



ROYAL HIGH BATH

G D S T
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

ATTENDANCE

This policy meets the school's responsibilities under the Education and Skills Act 2008, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

The school has regard to the following statutory guidance and advice:

- *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)*
- Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance (2024)
- *Children Missing Education (2025)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*
- *The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*

1. Aims & Overview

School attendance is critical to academic attainment, future success and social and emotional development, and regular or persistent absence can indicate a pupil welfare issue. We ask parents to familiarise themselves with this policy, and to help us to promote the standards of attendance and punctuality which are essential for an orderly school environment where all pupils can get the maximum benefit from their education.

We expect the highest standards of attendance and punctuality, reflecting our commitment to wellbeing and achievement, and our minimum attendance target is 92%.

Our aims are:

- To develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes good attendance
- To ensure, as far as possible, that every pupil can benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the school
- To build strong relationships with families, encouraging them to take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality
- To respond proactively to non-attendance and/or lateness in a proportionate and targeted way
- To work closely with pupils, their families and, if appropriate, the local authority and/or other agencies where attendance becomes a concern

Royal High Bath (RHB)'s admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. We monitor

attendance rates on an ongoing basis and, as required by law, will take action if a student's absence becomes a concern.

Students are expected to attend school punctually every day that the school is open. It is the responsibility of the student to catch up with any schoolwork missed as a result of absence. The student should seek advice from their tutor and/or Head of Year if they require assistance. If the pupil is in the Prep School, parents should seek advice from the Head.

We have the following expectations of parents:

- To fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends every day (except in authorised circumstances)
- To notify the school of any absence or lateness as soon as reasonably possible and to provide an explanation for this
- To arrange medical and dental appointments outside of school times wherever possible
- To arrange holidays outside of school term time
- To make any application for authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity
- To speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may affect their child's attendance or punctuality
- To cooperate with the school to improve attendance or punctuality if it has been raised as an issue

2. Registration and Lateness

Registers are a legal document, and care must be taken to ensure they are marked accurately and in accordance with the regulations.

In the Senior School and Sixth Form, the school day starts with registration at 08:30 and ends with dismissal at 15:50. In the Prep School, morning registration takes place at 08:35 and the school day ends at 15:30. Students arriving at school after registers have closed should sign in at the relevant Reception, and parents should provide a note of explanation.

Any pupil arriving after registration but before the register is closed will be marked as late. Lateness without reasonable cause will be recorded as unauthorised absence. Acceptable reasons for lateness might include specific traffic events and unavoidable vehicle problems.

In the Senior School, if a student is marked as late three times within one term, a debit will be issued (at the tutor's discretion). Further lateness will be followed up by the Head of Year and/or Attendance Officer. Patterns of persistent lateness in the Sixth Form will be followed up with the student and/or their parent(s) as appropriate.

If leaving during the school day, pupils must sign in and out at the relevant Reception. Prep School students must be signed in and out by their parents.

3. Planned Absence

Apart from illness, no pupil should be away from school without prior permission from the school. Parents should submit a request for absence to the relevant staff member no later than 10 school days prior to the date of absence (where possible). If an absence is authorised in advance parents will be notified and an absence note will not be required on return.

In the Senior School and Sixth Form, requests for short-term absences should be directed to the student's tutor and/or Head of Year in the first instance. Requests for a student to be absent for an extended period should be directed to the Head. In the Prep School, all requests for planned absence must be directed to the Head of Prep School.

All schools are expected to restrict leave of absence to the specific circumstances set out in the regulations. These are summarised below:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- Attending a medical or dental appointment (where it is not possible to make an appointment out of school hours)
- Attending an interview
- Religious observance
- Studying for a public examination
- Exceptional circumstances (e.g., bereavement)

In Sixth Form, students are expected to visit universities and colleges during school holidays. However, a maximum of three Open Days over the two years may be attended during term time. Unless scheduled on the school calendar, students in Years 12 and 13 are encouraged to undertake any work experience during the school holiday periods. In some cases, it may be appropriate for Sixth Form students to carry out work experience during their study periods, however, this must be agreed in advance with the Head of Sixth Form.

If a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school. As stated in the regulatory guidance, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance.

Absence for reasons other than those sanctioned by the regulations, for no reason given, or exceeding the terms of exceptional leave, will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

4. Unplanned Absence

It is a parent's responsibility to inform the school of their child's absence as soon as reasonably possible on the first day of absence. If it is clear the pupil will be absent for numerous consecutive days, this should be stated at the outset, otherwise, parents must contact the school on each day of unplanned absence.

The different reporting procedures for the Prep School, Senior School and Sixth Form are outlined below.

Senior School: Parents should report absence by emailing royalhigh@rhsb.gdst.net (and copying in the student's tutor) or by phoning Reception.

Sixth Form: Parents should report absence by emailing the Sixth Form Administrator via sixthform@rhsb.gdst.net.

Prep School: Parents should report absence by phoning Reception or by emailing prep@rhsb.gdst.net

If the school is not notified of a pupil's absence, a call will be made to parents. If contact cannot be made within a reasonable timeframe, the school will seek to assure itself that the pupil is safe and well, through contact with emergency contacts, external professionals or a home visit by local authority personnel and/or school staff. Pupils who cannot be located will be considered missing and the school will pursue the matter in accordance with local procedures. A missing pupil on a student visa will also be reported to the UKVI.

If students are found to be truanting from lessons, parents will be contacted and sanctions imposed.

5. Boarders' Absences

When travelling between school and home, boarders should aim to make travel plans that avoid missing any school time. Requests for absence to travel home early or arrive back to school late should be addressed to the Head in the same way as for any other absence.

If a boarder is unexpectedly unable to return at the end of an exeat, school holiday or other period of absence, the parent/carer(s) should telephone the school in advance to explain the circumstances. If a boarder has not returned by the anticipated time - and by 21:00 at the latest - on the day of return, the Senior Housemistress will telephone the parent/carer(s) to request an explanation. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will also be informed.

If a boarder is not at registration and no reason for absence has been given by the boarding staff, the tutor or class teacher should contact the Director of Boarding. If necessary, the boarding staff will then implement RHB's *Missing Child Policy*.

6. Individual Needs

Whilst punctuality and good attendance is an expectation for all pupils at the school, we recognise that this may be more of a challenge for some pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and/or those experiencing Emotionally Based School Avoidance, long-term medical conditions or mental health issues. We will always take a supportive approach and will assess each case individually to ensure the correct support is offered, including making reasonable adjustments and developing individualised support approaches as appropriate. The school will work closely with the other professionals supporting the child and family to ensure their specific needs are being addressed and in order to improve school attendance.

7. Monitoring Attendance

The school has systems in place to track punctuality and attendance at both individual and group levels. Analysis includes lesson attendance, as well as overall school attendance. The

data is monitored and analysed regularly to ensure early identification of concerns, and intervention where required.

Parents will receive information concerning their daughter's attendance and punctuality via written reports. This information is also available online via Firefly. The school is also obliged to provide attendance data to prospective employers and external organisations where requested, e.g. for university application purposes.

If a student's attendance falls to 90% or below, the Attendance Lead or Prep DSL will contact home to discuss the possible reasons for this, explore any barriers to attendance and establish whether any support is required. If attendance continues to fall, an Attendance Support Meeting will be arranged, which should be attended by the student's parent(s) and any relevant members of staff (e.g., Attendance Lead, Deputy Head, Head of Year, Medical Team). If a student's attendance falls below 85%, the school must consider whether a referral to the local authority's Attendance and Welfare Support Service (AWSS) is required.

The school are required to attend termly meetings with the local authority's AWSS in order to share attendance data and raise any students of concern. The school has a statutory obligation to inform the local authority of the full name and address of any pupil of compulsory school age who:

- a) Fails to attend school regularly
- b) Has unauthorised absence of a continuous period of 10 days or more
- c) The school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of illness

In the Senior School and Sixth Form, if a pupil is absent for three or more consecutive days within a school week, their tutor will inform the Attendance Lead and the student's Head of Year. Unless otherwise agreed, the tutor will have a one-to-one meeting with the pupil on their return to school. If a pupil is absent for five or more consecutive days within a school week, the student's Head of Year will arrange a meeting with them via Microsoft Teams (providing the student is well enough to attend). In both cases, the aim of these meetings will be to check the student's welfare and determine whether the student requires any additional support on their return to school.

8. Responsibilities for Staff

Staff should be vigilant to ensure that students are not absent from registration sessions and/or lessons without permission. The Head (Prep School) or Attendance Lead (Senior School) must be informed of any student who is absent without permission.

All registers are taken electronically via SIMS. All absence codes used in SIMS should be accompanied by a brief comment as explanation for the absence, as this will allow for more accurate monitoring. Staff should take care to ensure that appropriate absence codes are inserted.

In the event of IT systems not working, a hard copy register should be taken and shared with the School Administrator.

Two session registers are recorded each day. The morning session is taken at 08:30 and the afternoon session is taken at 13:25 in the Prep School and 13:45 in the Senior School.

If session registers have not been saved to the system within half an hour, the School Administrator will follow up with the relevant teacher(s).

Once session registers have been completed, the School Administrator will telephone the parent(s) of any student who has not been registered (unless absence has already been agreed and/or contact from home has already been received).

Lesson registers are also taken at the beginning of each class. If a student is absent from a lesson, staff should aim to determine the reason for this absence as soon as possible. If no absence code or comment is provided in SIMS and no co-curricular activities are listed on SOCS, there are three channels via Microsoft Teams (in the 'RHS - All Staff' team) that will indicate possible absence from lessons. These should be checked if there is an unexplained absence:

- a) Students out on visits or other events
- b) Medical Centre
- c) Boarding Information

If, following checks, an unauthorised absence is suspected, the Attendance Lead, Main School Office and the student's Head of Year should be informed immediately. These staff will investigate further and take steps to locate the student in school. If a child is found to be unaccountably absent, RHB's *Missing Child Policy* will be followed.

The School Administrators run a daily report of any missing marks and follow these up with the relevant teacher(s) and run a weekly report of any unauthorised absences and follow these up with the Attendance Lead and/or relevant Heads of Year.

Some co-curricular activities and lessons take place during curriculum lessons. These should change each week so that the same lessons are not impacted. If staff feel the frequency of absence is too great, they should contact the relevant Head of Department in the first instance.

Staff should allow students to leave lessons as promptly as possible to enable them to arrive on time for their next lesson.

All staff should be vigilant during non-teaching time and should challenge students who are not in lessons.

If staff notice patterns of lateness, they should inform the Attendance Lead and relevant tutor(s) and Head of Year at the earliest opportunity.