



# Attendance Policy

At BIS Abu Dhabi we aim to encourage and assist all students to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality. Good attendance is essential for all students to reach their potential and take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. We recognise that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and securing excellent student progress, enabling students in our school community to maximise their learning.

- This policy aims to support us all to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality
- This policy establishes the attendance requirements that must be included in the school-based attendance procedures for all Abu Dhabi Education and Knowledge Council (ADEK) schools

## Responsibilities & Expectations.

- All students are expected to attend school regularly and punctually, ready to learn.
- The school will provide a safe learning environment and maintain records of attendance according to legislation and guidance on a daily basis.
- Only senior leaders with directed authority from the Principal will authorise absence.
- The school will provide attendance details as part of the annual reporting to parents.
- Details of poor attendance/punctuality will be reported to subsequent schools.
- Parents have a legal obligation to ensure their child attends school. They do not automatically have the right to take them on holiday during term time.
- Parents are expected to ensure their child attends school regularly, on time, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- Parents must inform the school on the 1st day of absence by 7:30am by telephoning the main reception or emailing the class teacher/tutor.
- Parents must give a reason for their child's absence. Parents will also maintain daily contact with the school until child returns to school unless parents have been given a particular time of absence by a doctor, e.g. 3 days leave to recover from infectious illness.
- Parents are requested to provide medical evidence for absence due to medical reasons.
- Registers can be monitored on a regular basis by ADEK. They may ask to see parents if attendance is not satisfactory.
- For students who use the bus we kindly request that parents contact the Support Assistant via the mobile phone number provided no later than 6:30am on that day. This avoids other students being late for school because of unnecessary delays.

## If a student is absent the school will:

- Record any absences as authorised or unauthorised according to current ADEK guidelines (see Appendix 2).
- If notification is not received, the school will contact parents by 9:00am on the first day of absence and record the reply directly on to the school management information system (MIS).
- Contact parents requesting a reason for absence if it has not been provided.



### Absence due to Medical Appointments

- We request that all medical appointments, if possible, are made outside of school hours.
- We request that appointment cards or verification by the doctor/dentist/hospital is provided by parents
- We expect that students will return to school directly after the appointment.
- If a medical appointment is known in advance parents must notify the school in writing. If an emergency appointment is made please phone the school by 7:30am.
- Notification must be given if a student needs to leave school during the day. The student will be provided with a slip to confirm that they have been cleared to leave and have been entered on to the school management system.

### Term Time Holiday

Term time holiday is not recognised as a valid reason to be absent – no leave of absence will be granted for this reason.

### Exceptional leave of absence

- Parents may make an application for leave of absence for an exceptional circumstances
- Those delegated by the Principal will decide whether this application will be granted
- Those delegated by the Principal will decide the number of days granted for any leave of absence
- Leave of absence taken without permission will be unauthorised
- The school will decide what is deemed as an exceptional circumstance
- Requests for absence in cases where students are known to have already had 10 days of absence in the school year will be denied.

### Punctuality

**In Nursery and Foundation Stage:** Students are expected to be dropped off at their classrooms from 7:30am and must be in class by 7:45am. Registers close at 8:00am. If a child is not in class by 8:00am they will be marked as late.

**In Primary:** Students are expected to be at school at 7:30am and be on the playground lined up and ready to sing the National Anthem at 7:45am prompt. The children will then be taken inside, and the register will close at 8:00am. Any child not in class by 8am will be marked as late.

**In Secondary:** Students are expected to be at school at 7:30am and must be in their form room no later than 7:40am. Registers close at 7:45am. Any child not in class by 7:45am will be marked as late.

It is important that all students are safe and accounted for at all times during the day. Any student arriving after 7:50 will have to enter through the main gate and reception. Security will not allow them to enter through other gates. Unexplained absence is monitored very carefully. Parents whose children are regularly late for school will be contacted by a member of school staff who will work with parent(s) to bring about a rapid improvement in punctuality.

All students need to be collected promptly at the end of the school day. Please be aware that late collection has a drain on school resources that should be used for enhancing after school



provision (e.g. CCAs.). Persistent late collection affects your child and the opportunities of others.

In secondary students are able to access the library to work independently until 4pm each day. At this point they will be escorted to main reception to wait for collection. If a student has an externally run club (swimming etc.) later in the evening, they will still need to be collected at the end of the school day and return to school to attend the club. Students cannot be left unsupervised.

### Monitoring Attendance

- It is expected that students are in school 97% of the time (thus allowing for illness and the odd exceptional reason). Parents of students with less than 94% attendance will be notified.
- Registration details are transferred to an electronic database, which is a legal document.
- The school will follow up persistent lateness, all absences and students with low levels of attendance.
- The school will monitor attendance on a daily/weekly basis.
- Students with persistent absences will automatically be discussed with the School Attendance Lead and appropriate action identified and agreed.

### Records

- The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for the duration of a child's time at BIS Abu Dhabi.
- Rates of attendance will be reported to the senior team on a regular basis and in the school performance summary.
- When attendance falls below 90%, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue. When it falls below 85%, parents will be invited to a meeting and the student will be made known to the School Attendance Lead.

### Persistent Absenteeism

A student is classed as a 'Persistent Absentee' (PA) when they miss 15% or more schooling across the year for whatever reason. Absence at this level damages any student's educational potential. We will try to work with parents to improve attendance rates quickly. When absence begins to reflect this level, persistent absentees are monitored carefully through our pastoral system, this is combined with academic support where absence adversely affects attainment. All persistent absentees are automatically made known to the School Attendance Lead.

### Rewards for Good Attendance

The school aims to ensure children develop an intrinsic love of attending school and develop their understanding of the importance that good attendance has on their life chances. In order to move towards this, we use rewards as a tool. This includes:

- Certificates celebrating children who have achieved 97% attendance or higher
- Certificates to reward children who have achieved 100% attendance for the end of the year
- Weekly class trophies that are awarded to the class in each phase of the Primary school for the best attendance.



## Appendix 1 – Term Time Request Form

### Term Time Leave – Request for Absence.

Request for absence in term time must be made, by a parent or guardian, **at least ten school days in advance** of that leave.

Term time absence from school will be 'authorised' **for an exceptional reason only** - please refer to the school's Attendance Policy for guidance.

Examples of 'unauthorised' absence include, but are not limited to, family holiday and vacations in term time; social events; non-urgent family travel; appointments without prior approval and other reasons not included in the 'unauthorised' list.

Please note that in accordance with school procedures an 'unauthorised' absence will result in the following actions:

- More than 10 days 'unauthorised' absence will trigger a referral to the Assistant Head Teacher for Student Wellbeing.
- More than 20 days 'unauthorised' absence will trigger a referral to the Head of School and a request for a parent consultation.
- The school is requested to submit periodic reports upon student absence(s) to ADEK.

STUDENT NAMES	CLASS/FORM	CLASS/FORM TEACHER	START DATE	END DATE

#### REASON FOR ABSENCE

PARENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PARENT SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

AUTHORISED/NOT AUTHORISED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

#### REASON FOR NON-AUTHORISATION:



## Appendix 2 – Authorised Circumstances

### Exceptional Circumstances

The school will actively seek to work with parents where there is a genuine difficulty with attendance.

Support strategies will be put in place for individual pupils where appropriate.

When a child has an illness that means he/she will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send work home, so that they can keep up with their school work where this is appropriate.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will review this provision and work with the family and any other service (e.g. hospital).

### Authorised Absence

A student's absence from school will be considered 'authorised' only for the following reasons:

- Personal illness
- A scheduled medical appointment (that couldn't take place out of school time)
- Death of a very close relative
- Taking part in an approved public performance or sport event
- Study leave
- A field trip or educational visit
- An official community task
- A mandatory appearance before an official
- Essential urgent family travel (i.e. medical treatment, death of immediate family member)

Request for term time leave must be made by a parent using the school's 'Request for Term Time Leave' form (Appendix 1) at least ten school days in advance and accompanied by appropriate documentation e.g. medical certificate.