumstances will a holiday be authorised, otherwise family holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence. If a family holiday is deemed necessary, permission should be sought in writing from the Principal.

5.6.6 Accommodation for outstanding athletes and artists or students with SEND

At BISL, as in Slovene schools, accommodation may be granted to students with outstanding sporting or artistic talents, or to students who require an adapted curriculum for medical or SEND reasons. Such accommodations may include permitting a higher level of absence or enabling a reduced number of subjects, adapted assessments, etc. Such

accommodation is only at the school's discretion and may not be possible during the external examination years (Years 10-13).

6. Managing Non-Attendance

The procedures taken to address poor attendance and punctuality are laid out below. In general terms, the management of lateness and absence is initially dealt with by the Class Teachers/Form Tutors through verbal warnings and explanation of why poor attendance is inappropriate. For more persistent or repeated concerns, the management of absence is handled by the Phase Leaders, who monitor attendance on a weekly basis.

Attendance Issue	Action to be taken	Action by
Lateness		
If a student has arrived late but no SMS notification has been received	Student/parent reminded to notify school of lateness by SMS	Administration Team
If a student is late on 2 or more occasions in a 1 block period	Class Teacher/Form Tutor speaks to student about his/her punctuality and records this action on iSAMS	Class Teacher/Form Tutor
If a student is late on 2 or more further occasions in any subsequent block	Class Teacher/FormTutor sends an email home to parents stating that student has been late twice and reminding parents of the 07.50 start time.	Class Teacher/Form Tutor

If the level/pattern of lateness continues	Class Teacher/FormTutor notifies Phase Leader who requests a meeting with parents to discuss. If possible, the form tutor/class teacher should also attend. Any welfare concerns that arise either before or during the meeting should be referred to the DSW.	Class Teacher/Form Tutor/Phase Leader.
Absence		
If a student is absent but no SMS notification has been received	Parents called by 10am to establish reason for absence and remind them to notify school of absence by SMS	Admin Team
If a student is absent on 3 or more occasions during a block	Repeated unauthorized absence will be picked up by the Phase leader and a meeting called with parents to offer additional support.	Phase Leader
If level/pattern of absence continues	Principal is notified by the Phase Leader.	Phase Leader/Principal

Late pick-up		
If a student has not been collected by 15.40 (or 16.30 for extended supervision) and an SMS has not been received.	Student/parent reminded to pick up by the designated time.	SLT on Duty Extended supervision staff Security

On the second occasion if the student is not collected by 15.40 (16.30 for extended supervision)	An email will be sent to the parent informing them that future late pick-ups may result in a withdrawal of after school services.	Principal
On the third or subsequent occasion of a late pick-up	After school services will be temporarily withdrawn until a meeting is arranged between the Principal and parents.	Principal

APPENDIX 1: Leave of Absence Request Form

This form should be completed and submitted to your child's Class Teacher/Form Tutor as far in advance (at least 3 days) of the start of any proposed absence as possible. In the case of medical/dental appointments, please also attach a copy of the appointment confirmation.

Parents/guardians are reminded that, as stated in the school's Attendance Policy, our expected level of attendance is 95%. The school reserves the right to terminate the place of a student who significantly fails to meet this expectation.

Absence can damage successful learning, so appointments and holidays should, wherever possible, be arranged outside of the school day or term-time. Leave of Absence for the purpose of holidays in term-time may not be authorised except in the most exceptional circumstances.

Student's name:_____ Class: _____

Parent's name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____

Start date of proposed leave of absence:	
End date of proposed leave of absence:	

Reasons for request:

Appointment confirmation attached: YES / NO *(delete as appropriate)*

PREPARED BY:	Mel Hitchcocks	18/07/2023
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This Policy is to be reviewed **every three years** and updated as and when changes occur.