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# British School of Gran Canaria

## **Attendance and Absence**

### Policy Document

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# THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF GRAN CANARIA

## ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY

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### 1. Scope

The policy outlines attendance expectations for students at The British School of Gran Canaria, and responsibilities for parents, to ensure consistency and clarity for all parties.

### 2. Rationale

The school expects high levels of attendance from all pupils, viewing this obligation as being essential in enabling and ensuring high levels of achievement, success and fulfilment at school.

When a student is unable to attend school, notification is required so that the school can maintain accurate records, as required by law (*Convivencia en el ámbito educativo en Canarias*), and to monitor attendance and related issues.

### 3. Attendance

Primary class teachers and secondary tutors register the students at the start of each day to monitor daily attendance. All pupils are required to be in school before 08.45. The school day ends at 15.35 although many pupils remain later to take part in after-school activities and clubs, under the supervision of a member of staff.

On-line registers are taken at 08.45 and overall attendance information is collated by the school office. An absence and late list is emailed to all school staff so they are aware of any attendance issues, for their class and other students in the school. This list is also available on the school's Administration System and should be accessed to check on absence at the start of each lesson.

The school day ends between 3.25 and 3.35pm, depending on the age and sector within the school. Pupils may leave at this time or stay for after-school Enrichment Activities, which end at 4.50pm. All students are expected to leave school by 5pm and the school may charge parents for supervision duties after 5.15pm.

### 4. Punctuality

Punctuality to school is very important, helping to set standards expected during the rest of the school day and because latecomers can disrupt the flow of a lesson or distract other students.

A student is 'Late' for school if they arrive at school after 8.45am. Students who arrive in school after 8.45am must sign-in at the school office to ensure they are recorded present in their class register.

Secondary tutors, all teachers and senior staff monitor punctuality and intervene with persistent later comers which may include sanctions or contacting parents. In primary, parents will be contacted to bring about improvements, as they have the main responsibility in this regard.

School buses can be late, which is out of the control of the students. This lateness is recorded but not sanctioned.

## **5. Absence**

If a child is unable to attend school their parents must email or telephone the school before 10.00am on the first day of absence. If notification is not received, the school will contact parents to ascertain the wellbeing and whereabouts of the student.

On their return to school, the student should present a signed, dated letter from a parent/guardian providing a reason for the absence that is handed to the child's primary teacher or secondary tutor. This justification must be submitted within three days of return. In addition, if a child is absent from school for more than three days for medical reasons, parents must provide a medical certificate to verify absence and this must be attached with the letter explaining absence.

If a child is absent for three or more days without justification the parents will be requested to attend a meeting to discuss the absence.

The school will monitor all students' levels of attendance. Concerns or issues related to attendance will be shared with parents. The school has an obligation to report high levels of absence to the local Social Services, and as part of our Safeguarding Policy – *'Local authorities are informed of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more. This also includes those students who have been permanently excluded.'* (BSGC Safeguarding Policy).

Similarly, students with 4-6 days absence per month must be reported to the local Social Services.

Parents are informed of the term dates in advance and are expected to arrange trips and holidays without disrupting the child's education. The school does not, unless in exceptional circumstances sanction holidays, and will not be rescheduled school examinations or tests to accommodate family holidays during term time.

If parents are aware of an absence in advance of the non-attendance at school, they should inform the school of the duration and date of absences. This notification should be made to the school office, class teacher and Primary Head in Primary and in Secondary, school office, Head of Key Stage and Assistant Head – Students.

Students participating in regional or national events or competitions are considered to have a justified absence if they are participating in a recognised and sanctioned event. Parents are responsible for informing school and sending official documents issued by Federation / Sport club, etc.

If it is known that a student will be absent from school during term time then the school should be informed, at least 7 days in advance (except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone as soon as possible). These requests are usually for Religious events, medical or dental appointments and participation in sports events.

## **6. COVID-19 Changes**

The COVID-19 restrictions have results in some changes that are applied during the pandemic.

The start time of school is staggered in Tafira, with Primary commencing at 8.40am and Secondary at 8.50am. The start time of school will revert back to the set time of 8.45am when possible.

The frequency of student absences is also affected by the COVID situation, as the possibility of isolation and confinement increases the level of absence. All COVID isolation expectations (including duration and authorisation for return) are stipulated by Sanidad. Parents should share this information with the school.

Absence will be recorded as 'Health Issue' in the register by the school office, to distinguish it from other reasons. The school COVID Coordinator will monitor absences and liaise with families.

In most cases (more difficult with EYFS pupils), the school will organise and authorise Zoom access to live lessons the student is missing. Such provision is disruptive and complicated to organise so is only available to COVID isolation students, unless there are unique and special circumstance, and these will be considered on a case-by-case basis.