

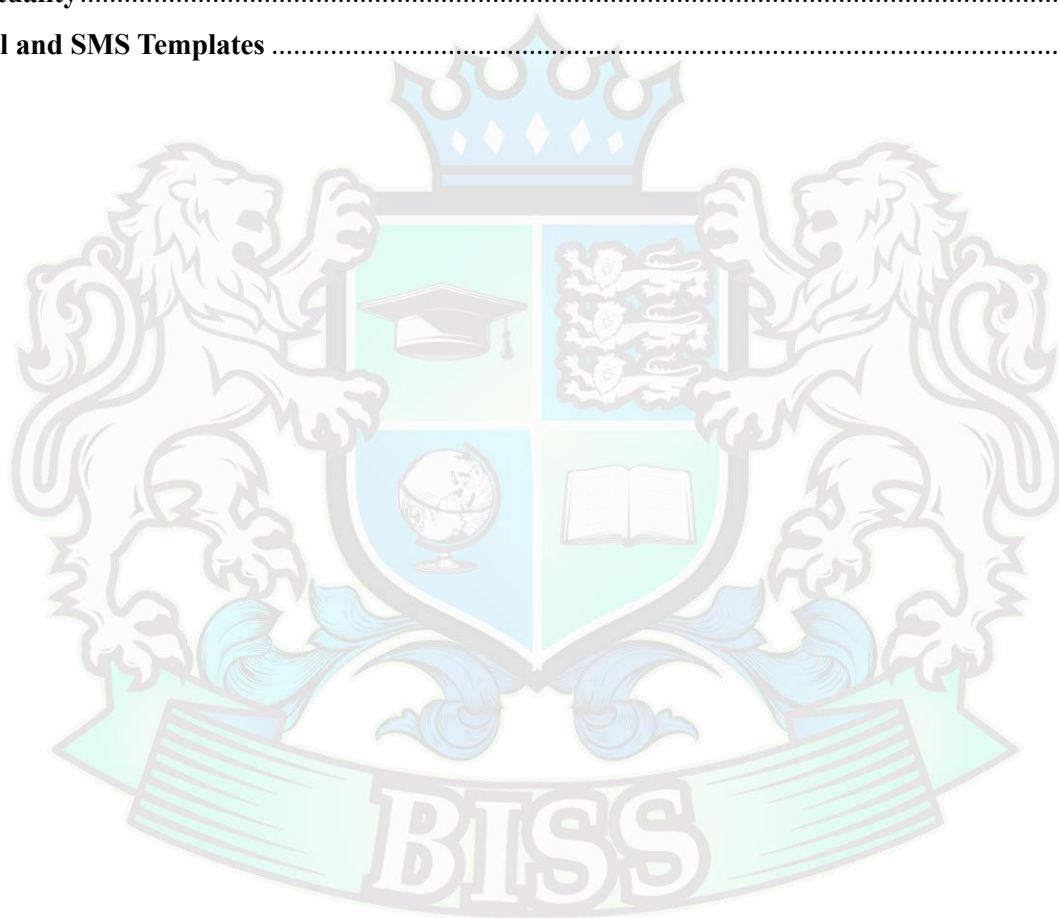


BALANCE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL SURATTHANI
โรงเรียนนานาชาติ บาลานซ์ สุราษฎร์ธานี

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Rationale

We know that excellent attendance and punctuality impacts positively and directly on student outcomes. It is the collective responsibility of school, parents and students to ensure that children attend regularly over the duration of their education careers. Students must ensure they achieve and maintain excellent attendance in order to meet the school's expectations and satisfy the ongoing requirements of the school's admission policy. The school recognises that poor attendance impacts both directly on the child not attending school, but also on the class upon returning to the school. Whilst teaching staff are committed to ensuring they do all they can to ensure students are reintegrated into the curriculum after a period of absence, the school recognises the opportunity cost to all providing ongoing interventions.

This policy is in line with the UAE Federal Inspection Framework and the requirements of ADEK, the local regulatory body.

A **summary** of what the school expects of parents:

- Parents will do all that is possible to ensure their child has 100% attendance.
- Parents provide a written child note to the Class Teacher/Form Tutor explaining why he/she has been absent on his/her return to school. The note should detail the days a child has been absent and the reasons for this absence.
- Parents wishing to take their children out of school for any reason, other than that caused by short-term illness, are required to seek permission in advance to remove a child and explain why they wish to do so. A **Student Leave of Absence Form, Early Leave Form** is available (see below).

We ask parents to note the following:

- Absences above ten days in an academic year will lead to review in line with the school's Admission Policy, expectations and school readiness for promotion to the next year group.
- It is often not possible provide work for students who are absent, particularly when they are very young and their lessons increasingly depend on a high level of teacher involvement.
- Not to take their child out of school during term time. The school's approach to the design of its annual Term Dates i.e. ensuring holiday periods of around three weeks at the end of the First Term, a two weeks holiday at the end of the Second or during the Third Term and the long summer holidays, ensures we can expect the vast majority of families to accommodate family holidays within the designated school holidays.

Roles and Responsibilities

Promoting and maintaining excellent attendance is a team effort of all stakeholders with a more detailed outlined of each stakeholder's responsibilities set out below.

Core Leadership Team.

As part of our whole/core school approach to maintaining high attendance, the core leadership team will:

- be active in their approach to promoting excellent attendance to students and parents, including forming positive relationships with families at every opportunity
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning encourage excellent attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own progress and achievement
- coordinate with the Parent Council (as appropriate) to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an annual full review
- ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance process and expectations including via reporting to parents
- ensure Heads of Schools and Assistant Head of Schools monitor and promote excellent attendance
- ensure systems to record attendance are in place and effective

Teachers and admin staff

As part of our whole school approach to maintain high attendance, teachers and admin staff will:

- be active in their approach to promoting excellent attendance to students and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage excellent attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement
- ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance process and that they will speak to another member of staff or seek support from their Head of School or Assistant Head of School if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue
- ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken daily/ lesson by lesson as per school guidance.

Parents

As part of our whole-school approach to achieving excellent attendance, we request that parents:

- engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school
- promote importance of excellent school attendance as part of an outstanding education
- encourage and support their children's aspirations
- ensure that their children arrive at school on time (including being appropriately dressed and with the necessary equipment)

- follow the set school procedure for reporting the absence of their child from school using the **Student Leave of Absence Form, Early Leave Form** and include an expected date for return
- do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside school hours
- use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school to ensure good communication (if problems arise)
- keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance
- enforce a regular routine with homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance
- do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time. If parents would like to make a special request for this, they may do so to the Head of School.
- inform the school in advance of any proposed change of address for their child(ren) along with the name of the parent with whom the child shall live.
- acknowledge and agree to the school's home-school agreement and expectations.

Students

As part of our whole school ethos to maintaining excellent attendance, we expect students to:

- be aware of and adhere to the school's attendance expectations
- speak to their form tutor if experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance
- be "learning ready" with the appropriate learning equipment and uniform at all lessons.
- bring a note of explanation from their parents to explain all absences
- follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance and is important for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation
- Acknowledge and agree to the school's home-school agreement and expectations as asset out in the school's parent.

Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences

Absences will be treated as **unauthorised** unless a satisfactory explanation for the student's absence is given to the school. Parents cannot authorise absences.

Staff must make clear on the school register, when registering attendance, whether a child's absence is authorised or unauthorised. Where staff have concerns regarding absences, they should follow the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.

When a child is to be absent from school without prior permission, parents should inform the class teacher (primary) or form tutors (secondary) by telephone or email on the first day of absence and let them know what date they expect the child to return. For a prolonged absence,

this should be followed up with a written note from the parent of the child. Alternative arrangements will be made individually with non-English speaking parents.

Illness

Parents should make every effort to ensure all non-urgent medical appointments are made outside school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, students should attend school for as much of that day as possible. Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents will need to **make a telephone call to alert the school on the first day/each day of absence.**

When the child returns to school, they should bring a note from their parent explaining the absence – **this is for the school records.** For prolonged absence due to illness, parents may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence such as a note from the child's doctor, an appointment card letter. If these are not provided on request it may result in the absence continuing to be classed as unauthorised.

If a child is sick and not at school, we ask the family to let us know as early as possible and no later than 8.15 am on the same day. This should be by line to the class teacher AND reception at Line Official (<https://lin.ee/3cVnQ7N>), informing the class teacher or reception in person or contacting the teacher on Class Dojo is important, although an email must be sent as well. If the school has not been informed by the family by 8.15 am (as part of our safeguarding procedure), we aim to contact the family to make sure their child is safe. If you know in advance that your child will be absent (i.e. for the reasons above apart from sickness) please collect, complete and return to reception a copy of the **Student Leave of Absence Form, Early Leave Form.** This will be reviewed by the Head of School and returned to you indicating to you whether the absence will be authorized or unauthorized. Leave will only be authorized if the child's attendance is already very good.

Family holidays and extended leave: Parents should make every effort to ensure that family holidays and extended leave are arranged outside of school term time. Parents may request a leave of absence during term time where there are exceptional circumstances. Requests for leave of this type must be made in writing to the Head of School via their Head of School. In the case of unforeseen circumstances, such as a family bereavement that requires the child to travel to another country, this will be taken into consideration. Exclusion: Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence. The Head of School, via class teachers (primary) and form tutor/subject teacher (secondary), will arrange for work to be sent home. **Religious observance** - We recognise that there may be times where children observe religious events if they fall outside of school holidays and weekends and will allow authorised absence for these times. Parents will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.

Study leave

The school may have a limited period of study leave leading up to external examinations where students are granted authorised absence to revise at home. The school operates study sessions at school within this time to help with revision and to reduce the amount of time spent out of school.

Retrospective applications

Will not be considered, and this time taken will be processed as unauthorised absence. The Head of School may only grant such requests in exceptional circumstances and the Head of School's decision is final on whether the request is approved, and the length of absence approved.

All requests for authorised absence will be responded to in writing and will outline the details of when the child is expected to return to school. Parents should contact the school immediately if there will be a cause for delay from the stated date of return.

Truancy

Truancy is strictly prohibited and considered a Level 2 violation by the local ADEK regulatory body. Any unauthorized absences of 10 consecutive days or more may ultimately result in the permanent removal of a child's place from the school. For repeated unauthorized absences, we may either permanently exclude a student or withdraw their place for the following academic year. Students are considered to be truant (i.e. unauthorized absence) if they are absent from school without their family's knowledge or consent, or if families have colluded with the student so that they are absent without authorization.

Rewarding good attendance

At the end of October, December, February and April the school's social workers will send emails and a letter (signed by the school Head of School) to families where attendance is less than 96% and where a child has been late more than 10% of the time. We reward and encourage 'Very Good' attendance through announcements of classes with 100% attendance. Every week the class with the best attendance is announced in year group assemblies, they then hold the attendance certificate for the week and are announced in the newsletter. On a termly basis

children with full or significantly improved attendance and excellent punctuality receive a certificate and award.

Punctuality

Late arrival

Morning registration takes place on the school playground (subject to appropriate weather) between 8:00am and 8:15am.

- Students arriving with parents after 8.00am (upon commencement of the National Anthem) will register as "late" before entering the school playground at 8.00am (after the National Anthem has been played).
- Students arriving after 8.15am will register directly in the schools' Reception to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that all students are accounted for. Reception will be accessible between 8.15am and 8.30am
- A register is also taken at the start of all subject lessons by the subject teacher, and any unexplained absences reported back to Reception. If a student is late to the lesson this will be recorded on the register.

EYFS – Nursery (FS1) and FS2 Students

Parents who arrive before 7:30 am should not leave their children with security. They must be safeguarded by the guardian/parent until the security allows them into the building between 7:30 and 8:00 am. Whilst parents or guardians are welcome to drop off at their child's classroom., they should leave as soon as possible after their child is entering the classroom to ensure a safe and prompt start to the school day.

Persistent lateness may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student and/or possibly non-re-enrolment into the next academic year.

First Day Calling. Reception staff will telephone home in all incidents of unexplained absences. This is in line with the school's safeguarding policy, expectations, and drivers.

After school pick-up and bus departure

Parents must ensure to pick up their child on time during the following dismissal times:

Monday – Thursday

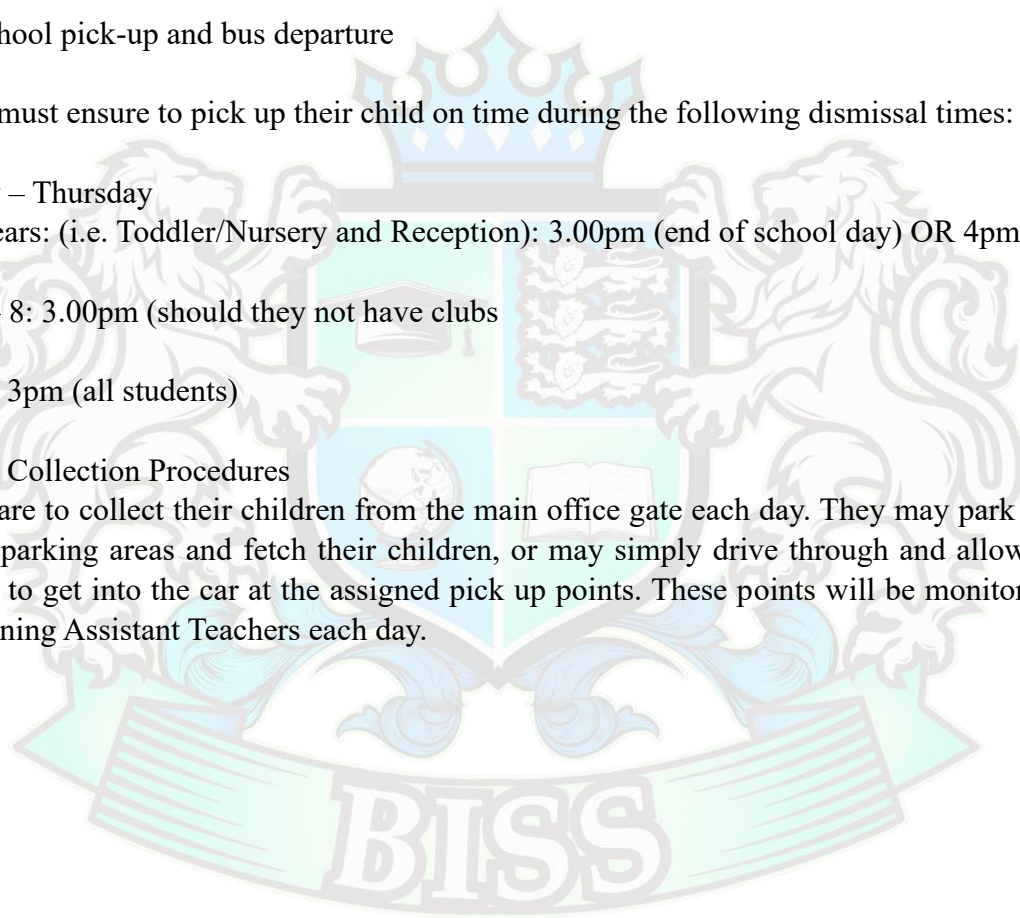
Early Years: (i.e. Toddler/Nursery and Reception): 3.00pm (end of school day) OR 4pm (after ECAs)

Year 1 – 8: 3.00pm (should they not have clubs)

Fridays: 3pm (all students)

Campus Collection Procedures

Parents are to collect their children from the main office gate each day. They may park in the allotted parking areas and fetch their children, or may simply drive through and allow their children to get into the car at the assigned pick up points. These points will be monitored by the Learning Assistant Teachers each day.



Email and SMS Templates

Email and short SMS that will be sent to families by the receptionist on the first day of unauthorised absence:

Email

Dear Family,

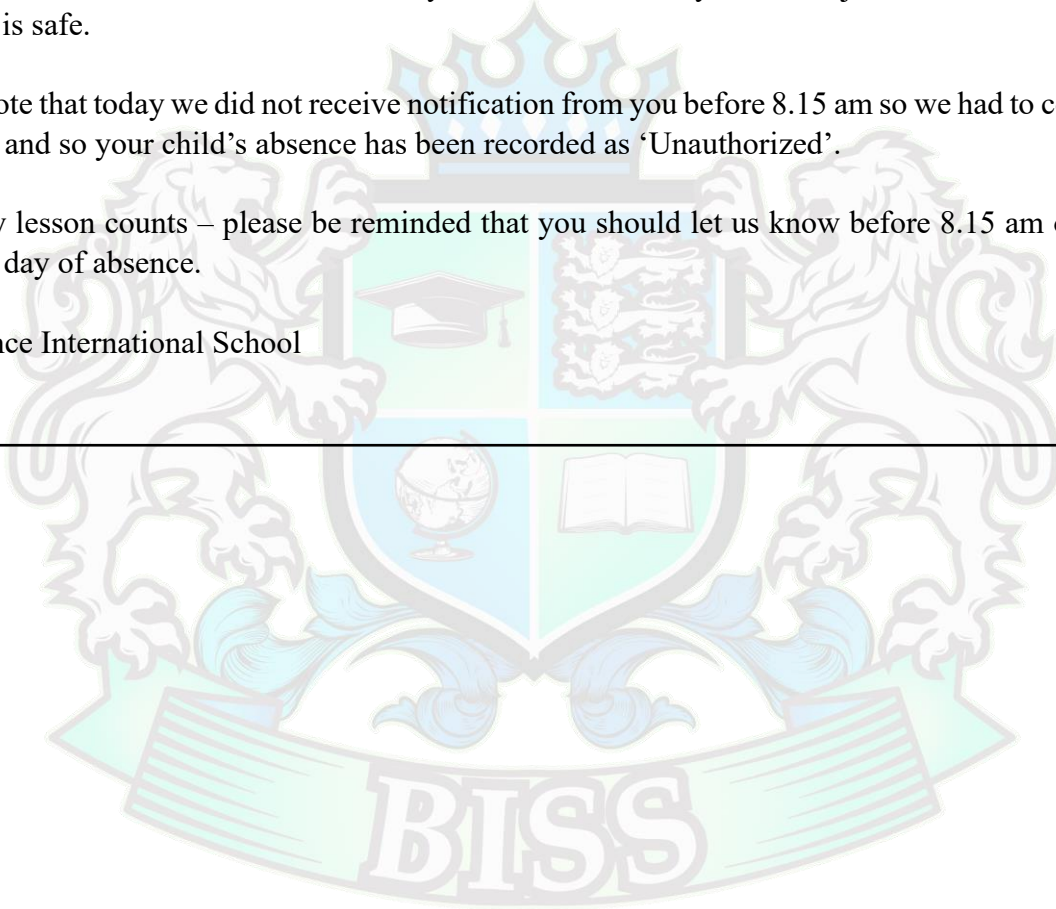
The safety of our students is always our number one priority.

When a child is not at school, we ask you to let us know by 8.00 am, just to check that your child is safe.

We note that today we did not receive notification from you before 8.15 am so we had to contact you - and so your child's absence has been recorded as 'Unauthorized'.

Every lesson counts – please be reminded that you should let us know before 8.15 am on the same day of absence.

Balance International School



SMS

Please inform school of the reason for your child's absence today

Line Official: <https://lin.ee/3cVnQ7N>

or School Number: +66 82 454 2424

Third Day of Absence

Email that will be sent to families by the classroom teacher on the third day of unauthorized absence:

Dear Parent of,

The safety of our students is always our highest priority

When a child is not at school, we ask you to let us know the reason for absence as per our policy, just to check that your child is safe. We note that today is the third consecutive day that we have not received notification from you, as required. We had to contact you - and so your child's absence has again been recorded as 'Unauthorized Absence'. Your child is also missing out on learning opportunities that the school provides.

Please remember that continued unauthorized absences can lead to the school permanently excluding your child or withdrawing their place for the next academic year. Every lesson counts – please be reminded that you should let us know on the same day if your child is not at school for a valid reason.

Kind Regards,
Classroom Teacher Name

Reviewed on 1st August 2024