

COGNITA

Attendance Policy
ELIS Villamartín

2018- 19

KEY FACTS:

- **Regular attendance is vitally important for successful academic achievement and well-being**
- **The school promotes good attendance for all, in close liaison with parents and pupils**
- **Parent/carer(s) have a duty to ensure regular and punctual school attendance**
- **The school may refer persistent absentees to the local authority for support**
- **The school will communicate attendance rates to parents and work proactively with parents to improve attendance**
- **The school will maintain separate attendance and admission registers in keeping with regulations and using its standard MIS codes**
- **This policy applies to statutory age pupils and those educated in the Early Years and at ELIS Villamartín to A Level students.**

Introduction

It is important that staff, parents and pupils are familiar with the Attendance Policy to ensure all children achieve their potential. Regular school attendance from an early age creates a culture about the importance of education and learning so that all can benefit equally. Missing learning time leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and it is well-known that poor attendance leads to lower levels of achievement. The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child, beginning from the early years.

The legal framework

Cognita schools base their policy on UK school attendance legislation. The UK Education Act 1996 specifies the legal responsibility of parent/carer(s) statutory school age children to ensure they attend school. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs; either by regular school attendance or education otherwise such as home education.

The same law requires the school to have an admissions register and an attendance register, and to place all children on both registers. Failure to do so is an offence. Specific details are contained within the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006(c) and referred to as such within the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (England) 2014 (Part 3 s15).

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014) requires at section 3.76 a daily record of the names of the children being cared for on the premises and their hours of attendance.

Children missing education who are of compulsory school age are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse, and becoming Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) later in life. Pupils at risk of harm or neglect may miss education as a result. The school must take action under the school's safeguarding duties under section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and Part 3 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (England) 2014 in respect of all pupils. As such, the school must investigate any unexplained absences and follow the local authority children's social care referral procedures accordingly.

School aims

At El Limonar International School Villamartín, it is our aim to provide the quality of education and the caring environment which will encourage pupils to attend school on a regular basis. A pupil whose attendance is poor cannot take advantage of the opportunities offered and will fail to make the academic progress of which they are capable. It is also our policy to regard punctuality as an important element of school attendance. Irregular attendance and/or frequent tardiness jeopardise a pupil's academic achievement as they miss important classroom lessons and activities.

El Limonar International School Villamartín's aim is that every child achieves attendance of 95% or higher.

We achieve this in the following ways:

- We value positive attitudes towards learning
- We promote a happy, rewarding and successful school
- We provide a motivating, relevant, accessible curriculum for all
- We encourage strong home-school links
- We ensure our pupils are aware of the importance of good attendance, and the benefits
- We have in place a system for rewards and support for persistent absentees

Link between attendance and achievement

There is clear evidence of a link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement, as well as a strong link between truancy and antisocial behaviour:

- of pupils who miss more than 50% of school, only 3% manage to achieve five A* to Cs GCSEs including English and maths.
- of pupils who miss between 10% and 20% of school, only 35% manage to achieve five A* to C GCSEs including English and maths.
- of pupils who miss less than 5% of school, 73% achieve five A* to C GCSEs including English and maths.
- Attendance of 90% means that a pupil is missing 1 day's learning every 2 weeks or 6 lessons out of every 60.

Parent/carer(s) responsibilities

- Encourage regular and punctual attendance, being fully aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that the child in their care arrives punctually, prepared for learning
- Provide clear reasons for any absence which ensures the school can code the absence properly and accurately
- Contact the school on the first day of the child's absence as early as possible and preferably before the start of the school day
- Avoid making arrangements to remove children from school during term time
- Respond helpfully and positively to any enquiry made by the school to ascertain the reason for any absence, including any safeguarding matter

School Responsibilities

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence (attendance below 90%)
- Ensure every pupil has high levels of attendance so s/he can access the education

s/he is entitled to

- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Encourage parents to ensure their child attends all learning opportunities regularly and punctually
- Keep accurate and efficient records of attendance and registration at school including attendance at all after school and before school activities

We achieve this in the following ways:

The school's Management Information System (SIMS) records and tracks pupil attendance. From the system we are able to extract data relating to overall session attendance; attendance on specific days and individual lesson attendance.

The system records whether a pupil is present; absent but taking part in an approved educational visit; absent (either authorised or unauthorised) and whether a pupil arrives late.

Attendance is also recorded on paper registers, kept in the school office. Registers, both paper & on SIMS, are completed by 9.15am when they are submitted to the School Office. Tutors will mark the register using the following symbols.

/ Present

S Absent (Approved – Educational Activity)

a Absent (Authorised Family)

m Absent (Authorised Medical)

o Absent (Not authorised)

L Late

Tutors will monitor attendance and unauthorised or unexplained absences weekly, with the office contacting parents by phone or email after 1 day of unexplained absence. The office will inform the tutor of the outcome of the call and record the reason on SIMS.

The relevant Head of Department or Coordinator will contact the parents of pupils whose attendance raises cause for concern and the matter may be raised with the Leadership Team or the Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

A pupil who is found to be marked as present in school and then misses lessons will be put onto an attendance report which will be given to the stage coordinator at the end of each day. Staff will keep a class register on paper for individual classes.

The School will also:

- Monitor attendance and lateness and implement strategies for promoting improved awareness of attendance such as year groups or vulnerable children, as required, including the use of formal letters home
- Report on patterns of attendance to our Safeguarding Governance Committee (SGC) to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- Specifically monitor any persistent absence (individual attendance below 90%)
- Consistently use the MIS standard codes to record and monitor attendance and absence in way which complies with the regulations, including preservation of the entries on both the admission and attendance register for a period of three years after it was made
- Only the Head of School Section, Executive Principal, or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence

- Close discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to identify children causing concern, including interviewing children and parents regarding any unsatisfactory attendance.
- Implement any agreed improvement strategies such as referral to the Local Authority attendance services and/or children's social care in accordance with the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures.
- Provide parent/carer(s) with the timings of the school day and the calendar via the school website and any other usual method such as the school newsletter, in advance

Children at risk of missing education

A child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Where the school has not been provided with information about a pupil's next school, we will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register. This includes situations where they have been taken out of school by parents and are home educated, or are in custody for more than four months, or have ceased to attend school because they have a medical condition preventing them from attending school, or have been permanently excluded by the school or an unknown school destination. The school deals effectively with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions to help identify any risk of abuse or neglect. This includes any possible sexual exploitation or extremism risk and helps to prevent any future risk of absconding or truanting. In accordance with the school safeguarding policy, staff are alert to the signs and triggers to be aware of including travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

The school informs the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been unauthorised absent for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at intervals agreed and consistent with the local authority's policy and procedure.

Late arrival

It is essential that if a pupil arrives late, s/he signs in at Reception so our systems remain fully updated in case an evacuation of the school is necessary and in order that we know exactly where every pupil is at all times.

Any pupil arriving after 9.15am must go directly to the school office to be registered by the office staff so that our systems remain updated in case an evacuation of the school is necessary and in order that we know exactly where every pupil is at all times. The parent must inform the office of the reason for the lateness in person or by note. Early Years pupils will be accompanied to class by a member of the office staff.

Leaving school early during the day

Pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff or their known parent/carer; or to attend a school visit, an off-site scheduled lesson, or a sporting fixture.

Any pupil needing to leave the school site during school hours for e.g. medical appointments must sign out at reception and sign in on return. For younger pupils the parents will need to do this. An appointment card or letter should be produced. Before signing out a pupil/ parent should inform the tutor.

Study leave

During formal examination periods, Year 11, 12 and 13 students are expected to attend school full time in accordance with the usual requirements. Once examinations have finished, Years 11 and 12 will follow a special timetable for commencement of the following year's courses. ELIS Villamartín does not allow for periods of study leave to take place during the academic year.

Requests for absence from parent/carer(s)

Schools, not parents, authorise absence. Requests to the school for granting permission for leave of absence to a pupil during term time must be made in writing in advance directly to the Head of School Section. The Head of School Section or Executive Principal is only able to authorise leave of absence where exceptional circumstances relate to the application. Authorised leave is unlikely to be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.

We ask that parents make contact with the school each day the child is going to be absent for ill health reasons in order that the school can keep records updated and importantly, so that the school can be kept informed of their progress to full health and anticipated return date. If necessary, the school may ask for medical evidence of any illness. We expect any absence for illness to be evidenced by a note from the parent/carer(s) as soon as possible.

An absence is classified as unauthorised if a child is away from school without the permission outlined above being granted in advance.

Absence from School

There will be situations where absence from School is unavoidable. It is important that the reason for absence be communicated to the school, via the school journal or in writing to the school office, and where appropriate, prearranged with the class tutor.

Following an unplanned absence, an explanatory letter is required from the parents. Telephone calls from parents to explain absences are welcomed, but must be confirmed in writing when the pupil returns to school. Receipt of the note is recorded in the register.

Authorised school absences include:

- Illness
- Routine medical/dental appointments that cannot be scheduled for out of school hours
- Emergency medical/dental appointments
- Attending University Open Days (A Level only) and Work Experience programme
- Observing a religious holiday
- Bereavement; attending a funeral with the family

Unauthorised absences include:

- Family holidays during term time
- Days off for leisure activities or other reasons not mentioned above
- Absence is authorised, but a letter stating the reason for absence has not been sent to school

Missed work and examinations

Pupils are responsible for collecting work that they have missed from their teacher. Having to make up many missed assignments puts added pressure on pupils trying to keep pace with their classmates. Teachers will assign work for authorised absences only and cannot be responsible for work or lessons missed due to unauthorised absence.

During school exam periods, a child's absence should be supported by a medical certificate. Missed exams can only be taken on another day if the absence is excused with a doctor's note or has been prearranged and authorised by the relevant Head.

Absences during external exam periods must be communicated to the Exams Officer and advice sought over the procedure to follow. Missed external examinations (IGCSEs, A levels, *Selectividad*, language exams...) cannot be rescheduled.

Any time off, other than on medical, academic or compassionate grounds, will be unauthorised.

Attendance at Extracurricular Activities

Attendance at all extracurricular activities is recorded by the Activities Coordinator and monitored on a monthly basis.

Persistent absentees

Persistent absentees are those pupils with attendance below 90%. The school will contact the parent/carer(s) if their child's attendance approaches that threshold. If attendance does not improve the school will contact the local authority in accordance with local authority procedures.

Maintaining records and reporting to the authorities

The school's attendance register kept by means of a computer is backed up, in the form of an electronic copy, on a daily basis.

Monitoring and review arrangements

Attendance rates are reported regularly to the Cognita Board. The Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Governance Committee (SGC) receives regular performance management indicator reports on pupil attendance as well as any patterns or trends of persistent absence from school. The Independent Chair scrutinises admissions and attendance registers for compliance and safeguarding purposes.

Ownership and consultation	
Document sponsor (role)	Director of Education
Document author (name)	Education Compliance adapted by CE (ELIS Executive Principal)
Specialist Legal Advice	None
Consultation	Headteachers at Glenesk, Duncombe, Milbourne, NBH Prep, St Margaret's, Akeley Senior, Hydesville.

Compliance	
Compliance with	Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2016 Spanish local, regional and national education attendance legislation The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 Part 3 Paragraph 15 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DfE September 2014 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Audience	
Audience	All members of the ELIS community

Document application	
England	Yes
Wales	No
Spain	Yes

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Related documentation	
Related documentation	School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy School Attendance, DfE October 2014 Children Missing Education DfE 2013 School exclusion procedures