



BRITISH SCHOOL OF TIRANA

Pupil Attendance Policy

2024-2025



Rationale

For a child to reach their full educational potential, a high level of school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome, both parents and pupils play a part in making our school successful. Each child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Purposes

To have clear relevant guidelines for **completing registers** which are carefully and routinely carried out by staff

To ensure that **good attendance has a high priority** with pupils, parents/carers and teachers

To clearly demonstrate stated procedures for prompt, follow up actions when there is a ***concern about an absence***.

To recognize that matters relating to the quality of the curriculum, teaching, the school's ethos and relationships with pupils and parents are most significant in ***encouraging good attendance***.

Rights, responsibilities and roles

School

In the belief that all pupils are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is lively and meets their needs, the curriculum will be regularly reviewed and developed to meet the needs of all pupils. ***The school staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality and will investigate all unexplained and unjustified absenteeism.***

All staff will understand and apply the school's registration process. All registers will be completed accurately at the beginning of each session/lesson in Primary and Secondary school. If a child is late to class, the status of the absence note (in EduPage) will be change from "Absent" to "Late" in case the student arrives to school before 09:10; otherwise, they will be marked `absent` but still allowed to join the lesson.

NB: Incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable; they provide a daily record of attendance which may be required in a Court of Law.

The school will ensure that clear attendance information is regularly communicated to parents/carers through a variety of media: the school's website, newsletters, school prospectus and parent's meetings.

The school will inform parents regularly of attendance figures and annually of the whole school attendance target via the school official communication platform EduPage.

All absenteeism and lateness will be recorded accurately and monitored through EduPage. All pupils with attendance below 95% will be monitored on a regular basis by the school, in order to identify persistent absentees and those pupils at risk of becoming persistent absentees.

The school will have clear procedures to identify and follow up all absence and lateness, allocating individual staff roles and responsibilities. ***Pupils who are consistently late will be required to complete any work missed during their own time.***

The School Director/s and Leadership Team will analyze attendance data to consider trends and/or patterns and set any action points as necessary.

Parents'/carers' Responsibilities

1. Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child regularly attends the school at which they are registered.
2. Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, appropriately dressed in the correct school uniform, equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
3. Parents/carers are responsible for informing the school at which their child is registered of the reason for any absence by text message, letter, or by email on every morning of any absence. This should be done before 9.30 a.m, or latest 12:00 p.m.
4. Parents/carers should not take their child on holiday in term time and are to be informed of the potential consequences of this.
5. Parents/carers should not take their child off school for any other family/personal matter except health emergencies during school time but make any effort to arrange all other businesses after school hours or on school holidays days.

Authorized/Unauthorized absence

All absences must be explained by a parent/carer. The school will then decide whether or not it will authorize the absence.

Acceptable reasons for the authorization of absences may be as follows:

- ✓ Illness (1)
- ✓ Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement
- ✓ Days of religious observance
- ✓ Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (2)

This list is not exhaustive.

Illness

Medical evidence may be requested where a pupil has been absent for 3 days or more due to illness OR where a pupil's attendance is below 95% and/or the pupil is regularly away from school due to illness.

Failure to provide evidence when requested may result in the absences being recorded as unauthorized. Medical evidence can be in the form of a copy of a prescription, medication or an appointment card showing the name of the child and date they visited. If a child is diagnosed with a medical condition, evidence should be provided.

All routine (non-emergency) appointments should be made, wherever possible, outside of school hours. Should a pupil need to have an appointment during school hours, such as an emergency or hospital/ doctor appointment, evidence of this will need to be provided. Failure to provide evidence may result in the school recording the absence as unauthorized.

If a student is absent for medical / health reasons, a doctor's certificate should be submitted and / or a parent note explaining reasons for the absence. A parent note should also be sent for any other absence non-related to health / medical reasons.

Parent's notes for absences (via EduPage) up to 2 days should be sent directly to the Homeroom/ Form teacher. If calling the school instead of EduPage messages, the Receptionist will collect the information and pass it on to Director and Form Teacher. Parent's absence notes for longer than 2 days should be sent to School Director/s at Director@britishschooloftirana.al (Primary School) and Director.Secondary@britishschooloftirana.com (Secondary School)

Holidays in term time / Leave of absence

The School Director may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. These will be decided on an individual basis.

Requesting the absence: All requests for a pupil to be absent from school during term time must be made in writing (by email to director@britishschooloftirana.al for Primary School and Director.Secondary@britishschooloftirana.com for Secondary School) and at least a month in advance of the proposed absence.

The School Principal will decide whether or not to authorize the absence, on a case by case basis, and will only do so where there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Where a decision is made not to authorize a request for a leave of absence, the school will write to the parents/carers, notifying them of that decision.

If no absence request is made: If a pupil is absent from school during term time and no prior absence request has been made, the school will write to the parents/carers to inform them that the absence has not been authorised.

Pupils Responsibilities

1. Pupils will ensure that they attend school regularly and on time.
2. Pupils will attend all lessons punctually.
3. Pupils **will not** leave the school premises without permission.

Procedures for following up absence/lateness

1. On each day of absence, the parent/carer should contact school via email or EduPage message **before 9.30 am** to inform the office that their child will be absent from school and give a reason for that absence. An indication of the likely period of absence is to be requested by the school.
2. Receptions staff must keep a log of absence calls and reasons received each day.
3. Registration marks must be made available immediately after registration in order that, where necessary, any absenteeism can be followed up by admin staff.
4. If any member of staff is concerned about an absence, they will liaise with the School Principal to clarify any reasons or knowledge for the absence.

Lateness / Leaving School Earlier

There are two negative results caused by pupils who constantly arrive late or leave earlier. These are:

- The loss of education suffered by the pupil which over a year can add up to a significant proportion of their time in school missed.
- The disruption to other pupils in their class as the teacher's attention is diverted from the lessons being taught. This also applies to request to leave earlier which still results in missing part of the lesson/s or other school activities.

The strategies that the school will use to tackle lateness will include:

1. School gates will be locked promptly at 09.00 at the start of the school day.
2. Pupils who arrive before 09.05 am are considered 'Late' (L). They will join class but will be marked as Late (L) in class register.
3. Children who arrive after 9.10 am will be marked 'Absent'. They will join class but will be marked as 'Absent' in class register.
4. Notification for leaving school earlier should be send to Form Teacher / class teacher via EduPage the day before including exact time of pick up from school.

The pupil will be asked to wait at reception to be picked up. The lesson's missed will be marked as absence.

Should a form/class teacher have particular concerns about an individual pupil's attendance or punctuality they should try and speak to the parents direct (at the beginning / end of the day or during parents' evenings). If this is not possible then the class teacher should bring it to the attention of the School Director.

The school will endeavor to work closely with parents should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern.

All pupil's attendance records will be entered regularly in EduPage register by class/subject teacher (Absentee and Lateness) at the beginning of each period. These records will be checked for accuracy by Director/s and then officially reported every term.

For absentees over a total number of hours per term / year the Albanian legislation will be followed and more specifically:

1. Student in Year 5 to 10 who have more than 35% to 50% of lessons period absence in one academic year is marked as a non-Pass for that academic year in the specific subject/s.
2. Students in Year 11 -13 who is absent for more than 30% of the total annual periods in a specific subject is marked as non-Pass for that subject. If the same number of absentees is verified for the entire lessons plan of the year than the students have to repeat the entire academic year.
3. Students in Primary who are absent for up to 35% of the lessons in one subject and students in Secondary who are absent for up to 30% of the total number of lessons in one subject, are tested by the teacher on the specific knowledge / topics missed due to absentees. The grade for these tests is reported separately.
4. Students in Year 11-13 who have more than 30 non justified absences receive written warning from the school Principal. The same students might be expelled from school if being absent for a further 15 non justifies absences.
5. For students both in Primary and Secondary who are absent for more the 25% of the total number of lessons in an academic year, the School Principal is required by law to inform in writing the local Education Department office.

Justified absence is considered when supported by a medical certificate or a parent's note explaining the reasons for absence. These parent's notes are sent to the Form Teacher / Homeroom teacher if the absence is of 1-2 days and should be sent to Director/s for longer absences. The school will decide based on the reasons for absence whether to consider it and record it as a justified or as an unjustified absence.

Attendance letters

Whole school attendance will be monitored on a half termly basis and the following actions taken:

Attendance 1 letter will be sent out to parents/guardians advising that their child's attendance has dropped below 95%

Attendance 2 letter will be sent out if attendance does not improve, inviting parents/carers into a meeting with the Director.

Attendance 3 letter will be sent if parents/carers do not attend the meeting and/or there is still no improvement following letters 1 and 2, inviting parents/carers into another meeting with the Director.

If, at any time, a pupil has 10 or more unauthorized absences equating to 10% within a 6 months period, the school should consider whether or not the pupil is still on track to pass that academic year.



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Secondary School