



## Attendance Policy

### Policy and Procedures

BIS Belgrade is a successful school and both parents and students play an important part in making it so. We aim for an environment that enables and encourages all members of the community to reach for excellence. We strongly encourage and support good attendance. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend school regularly, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

### Why attendance is important?

**Learning:** Learning at our school is very interactive, requiring the participation of the students with the teacher and one another during class. This is adversely affected when a student is absent or habitually late – not only for that student, but for the dynamics of the entire class both during their absence as well as upon their return, when time is taken to reintegrate them into the learning context of the class. Additionally, book assignments can help make up lost work, but cannot replicate the discussions led by the teacher, questions raised by other students or the activities conducted in class.

**Safeguarding:** Students may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for every student encompasses: Attendance, Behaviour Management, Health and Safety, Access to the Curriculum and Anti-bullying. Failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

### Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility— parents, students and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will report to parents on how their student is performing in school and their attendance rate.

### Understanding Types of Absence

Every absence from school has to be classified by the school as either EXCUSED or UNEXCUSED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Excused absences are times away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, visa issues, religious observances, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

Unexcused absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given by the Principal.

This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day



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- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Students who arrive at school late
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays

Whilst any student may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the student. If a student is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

## Persistent Absenteeism

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% (25 school days) or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. The parent of any student who is at risk of moving towards persistent absenteeism will be informed of this immediately so that the situation can be rectified.

## Absence Procedures

If a student is absent their parent must:

- Contact the school secretary as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- Send a doctor's note for any illnesses exceeding five consecutive days

If a student is absent we will:

- Telephone, email or text on the first day of absence if we have not been notified of absence
- Invite the parent in to discuss the situation with the Deputy Principal/Principal if absences persist

## Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a student misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class/subject teacher getting vital information for the day. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the student and encourage further absences.

The school day starts at 8:30am and we expect all students to be in class at that time. If a student has a persistent late record, parents will be asked to meet with the Deputy Principal to resolve the problem.

## Summary

The school has a duty to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and students as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every student's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

## Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually.  
Reviewed July 2020