



Attendance policy

Rookwood School

September 2024

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1. Introduction

The 'School' refers to all the staff and pupils of the Prep Department and Senior School which includes Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Pre-Prep (Key Stage 1), Prep (Key Stage 2), and Senior School (Key Stages 3-5)

The Attendance Champion – A designated senior leader in school whose responsibility is to improve school attendance. At Rookwood each school has an attendance champion.

Prep – Head of Prep

Senior – Head of Senior

2. Aims

At Rookwood School, education is seen as a partnership between the family and the School. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for your child, and we look to you to support this objective. Regular attendance at school has been proven to be a critical factor in ensuring the best academic, social and emotional outcomes for children. Therefore, this policy reflects the legal obligation we have and the family's role in ensuring excellent attendance for your child.

3. Day Pupils

All pupils are required to be in school before 8.40am no earlier than 8.15am unless booked into Breakfast Club. The school day ends at 3.30pm (REC) /4.00pm for Prep and Senior School although many pupils remain later to take part in Co-curricular activities or study in Prep with a member of staff.

With the exception of pupils of lower and upper sixth, pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for a trip or visit or a sporting fixture, the dates of which will have been notified to the parents in advance.

Requests for absence must be made in writing via the ISAMS Parent Portal and reach the school in advance, except in an emergency, when parents are asked to telephone the school before 9.00am. Requests for exceptional absence (i.e. absence for days other than Religious Festivals, medical or dental appointments or for illness) should be sent to the Head or Head of Prep at least two weeks in advance.

If your child is ill, please e-mail or telephone the appropriate school office, before 9.00am on each day of absence. For Senior and Sixth Form pupils the School Reception should be contacted. For Prep School pupils the Prep School office should be contacted. Parents who have emailed from their registered email address can give the reason as part of the daily notification. Unless notified of an absence we will always contact parents or guardians on the first day and subsequent days of an unexplained absence to make sure that your child is safe. We will usually do this by 10am.

Requests for absence (i.e. medical or dental appointments) must be made via ISAMS, or by contacting the school office.

Requests for compassionate absence (i.e. funerals, weddings, military events) should be made to the via ISAMS using the online form. This can be found in the Parent Portal at rookwood.parents.isamshosting.cloud in the Electronic Forms section.

We always send parents the term dates over a year in advance in order that holidays can be arranged without disrupting your child's education. These dates are also available on the Rookwood School website. **The school is unlikely to grant permission for leave of absence, unless in exceptional circumstances. The Attendance Champion will make the final decision on leave of absence.**

Parents are requested to complete a leave of absence form, to request a pupils' absence from school.

4. Boarding pupils

After the school day, when boarders return to the boarding house, they are then cared for by the Head of Boarding and boarding assistants. Together, they are responsible for students during term time, ensuring they are safely occupied outside normal school hours. Procedures for pupils signing in and out of the boarding house will be detailed in the boarding handbook.

All attendance is recorded on Reach for out of school hours and tracked by the Head of Boarding who will report to Head of Pastoral if concerned.

5. System for Recording and Improving Attendance - Teaching Staff:

The attendance register is a legal document and the following matters are statements of policy, not guidance.

It is every teacher's professional responsibility to monitor attendance and punctuality and to apply the policy fairly and consistently, leading by example where appropriate. The expectations of all staff and how those expectations are communicated to pupils are critical for improving attendance. Good attendance is also reliant on administrative systems that accurately record attendance and where authorised and unauthorised absence can be challenged as appropriate.

5.1 Teachers' Responsibilities:

- It is the School's legal duty to register students in the morning and afternoon. Registers must be taken on time, 8.40 a.m. and 1.00pm. Registers should also be taken at the start of every lesson, where possible.
School Attendance (Pupils Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Only pupils in the room are to be marked present - no blanks are to be left.
- Frequent absences must be monitored and discouraged. Initially an informal contact by the Form Teacher, followed up with formal contact with parents. This should be positive and encouraging.
- Form Teachers should keep a check on the number of absences, over 5% per term should automatically initiate a response from the School, in consultation with the Deputy Head Pastoral and Administration staff.
- On return from an extended absence Form Teachers should monitor easing back into school and ensure the workload is balanced.

Form Teachers must make their Form aware of the following procedures:

- Pupils arriving after close of register (9:00 a.m. or 1.10 pm, must register at Prep or Main Reception
- Pupils in School but not attending registration for a valid reason, e.g. Music lesson, must go to reception to be entered in the register – Form Tutors should emphasise the importance of this for safety reasons.

5.2 Monitoring

- Heads of School (Attendance Champions) will monitor the attendance registers with the assistance of admin staff on a weekly basis.
- Initial concerns about attendance will be expressed, in writing, by the Form Tutor. Continuing concerns initiate a letter of concern by the Head of School. In cases where improvement is not noticed, a final letter of concern will be initiated by the relevant Head of School. At this point, a referral to Hampshire MASH will be considered.
- The DFE require schools to notify the local authority if a child is absent from school for a period of 15 consecutive days.

The attendance champions will oversee the accurate completion of registers and compilation of attendance statistics with the support of administration staff.

6. System for Recording and Improving Attendance – Administrative Staff

The attendance register is a legal document and the following matters are statements of policy, not guidance. Good attendance is reliant on administrative systems which accurately record attendance and where authorised and unauthorised absence can be challenged as appropriate. It is everyone's professional responsibility to monitor attendance and punctuality and to apply the policy fairly and consistently, leading by example where appropriate. The expectations of all staff and how those expectations are communicated to pupils are critical for improving attendance.

6.1 Administration Staff Responsibilities:

- Reception must chase absence. An explanation is required, by law, on pupils' return – notes should be kept on ISAMS.
- Reception will log calls, including time, reason and identification of caller.
- Details of calls will be placed in ISAMS.
- Administration staff will make contact after 9.00am on the first day of absence and subsequent days if no message is received.
- Absence notes are to be taken from the ISAMS report for filing in pupil files at least half-termly.
- Administration staff will chase absence notes by: 1 week after return - issue note to students for signing by parent / guardian, 2 weeks - letter sent home by post or email.
- Any absence of more than 3 days will automatically involve contact with home by admin staff or form tutors and negotiation about work to be sent and how it will be delivered. This should be initiated by the School rather than parents or pupils.
- Manual register information will be entered on to the Admin System immediately registration closes.

Staff must be aware of the statutory codes, as outlined in appendix 2

- Monthly attendance statistics will be generated for inclusion in Reports and for the Head of Senior/Head of Prep.

(The proprietor of a school must ensure that whenever an entry in the school's admission register or attendance register is amended, the register contains -

- (a) the original entry;
- (b) the amended entry;
- (c) the reason for the amendment;
- (d) the date on which the amendment was made; and
- (e) the name of the person who made the amendment.

7. Attendance at lessons (Senior):

Absence from lessons should be checked against the attendance register or with the Form Tutor. All teachers are responsible, as part of their pastoral duties, for monitoring attendance and should pass concerns to Form Tutors or Heads of School. Persistent or serious pastoral concerns should be passed to the Head of Senior or DSL who oversees pastoral care.

7.1. Attendance in lessons (Prep):

Absence from lessons should be monitored by all subject teachers. Where there are any doubt or concerns the teachers should double check with the Prep administration team or with the Form Tutor. Any serious concerns should be reported to the Head of Prep and/or the Head of Senior.

Attendance – Little Rooks Nursery

Nursery opens at 8am for all children and will close at 6pm. We offer half day sessions and a school day session. Children should be dropped off and collected at the nursery door in the Rookery building.

We request that holidays or sickness absences be recorded on the Family app, you will be contacted by a member of the nursery team if we have not heard from you by 9.30am.

7.2. Sixth Form – Leaving the College premises during the day

Sixth Form students are only permitted to leave the School premises following agreement with the Head of Sixth Form and written permission. This privilege will be revoked if aspects of School life fall below the required standard, for example if a student falls behind on work or if they do not role model the behaviour that is in line with our School's policies and ethos. All students are expected to continue to attend lessons on time and follow the correct signing in and out procedures.

Students must attend all lessons including Personal Development, PE and Enrichment. If a student is

free for lesson one, they will still be expected to attend registration. Unless it has been agreed that the pupil may go home to study.

Students will sign in and out from main reception.

To allow students to leave the School premises during the school day, each parent must give written consent that they take responsibility for their child while they are off the premises

8. Regulatory Framework - The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education

Taken from Working together to improve school attendance. Came into force in August 2014

10. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

11. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

12. This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.

At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%).

At KS4, pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 4 or above. The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%).

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

SUMMARY OF THE LAW TAKEN FROM THE GUIDELINES FOR ISI INSPECTION

All Independent schools - Regulation 3(17) "The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006" (amended 2016)

For Boarding Schools – NMS 20.5: "Staff know the whereabouts of boarders (or know how to find their whereabouts) in their charge at all times". NMS 20.6: "Staff working within the school know and implement the school's policy in relation to children going missing and their role in implementing that policy. Staff actively search for children who are missing, including working with the police where appropriate".

Every school is required by law to maintain two separate registers, an Admissions register, known as the “School Roll”, and an Attendance register. School Inspectors are required to check both registers and assure themselves that the requirements of the regulations are being met.

Boarding pupils are covered by the Boarding Standards: National Minimum Standards. Standard 20 places a legal requirement upon staff who have boarders in their charge to know their whereabouts at all times (or to know how to find their whereabouts), e.g. by operating a signing in and signing out system when boarders leave the school, and by registering attendance in the boarding house.

9. Publication & Availability

This policy can be found on the school website and on request from the school office. Accessible versions can be obtained from the school office on request.

10. Version Control

Date of adoption of this policy	September 2022
Date of last review of this policy	September 2024
Date for next review of this policy	Autumn Term 2026
Policy owner (School)	Head of Senior School / Head of Prep

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Registration Codes

(1) The proprietor of a school must ensure that, at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session, the attendance of each registered pupil who is not a boarder is recorded in the school's attendance register in accordance with [this regulation](#).

(2) If the pupil is present at the school their attendance is to be recorded by entering in the attendance register the code listed in the second column of Table 1 that corresponds to the circumstances as listed in the first column.

Table 1 - Attendance

The session is a morning session and the pupil is present at the school when the attendance register begins to be taken.	/
The session is an afternoon session and the pupil is present at the school when the attendance register begins to be taken.	\
The pupil is absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended.	L

(3) If the pupil is absent from the school so that they can attend a place other than the school in any of the circumstances listed in the first column of Table 2 their attendance is to be recorded by entering in the attendance register the code listed in the corresponding entry in the second column.

Table 2

Attendance

The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the 1996 Act(1) or section 42(2) or 61(1) of the 2014 Act.	K
The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the proprietor and supervised by a member of school staff.	V
The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity within paragraph (11) that is a sporting activity.	p
The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity within paragraph (11) that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the proprietor as part of the pupil's education.	W
The pupil is attending a place for any other approved educational activity within paragraph (11) .	B

(4) If the pupil is absent and none of the circumstances listed in the first column of Table 2 applies their absence is to be recorded by entering in the attendance register the code listed in the second column of Table 3 that corresponds to the circumstances as listed in the first column.

Table 3

Absence

The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	C1
The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.	M
The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution.	J1
The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of studying for a public examination.	S
The pupil is not of compulsory school age and is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to attend.	X
The pupil is of compulsory school age and is absent with leave because, in accordance with an agreement between a parent who they normally live with and the proprietor that the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis, their timetable does not require them to attend.	C2
The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending another school at which they are a registered pupil.	D
The pupil is absent with leave for any other purpose.	C
The pupil is a mobile child, their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with that parent.	T
The day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which a parent of the pupil belongs.	R
The pupil is unable to attend because of sickness.	I
The pupil is unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements for them within paragraph (12) or (13).	Q
The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home and the transport to and from school that is normally provided for the pupil by the proprietor or a local authority is not available.	Y1
The pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency.	Y2
Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those who the proprietor thinks cannot practicably be accommodated in those parts of the premises that remain in use.	Y3
The pupil is unable to attend because they are in criminal justice detention within paragraph (14).	Y5
The pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be— (a) contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care or any body or authority exercising equivalent functions in relation to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland; or (b) prohibited by any enactment relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease or any instrument made under such an enactment.	Y6
The pupil is excluded from the school for any other reason.	E
The pupil is unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	Y7
The pupil is absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday.	G
The circumstances of the pupil's absence have not yet been established.	N
None of the other rows of this table applies, or this code is required to be used by	O

paragraphs (7) and (9)(b) .	
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(5) If a registered pupil's absence is recorded in the attendance register using the code B or K the nature of the approved educational activity (in the case of code B) or educational provision (in the case of code K) is also to be recorded in the attendance register.

(6) If a registered pupil's absence is recorded in the attendance register using the code Y7 the nature of the unavoidable cause is also to be recorded in the attendance register.

(7) If, at the time the attendance register is taken, a registered pupil's absence is recorded in that register using the code N the proprietor must ensure that reasonable steps are taken to establish the circumstances of the pupil's absence and that the register is amended within five school days in accordance with [paragraphs \(8\)](#) and [\(9\)](#).

(8) If it is established under [paragraph \(7\)](#) that the pupil attended the school after the taking of the register ended but before the end of the session—

(a) if the circumstances of their absence during the taking of the register are established as any of those listed in Table 2 or any row of Table 3 other than the final two rows, the code N is to be replaced with the appropriate code;

(b) otherwise, the code N is to be replaced with the code U.

(9) In any other case —

(a) if the circumstances of the pupil's absence have been established, the code N is to be replaced with the appropriate code as specified in [paragraph \(3\)](#) or [\(4\)](#);

(b) if the circumstances have not been established, the code N is to be replaced with the code O.

(10) If a school session is cancelled, the proprietor must ensure that that fact is recorded in the attendance register by entering the code Y4 as if it were a record of each pupil's attendance at the time when the session was due to take place