Maria International School of Bucharest

Resilience Respect Compassion Integrity Responsibility

Student Attendance Policy

Our Mission

We provide a learning experience and environment at Maria International that fosters creativity and excellence whilst providing supportive, stimulating and relevant lessons and resources within the context of the British style international curriculum.

Our school will be a caring place where adults and children are valued equally. Our aim is to create an environment where children and the whole school community will be inspired to be resilient, respectful, compassionate and act with integrity.

Our children will learn to respect themselves and others in an atmosphere of high expectations where they are nurtured and dare to make mistakes.

We will strive to create opportunities for students to have a well-rounded school and learning experience, where they can develop critical thinking skills and work in collaboration with others.

Our Values

Resilience - We will handle adversity and problems with a mentality that enables us to keep going and improve.

Respect - We treat others with dignity, empathy and equality through our words and actions.

Compassion - We are kind, and caring and will help everyone to be the best they can be.

Integrity - We are open, honest and act with good morals and ethics in all situations.

Responsibility - We ensure our own work, learning and duties are completed in a timely manner and to a high standard

Rationale

At Maria International, we encourage and promote the importance of education and other essential skills and values needed in the modern world, one of them being punctuality and good attendance.
Arriving on time and having a positive approach to attendance is important to ensure that students receive the best educational opportunities that are available to them. Furthermore, repeated and frequent absences can make it hard for students to access the curriculum and in some cases can cause the failure to achieve in a subject. Therefore, we at Maria International require that students arrive on time to school and subjects, with the required resources, for the maximum number of days and hours available to them at Maria International if the students are

to take full advantage of the educational opportunities and to enhance their whole educational experience.

As previously mentioned, students who regularly miss lessons or are late will fall behind in their studies as well as their social learning through interaction with their peers. Whilst we place the responsibility of the punctuality and attendance of students on their parents/guardians, the staff and community of Maria International are committed to cooperating and supporting the parents/guardians in their duties to ensure that all students who attend Maria International feel encouraged and excited to attend school and lessons, and to further develop positive attendance and punctuality skills.

Aims

This policy is to ensure that all in the Maria International community are given clear expectations and procedures to help promote and encourage a minimum of 90% attendance for all students. This policy is aiming to make a clear framework of expectations, responsibilities and processes that all parents/guardians, staff and students can use to promote positive attendance at Maria International.

Through this policy, Maria International also aims to:

- Ensure all students can meet their potential, without being held back by unnecessary absences and lateness
- Create a school environment in line with the Maria International ethos that encourages and promotes positive attendance and punctuality as a professional expectation and valued norm for all in the Maria International community.
- Raise awareness for all in the Maria International community of the importance of regular and punctual attendance at every stage of education as life-long learners.

At Maria International, we promote and maintain punctual and positive attendance through:

- Raising awareness for all in the Maria International community regarding the importance of punctual and consistent attendance
- Enable students to learn professional and functional life skills to be responsible for their attendance and punctuality, in line with their age and development.
- Work towards the promotion and sustainment of a positive, welcoming and encouraging school environment where students feel safe, valued and excited to learn and engage with their peers.
- Provide support and resources to students and families who have problems or difficulties that prevent a good level of attendance and punctuality.
- Consistently monitor attendance for all staff and students in school.

- Implement procedures for the identification, reporting and resolution of cases involving persistent absence or tardiness.
- Maintain an effective and cooperative channel of communication between staff, students and parents/guardians

This Attendance Policy is used in conjunction with, and regarding:

- Maria International Parent Handbook
- Maria International Positive Behaviour Policy
- Maria International Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Maria International Terms & Conditions
- Maria International Complaints and Concerns Policy

Definitions

Authorised Absence

At Maria International, we require that any absences be notified in advance with a sufficient explanation so that we can then authorise the absence and ensure that appropriate measures are taken to provide resources and means for students to ‘catch up’ on work and learning they have missed. An example of this could be in the case of an illness and the parent/guardian has notified the homeroom teacher by email or contacted the office to explain the absence. Further evidence may be required at a later date.
Absences for medical reasons that result in more than three (3) days of continued absence need a medical note from a doctor or confirmation for a doctor's appointment for the absence to be approved.

Only the school has the right to authorise an absence, not a student or parent/guardian. As such, not all absences supported by parent/guardian notification will be authorised. This is decided on a case by case basis.

Unauthorised Absence

At Maria International, any absence that has not been approved by the school is considered unauthorised. This can occur when no notification or explanation is provided for an absence by parents/guardians, if insufficient evidence has been provided for justification of an extended period of absence or if a student is away from school without a sufficiently good explanation, even with the support of parents/guardians.

Roles and Responsibilities

As previously mentioned, Maria International believes that consistently punctual and positive attendance is a key attribute of all lifelong learners and a requirement for educational success. All in the Maria International community are responsible for supporting and aiding students in achieving attendance expectations.

Romanian legislation requires that all students from the ages of five (or six) years of age to the age of eighteen (or nineteen) are engaged in compulsory education. This compulsory schooling begins with the last year of kindergarten (Grupa mare) and continues until the end of twelfth grade.

In cases where attendance falls below 90%, staff, parents/guardians and students must work together to develop and implement strategies to address the lack of attendance and ensure that essential learning is not left uncompleted.
Should parent/guardians fail to support the school in aiding the child's attendance and/or punctuality issues then they may be in breach of the Maria International Terms & Conditions and this could result in the student being withdrawn from the school.

Headteacher

The headteacher has overall authority and responsibility for school attendance and the authority to decide whether an absence is deemed to be authorised or unauthorised. Other staff will help inform the decision-making process through the review of attendance figures for students, curriculum and other educational factors.

Maria International Teaching Staff

Homeroom teachers will complete an attendance register in the morning by 9:15 am. Any student absences should be notified in advance, via email, to the homeroom teacher before 8:45 am to ensure that the register and attendance report is completed accurately. Teaching staff also routinely monitor the punctuality of students and, when they feel a student is consistently tardy or absent, will follow the relevant reporting channels to notify the Head of the key stage and the parents/guardians to support the student moving forward. All teaching staff model good practice in terms of attendance and punctuality and should emphasise the importance of these attributes in classes too.

Maria International Administrative Staff

The office staff are responsible for double-checking and contacting parents regarding student absence after completion of the homeroom attendance register and will check these registers at 9:20 am. Any absences or expected lateness should be notified to the office before 8:45 am to

ensure clear communication and reporting is completed. When informing the school of expected absences or lateness please ensure that the office administration and homeroom teacher are cc'd in the email.

Any students who arrive late, i.e. after 8:45 am, must register at the school office (who will then update the register to show late), with a corresponding note explaining the late arrival in order to facilitate the accurate completion of the school register.
When leaving school before the end of the school day, students must leave through the office with their parents/guardians to sign out for the day. Staff who leave school during the day must also check themselves in and out on the attendance registrar posted by the entrance. These procedures are in place for fire and earthquake safety, as well as general staff and student safety/wellbeing.

Students

At Maria International, no student can authorise or request a leave of absence without parent/guardian permission prior. Each student is, in line with their age and development, responsible for their punctuality in school and to aim for a high standard of attendance where possible. Students are expected to be in their homeroom class for registration in the morning and if any learning has been missed due to absence, to complete any outstanding work that has been missed.

Teachers may be contacted regarding work that can be completed at home if the student's absence is expected to be prolonged or significant, 5 days or more. However, students and parents/guardians should not assume that staff will afford additional time to cover the work that students have missed upon the students return to their lessons.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children are enrolled in compulsory education from the last year of kindergarten through to the end of twelfth grade in line with Romanian legislation as well as follow the expectations and procedures outlined in this attendance policy.
Parents/guardians also must notify the school, in advance where possible, of any planned/expected lateness or absence. If their child is going to be late, arrive at school after 8:45 am, or is absent then parents/guardians should notify the office and relevant homeroom teacher by email or call the office.
The office should also be notified in advance by parents/guardians of any appointments or events that will require students to leave school during the school day.

Should parents/guardians become concerned by their child's reluctance to attend school, they

should immediately contact the child's homeroom teacher or Headteacher to ensure that the child's wellbeing is discussed and supported and to identify and resolve problems quickly and effectively.

Procedures

At Maria International, the school day for students begins at 8:45 am with Homeroom and ends at 3:00 pm, or 3:45 pm if a student will attend an after school activity. However, students are expected to be in Homeroom by 8:45 am so they should arrive at school on time to be at their desks for the start of Homeroom, to avoid being registered as late.

Drop off and Pick Up

Parents/guardians are advised to arrive between 8:00 am and 8:45 am and to enter the school via the playground gates at the side of the building. Students who arrive after 8:45 am must enter and register through the reception. Where lateness can be notified in advance, Parents/guardians should also contact the reception as soon as possible to notify the school of the lateness and expected time of arrival.

Lessons finish at 3:00 pm and, as such, parents/guardians are expected to pick their children up at this time unless their child is attending an after school club/activity. Parents/guardians should notify the office as soon as possible if they are going to be later than expected to pick up their child to avoid upset and confusion for the child.

If parents/guardians are to pick up their child during the school day, they should do so at the school office, where they can wait for a member of staff to bring their child to them and sign out. Prior notice should be given to avoid the disruption of classes and learning in the school.

Registration

Students are expected to be at their homeroom classroom by 8:45 am to be registered and to help get them prepared for the day ahead. Parents/guardians are encouraged to drop their child off with enough time to go to the bathroom, hang up coats and change shoes and still arrive on time at 8:45 am for the start of the homeroom period.
The accurate recording of attendance is important for ensuring an accurate record is kept but also to monitor the safety and wellbeing of all our students at Maria International.
Parents/Guardians will be contacted by the office if no record of absence or lateness has been provided for a student in the register.

If students arrive after 8:45 am they are to enter the school and register through the office and go straight to their timetabled lesson/classroom. The office will then attach a note to the register that explains the reason for the student's lateness.

It is important that the school is informed of any lateness and expected arrival times as soon as possible to avoid disruption to the school and classes that are taking place.

Leaving/Returning During The School Day

Students are not allowed to leave the school during the school day without appropriate supervision and prior authorisation. Any permission must come from the Headteacher and the relevant class/homeroom teacher should be informed. Students must leave through the office and be picked up by parents/guardians. When leaving or re-entering the school students are expected to sign out and back in again to ensure appropriate tracking of students' whereabouts in the case of an emergency such as a fire or earthquake.

Late Pick Up

Parents/guardians are expected to pick their children up from school between 3:00 pm and 3:15 pm unless their child is attending an after school activity/club when pick up is expected between 3:45 pm and 4:00 pm. Parents/guardians should inform the office administration of any unexpected lateness in picking up their child as soon as possible and give an expected time of arrival. Students who have not been picked up by 4:00 pm will be supervised by office administration staff or other authorised Maria International Staff until they are picked up. Parents/guardians who are persistently late in picking up their child should expect a meeting with the Headteacher to address the situation.

Absences

At Maria International we expect that students attend school every school day, and meet the minimum expected attendance percentage of 90%. As previously mentioned, if a child misses school they will be marked as absent. The number of days marked as absent and overall percentage will be shown on the school report card.

However, if a student is ill he/she should avoid attending school to minimise the risk of passing the illness on to other students and staff in the Maria International building and to avoid potential difficulties in concentrating and engaging with their learning.
Prolonged or consistent absences will be passed along to the relevant Head of Key Stage and then to the Maria International Senior Leadership Team.

Extended or Recurring Absence

If a student has an illness or injury that will result in them being unable to attend school for an extended period then the Homeroom teacher should be notified to help arrange a pack of work to be passed on to the student to complete at home. The school will do its utmost to ensure that the work is comprehensive and accompanied by clear instructions.

Prior Notification of Absence

Requests for a leave of absence during term time must be submitted at least 3-5 days before its intended commencement. The requests should only be submitted if necessary and are not automatically authorised. Parents/guardians should complete the relevant leave of absence request form found at the end of this policy and be returned to the office or homeroom teacher as soon as possible.
The leave of absence form should contain information regarding the dates and times of the proposed absence and clearly state the reason for the proposed absence. The form will then be passed on to the Maria International leadership team for approval or denial of the request. Once a decision has been made, a copy of the form will be given back stating the outcome of the request, with a justification included in the case of refusal. The Headteacher has the final authority and responsibility for the determination and authorisation of absences.

Holidays Taken During Term-Time

Due to the impact on learning that absences can have on a child we highly discourage the booking and attending of events and holidays during school time. Only in exceptional circumstances will permission be given for a holiday during term-time, otherwise any time taken off during term time for holidays will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Accommodation for Outstand Student-Athletes, Artists or Other Exceptional Circumstances

Maria International can accommodate requests for absences for students who are deemed to be outstanding athletes, artists or if a student requires a modified timetable or curriculum for medical or AEN needs. Such accommodations can include permitting a higher number of absences, adapted assessments or timetables etc. but this is subject to the Maria International Leadership Team's discretion and is reviewed regularly to ensure the needs of our students are sufficiently met.

Managing Non-Attendance

The procedures for addressing poor and non-attendance or punctuality are outlined below. Generally, the first point of contact for initial absence, lateness or non-attendance will be conducted through the Homeroom teacher. For repeated absences, lateness or non-attendance, the relevant line manager will be the point of contact from the Head of Key Stage through to the Maria International Leadership Team and ultimately, the Headteacher.

Attendance Issue	Action Taken	Action By
Lateness		
If a student arrives late without prior notification	Student(s) and Parents/Guardians are reminded to notify the homeroom teacher and office in advance of lateness. Student(s) will enter through the office, with their parents, and sign a late slip.	Office Staff
If a student is late more than four times in one month	Students will meet with the homeroom teacher to discuss lateness, be reminded of expectations and an email be sent to parents/guardians.	Homeroom Teacher
If a student continues to be late after meeting with Homeroom Teacher	The homeroom teacher will notify the head of Key Stage. Arrange a meeting with Parents/Guardians to discuss lateness and implement strategies to minimise future lateness.	Homeroom Teacher Head of Key Stage
If a student is still late after parental meeting with Homeroom Teacher	Head of Key Stage and Maria International Leadership Team will arrange a meeting with Parents/Guardians	Homeroom Teacher Head of Key Stage and Leadership Team

Absence		
If a student is absent without notification	Office staff will contact parents/guardians from 9:20 am onwards to find out the cause of absence. Parent's/guardians are reminded to notify the homeroom teacher and office of any absence by 9:00 am.	Office Staff

If a student is absent more than three times in a one month period	The homeroom teacher talks to the student about reasons for absences and reminds the student of attendance expectations. Homeroom teachers email parents/guardians about concerns and expectations for attendance.	Homeroom Teacher
If a student is absent two more times in any one month	Homeroom Teacher notifies the Key Stage leader. Key stage leader talks to the student about attendance expectations and emails parents/guardians.	Homeroom Teacher Key Stage Leader
If the pattern/level of absence continues	Key Stage leader notifies the Maria International Leadership team and arranges a meeting with the student and parents/guardians.	Key Stage Leader
If the pattern/level of absence still continues	Maria International Leadership team meet with parents/guardians	Maria International Leadership Team
If the pattern/level of absence still continues	Headteacher will meet with students, parents/guardians and the governing board of Maria International to discuss the situation. Maria International retains the right to suspend or terminate the place of a student who regularly and persistently fails to attend school. External agencies may be brought in the case of concern for student wellbeing and welfare.	Headteacher

Late Pick Up		
A student has not been picked up by 15:30 or 16:00 without notification from parents/guardians	The student is supervised by office administration and other authorised staff members. Parent's/Guardians are contacted and reminded of the late pickup procedures.	Office Staff
Third time a student has not been picked up without notification or provision provided	The student is supervised by office administration and other authorised staff members. The Head of Key Stage is notified and arranges a meeting with parents/guardians. Parents/Guardians are further notified that if persistent failure to notify or pick up the child on time they will be financially charged for any further cases of extra supervision.	Office Staff Head of Key Stage
Any further cases of late pickup or lack of notification	The student is supervised by office administration and other authorised staff members. Maria International Leadership team and Headteacher meet with parents/guardians to explore options moving forward. External agencies may be brought in the case of concern for student wellbeing and welfare. Office administration staff will prepare and issue an invoice at the end of the month for any extra supervision that has been provided	Office Staff Maria International Leadership Team Headteacher Office Administration staff

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Leave of Absence Form

This form should be completed and returned to the office or your child's homeroom teacher as far in advance (at least 3-5 days) of the starting day of absence, as possible. In the case of medical appointments or justification for leave please provide a copy of the medical note or appointment confirmation when returning this form.

Parents/Guardians are reminded that; as addressed in the Maria International Attendance Policy, we take the attendance and punctuality of all our students seriously and expect that students maintain an attendance level of at least 90% throughout the academic year. In line with our Attendance Policy, the Headteacher has the final and ultimate responsibility for the authorisation of any leave of absence requested. The school reserves the right to suspend or terminate any student's place at Maria International if they consistently fail to meet the attendance expectations required.

Absence from school can seriously hinder and impact a child's social, emotional and educational wellbeing, so any appointments or events should be booked after school or during school holiday periods, which can be found in our academic calendar. Leave of absence for holidays during term-time are not advised and are only authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Student Name:_____

Year Group/Homeroom Teacher:_____

Parent/Guardian Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

_____

Telephone/Email: _____

Date(s) of absence: ____/_____/_____ to ____/_____/_____
Parent/Guardian Signature:

Reason for Absence Request: Medical Appointment/Note attached: YES / NO	For use by Maria International administration only: Approved: Yes / No Reason (if necessary): Headteacher signature:

Review and Evaluation

This policy is to be renewed, evaluated and appropriately updated annually by the Maria International leadership team and Head Teacher.

Date of next review: 15/08/2025

Prepared/Updated by: Yara Barsoum **Date**: 15/11/2024

Approved by: Nicholette Vicol **Date**: 25/11/2024

This policy is to be reviewed annually and updated as and when relevant changes occur.