



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 AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised 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.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given by parents and agreed by the Head of School.

This includes:

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



BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

- 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.

Online Registers

- All absences that parents authorise by informing the school will be treated as authorised. Until then, if there is no prior information from parents, teachers will treat non-attendance as unauthorised and register it in that way.
- School office will follow the completed registers daily and contact parents related to students' absences on the day of absence. Information obtained from parents related to absence will be used by the school office to subsequently adjust entries from unauthorised to authorised.
- When the teacher has information from the student related to their absence, the teacher sends an email to the School office informing them and still registers the student as 'unauthorised absence'. Once the Office confirms the reason for absence with the parents of the student, the Office then adjusts the register to authorised absence.
- Secondary only: When the student is absent from multiple lessons from a specific subject, the teacher will initiate that the written contact (mail) is sent to parents through the Office with the information. The subject teacher then fills in the [BIS Behaviour form](#).
- When the staff member is covering the lesson, they need to fill in the online register with information about students' absence/presence.
- When the teacher is working from home and holding online lessons, the register needs to be completed by them.

Persistent Absenteeism

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more schooling for whatever reason.

Secondary only: The form tutor has the responsibility of overseeing attendance of their form group. When they notice that the student has missed 15% of school days, a referral to Head of Secondary is made through the [BIS behaviour form](#).

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, and the school will keep the records. Tutors/Class Teachers will initiate the contacts to be made with parents related to persistent absenteeism.

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 three consecutive days

If a student is absent we will:



BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

- 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 Head of School/Director of Education 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. Students arriving late 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 Director of Education 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 2021