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15b Attendance Policy

Policies in School	**Part 2**
ISI	Part 3. Welfare Health and Safety – Admissions and attendance
Author Led	Headteacher
Date of Review	November 2026
Next Review	November 2027
Comment	Annual Review
Website	Yes

Aims of this Policy

The aims of this policy is for The British International School Casablanca to maintain high levels of school attendance and plan the school day and year. This policy has been written with regard to the following:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2016 (Amended)
- DFE Working to Improve School Attendance July 2026 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a4f9ec6a6586e258d371bd0/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_2026.pdf)
- The Ministry of Education Morocco https://www.men.gov.ma/Ar/Pages/Accueil.aspx

School Attendance

We believe that central to raising standards in education and ensuring all students can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – students need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less and this was more than ably demonstrated by the impact of COVID-19 on student performance in 2021 external examinations.

In order to achieve this, we will:

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- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Expect parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- Expect all students to be punctual to their lessons.

Moroccan Legal Context

Moroccan legislation establishes compulsory education and places responsibility on parents to ensure regular attendance. However, unlike the UK, it does not prescribe attendance percentage thresholds or an equivalent system of routine enforcement and parental fines.

BISC therefore uses its own attendance thresholds to monitor concerns, support students and work with families. These are internal measures, not statutory requirements under Moroccan law. Serious or prolonged unexplained absences may be referred to the relevant Moroccan authorities where appropriate.

The Admission and Attendance Registers

The law requires us to have an admission register and an attendance register. All students (regardless of their age) must be placed on both registers.

Contents of Admission Register

The admission register must contain the personal details of every student in the school, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.

Expected First Day of Attendance

The Administration Team will enter students on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the student will attend the school. For most students the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year. If a student fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school must establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

Deletions from the Admission Register

A student can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Any permanent exclusions will be carried out following the procedures outlined in the Admissions and Exclusions Policy.

Deletions due to Unpaid Fees

The school may, additionally, delete a student from its admission register where the fees remain unpaid at the end of the school term. Where fees are unpaid, The British International School Casablanca will, before removing the student, consider whether removing the child would have a significant negative effect on his or her education and whether it can be mitigated.

Amendments to the Admission Register and Attendance Register

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The admission and attendance registers must be maintained accurately and kept up to date. Any amendments must be made by authorised members of staff, with appropriate records maintained to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the school's records.

Preservation of the Admission Register and Attendance Register

Every entry in the admission register and attendance register will be preserved for a period of no less than six years after the date on which the entry was made.

Whole School Attendance Champions

Given the recent directive from the UK's Department of Education, the school already recognises the importance of this critical role and can confirm the following is already in place:

- The Junior School – The Office Manager with the assistance from the Head of EYFS and the Head of Junior School.
- The Prep School – The Office Manager with assistance from the Head of Prep School.
- The Senior School – The Office Manager with assistance from the Head of Senior School.

Daily administration of the Attendance Register

The Junior School and The Prep School form tutors will take the daily attendance register using the schools MIS (SchoolBase) at the start of the first session of each school day (08.00 – 08.10am), whereas Senior School students will be registered as soon as they enter Gate C in the morning.

They must record whether every student is:

- / - Present
- O - Absent
- L – Late

Office Managers will then run their attendance report at 09.15am. Any absence for which no explanation has been received must be followed up with parents on the first day of absence.

The purpose of this contact is to:

- Establish the reason for absence.
- Determine whether the absence can be authorised.
- Establish the expected duration of the absence, where possible.
- Ensure that any relevant safeguarding concerns are identified and addressed.
- Update the attendance register accordingly.

Where a parent initially reports an absence for a specified period, but the student remains absent beyond that period, further contact must be made to establish the reason for the continuing absence.

Where parents cannot be contacted, the school will make further attempts using the emergency contact information held on record.

Afternoon Attendance and Departure from School

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The school does not operate a separate afternoon form-tutor registration session. As a closed site, students are expected to remain on the school premises throughout the school day unless authorised to leave.

Teachers are responsible for recording attendance in their lessons and reporting any unexplained absence to the relevant office or pastoral team.

Key Stage 5 students

Key Stage 5 students whose timetables do not require them to attend Period 6 may leave the school premises at the end of Period 5. Students must be collected by their parent or guardian, or by their designated family driver. Students are not permitted to leave the premises independently during the school day.

Other students

Students in EYFS, Junior, Prep and Key Stages 3 and 4 may only leave the school premises during the school day with authorisation from their parent or guardian and approval from the relevant Office Manager or Head of School.

All departures must be recorded by the relevant school office to ensure that the school maintains an accurate record of students leaving the premises.

Late Arrivals

Students arriving at school after 8.10am will be directed to the Gate C area, where they will remain under supervision until 9.05am, when Lesson 2 commences.

The designated member of staff stationed at the Block C gate will record all late-arriving students on the attendance register, ensuring that their arrival is accurately recorded. At 9.05am, Junior School students will be escorted to their respective classrooms by a Teaching Assistant, who will maintain supervision throughout the transition. Prep and Senior School students will be permitted to return to their classrooms independently to attend Lesson 2.

Parental Responsibility

Parents and guardians are expected to inform the school of any absence on the first day that their child is unable to attend. Where possible, they should provide the anticipated duration of the absence and keep the school informed if the absence continues beyond the period initially reported.

Where a student has a planned appointment, such as a medical or dental appointment, parents should notify the school at least 24 hours in advance wherever possible.

Absence and Attendance Codes

The codes established in the UK enables us to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the ISI regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the SchoolBase MIS.

If a student is not present, and the form teacher KNOWS the reason, the following codes should be used (authorised absence). These codes may also be added to the O code for unauthorised absence if the person taking the register was not aware of the student's whereabouts;

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Code	Reason	Note
C	Consent given for absence	Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Each application will be considered individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
E	Excluded with no alternative provision made	
H	Family Holiday authorised by the Headteacher	The application must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a student can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at her discretion
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	Parents should notify school on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Absences due to illness will be authorised unless we have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, we will request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. We will record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but will advise parents of our intention. We will not request medical evidence unnecessarily.
M	Medical or dental appointments	We encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.
S	Study leave	Study leave will be used sparingly and only granted to students during public examinations. Provision will still be made available for those student who want to continue to come into school to revise.
V	Students on an academic trip	During the course of the academic year the school will run a number of day and residential trips. These are known in advance and so staff will be able to record this as and when required.

If a student is not present, and the form teacher does NOT KNOW the reason, the following codes should be used (unauthorised absence);

Code	Reason	Note
O	Absent from school without authorization	If a student is not present during registration this mark with be entered, additional codes may be added to the register if a valid reason is discovered.
G	Holiday not authorised or in excess of the period determined by the Headteacher.	If a leave of absence is not authorised for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. Retrospective approval will not be given. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	This code maybe entered within the **O** code for unauthorised absence

Setting School Term Dates and Holidays

The British International School Casablanca operates for 38 weeks. Term dates are set by the Senior Leadership Term and every effort is made to incorporate the school holiday dates set by the UK Local Education Authorities, in order that we coincide with the public examination dates. Staff INSET days are included in the 38 weeks.

The School Day and Year

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The school year is divided into three terms: Autumn (September to December), Spring (January to March, or occasionally April) and Summer (April to July). Each term includes a one-week half-term break.

The school day operates as follows:

- **Years 1–6:** 8.00am–4.00pm.
- **Years 7–13:** 8.00am–3.00pm, except where students participate in an extra-curricular activity, which may run from 3.00pm–4.00pm.
- **Sixth Form (Years 12–13):** Students may arrive at 9.00am if they do not have a timetabled Period 1 lesson. Students may leave the school premises at 1.10pm if they do not have a timetabled Period 6 lesson.
- **EYFS:** 9.00am–3.00pm.

Students are expected to attend all lessons and activities included in their individual timetables.

Part-time Attendance

All students of compulsory school age are expected to attend school for a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a student's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a student from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

Persistent Absence

Students whose attendance falls below 90% may be classified as persistently absent and may be subject to closer monitoring and appropriate intervention.

The school recognises that there may be legitimate reasons for a student's attendance falling below 90%, including medical conditions, ongoing medical treatment, family circumstances and international travel relating to residency or visa requirements.

Attendance figures will therefore be considered alongside the reasons for absence, the individual circumstances of the student and any support arrangements in place. Falling below the 90% threshold will not automatically result in sanctions or formal intervention.

The school recognises that attendance concerns can emerge before a student reaches this threshold. Patterns of absence, repeated lateness and individual circumstances will therefore be considered when determining whether further support or intervention is necessary.

Monitoring Attendance

Attendance is monitored regularly by the Senior Leadership Team, with day-to-day administrative responsibility delegated to the relevant Office Managers and oversight provided by the respective Heads of School.

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Office Managers will review attendance records, identify emerging patterns of absence and lateness, follow up unexplained absences and bring concerns to the attention of the relevant Head of School.

The Heads of School will meet with their respective Office Managers twice each half-term to review attendance and punctuality, identify students causing concern and agree appropriate follow-up actions.

Steps for tackling poor attendance

The school will take appropriate steps to address attendance concerns and provide support where necessary. These may include:

- Liaising with students and parents to identify the reasons for absence and agree appropriate support.
- Reviewing attendance and punctuality regularly, with concerns and progress communicated to parents.
- Introducing an attendance improvement plan where appropriate.
- Considering a temporary part-time timetable in exceptional circumstances, where this is considered to be in the student's best interests. This may include students with diagnosed medical conditions that prevent full-time attendance. Any arrangement will be agreed with parents and reviewed regularly, with the aim of returning to full-time attendance where possible.

Sanctions

Attendance below 90% will prompt a review of the student's circumstances and may result in additional monitoring or intervention. Any further action will be considered on an individual basis, taking into account the reasons for absence, the student's welfare and academic progress, and the support already provided.

Where attendance concerns remain unresolved, the school may consider further action in accordance with its relevant academic, pastoral and admissions policies. The school reserves the right to withhold a student's progression to the next academic year or withdraw their entry for public examinations. Any such decision will be made on an individual basis, taking into account the circumstances of the absence, the student's academic progress and the support provided by the school.

Following the introduction of the Junior, Prep and Senior School structure, this policy was first reviewed in December 2025 to ensure that it remained appropriate and workable across all phases. It was reviewed again in November 2026 and will continue to be reviewed annually, or sooner if required.

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