

Ramsey Grammar School

Standard Operating Procedures for School Attendance

Roles involved

Attendance coordination - named LG member

Attendance administration - named school Administration Team member
Attendance recording and monitoring - Form Tutors

Attendance monitoring and intervention - Heads of Year

Attendance intervention and support - Leadership Group

Focus:

- keep whole school attendance at 96% or above, with a whole-school culture of understanding that attendance leads to success and a celebration of such
 - work to eliminate individual attendance figures of less than 80%
 - ensure all AM and PM registers are taken by the times outlined in the SOP
 - have back-up procedures in place for when technology lets us down; legal obligations must be met regardless
 - as far as possible, reduce "Unauthorised Absences" to 0, including Years 12/13/14
 - have a range of strategies in place to address individual student attendance when it falls below identified thresholds
 - have a clear understanding of the role of the Education Liaison Officer
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1. **The Marking of Registers:** ALL Form Tutors must mark their AM and PM registers (remembering to click Save) by 9.05am and 2.00pm respectively

- at each registration point, Form Tutors will collect from the school office their folders which contain hard copy registers so that in the event of an electronic register not being available, a paper register can be taken. All paper registers will be sent to the Attendance Administrator (AA) as follows:
 - i) to the Attendance Office (on the corridor at the back of West Hall) by 9.15am, and
 - ii) to the West Office by 2.15pm
 - **NOTE:** no registers to be handed in at East Office - students must be sent to the West building to hand them in directly to the AA
- Form Tutors will use either a / or an N to indicate whether a student is present in the room or not - if a student is helping in the Animal Unit, staff need to let Form Tutors know
- SIMS message/email will be sent by the AA to those Form Tutors whose registers have not been marked, once the cover list has been checked for absent colleagues, and the paper registers checked off
- Form Tutors / teachers should not change or amend marks which have been entered by office staff. Comments entered will be initialled by the person entering them. If a code denoting absence has been entered, and the student then appears in the classroom, the code can be overwritten and the AA notified by email.

The following has been sent to all staff:

"This is to inform you that as we now have a designated email and phone line for absence, Admin Staff will no longer send emails to Form Tutors and HOYS informing them of the reason for absence. Instead, when a notification of absence is received, I will amend the register and put a comment in the comment box. This way it will cut

down on your emails, but will also allow the class teacher to see the reason for absence too. Hopefully, this will also avoid marks being changed back to N. I will print off a comment report each week for HOYS, which will show the student name and the reason for absence - this way it should be easier to pick up repeated absences and patterns. Comments can be viewed by hovering over the red triangle on the register."

- students arriving late ie after the close of AM (9.05am) or PM (2.00pm) registration will sign in at either the West or East Office depending on where their first lesson is - the AA will telephone the East Office by 10.00am and 2.50pm to collect names from the Signing In/Out book before making calls home. Persistent lateness by individuals should be followed up and addressed - 3 x late in any half-term leads to a detention with Form Tutor, escalated to HoY Detention, then School Detention, and then a Parental Meeting if the problem persists (all logged on SIMS)
- students will receive e-points at the point of each School Report for >95% attendance as recorded since the last Report and as part of All Green Report
- HoYs have discretion to award e-points based on individual attendance target-setting

2. Authorising Absences:

- for most students, this is covered by a telephone message or email to a dedicated line 811100 (Option 1) or address (rgsabsence@sch.im) from parents/carers/families and the AA changes the N accordingly to record the reason for the absence on the register and adds an explanatory note, with initials (the presence of a note is indicated by a red triangle in the mark square and can be read by hovering the cursor)
 - if notice has not been received by 10.50am (breaktime) the AA will send a text alert using the school's In Touch facility which should prompt contact from home and then the register is amended by the AA accordingly to show reason for absence (Note: these currently average 45 per day)
 - in the event of no response from home, a second text and/or telephone call is made by the AA
 - with any continued lack of communication on the day of absence, an email is sent by the AA to the Form Tutor who is required to follow up a written authorisation from home via the student on their return to school. When this is received, the Form Tutor places the note in the register folder and amends the register to show absence authorised - the AA checks the folders regularly and files the notes in both the West/East buildings. (NOTE: there are tear out slips in the Student Planner which can also be used) (ref: DEC Procedures1.1 - see Document below)
- If no absence authorisation is forthcoming 3 working days after the student has returned to school, and repeated reminders have been given by the Form Tutor, the requirement to follow up is passed by the Form Tutor to the Head of Year who contacts home and pursues the issue until an acceptable conclusion is reached and the absence formally authorised OR
- continued unexplained absence will lead to contact with Education Liaison Officer See FlowChart in Appendix B of this document:
(https://www.gov.im/media/191788/attendancepolicy20062011update_1_.pdf)
(NOTE: Form Tutors/Heads of Year can add individual electronic notes to any student on their registers to indicate intervention / progress / problems with tracking attendance - this helps to create a trail of evidence; entries should be initialled)
 - where ongoing and recurring health problems are cited by parents/carers as the reason for persistent or repeated absence, a medical note is requested by HoY for holding on file

- the AA will advise HoY of students whose parents/carers/families repeatedly fail to contact school regarding absence on first day of non-attendance - HoY contacts home and advises of the "First Day of Absence" procedures to be followed
- Year 12/13/14 - currently, students self-certify through a system of signing a document in Head of Year office

3. Ongoing Unexplained Absence / Absence with Unsatisfactory Authorisation from Home:

- in the event of a student's absence failing to be reported by parents/carers in a satisfactory manner, or the absence not being reported at all, the procedures outlined by the Department of Education and Children's Policy: "Attendance of Pupils: Legislation, Policy and Procedures" must be followed (Appendix B - see below)

4. Leave of Absence

The Headteacher can give permission for leave of absence from school, including for reasons of family holidays, for up to a maximum of 10 days in any school year. A letter is sent by an adult named on a student's SIMS record as having 'parental responsibility' to request the absence, giving details of dates and reason for requested absence. The Headteacher signs and dates the request, passes it to the AA who records the appropriate code in the register and returns the letter to the student.

5. The AA monitors those students who are on a Reduced Timetable, liaising with the HoY or FLA2/3 Subject Leader to ensure that records are accurate and comply with attendance procedures
6. The AA records Suspensions on registers - see separate Suspension of Students SOP
7. The Attendance Coordinator speaks with Form Tutors who repeatedly fail to take registers by the times stipulated above and highlight legal and professional duties
8. Form Tutors monitor individual and group attendance patterns and advise HoYs of emerging concerns so that they can be addressed as early as possible
9. ELO meets regularly with the AA and HoYs re individual students and agree routes of support and intervention in compliance with the Procedures for Dealing with Unexplained Absences table below - these meetings take place on the first Thursday of every month when in school; each HoY and the AA has a timetabled session on this day
10. The AA completes and returns to the Department of Education and Children the monthly reports on Attendance, and copies these to the LG and HoYs - immediate action is taken to address those "at risk" ie less than 85%
11. For KS5 students attending "Collaboration Subjects" at other schools, the RGS students are marked with a B by RGS at point of registration. When receiving school/IOM college provides the registers to RGS, normally every 2 weeks, the AA will make any amendments as required. Close liaison is maintained throughout the partnership re attendance.

For KS4 students attending college, students are registered on the bus by the East building Deputy Headteacher (or KS4 HoY in their absence), and the information is emailed or telephoned to the AA who amends the relevant registers.

12. Attendance figures are included on the Report in 2 forms - i) Year to Date, and ii) Current Reporting Session - the latter is formally analysed at point of School Report (3-4 times per year) and the following implemented across the school:

Highlight attendance using a traffic light system:

- 95% or higher - Green
- 90% - 94% - Amber
- 89% or lower - Red

13. In accordance with these figures, the letters in Appendix A to this document are issued with the Reports. There is advice on the back of the Reports with links to resources which will support parents/carers/families in understanding the impact of attendance at less than 95%.

14. The Education Liaison Officer is made aware by the AA of any student whose attendance falls below 80% (holidays, suspensions etc are taken into account in the figure).

Where the issue is of significant concern, ie cannot be accounted for in terms of agreed Leave of Absence, Suspensions etc, the Head of Year makes a formal referral (using official Referral Form held in LG/HoY Shared Folder and emailed to attendanceconcerns@gov.im) and an intervention plan implemented - **a copy of this referral and plan MUST be attached to the student's SIMS record.** If intervention with ELO improves attendance over 8 weeks with a consistent >80%, the case will be closed and a letter will be sent to the original referrer **to be filed on SIMS.**

For students in **KS5** whose attendance falls below 80%, a meeting is arranged with the student and parents/carers by the HoY as a matter of urgency - KS5 students are not subject to the same legal requirements of attendance as those aged 16 years or below, but parental involvement in discussions about consequences of below 80% attendance are vital.

Letters to accompany Reports when attendance figures trigger a response (names filtered through HoY to allow discretion prior to letter being created) with advice on the Attendance to Attainment website link to be included on the back of the Report. These letters are located with the attendance officer.

The 'warning' letters referred to in stages 3.3 and 5 may be omitted at the discretion of the Department.

** Alternatively, or additionally, application may be made to the juvenile court for the child to be made the subject of an education supervision order. If such an order is made, the child's attendance should continue to be monitored closely by the school and its' Education Liaison Officer. School staff and the relevant Department officers will need to work closely and in co-operation with the child's designated social worker for the duration of the order.*

Appendix B

Procedures for Dealing with Unexplained Absences (DEC)

Stage	Time Scale (approximate)	Procedure
1.1	Plus 3 working days	All unexplained absences should be followed up by the school on the pupil's return to school or after 3 consecutive days of absence. An explanation should be sought, perhaps by giving the pupil a standard letter, with reply slip, to take home (<i>see Appendix E</i>) or by trying to contact the parents by 'phone.
1.2	Plus 2 more working days	School to review in 2 working days.
1.3		If there is no reply or the reply is felt to be unsatisfactory and the child's attendance continues to give cause for concern, the school should continue to try to contact the parents by 'phone in an endeavour to obtain a satisfactory explanation.
1.4	Plus 2 more working days	School to review in 2 working days.
1.5		If the child's attendance still gives cause for concern, a letter should be posted to the parents by the school. (<i>See Appendix F</i>)
1.6	Plus 2 more working days	School to review in 2 working days.

1.7		If there is no satisfactory reply the school should contact the parents, by letter, inviting them to attend a meeting at the school. <i>(See Appendix G)</i>
1.8	Plus 5 more working days	<p>Parents should be given 5 working days' notice of this meeting, the aim of which is twofold: firstly, to seek an explanation for the child's unauthorised absence(s) and, secondly, to obtain an undertaking, from the parents, regarding future attendance.</p> <p>Persons invited to attend the meeting would normally include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ both parents and/or guardians (or whoever else has care and control of the child); ○ a school representative; ○ the school's Education Liaison Officer; ○ a Social Services Division representative (if the child is on the Child Protection Register); and <p>in the case of a Looked After Child, the child's designated social worker and the school's designated teacher for Looked After Children.</p>
^{2.2} 1.9		<p><small>If the child's attendance is</small></p> <p>If, at the end of this meeting, either (1) there has been no response from the parents or (2) a satisfactory undertaking has not been given, the school should refer the matter to its Education Liaison Officer.</p>
2.1	Plus 20 more working days	Education Liaison Officer to make appropriate enquiries and to review weekly for one month.
		satisfactory throughout this period, reviews should be conducted thereafter on a monthly basis.
2.3		If the child's attendance has not been satisfactory, however, and the Education Liaison Officer's enquiries have failed to reveal any mitigating circumstances to account for the absences, the Education Liaison Officer should refer the matter to the Department for further action.

3.1	Within 2 more working days	<p>Action will normally take the form of a formal 'warning' letter sent to the child's parents by the Manager of the Department's Legal & Administrative Services reminding them of their statutory duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually and of the consequences, in terms of legal proceedings, of their failure to do so. (<i>See Appendix H</i>)</p> <p>The parents will be asked in this letter to arrange to meet with the Manager (Legal & Administrative Services) and the school's Education Liaison Officer to discuss their child's poor attendance. In the case of a looked after child, the school's designated teacher for looked after children may also be invited to attend the meeting.</p>
3.2		<p>The child's attendance should continue to its Education Liaison Officer on a weekly basis.</p>
3.3	Plus 20 more working days	<p>If attendance has been satisfactory for four consecutive weeks, reviews should be conducted thereafter on a monthly basis. If attendance continues to be satisfactory for three months or more after the Department's 'warning' letter but then deteriorates to an unacceptable level, a further 'warning' letter will be sent to the parents by the Manager (Legal & Administrative Services).</p>
3.4		<p>If there have been any further unauthorised absences during the above four week period, however, the Education Liaison Officer should submit a further report to the Department. This must be accompanied by a Certificate of Attendance signed by the headteacher and an attendance monitoring sheet covering the same period.</p>
4.1	Immediately	<p>The Manager (Legal & Administrative Services) will then write to the Department's Advocate/Attorney General's Chambers requesting that arrangements be made for a summons to be served on the parents.*</p>

4.2		Court hearing.
4.3	After court hearing	The child's attendance should be monitored closely by the school and its' Education Liaison Officer on a weekly basis during the period following the court hearing.
5		If there are further unauthorised absences a 'warning' letter will be sent to the parents by the Manager (Legal & Administrative Services) requesting an immediate reply.
6		If there is no reply from the parents or the reply is felt to be unsatisfactory and there are further unauthorised absences, the Department's Advocate/Attorney General's Chambers will be requested to take the necessary steps to bring the parents back before the court.