



ST. CATHERINE'S BRITISH SCHOOL

A registered charity in the UK and member of HMC & COBIS

Whole School Attendance Policy

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The St. Cats Way

What do we do? We deliver a world class independent education through our 4 strategic pillars:

Organisational optimisation
Educational excellence
Infrastructure development
Community engagement

Why do we do this? To deliver the purpose and mission of the school:

Purpose: To empower young people to understand, care and create a better future.

Mission: Foster learning with a rich curriculum that develops intellectual, social, physical and creative skills, preparing students for global citizenship.

How do we do this? By ensuring that everything we do is guided by the values of the school:

Care | Compassion | Empathy | Looking After One Another | Asking Difficult Questions with Respect | Wellbeing | Happiness

Integrity | Honesty | Fairness | Transparency | Doing Our Part | Respect

Dedication | Commitment | Giving Our All | Going the Extra Mile | Consistency | Showing Up When Things Get Tough | Striving for Excellence

Curiosity | Keep Asking Questions | Drive to Evolve | Inquisitive | Explore Ways to Do Things Better | Keep Learning | Creativity

The rising water lifts all boats. To action the what, the why and the how our key objective focus must be

Consistent Excellence in Every Interaction

This is practically seen every day, as well as visibly implemented into Individual Staff Development Objectives (ISDO) process, and Departmental Development Plans (DDPs). This cultural paradigm will ensure that we are able to deliver the top-class education we all aspire to and enjoy the strongest community for students, staff, parents, governors and alumni.

Introduction

St Catherine's British School is committed to providing a high quality education to all students and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or guardians the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Attendance at St Catherine's British School is governed by the mandatory provisions of Greek educational legislation. The school also applies attendance practices consistent with the expectations of British Schools Overseas (BSO), COBIS accreditation standards and current Department for Education guidance for England, including Department for Education's *Working together to improve school attendance* (current edition), insofar as these are compatible with Greek law.

The school monitors attendance trends annually and seeks continual improvement through early intervention and supportive strategies.

Attendance data is reviewed termly by senior leaders and reported to the DSL link governor - where appropriate.

1. Promoting Attendance and Punctuality

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the student. We will promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality through assemblies, classroom activities, and ongoing communication with families. By recognising and reinforcing positive attendance habits, we aim to build a shared understanding of its impact on learning, wellbeing and future success. It is also important to note that persistent low attendance may raise safeguarding concerns, which we are committed to addressing promptly and appropriately.

The school promotes attendance through a culture of belonging, positive relationships and early support rather than relying solely on sanctions.

The school appoints an Attendance Lead in both the Lower School and Upper School. They are responsible for promoting high levels of attendance and punctuality across the school by monitoring attendance data, identifying patterns of concern, and leading early intervention strategies. They work closely with pupils, parents, pastoral staff, safeguarding leads and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance, support compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements, and foster a culture where regular attendance is valued and supported.

2. Reporting Attendance

Parents/Guardians can access up-to-date attendance data for their child through the Parent Portal on iSAMS.

- a. Attendance data is updated and accessible to parents at the end of every half term via the Parent Portal.
- b. The Upper School will report on a student's attendance in their formal school written reports.
- c. The school may communicate a student's attendance data to other destination schools or universities, where permitted by applicable data protection legislation.

3. School Registration Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the time of a registration must have their absence recorded as being:

- a. Authorised,
- b. Unauthorised or
- c. as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school].

If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

The coding for any absences are as used in the iSAMS management of information system which are in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education in England. They are described in Appendix 3.

Additionally, the coding practices are in accordance with local Greek legislation, ensuring compliance with both national and international standards.

Attendance procedures are applied fairly and consistently. Reasonable adjustments will be made for pupils with SEND, medical conditions or disabilities where appropriate

The school recognises that mental health difficulties may affect attendance. Where appropriate, support will be provided through pastoral staff, learning support, counselling and external agencies.

3.1 Categorisation of Absence

Any student who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

- a. Unauthorised Absence
- b. Authorised Absence
- c. Approved Educational Activity

3.1.1 Unauthorised Absence

This is for those students for whom no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed by the school to be without valid reason.

3.1.2 Authorised Absence

This is for those students who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under either the Education Act (England) 1996 or the local regulations under Greek legislation. The school reserves the right to request medical evidence where there are concerns regarding attendance patterns.

3.1.3 Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. Note, students recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This would include:

- a. Work experience placements
- b. Field trips and educational visits
- c. Sporting activities
- d. Link courses or approved education off site

3.2 Registration Procedures in the Upper School

Registration is recorded through the iSAMS system twelve times each day in the Upper School (Years 7-13). The first registration takes place at 08:30. These twelve registrations comprise the daily form period and all lesson periods, and are completed by form tutors and subject teachers.

If a student is absent from the form period or any lesson without an acceptable explanation, they will be marked as having an unauthorised absence. Acceptable reasons may include circumstances such as a delay to school transport or another approved absence

FORM PERIOD:

- a. If a student arrives after the register has been taken during the form period, they will be marked as late.
- b. The form period lasts 10 minutes, and the number of minutes late will be recorded by the teacher.
- c. This means that if a student arrives during form time but after the register, the teacher will note exactly how many minutes late they are within that 10-minute window.

FOR LESSONS (Periods 1–13):

- a. Students must arrive within the first 5 minutes of the lesson.
- b. If a student arrives after the 5th minute (i.e., at minute 6 or later), they will receive an 'Unauthorised Absence' mark, even though they are still allowed to enter the classroom.

IB Pupil Punctuality Guidelines

- a. IB pupils are not required to be on site if they do not have a Period 1 lesson. In such cases, they must arrive at school at least 10 minutes before their first scheduled lesson.
- b. IB Students may leave the school site once they have completed all lessons

- and other school obligations for the day.
- c. All IB students must sign in and out at the front entrance when arriving late or leaving early.
 - d. To leave early, students must have parental consent if they have no further lessons or commitments

3.3 Registration in the Lower School

In Lower School registration takes place through the iSAMS system twice a day. The morning registration is taken between 08:30-08:40 and the afternoon registration by 13.40.

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 08:30 and remain open until Lesson 1 begins at 08:40. Students arriving after the start of lesson 1 at 08:40 will be recorded as late and will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation e.g. school transport was delayed in which case they will be marked as Excused Late.

In cases where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. Morning medical appointments (with correct paperwork given in advance) are coded as authorised absence.

A member of Lower Admin will be at the school gate from 08:40-09:00, recording students who are late to school and updating iSAMS to ensure registers are correct.

If a student leaves school before the end of the school day, a member of Lower Admin will record this on iSAMS.

3.4 Record Preservation and Security

Attendance records shall be retained in accordance with the School's Data Retention Policy and applicable Greek legislation. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups and will be available for each month. Electronic registers must be password protected.

Parent/Guardians can access up-to-date attendance data for their child through the Parent Portal on iSAMS.

4. Home / School Communication Over Absences

4.1 First Day Absence

Parents/guardians are expected to contact the school administration via Parent Portal link and outline the reason for the absence. If this does not happen, then the school administration will contact the nominated parent/guardian by phone call or e-mail. The school administrators will amend the iSAMS record of reason for absence. Upper School absent students and parents/guardians are informed that they can access set homework and supporting material for the missed lesson through the Microsoft 365 platform.

4.2 Continuing Absence

For each subsequent day of absence, the parent/guardians are expected to contact the school administration via Parent Portal link and outline reason for the absence, and the school administrators will amend the iSAMS record of reason for absence.

If no contact is made by parents for a full day of absence via parent portal or e-mail/phone call, then the school administration will phone contact numbers in iSAMS.

If no contact is made by parent for three full days of absence via parent portal or e-mail/phone call, then the school administration will phone contact numbers in iSAMS then the Deputy Head and appropriate Head of Year alerted and further strategies to contact parent/family implemented.

In the Lower School, teachers liaise with the families of children who are absent for more than a few days and, if the child is well enough, they will be set tasks by email in EYFS and Key Stage One or by Google Classroom/OneNote in Key Stage Two.

Where there are serious concerns regarding a pupil's welfare, prolonged unexplained absence or possible safeguarding issues, the school may contact the competent Directorate of Education, the competent Social Services and, where appropriate or required by law, the Attorney General for Minors and/or other competent public authorities.

Where the procedures described in this Policy exceed the minimum requirements of Greek educational legislation, they are intended solely as internal pastoral and safeguarding measures and shall not affect the statutory recording of attendance under Greek law.

4.3 Ten Day's Consecutive Absence Without Notification/Children Missing Education (CME)

In England, the legal requirement is for any student who is absent without a notification or explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Staff for the local area. Within our local context the equivalent measure open to the school would be to contact the Attorney General for Minors. If there is a suspicion that the student has gone missing at any point, then the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headteacher may decide to contact the Attorney General for Minors before the 10 days. Procedures follow the school's safeguarding policy and the principles of Children Missing Education guidance.

The following procedures reflect the school's safeguarding responsibilities and are informed by UK Children Missing Education guidance. They supplement, but do not replace, the obligations imposed under Greek educational legislation.

4.4 Absence Notes

Parents are expected to notify the school promptly of the reason for any absence. For absences of up to two consecutive days, a parent may verify their child's illness in writing. Parents are allowed to submit such written verification for a maximum of five days per academic year, and no more than two consecutive days at a time.

Starting on the third consecutive day of absence, a doctor's note is required for the absence to be considered justified. The school may request appropriate supporting documentation, including medical evidence, where this is reasonably required, where attendance gives rise to concern, or where such documentation is required by applicable Greek educational legislation.

Any documentation submitted shall be retained in accordance with the school's Data Retention Policy and applicable data protection legislation.

4.5 Leave of Absence in Term Time

Leave of absence during term time will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances. Parents will be clearly informed that absence during term time can significantly disrupt a student's learning and negatively impact their academic progress.

4.6 Leaving During the School Day

If a student is to leave school early due to feeling unwell, permission needs to be given by the school nurse or in the rare event of the nurse's unavailability by the relevant Head of Year or Deputy Head of School. Permission will not be normally granted for students to leave school during the school day when there are special events such as sports days, swimming galas, performances, and celebrations (except in exceptional circumstances determined by the Principal or delegated senior leader). These are part of the curriculum and attendance is compulsory.

All attendance-related communications and supporting documentation constitute education records and are processed in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and applicable data protection legislation.

5. The Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all students are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the student is helped to catch up on any essential work and key assessments that have been missed. They should be brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils. In Lower School this is the responsibility of the class teacher and in Upper School this is the responsibility of the Head of Year and form tutor.

6. When Attendance is a Concern

Attendance is monitored by Attendance Leads and other school leaders through:

- regular attendance reviews
- attendance data analysis

- monitoring vulnerable groups
- termly attendance reports

6.1 Frequent Absence

Within the school it is the responsibility of the class teacher (Lower School) or form tutor (Upper School) to be aware of and bring to the attention of the Head of Key Stage/Head of Year/Deputy Head any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a student begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem as soon as possible.

6.2 Persistent Absence

In accordance with local regulations (Appendix 2) there is a limit of absences beyond which a student may be prevented from progressing into the subsequent year group (from Year 8 and above).

In line with UK practice, attendance below 90% is regarded as persistent absence and will trigger additional monitoring and intervention, alongside any requirements under Greek legislation.

Parents can access their child's attendance records on iSAMS. For Upper School students, attendance updates are provided to parents every half term via the Parent Portal. In line with Greek Law the school will inform the parents/guardians when their child's absence is in line to exceed the annual permissible absence limit.

For Upper School the annual limit prescribed by the applicable Greek educational legislation is currently (in 2026 when this Policy is updated) 173 teaching periods (approximately 16 full school days) (does not include morning registration) of which no more than 76 teaching periods of absence (approximately 7 school days) may be considered unauthorised according to absence codes described in this policy.

If a pupil's annual absences exceed the school regulations as stated in this policy the following steps will be followed:

- a. The parent/guardians will be informed that the absence record is excessive and requires definitive action. A date will be set for a meeting with senior staff.
- b. Prior to the meeting the school will carry out due diligence as to the reliability of the attendance record and through the school's legal representation how the number of absences relate to local legal requirements. The student's teachers will be alerted as to the forthcoming meeting and will be able to communicate their view as to the impact of the poor attendance on the student's progress.
- c. The student with their parent/guardians will meet with 1. the Head of School or Deputy Head of School and the relevant Head of Key Stage/Head of Year and 2. the Principal. Key teachers and counsellors may also be involved.
- d. Where attendance has reached a level that may affect progression under applicable Greek educational legislation, the school shall review the pupil's attendance record, ensure that all statutory requirements have been complied

with, meet with the parents and explain the possible legal consequences. Any decision regarding progression or repetition of the school year shall be taken by the Principal strictly in accordance with this Policy and the applicable provisions of Greek educational legislation.

6.3 Punctuality Concerns

In Lower School:

Punctuality is celebrated by the awarding of stickers, senior staff noticing punctuality, reminders in assembly and via class teachers. If a student is consistently late for school, the following will occur to remind parents:

- a. 3 late marks in a week - Lower Admin will send a standard email to the parents reminding them of the importance of punctuality and estimating lost learning over a longer period. Class teachers will be cc-ed.
- b. At the end of each half-term, an iSAMS report will show any pupil who has been late more than 15 times. Class teachers will email to offer support and remind parents of lost learning
- c. At the end of each term an iSAMS report will show pupils who have had more than 30 lates in a term. Phase leaders will invite parents to meet them in school to offer support and consider a plan to support with an earlier arrival at school

Ongoing and persistent lateness may be considered a safeguarding concern.

In the Upper School:

The school values punctuality as a key life skill and expects all students to arrive on time, ready to learn. Persistent lateness disrupts learning for both the individual and their peers. The following staged procedures will be applied to address lateness:

Stage 1

- a. Students who arrive up to 5 minutes late will be marked as late.
- b. Students who arrive more than 5 minutes late to their first lesson will receive an unauthorised absence mark for that session.

Stage 2 – Frequent Lateness (Early Intervention)

- a. If a student is late three times in one week, an automatic email/letter will be sent home to inform parents/carers.
- b. Form tutors will be made aware to monitor patterns and check in with the student.

Stage 3 – Escalation to Head of Year

If lateness continues despite Stage 2 interventions:

- a. The Head of Year will arrange a meeting with the student and parents/carers.
- b. An action plan/punctuality contract will be agreed, with clear expectations and support strategies.

Stage 4 – Persistent Lateness (Formal Sanctions)

Continued failure to improve punctuality may result in:

- a. Detentions
- b. Loss of privileges (e.g., school trips, clubs, or leadership roles) in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Where necessary, further action may be taken.

6.4 Supportive Measures

- a. At each stage, staff will consider whether lateness is linked to transport issues, wellbeing, or family circumstances and offer appropriate support.
- b. Support may include mentoring, or liaison with external agencies if required.

These measures ensure lateness is dealt with consistently, fairly, and with a balance of accountability and support.

This policy was reviewed in September 2026 and will be reviewed again in September 2027 if not before.

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1: England – Attendance Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy has regard to the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- **Education Act 1996**, particularly:
 - **Section 7** – Duty of parents to secure suitable full-time education.
 - **Section 444** – Offence where a parent fails to secure regular attendance at school.
- **Working together to improve school attendance** (Department for Education, current edition), which sets out the expectations for schools, academy trusts, governing bodies, local authorities and parents in promoting good attendance through a culture of support, early intervention and partnership working.

In line with *Working together to improve school attendance*, St Catherine's British School will:

- Promote a culture where excellent attendance is expected and valued.
- Monitor attendance accurately and analyse patterns of absence.
- Identify pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern at the earliest opportunity.
- Work in partnership with parents to remove barriers to attendance.
- Provide targeted support where attendance is affected by safeguarding, medical, SEND or wellbeing needs.
- Escalate concerns where necessary while maintaining a supportive, child-centred approach.

7.2 Appendix 2: The Law in Greece

(Primary Education – Lower School)

This Policy complies with the following Greek legislation, as amended and currently in force for the Lower School:

1. **Law 1566/1985** (Government Gazette A' 167/30.09.1985) – *Structure and Operation of Primary and Secondary Education and Other Provisions*.
 - Article 2(3) (Compulsory school attendance and parental responsibility).
2. **Law 682/1977** (Government Gazette A' 244/01.09.1977) – *On Private General Education Schools*, as amended and in force.
3. **Law 4713/2020** (Government Gazette A' 147/2020) – Article 7
4. **Presidential Decree 79/2017** (Government Gazette A' 109/01.08.2017) – *Organisation and Operation of Nursery Schools and Primary Schools*.
 - Article 13 (Monitoring of pupils' attendance).
 - As amended and currently in force.

(Secondary Education – Upper School)

This Policy complies with the following Greek legislation for Secondary Education, as amended and in force:

1. **Law 1566/1985** (Government Gazette A' 167/30.09.1985) – *Structure and Operation of Primary and Secondary Education and Other Provisions*.
 - Article 2 (Compulsory education and school attendance).
2. **Law 682/1977** (Government Gazette A' 244/01.09.1977) – *On Private General Education Schools*, as amended and in force.
3. **Law 4713/2020** (Government Gazette A' 147/2020) Article 7
4. **Ministerial Decision 102791/ΓΔ4/10.09.2024** (Government Gazette B' 5130/10.09.2024) – *Organisation and Operation of Gymnasia and General Lycea*, especially articles 20, 21, 24, 25 and 26
 - Provisions governing:
 - attendance;
 - recording and monitoring of absences;
 - communication with parents/guardians;
 - characterisation of attendance;
 - promotion and graduation requirements;
 - supporting documentation and non-counting of absences where provided by law.

The above legislative framework shall be interpreted together with any subsequent amendments, Ministerial Decisions, Circulars or other binding regulatory acts issued by the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports governing pupil attendance in Secondary Education.

7.3 Appendix 3: iSAMS Absence Codes

Code (new)	Heading	Description	Required Documentation	Limit/Notes	Counts As	Colour (not assigned yet)
Unauthorised						

N		Absent without a known reason	-	Count Fully	Unauthorised absence	RED
LA	Late Arrival To Lesson	If a student arrives more than five minutes after the start of a lesson, they will be admitted into the classroom but will still be recorded as 'unauthorised absent' for that period.	-	Count Fully	Unauthorised absence	RED
HO	Holiday During Term Time	Holiday during term time	-	Count Fully	Unauthorised absence	RED
UM	Unauthorised Medical Appointment	Unauthorised Medical Appointment	-	Count Fully	Unauthorised absence	RED
MT	Missed School Trip	Missed school trip without attending alternative school programme	-	Count Fully	Unauthorised absence	RED
LE	Leaving During School Day	Leaving during school day	-	Count Fully	Unauthorised absence	RED
OU	Other Unauthorised Absence	Other Unauthorised Absence	-	Count Fully	Unauthorised absence	
Authorised non-penalised absences: Statutory Recognised Absences						
SC	Leaving During School Day (Sickness)	Leaving during school day due to sickness	School nurse	Only if the nurse approves	Authorised absence	ORANGE
AC	Participation In School Organised Activities	Participation in school organised activities (domestic/international)	School trips	-	Presence	GREEN
IS	Attending School Organised Events in School	Attending School Organised Events in School	-	-	Presence	GREEN
CO	National/International Competitions	National/international competitions	Event organiser/federation	Up to 70 absences	Presence	ORANGE
SE	Ministry-Approved School Sports Events	Ministry-approved school sports events	Ministry documentation	No stated limit	Presence	GREEN
NT	National Team Participation (Athletes)	National team participation (athletes)	Sports federation	Up to 140 extra absences allowed	Authorised absence	ORANGE
TS	Training Squad Participation	Training squad participation	Federation documentation	Up to 120 absences	Authorised absence	ORANGE
AR	Artistic Participation (Concepts/Exhibitions)	Artistic participation (concepts/exhibitions)	Organiser to provide invitation + participation certificate	Max 2 weeks	Authorised absence	ORANGE
EC	Adverse Weather/Enforced Closure	Adverse weather/enforced closure	School		Needs clarification	ORANGE
PS	Visit To Educational Psychologist/K.E.D.A.S.Y.	Visit to educational psychologist/K.E.D.A.S.Y.	K.E.D.A.S.Y. or Ed. Psych. documentation	Up to 2 days	Authorised absence	ORANGE
CI	Chronic Illness/Disease	Chronic illness/disease (e.g. dialysis, cancer, diabetes)	Medical certificate from hospital/doctor	Up to 24 days per year	Authorised absence	ORANGE
SI	Serious Illness (Surgery/Hospitalisation)	Serious illness requiring surgery/hospitalisation	Hospital recommendation	Up to 20 days per year	Authorised absence	ORANGE
HI	Serious Illness (Home Care)	Serious illness requiring home care	Hospital recommendation	Up to 10 days per year	Authorised absence	ORANGE
EI	Epidemic-Related Illness	Epidemic-related illness (COVID)	Doctor's certificate + public health notice	Max 5 working days	Authorised absence	ORANGE
FL	Seasonal Flu/COVID/RSV	seasonal flu/COVID/RSV (between November-April 2026, as per announcement from the Greek Ministry of Education)	Medical certificate?	5 days	Authorised absence	ORANGE
BD	Voluntary Blood Donation	Voluntary blood donation	Centre/doctor	Up to 2 days per donation	Authorised absence	ORANGE
EE	Entrance Exams (Non-National)	Entrance exams (non-national, e.g. Fine Arts)	Exam schedule proof from institution	No stated limit	Authorised absence	ORANGE
PE	Preliminary Exams	Preliminary exams (e.g. for academies)	Exam schedule proof from institution	No stated limit	Authorised absence	ORANGE
CR	Court Appearances	Court appearances	Court summons	No stated limit	Authorised absence	ORANGE
DE	Death Of Close Relative	Death of a close relative	Family to provide proof of relation/death	Max 3 days	Authorised absence	ORANGE
EX	Exclusion	Exclusion	School	No stated limit	Authorised absence	ORANGE
IN	Interview	Interview	School	No stated limit	Authorised absence	ORANGE
ST	Study Leave	Study leave	School	No stated limit	Presence	GREEN
WE	Work Experience	Work experience	School	No stated limit	Authorised absence	ORANGE
UT	Un-Timetabled Sessions (Non-Compulsory School Age Pupils)	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age pupils	School	No stated limit	Authorised absence	ORANGE
NR	Pupil Not Yet On Roll	Pupil not yet on roll	School	No stated limit	Authorised absence	ORANGE
LS	Late Start (IB)	IB students arriving later in the day because their lessons start after period 1	School	No stated limit	Needs clarification	ORANGE
Authorised absences						
IP	Illness (Parent Verified)	For absences of up to two consecutive days, a parent may verify their child's	Parent/guardian statement	Max 5 days per year	Authorised absence	ORANGE

		illness in writing. Parents are allowed to submit such written verification for a maximum of five days per academic year, and no more than two consecutive days at a time.				
ID	Illness (Extended Duration)	Illness over two days.	Medical certificate	Must be submitted in 10 working days	Authorised absence	ORANGE
AU	Other Authorised Circumstances	Authorised – other circumstances (only to be used by Heads/DH of school)	-	No stated limit	Authorised absence	ORANGE