



# **BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

## **SECONDARY DEPARTMENT**

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In line with our vision, we aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend school regularly and your child should be at school on time and every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is the responsibility of the student to catch up on all work missed in class. Parents withdrawing students from school for any other reason should consider that the classroom experience can never be 'made up' with extra work sent home, and as such, absences have a negative impact on the student's educational progress and may affect their promotion to the next year level.

It is very important therefore, to ensure that your child attends regularly. This policy sets out how we will achieve this together.

#### **1.1 IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDANCE**

**Learning:** Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence can disrupt teaching routines thus affecting the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is the parents' responsibility.

**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 in December, April and June on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment.
- Regular communication will be sent out to parents of students whose attendance is becoming a concern.
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, awards and certificates.
- Stress the importance of attendance at PTA meetings and relay the message that poor attendance can affect your child's attainment negatively.
- When attendance reaches a level that may result in serious repercussions we will offer your child an attendance contract.

## 1.2 RELEVANT DEFINITIONS

### Excused and Unexcused Absences

- **Excused** absence of one day for a good reason like illness or family emergencies if communicated by a parent. Please note that for an Excused absence of more than one day, a doctor's note is required.
- **Unexcused** absence is when there has been no communication from a parent about an absence or if the absence is for two or more days and a doctor's note has not been received. Suspension is also an unexcused absence.

## 1.3 PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when their attendance record is a cause for concern. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to the child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and cooperation to tackle this. Some of the actions that may be taken by the school are:

- Warning letter issued to parents by the school after recognition of ongoing absence problems.
- Meeting with parents to establish circumstances.
- Attendance agreement set up between parents, student and school.

- If attendance agreement is not adhered to, then the child will be cited to be in breach of the pre-existing agreement and a document will be drawn up to reflect this.
- Failure to abide by the attendance policy of the school will then be considered with regard to non-promotion for the next academic year.

**If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence and inform us as to why your child is not in school via [info@bisghana.com.gh](mailto:info@bisghana.com.gh)
- Inform us if the absence is likely to be more than 1 day and obtain a doctor's note if you wish the absence to be recorded as excused absence.
- Keep us informed on any subsequent days of absence.

#### **1.4 ABSENCE PROCEDURES BY THE SCHOOL**

- Telephone on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- Telephone on the third consecutive day of continual absence, unless this period of absence is indicated in the first communication.
- Invite parents to discuss the situation with our Vice Principal if absences persist.

#### **1.5 REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

British International School strongly disapproves of students being removed from school whilst school is in session (e.g. for vacation purposes). Leave of absence is given at the discretion of the school. If holidays are taken during the term, they will be marked as unexcused absences. All students who attend a school day trip or overnight excursion will be marked as present.

The school will not consent to an absence during the following times:

- When a student is just starting the school. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.
- Immediately before and during assessment periods, school examinations and external examinations.
- When a student's attendance record already includes a high level of absence
- **If a student takes holiday leave or has absences for greater than 15 consecutive/ non-consecutive days, then this student may be retained within his/her current year level at the end of the academic year. All absence shall be recorded as such on the student's report.**

Students must be in school for the total number of school days for a term; unless necessary permission has been granted by the school.

## 1.6 PUNCTUALITY PROCEDURES

- Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they will miss important work and time with their form tutor. They will miss vital information and news for the day.
- Late arriving students also ***disrupt lessons. This can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.***
- BIS requires students to be in their **classroom during the silence hour period starting at 7:30 am** and if a student arrives after silence hour time (7:45am – 8:00am), they will be registered as present but will still be marked late by their class teacher.
- **The school gates will be locked at 8:05 am; students will not be allowed entry to the school premises.**
- The school has targets to improve attendance. You and your child have an important part to play in meeting these targets.
- Our target is to achieve 98% attendance. This is rated as outstanding to drive the point home that attendance is the key to successful schooling and high attainment.