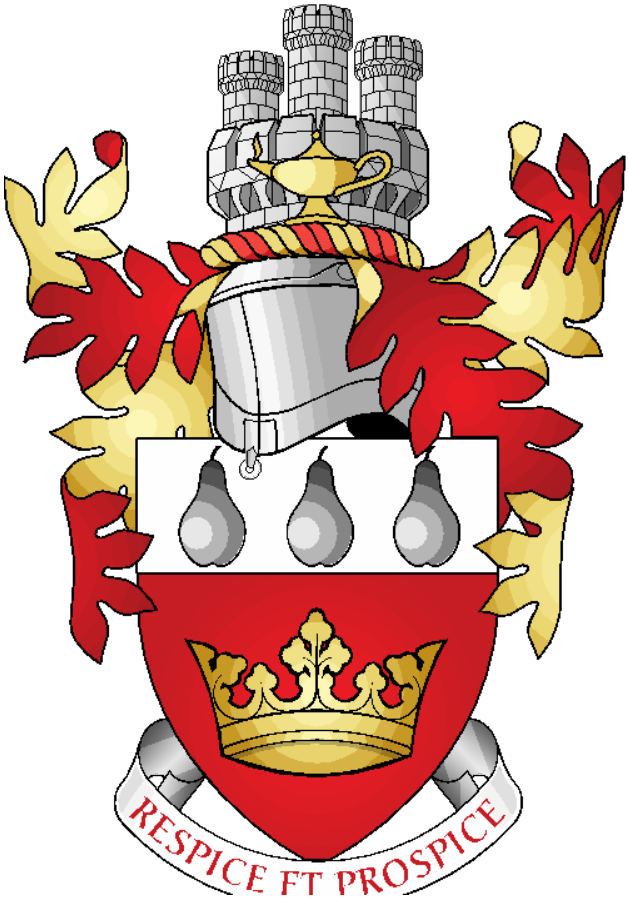


Pupil Absence from School Procedure

RGS Worcester
October 2026

PUPIL ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL PROCEDURE

Absence through illness

In the event that a pupil is not well enough to attend School then parents must telephone the School Office on 01905 613391 in the morning before 8.30am. Alternatively an email can be sent to absence@rgsw.org.uk confirming the absence.

It is a requirement that parents contact the School. In the event that contact is not made, the School Office will telephone and/or e-mail parents of any pupil who is absent and ask them to provide a reason. This contact will be made on the first day of absence. If the absence continues without explanation, further contact will be made (including with other emergency contacts and, where appropriate, a pupil's social worker) to ensure the pupil is safe. We would, therefore, be grateful if all parents could contact the School first.

Parents must give sufficient detail of any illness when informing the School of an absence due to illness.

The pupil should then bring in a signed note from parents, or a direct email from parents must be sent to the Form Tutor, explaining the absence on the day that they return to School.

If a pupil is absent from school due to illness for longer than a period of 5 full days, the Head of Year will contact parents to discuss how the School can support the pupil, including with catching up on work and returning to School. Parents are asked to share any relevant information from medical professionals already involved in their child's care, particularly where it relates to additional needs or support.

Additionally, if a pupil reaches a collective absence of 20% during the course of a half-term period due to illness, the School will meet with parents (and the pupil where appropriate) to understand any barriers to attendance and agree how the pupil can be supported.

The School does not routinely ask for medical evidence for illness absence and does not apply blanket rules requiring it; in most cases a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend will be accepted. The School may ask for reasonable evidence only where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the illness, or where it is seeking to support a pupil with prolonged or repeated patterns of illness. In these cases the School will first talk with the parent (and the pupil where appropriate), will not be rigid about the form of evidence, and will take into account evidence such as prescriptions, medication or appointment cards.

For long-term or chronic illnesses where a pupil is absent from school for an extended period of time, the School will work closely with the family, and any medical professionals or external agencies involved with the situation. As per the Government's guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance, July 2026', where a pupil has been recorded as absent through illness and there are reasonable grounds to believe they will miss 15 school days or more (consecutively or cumulatively) in the school year, the School must make a sickness return to the Local Authority, so that any provision needed to ensure continuity of the pupil's education can be agreed.

The aim of the School will be to support the pupil and the family, and to find a pathway to return the pupil to full time education on appropriate provision, supported by the views of relevant other professionals, including medical professionals. In order to support matters further, the School is able to consider reasonable adjustments to individual curriculums, including subject choice adaptations, suitability of Public Examination entries, and options to consider repeated time in a particular Year group if absence due to illness has been significant and extended. Where a pupil has a disability, the School will make reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010, agreed with and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents. Support may include a time-limited phased return or, in very exceptional circumstances, a temporary part-time timetable agreed with parents, with regular reviews and a planned end date. Remote education will only be used as a last resort, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, and as part of a plan to support the pupil's return to School; absence will still be recorded in the attendance register.

Absence for Medical Appointments

On occasions, pupils need to attend a medical appointment which requires them to miss part of a School day. In the event of this, parents must write to the Form Tutor in advance explaining the reason for absence and the times that the pupil will be away during the School day. The Form Tutor will then mark this on the pupil's School attendance record. It is requested that such appointments should be made, where possible, after the end of school so as to avoid disruption to the School day for the pupil.

In the event of an emergency medical appointment, please contact the School Office by telephone or email absence@rgsw.org.uk and explain your child's absence.

Requesting Absence in advance

It is, of course, unfortunate if any pupil has to miss school during term time for activities not organised by RGS. Pupils must attend School during term time and parents should bear in mind that this is a legal requirement. However, on occasions, such activities have considerable educational benefit and therefore may be permitted, but only in 'exceptional circumstances', as set out by government guidance. Each request will be considered on its individual merits, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the background to the request and the pupil's attendance record. The School does not operate blanket policies under which leave of absence is granted automatically for particular events or circumstances. If leave is granted, the School will decide how long the pupil may be away. Leave will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours, and cannot be granted retrospectively.

Only the Headmaster or the Senior Deputy Head at RGS Worcester can grant this permission and parents should be aware that any days of school missed, other than through illness (where a note should be provided), which have not been granted permission by prior arrangement, constitute an unauthorised absence against the pupil's name in the School records.

Where a pupil has 10 or more sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks (for example, a term-time holiday that has not been authorised, or a combination of unauthorised absence and late arrival after the register has closed), this meets the national threshold for considering a penalty notice. The School will notify the Local Authority, which decides whether a Notice to Improve, a penalty notice or other legal action is appropriate. In addition, the School must notify the Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend regularly or who has been absent for a continuous period of 10 school days with unauthorised absence.

Any request for a pupil to be absent from School for an activity not organised by RGS, should be made in writing and sent to the pupil's Head of Year or directly to the Senior Deputy Head, and before any firm plans are put in place. It would be useful if parents could make it clear in the correspondence if and how a proposed absence constitutes an 'exceptional circumstance', and what the benefits of the proposed absence from School will be.

The Head of Year will then discuss the request with the Senior Deputy Head who will keep a register of requests, and who will then pass the request up to the appropriate senior members of staff; a decision will be made and a reply sent.

It is important that this procedure is followed and that permission is granted before the absence. We ask, therefore, that such absence requests be made well in advance of the proposed departure date, and certainly in advance of any firm plans being made, so that permission can be considered and the full procedure followed. It is worth noting, that the DfE does not generally consider a holiday or other absence for leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Such requests are therefore unlikely to be granted, and any holiday taken without permission will be recorded as unauthorised (code G).

Lateness and registration

The register is taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session, at the same time for all pupils, and remains open for 15 minutes (from 8.35am). Pupils who arrive after registration should sign in at the School Office. A pupil who arrives before the register closes is marked late (code L); a pupil who arrives after the register has closed without a satisfactory reason is recorded as an unauthorised absence for that session (code U), which counts towards the penalty notice threshold above. Repeated lateness will be followed up with parents.

Absence and School work

Any pupil who is absent from School for any reason should make every effort to ensure that work missed is caught up as quickly as possible once they are well enough to do so following their recuperation, if unwell. Teaching staff will do their best to provide the information and materials missed, usually via Showbie.

If a pupil has a significant period of absence through illness (usually greater than 5 school days), then the Form Tutor and Head of Year will discuss with parents and collect work from subject teachers to be sent home, or set via Showbie. Students should also keep monitoring Student Planner and try to complete as much work that is set to their classes as they can.

Please note that, given the number of different teachers each pupil has, it does take a little time to assemble such work in paper form.

Pupils who have been granted permission to be absent for another activity should endeavour to collect the work they will miss in advance from their subject teachers. Parents may also wish to contact the Head of Year well in advance to assist with this.

If parents have any queries regarding these procedures, please do contact the relevant Head of Year.

Summary

Reason for absence	Who to contact	Is a note required
Illness	School office via email absence@rgsw.org.uk or telephone call 01905 613391 + Form Tutor if by email	Yes, on return to school
Appointment Medical/Dental	Form Tutor By email or letter in advance	No
Emergency Appointment Medical/Dental	School office via email absence@rgsw.org.uk or telephone call 01905 613391 + Form Tutor and Head of Year	No
Absence for any other reason	Head of Year / Senior Deputy Head By email or letter	No

Absence from Weekend Co-Curricular Commitments

Planned Absence

RGS's programme of co-curricular activities depends on the full commitment of the pupil body. For this reason, school activities must take priority over all other commitments and we expect pupils to be available when selected.

We accept that there will occasionally be an event for which a pupil will have to miss a fixture or rehearsal, but requests need to be made well in advance so that provision can be made.

Please note that, unless permission is granted for a pupil to miss a co-curricular commitment, disciplinary sanctions will be imposed.

Requests for absence should be directed to the appropriate Head of Sport alongside the relevant Head of Year, who will discuss the matter with the Assistant Head Co-curricular and/or the Director of Sport if related to fixtures etc.

Illness and injury

Should a pupil fall ill or sustain an injury that prevents their participation in a co-curricular activity, they should communicate this to the relevant Head of Sport at the earliest opportunity. This should be followed by a written communication from the pupil's parent or guardian confirming the reason for their absence.

Sometimes illness or injury occurs after the end of the school day on a Friday for a weekend commitment. In these circumstances early communication is once again vital and gives us the opportunity to make alternative arrangements.

Any pupil who is absent from school through illness on the day before a sports fixture may not participate in that fixture except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Assistant Head (Co-Curricular) or Director of Sport.

Sponsor : Deputy Head, September 2014
Reviewed: September 2015, August 2016, August 2017, August 2018, August 2019
Reviewed and updated: August 2020, September 2021 (Senior Deputy Head), July 2022, June 2023, June 2024
Reviewed and updated as per Statutory Guidance: September 2024
Reviewed: June 2025
Reviewed and updated: June 2026
Reviewed and updated: October 2026 (Working together to improve school attendance, July 2026)