



**British International School**  
of Ljubljana  
an Orbital Education School



# **Attendance Policy**



## **1. 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.

## **2. 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;
- BISL Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- BISL Concerns & Complaints Policy;
- BISL Terms & Conditions;

### **3. Definitions**

#### **3.1 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.

#### **3.2 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.

### **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 zaszolstvo 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. Orbital Education provide support to the



Principal by reviewing school attendance figures and targets on both a weekly and a monthly basis, ensuring it is placed as an agenda item in scheduled discussions.

#### **4.2 Daily monitoring of attendance**

The Director of Student Welfare (DSW) is 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.

The DSW will work with the key stage coordinators to lead discussions with parents/guardians where concerns are raised about absence, liaise with other professionals if necessary, and provide reports and background information to the Principal if concerns are ongoing or if required for discussions with Orbital Education.

#### **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 at 07:50.

Primary Specialist Teachers and Secondary Teachers should take and keep a record of attendance in each of their lessons and notify the relevant Class Teacher/Form Tutor of any concerns.

Class Teachers/Form Tutors should follow up on 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 inform the DSW/key stage coordinators and provide background information where there are concerns and initiate meetings with parents/guardians to discuss attendance issues. They will then lead the follow-up actions and monitoring once these have been agreed to correct attendance concerns.

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 Administrative Staff**

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.

Reception staff register into iSAMS as "Late" the students who arrive after 07:50, and ensure the sign in/sign out book is completed for all students leaving the site (or returning) during the school day.

#### **4.5 Students**



Each student has a duty to ensure that he/she attends school punctually and regularly. The number of days absent or late are shown on the student's report.

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" at Reception.

Following an absence from school, students should give their Class Teacher/Form Tutor a written note from a parent/guardian explaining the absence.

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 (and before 08:00) 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.

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 14:45 for Primary students and 14:55 for Secondary 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 and drop students off at the playground gate (if on foot) or 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 at reception. Parents/guardians should inform reception via SMS to +386(0)40 486 548 as soon as possible (and before 08:00) if their child will be late.

Primary lessons finish at 14:45, and students may:

- take part in after school clubs (from 14:55-15:40) and be picked up at 15:40 from the Activity Teacher in reception;



- attend extended supervision (early years only) until 16.30 and be picked up from reception or the early years entrance by 16.30.

Secondary lessons finish at 14:55 and students should

- leave via the playground gate between 14:55-15:00.
- take part in after school clubs (from 14:55-15:40) and be picked up at 15:40 from the Activity Teacher in reception;

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 adeqt 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 at 07:50.

## **5.3 Lateness**

If students arrive after 07:50, they are "Late". The number of days the student arrives late are shown on the student's report.

Late students (arriving at school after 07:50) should enter the building via the main door and be registered on iSAMS at Reception (attendance code L in iSAMS). Students who come to school late having attended a medical appointment will be registered as a medical absence (attendance code M).

If parents are going to be late dropping off their children, they should inform the school by SMS to +386(0)40 486 548 as soon as possible (and before 08:00). They should not phone or send an e-mail or try to contact the teachers directly.

Where students are persistently late, the Class Teacher/Form Tutor or the Director of Student Welfare/Principal 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 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 their lunch break but should return to school at the end of that break time. They 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 or at the Admissions office.

#### **5.5 Late Pick-Up**

All students should leave or be picked up from school between by 15.40 unless they are attending extended supervision.

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 or in the case of any other proposed arrangements. Students who have not been picked up by 15:45 will be supervised by Security or a teacher 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". The number of days of absence are shown on the student's report.

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 reception staff and forwarded to the Class Teacher/Form Tutor. This should be confirmed with a written note of explanation when the student returns to school. For the absence to be recorded as a Medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist (appointment form). These letters are filed in iSAMS by the Class Teacher/Form Tutor.

##### **5.6.2 First Day contact**

Reception staff check the iSAMS register in the morning between 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, Reception 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. 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 is extended to the Director of Student Welfare or the Principal.





<b>Attendance Issue</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Action by</b>
<b>Lateness</b>		
If a student has arrived late but no SMS notification has been received	Student/parent reminded to notify school of lateness by SMS	Reception
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/Form Tutor notifies Director of Student Welfare (DSW) SW and contacts parents to discuss absences. This meeting is recorded on iSAMS	Class Teacher/Form Tutor
If the level/pattern of lateness continues	Class Teacher/Form Tutor notifies DSW/Key Stage Coordinators and meeting is convened with parents to discuss. This is recorded on iSAMS	Class Teacher/Form Tutor Director of Student Welfare (DSW) Key Stage Coordinators.
<b>Absence</b>		
If a student is absent but no SMS notification has been received	Parents called by 09.00 to establish reason for absence and remind them to notify school of absence by SMS	Reception
If a student is absent on 3 or more occasions during a block	Class Teacher/Form Tutor speaks to student about this and records action on iSAMS	Class Teacher/Form Tutor
If a student is absent on 3 or more occasions in a block and is absent on 2 or more further occasions in any subsequent block	Class Teacher/Form Tutor notifies DSW /Key Stage Coordinators and speaks to student about his/her attendance and records this action on iSAMS	Class Teacher/Form Tutor
If level/pattern of absence continues	Class Teacher/Form Tutor notifies DSW/Key Stage Coordinators and meeting is convened with parents to discuss either improvement or withdrawal of student from the school. This is recorded on iSAMS.	Class Teacher/Form Tutor DSW Key Stage Coordinators
<b>Late pick-up</b>		
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.	Activity Teacher 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



Start date of proposed leave of absence:	
End date of proposed leave of absence:	
Reasons for request:              	
Appointment confirmation attached: YES / NO ( <i>Delete as appropriate</i> )	



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**PREPARED/UPDATED BY:** Ms. Mel Hitchcocks

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This Policy is to be reviewed **every two years** and updated as and when changes occur.