

# Attendance Policy Procedure

1. Students attend Form Time with their Form Teachers / Mentors. The latter hand their attendance sheets to the clerks who input it on the e1 platform before 10am on a daily basis so that parents receive the SMS notifying them of their child's absence on time.
2. Students who do not attend school without justification are marked as 'Absent' (unauthorized absence).

If a student is present in the morning but leaves later in the day this is noted on the e1 platform. This information is obtained from the book the parents sign at the reception desk, when taking their child out of school.

Only parents can pick up their children, unless a written permission to the Assistant Head is presented, which includes a copy of the person's ID card. A valid reason must be presented and the permission of the Assistant Head must be asked. 'Going shopping in Malta' is not a justified reason.

3. The parents of students who are sick can phone at school and leave a message with the receptionist, who will in turn inform the Form Teacher / Mentor. Once the students return to school, they present to the Form Teacher / Mentor the note of their parents. These students will be marked 'Excused'. However, in the interest of the student, the Head of School can refuse to accept the note and ask for a medical certificate even when less than three days are involved in one month.

4. When the students are sick for more than three days in a month, their absence must be covered through a medical certificate which needs to be presented to the school not more than three days after the student returns to school. If the student is sick for more than 5 consecutive school days, the medical certificate has to be handed in on the first day the student returns to school. Students are thus marked 'Medical'.
5. One medical certificate can never cover separate dates of absence.
6. If a student turns up at school before the closing date of the medical certificate, the student cannot be accepted at school.
7. All medical certificates must be accompanied by the Medical Certificate Record Card, duly filled in and signed by the doctor. The Form Teacher is to countersign in the space provided. No Medical Certificate can be accepted without the Medical Certificate Record Card.
8. Parents can send a note to the Form Teacher to explain their child's absence. If the Form Teacher deems the explanation to be reasonable the student will be marked as 'Excused'. The reasons include family health issues, hospital visits, death of family members, funerals and severe weather conditions. If the Form Teacher is not satisfied with the explanation given, the attention of the Head is sought. It is at the discretion of the Head of School to accept or reject the parents' explanation and parents are informed accordingly. The students, whose parents' note was not accepted, are to be marked as 'Absent'. The notes of parents cannot cover more than three days in a month. The Form Teacher / Head of School cannot, in any circumstance, ask parents to produce a medical certificate to justify absences unless the student was reported sick.
9. It is at the discretion of the Head to excuse students when parents plan trips abroad of less than 3 weeks. The reasons include medical or other serious family motives, like funerals, weddings, cultural and educational trips etc. A letter for approval is to be presented to the Head before any tickets are purchased.
10. The SEWO7 form is sent to parents of students who fail to attend school for more than three (3) days during a particular month (unauthorised absence). A report is sent to the Education Social Work Service within

the Student Services Department, Hamrun (DSS) by the 12th day of the following month if the parents do not provide a valid justification within the stipulated timeframe indicated in the form.

11. If the Head of School notes that a student is habitually absent even if this long term absence is covered by medical certificates, she refers the student to the Social Worker based in the respective College by filling in the appropriate referral form.
12. When a student has been absent for 9 cumulative days from the first day of school, without any justification, the Education Psycho-Social Services Personnel will intervene to address the problem at an early stage.

### **What constitutes a ‘valid’ medical certificate?**

A Form Teacher only accepts a certificate of illness if such certificate contains the following information:

- (a) the name, surname and registration number of practitioner;
- (b) the name of the student;
- (c) class and school of the student;
- (d) the date of the examination or the date of issuing of the certificate of illness – the school shall not accept a medical certificate that does not show the date of issue or consultation;
- (e) the exact period of recommended absence from school due to illness. Certificate must be renewed after a period of 7 consecutive days;
- (f) the certificate is submitted by not later than 3 days after the student returns to school. Nonetheless, if the student is sick for more than 5 consecutive school days, the certificate has to be handed in on the first day the student returns to school.