



Absence Policy 2023-24

Introduction

This policy summarises our expectations and common working practices, which reflect the aims and objectives of the School and support its Vision Mission and Values for our assessment.

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

We aim to inspire lifelong learners and caring global citizens, in a community where everyone feels encouraged, supported and challenged.

Mission

We provide a high-quality British style international education in English, balancing tradition and innovation. Our passion is creating a positive, safe and nurturing learning environment in which everyone is valued as individuals, empowering them to be versatile, motivated and caring people. We will endeavour to create opportunities to develop creativity, collaboration and critical thinking skills through an inclusive and personalised experience.

Values

RESPECT - We learn at school by showing respect to everyone in the community. EMPATHY - We develop empathy for those around us.

EXCELLENCE - We strive for excellence in everything we do.

CHALLENGE - We embrace a challenge as it enriches our learning.

1. Rationale

The British International School of Ljubljana (BISL) is committed to the welfare of its staff. At the same time, though, it must be recognised by staff that absence causes disruption to classes and puts pressure on colleagues.



2. Aims

This Policy lays out clear guidelines for staff absence by stating:

- the responsibilities of staff members regarding sickness absence, informing the school and providing cover work;
- the procedures for certificating absence;
- the procedures for other forms of planned or unplanned absence;
- arriving late or departing early;
- the consequences of uncertificated or excessive absence.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Employment Relationships Act (ZDR-1, 2007)
- Staff Handbook and Staff Code of Conduct/ Behaviour Policy;
- Grievance Policy.

3. Working hours

Full-time staff are expected to be at school for 8 hours per day for five days, Monday to Friday, each week. Staff must sign-in at Reception before 7:40am and may sign-out after 3:40pm. Teaching staff take their leave during the school holidays. Leave of absence during term-time causes disruption and may be only granted as unpaid leave. As leave may cause disruption at certain times of the year, leave must be agreed with the Principal to ensure that a role is covered during the period of absence.

4. Certification of absence

It is expected that, for an absence due to illness, the staff member contacts the Cover Manager (Claudia Strok Claudia.strok@britishschool.si) and their Head of Department (Secondary), or Assistant Head of Primary Teaching and Learning (Lauren.thomas@britishschool.si).

For planned absence, prior approval should be obtained from the Principal (or Director of Teaching and Learning in her absence).

4.1 For absences of one day the staff member must complete a self-certification form (Appendix 2, available from the HR Officer) and (if applicable) submit a copy of the Principal's approval on the day s/he returns to work. The form will show the days of the absence and the reason and will be retained in the staff member's personnel file. In cases of sickness absence for more than one day or if they were treated by a doctor, staff should also submit a medical certificate. Uncertified absence will be treated as unauthorised absence and may result in a loss of pay.

4.2 For absences of three days or more the staff member must submit a copy of the Principal's approval or a doctor's medical certificate as well as the self-certification form (Appendix 2) to the HR Officer upon return to work.

4.3 For absences occurring either side of holidays or weekends on a frequent basis the staff member must submit the prior approval from the Principal or the doctor's medical certificate to the HR Manager upon return to work. Uncertified absence will be treated as unauthorised absence, and will result in a loss of pay, including any pay due for the period of the holiday.



5. Review of absences

The HR Officer will review staff absences and update the Principal at the end of each month, or more frequently if circumstances require it. The Principal may ask a staff member to discuss their absences if the staff member:

- has had three or more periods of absence in any academic year and senior leaders feel that there is cause for concern;
 - has had five or more working days absence in any month;
 - has failed to produce satisfactory self-certification or a medical certificate;
 - has absences which occur regularly on the same day of the week.
 - the Principal has a legitimate concern regarding the welfare of a member of staff.

If, in the Principal's view, absence has reached an excessive level and/or is not supported by appropriate certification, a letter of warning may be issued following this discussion, in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct. In making this judgement, the Principal may, if appropriate, request a medical examination by a doctor of the school's choice.

6. Illness at work

If a member of staff is taken ill at work and wishes to go home, the authorisation of the Principal is required, and the Cover Manager must be informed in order to arrange cover. In the Principal's absence, The Director of Teaching and Learning may authorise this leave.

7. Paid Sickness Absence

7.1 Informing the school

If a member of staff is too unwell to attend school, it is the responsibility of the staff member to act responsibly and professionally, and to provide the Cover Manager (Claudia.strok@britishschool.si) with appropriate information by 06.30.

S/he must:

- (if possible) state the nature of the illness and the likely the duration of the absence, in order to help in planning cover.
- (for teachers) send in appropriate cover work by e-mail, with another member of staff or, if there is no other alternative, over the phone.

The school may telephone any member of staff who is absent without having made contact. Should there be any cause for concern or a need to clarify the reason for absence, the Principal or HR Officer may make arrangements for a doctor to visit.

7.2 Certification of illness

All absence must be justified by certification. Uncertified absence will be treated as Unauthorised Absence and will result in loss of pay.

7.2.1 For sickness absence of one day, pay for the day missed will be included in the salary if appropriate self-certification is received and approved. Allowances (travel and meals) will not be paid for these days.

7.2.2 For sickness absence of two days or more, pay for the days missed will be compensated at 80%, according to the Employment Relationships Act, if certified as sick leave by a doctor. Allowances (travel and meals) will not be paid for these days.



8. Long-term illness

Cases of long-term illness will be dealt with individually. Consideration will be given to the nature of the condition and the contractual terms and conditions of employment.

9. Absence other than own sickness

The school recognises that certain circumstances may require a staff member to take leave of absence for reasons other than their own sickness. Except in cases of sudden illness or other unforeseen emergency, all leave must be approved in advance by the Principal, using the Leave Request form (Appendix 1, available from the HR Officer) who may in extraordinary circumstances refer the request to Orbital. If granted, this may be as Paid or Unpaid Leave. The staff member must complete a self-certification form (Appendix 2, available from the HR Officer) on the day s/he returns to work. The form will show the days of the absence and the reason and will be retained in the staff member's personnel file.

9.1 Medical appointments

Medical appointments, especially for non-urgent problems, should be made for outside of working hours. If a suitable G.P. or specialist is only available during the school day, appointments should be made for during break times. The member of staff should inform his/her Head of Section in advance and the Cover Manager, so that they can arrange any cover if necessary.

9.2 Care for an immediate relative (i.e. child, spouse or parent who has been taken ill or is undergoing an operation). The same procedures for paid absence are to be followed as for a staff member's own illness (i.e. informing the school, arranging cover, completing a self certification form and submitting a medical certificate from a doctor if required). If the situation requires more than two days of absence, the staff member must discuss this with the Principal. Consideration will be given to the nature of the relative's condition, alternate care plans and the contractual terms and conditions of employment.

9.3 Marriage/Bereavement The school will grant up to 3 days of paid leave in a calendar year in the event of the staff member's marriage or the death of an immediate family member, in accordance with the Employment Relationships Act. Leave to attend at the funeral of a family member or a close friend will be granted.

9.4 Maternity/Paternity Leave Maternity Leave is a statutory paid absence from work for 12 months, granted to all female regularly employed staff upon approval from the government of Slovenia, as compensation for the salary during the period of the maternity leave is paid directly by the government. Staff members should consult the HR Officer for further information in the event of pregnancy.

Paternity Leave is a statutory paid absence from work for 30 days, granted to all male regularly employed staff upon approval from the government of Slovenia, as compensation for the salary during the period of the maternity leave is paid directly by the government. First 15 calendar days of paternity leave, must be used up to six months of child's age. From 1 January 2018, father is entitled to use 15 more calendar days of paid paternity leave,

which must be used in the aggregated series after the end of parental leave, and at the latest by the end of the first grade of the elementary school of the child.

9.5 Other requested absence Leave for other reasons, such as for professional examinations, attendance at ceremonies, etc. should be applied for using the Leave Request Form (Appendix 1), and will be considered by the Principal on an individual basis. Leave may be granted as Paid or Unpaid.

9.6 Sabbatical Leave Sabbatical leave may only be granted in special circumstances, subject to approval from Orbital following a written recommendation from the Principal. If granted, sabbatical leave shall be without pay.



10. Arriving Late or Leaving Early

Permission to arrive late or leave early for official business, such as going to an Embassy, lawyer or bank, should be applied for in advance to the Principal. Such business should not require a full day's absence and should be arranged to cause as little disruption to normal work as possible. If any cover is required, this must be arranged with the Cover Manager and Head of Department. If a staff member needs to leave early for any other reason, s/he must also ask permission from the Principal. Staff members who arrive late or leave early are expected to substitute those hours in the same or following month.

Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to disciplinary proceedings.

11. Right of Appeal

If a member of staff is unsatisfied with a decision concerning permission for, or consequences of, absence, s/he has the right of appeal in accordance with the Grievance Policy.

Appeals must be submitted in writing within three working days of the initial decision, and will be considered by Orbital in consultation with the Principal.

All decisions of Orbital are final and binding, and will be communicated to the member of staff, the Principal and the HR Officer. The decision will be kept on file by the HR Officer.

Review and Evaluation

This policy is to be reviewed bi-annually by the School SLT and/or Principal.

PREPARED BY: Mel Hitchcocks, Principal - 09/08/2023

Review date: August 2025.



APPENDIX 1: Annual Leave Request Form

This form must be completed by all members of staff requesting Annual leave for one or more days, and returned to the HR Officer prior to taking the leave.

Absence information is available to the Principal and your Head of Section to help meet the school's obligation to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff and to ensure the meeting of contractual agreements.

Name

Section

Requested Period of Absence:

First day of absence day_/_/ (day/month/year) **Last day of absence** day_/_/ (day/month/year)

Total number of working days absent

Signature Date

Approved by Principal: Paid • Unpaid • **Signature Date**

Received by HR Officer:

Signature Date



APPENDIX 2: Self-certification of Absence form

This form must be completed by all members of staff absent for one or more days, and returned to the HR Officer on the first day back in school after the absence.

Absence information is available to the Principal and your Head of Section to help meet the school's obligation to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff and to ensure the meeting of contractual agreements.

Family Name Given Names

Section Staff No

Period of Absence:

First day of absence day_/_/ (day/month/year) **Last day of absence** day_/_/ (day/month/year)

Total number of working days absent

Reason for Absence:

Did you receive medical treatment during your absence? YES / NO If so, please state where and when:

If absent due to illness for 3 or more days, please attach medical certificate from

doctor. Do you believe that your illness is as a result of an occupational

injury/disease? YES / NO

[Type here]



I declare that I have not worked during the period of absence and that the above statement is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that to give false or misleading information can result in disciplinary proceedings which may lead to dismissal.

Signature Date

Received by HR Officer:

Signature Date



APPENDIX 3: Application for Leave in Special Circumstances

| | |
|---|--|
| Name | |
| Department | Teacher/Administration |
| Type of leave requested (please tick as appropriate) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Bereavement <input type="radio"/> Compassionate <input type="radio"/> Domestic Emergency <input type="radio"/> House Move <input type="radio"/> Marriage <input type="radio"/> Public or Community Service <input type="radio"/> Sick – self (Medical certificate must be produced) <input type="radio"/> Sick – dependent (Medical documentation must be produced) |
| Dates Requested | |
| Reason for Request | |
| Signed (employee) | |
| Decision (tick as appropriate) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Agreed with pay <input type="radio"/> Agreed without pay <input type="radio"/> Not agreed |
| Reasons for Decision | |
| Signed (Employer) | |
| Communications Checklist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Employee advised of decision <input type="radio"/> Payroll notified <input type="radio"/> HR notified |

Date:

Signature:

[Type here]