

# School absenteeism

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### PROTOCOL FOR ACTION IN SITUATIONS OF SCHOOL ABSENTEEISM

*Internal school document. Adapted to the instructions of the Government of the Balearic Islands and to the regulations on child protection and compulsory schooling.*

## 1. PURPOSE AND AIM

This protocol establishes an internal procedure to prevent, detect and intervene in cases of non-attendance and school absenteeism. Its aim is to guarantee the right to education, encourage regular attendance and punctuality, identify the causes of absenteeism and coordinate the school's response with the family and, where appropriate, with the competent external services.

Although privately owned, the school adopts as its technical reference the criteria and procedures established by the Balearic Islands Regional Ministry responsible for education.

### General principles:

- Prevention and early intervention: acting from the first unjustified absences or risk patterns.
- The best interests of the child and the right to education.
- Shared responsibility between the family, form tutor, teaching team, guidance department and management.
- Multifactorial analysis: absenteeism is not attributed solely to the pupil; personal, family, school and social factors are assessed.
- Proportionality and gradualness: intervention is stepped up according to frequency, persistence, seriousness and the family's response.
- Confidentiality, data protection and documentary records of all actions.
- Coordination with external services when the school's measures prove insufficient or there are indicators of risk or lack of protection.

## 2. SCOPE

The protocol applies to pupils enrolled at the school. During compulsory schooling (ages 6 to 16), regular attendance is a duty linked to the right to education. In the second cycle of Early Years Education (ages 3-6), although schooling is not compulsory, it will be applied preventively to encourage attendance habits and detect possible risk factors before Primary Education.

The Bachillerato is a post-compulsory stage and is therefore not part of the compulsory schooling period from 6 to 16. However, enrolment in these studies implies regular participation in the educational process, and attendance is a relevant element for academic monitoring, tutorial action and the application of continuous assessment.

The school will also systematically monitor the attendance of Bachillerato pupils. The steps to follow are:

- Teachers will record absences and late arrivals in the school management system (Colesc), using the same criteria as in the other stages.
- When absences are repeated, unjustified or may affect the pupil's performance or wellbeing, the form tutor will contact the family, inform them of the situation and agree on monitoring measures.
- If the pattern of absences persists, the case may be jointly assessed by the form tutor, the Management and the Guidance Department to explore possible academic, personal, family, emotional, behavioural or health-related causes and agree on support measures.

Repeated absences will not automatically be treated as school absenteeism in the strict sense applicable to compulsory schooling, but they may justify a specific educational and tutorial intervention and, where there are indicators of risk, lack of protection or any other situation requiring protection, the corresponding procedure will be activated.

### **3. FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE**

This protocol takes as its reference the Instructions for the management of school absenteeism of the Balearic Islands Regional Ministry of Education and Universities, including their annual updates, as well as national and regional legislation on the right to education and the legal protection of children. For the 2026-2027 school year, the official website of the Servei d'Inclusió per a la Comunitat Educativa identifies Instruction 41/2026 on the management of school absenteeism as the instruction in force.

### **4. CONCEPTS AND TYPES OF ABSENTEEISM**

For internal purposes, the thresholds used by the regional instructions are adopted:

| Type         | Primary Education                          | Secondary Education                                      | Action                                                                                              |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sporadic     | Occasional absences, up to 4 days a month. | Occasional absences, up to 24 teaching sessions a month. | Monitoring, contact and prevention. If repeated the following month, it is considered intermittent. |
| Intermittent | One day or more a week, or 4 days a month. | More than 6 sessions a week or more than 24 a month.     | Start of the absenteeism protocol.                                                                  |
| Chronic      | Half or more of the days in a month.       | Half or more of the teaching hours in a month.           | Intensive intervention and external coordination/referral depending on the case.                    |

Repeated one-off absences, repeated late arrivals, absences at specific times of day or any pattern suggesting disengagement from school must be assessed qualitatively even if a numerical threshold has not yet been reached.

## 5. JUSTIFIED AND UNJUSTIFIED ABSENCES

The following will be considered justified, with the accreditation or communication the school determines: absences due to the pupil's illness; a medical or specialist appointment; hospital admission; the death or serious illness of a family member; processing of official documents, tests or exams and court summonses; and other circumstances the teaching team considers valid, provided they do not become recurring absences.

The family must inform the form tutor or the school of the reason for the absence through the official channels established. A justification from the family does not prevent the school from assessing a pattern of continued or repeated absences. In the case of prolonged absences claimed for health reasons without sufficient documentation, the school may request the necessary documentation and, where appropriate, promote coordination with the health services in accordance with data protection regulations and the consent required.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES

| Responsible                    | Main roles                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Teachers                       | Record attendance and punctuality daily; report incidents to the form tutor; collaborate in monitoring measures.                                                                   |
| Form tutor                     | Review absences, contact the family, analyse causes, hold interviews, agree on measures, start the protocol when appropriate and monitor the case.                                 |
| Management                     | Support formal communications; authorise and coordinate external referrals.                                                                                                        |
| Guidance Department            | Assess personal, family, school and social factors; propose measures; take part in interviews; coordinate with external services where appropriate and support the pupil's return. |
| Family / legal representatives | Ensure attendance and punctuality during compulsory schooling; report and justify absences; attend interviews; comply with agreements and cooperate with the intervention plan.    |
| Pupil                          | Take part, according to age and maturity, in identifying difficulties, attendance commitments and return measures.                                                                 |

## 7. ACTION PROCEDURE

All relevant actions will be recorded in an internal case-monitoring document. When the official procedure applies, the records and annexes determined by the Regional Ministry will also be used and a folder will be opened in the pupil's name.

**1. Daily recording and detection.** Teachers record absences and late arrivals in the school management system (Colesc). The form tutor periodically reviews the attendance pattern, distinguishing between justified and unjustified absences. In the event of an unreported absence or a worrying pattern, the family is contacted without waiting for the case to become serious.

**2. First contact with the family.** The form tutor contacts the family by telephone, email or face-to-face meeting in order to find out the cause, remind them of the attendance rules and request the relevant justification. The date, channel, person spoken to, information received and agreements are recorded.

**3. Initial assessment.** If absences continue or reach the level of intermittent absenteeism, the form tutor informs the Management and the Guidance Department. Background, performance, integration, wellbeing, possible learning difficulties, relationships, transport, health, family situation and other relevant factors are reviewed.

**4. Formal start of the protocol.** In cases of intermittent absenteeism, or earlier if there are indicators of seriousness, the internal protocol is opened. The start date, accumulated absences, previous actions, factors detected and professionals responsible are recorded.

**5. Interview with the family and the pupil.** The family and, where appropriate, the pupil are called to a meeting. The attendance data, the obligation of schooling from 6 to 16, the educational consequences of absenteeism and the school's procedure are explained. The causes are listened to and specific measures, persons responsible and a review date are agreed.

**6. Intervention and monitoring plan.** The plan may include tutorial support, adapted support, welcome measures, internal coordination, weekly attendance targets, punctuality monitoring, support for transitions, intervention by the Guidance Department and other measures tailored to the causes. It is reviewed within a short period, preferably 1 to 2 weeks.

**7. Second request / formal communication.** If there is no improvement, a second interview or formal communication takes place.

**8. Coordination with or notification of external services.** If absenteeism persists, agreements are not honoured, the family does not cooperate or there are indicators of risk/lack of protection, the Management and the Guidance Department will consider notifying or coordinating with social services, the school liaison/local police, child protection services, the education inspectorate or other competent resources, depending on the situation. The regional instruction of the Conselleria d'Educació provides that schools must notify cases to external services within a maximum of 15 days from when notification becomes appropriate.

**9. Coordinated follow-up.** After referral, the school continues its educational follow-up, shares only the necessary information through secure channels and collaborates in the joint plan with the services involved.

**10. Closing the protocol.** The protocol will be closed when attendance has returned to normal on a stable basis or when the case is no longer the school's responsibility due to transfer, justified withdrawal or another documented reason. If the pupil remains at the school the following year and the risk persists, the case will be passed on to the new form tutor/team with due confidentiality.

## **8. CRITERIA FOR IMMEDIATE ESCALATION**

It will not be necessary to complete all the previous stages when there are indicators of seriousness. The Management and the Guidance Department will consider immediate action and coordination with the competent service when any of the following circumstances apply:

- The pupil cannot be located or it is persistently impossible to contact the family.
- Prolonged absence without sufficient explanation.
- Indicators of neglect, lack of protection, violence or any other situation of risk to the child.
- The family's express and repeated refusal to ensure attendance during compulsory schooling age.
- Chronic absenteeism or rapid deterioration of the attendance pattern.
- Information indicating that the pupil is attending an unauthorised setting as a substitute for compulsory schooling.

## 9. SPECIFIC SITUATIONS

The instructions of the Regional Ministry of Education provide for certain situations of absenteeism that require specific action. Although the school is privately owned, the criteria and procedures established by the Balearic Islands education authorities will be taken as a reference, adapting them where necessary to the characteristics of our school and to the corresponding communication channels.

- **Pupil who cannot be located:** Check telephone numbers, emails, home address and authorised contacts; record all attempts; consult the information available in the pupil's file; escalate to the Management and contact the competent services if the child cannot be located or there are doubts about their schooling.
- **Transition from Primary to Secondary:** Ensure the transfer of information on open or at-risk cases, with special monitoring at the start of the school year.
- **Travel on school days:** Inform the family that private trips do not suspend the duty to attend. Record absences in accordance with school rules and, if the absence is temporary and prolonged, document the destination, dates and planned schooling where appropriate.
- **Seasonal-worker families or temporary relocation:** Coordinate educational continuity and keep records of dates, destination and host school, where applicable.
- **Home schooling or attendance at unauthorised settings:** For children of compulsory school age, inform the Management and request intervention/guidance from the competent authority, given that schooling must take place in authorised schools under the current framework.
- **Schooling in a foreign education system:** Request sufficient proof of schooling and process the academic/administrative situation according to the instructions of the authorities.
- **Protocol opened the previous year:** Review it at the start of the school year and resume monitoring from the first weeks, without waiting for serious absenteeism to recur.
- **ESO pupil over 16 requesting withdrawal:** Check that they have reached the end of compulsory schooling age and follow the applicable administrative procedure, recording the information and guidance provided.

## 10. PREVENTIVE AND RETURN MEASURES

- Inform families at the start of the school year about attendance, punctuality, justification of absences and the consequences of absenteeism.
- Raise teaching staff awareness of early detection and a coordinated response.
- Create a welcoming and inclusive classroom climate and strengthen the pupil's bond with the group.
- Detect learning, relationship, health or adjustment difficulties that may lie behind the absences.
- Provide particular support during changes of stage and returns after prolonged periods of absence.
- After a return, assess the pupil's level of competence, adjust support and materials, establish an adult of reference and carry out individual monitoring.

## **11. RECORDS, CONFIDENTIALITY AND DOCUMENTATION**

The internal protocol file will contain, as a minimum: a record of absences; communications with the family; summonses and interviews; analysis of causes; agreements and intervention plan; reviews; external communications or referrals; documentation received; and resolution or closure. Access will be limited to staff who need the information in order to intervene.

Information given to external services will be limited to what is necessary for the purposes of protection, schooling and coordination. Communications will take place through secure institutional channels and in accordance with data protection regulations. When consent is required for a specific coordination, it will be obtained beforehand; where there is a legal duty to report or a situation of risk that permits communication without consent, the school will act in accordance with the applicable regulations.