

September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

### Attendance at the RGS – Years 7-13

**We strive to achieve 100 % attendance and are hoping to work with you to get as near to this target as possible.**

This is a reminder about the School's policy on attendance, which is based on the DfE Guidelines. We carry out a full academic programme throughout the year and have an expectation that pupils will commit to full attendance. Low attendance severely hampers a student's progress. To illustrate this in real terms, an attendance rate of 90 % over 5 years is equivalent to half of a school year missed. The final paragraph of this document requests your full cooperation in encouraging your son to adhere to this policy.

RGSHW Attendance Definitions	
97-100 %	Expected
90-97 %	Cause for concern
Below 90 %	Serious cause for concern

100 % attendance will be rewarded by House Points and letters home.

However, RGSHW attendance for 2020/21 will take into account the Coronavirus pandemic. The wellbeing of our boys is of utmost importance to us, and thus boys must not feel under pressure to attend when poorly.

We will maintain our current RGSHW Attendance Definitions, because at this time we do not know how the situation will develop over the academic year, but we give our assurance that we will manage fairly and supportively any attendance issues related to the outbreak.

To this end, we would request, should your son be unable to attend School, that you inform [attendance@rgshw.com](mailto:attendance@rgshw.com) of the reason why, including detail as shown below:

Illness, suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19  
Illness, not suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19  
Shielding for self or other family member  
Household isolation

#### Expected attendance

**Years 7-11** 0840-1540 daily  
**Year 12** 0840-1330 daily (unless timetabled lessons period 7 or 8, including Private Study)  
**Year 13** 0840-1330 daily (unless timetabled lessons period 7/8)

#### Pupil Absence

Please notify the Attendance Officer of an absence in the following ways:

- By telephone 01494 551466
- By email [attendance@rgshw.com](mailto:attendance@rgshw.com)

### **Illness**

If your son is extremely unwell and unable to attend school, please advise the School Attendance Officer by **8:40am** on the first day of your son's absence, and **every day thereafter**, stating your son's name, his form, the reason for his absence (please give detail) and an expected date of return. This information will be recorded in the register.

Should a student be absent without contact from parents, this will be treated as a matter of concern for the child's welfare. Contact will be attempted by the school and external agencies will be involved where necessary.

### **Medical/Dental Appointments and Music Exams**

If your son has a medical/dental appointment or music exam which cannot be arranged outside of school hours, please inform the Attendance Officer by telephone or e-mail as far in advance as is possible. Your son must show his appointment card/letter to the Attendance Officer when he signs in/out of school, and music exams must be verified with a letter from the exam board. Please arrange to collect your son from the main School Office by using the intercom facility at the main School gates.

Please note that if your son is absent for AM registration or Period 5 (PM registration) his attendance percentage will be affected. If your son has an **unavoidable** medical appointment during the school day, we would appreciate your support in arranging this, where possible, at lunchtime (1.30pm-2.20pm) or after 3pm, to minimise the effect on his schooling. A student attending an urgent medical appointment during the school day is expected to attend school for a significant part of the school day.

### **Leave of Absence**

In exceptional circumstances, requests for Leave of Absence can be made to the Attendance Officer. This may include requests to attend a wedding or funeral of a first degree relative, a university visit (a maximum of three Open Days in school time), driving tests (not lessons), work experience, county level sport, and students in entertainment.

Any request for Leave of Absence should be made using the 'Request for Leave of Absence' form on the RGS website/app. Please allow at least two weeks' notice between the request and the actual date for which you have applied. Please include an explanation of why this leave of absence needs to be taken during term time.

Once your request has been considered, a reply will be sent to the parental email(s) registered with the school.

Please note that the School cannot lawfully grant leave of absence for family holidays, except under clearly exceptional circumstances, and requests for LOA, in line with Government Guidelines, will normally not be authorised. Absence requests are not generally granted and almost never to those whose attendance is below 98 %.

### **Lates**

We are doing our very best to prepare your sons for the working world. A key requirement is the ability to be punctual, please can we draw your attention to our policy re. lateness. If your son arrives after 8.40am, without communication from a parent to the Attendance Officer by 9:15am the following day, he will automatically be given a Friday afternoon detention. Please use the phone number or email address above.

### **Personal responsibility of boys**

If your son needs to sign out or in at any point in the school day, for a valid reason, he should use the finger scanner in the Student Hub. He is also responsible for using the finger scanners when registering his attendance for additional music activities or sports lesson.

Thank you for your support in helping us ensure that your son receives the best education possible. We recognise the important role that parents play and whilst we will provide support and guidance, it is the parents' legal responsibility to ensure regular attendance of their child.

We will be monitoring your son's attendance over the year and will be in contact should this fall below 90%. If his attendance continues to fall we will invite you for a meeting with his Head of Year to work with you to support your son further.

Yours faithfully

**Mr A Wallace**  
**Deputy Headmaster**