School Dynamics

THE SCHOOL DYNAMICS MANUAL · CHAPTER 4

Attendance

Take roll-calls, follow who is absent, and keep staff attendance.

1	3	4	Nov 2026
CHAPTER	LESSONS	SCREENS	EDITION

Edition of 11 November 2026. The latest version, with search and questions answered by the team, is at app.schooldynamics.ug/help.

Screens show the demo school: every name and figure is invented. © 2026 Newline Technologies Limited, Kampala.

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Attendance

Take roll-calls, follow who is absent, and keep staff attendance.

Teachers take a roll-call in seconds on a phone or a laptop; leaders see who is absent today and who misses school often. Night roll-calls for boarders are in the boarding chapter.

Take a roll-call	4 min
The attendance dashboard and reports	3 min
Staff attendance	2 min

CHAPTER 4 · ATTENDANCE

Take a roll-call

Start a roll-call for a class, a stream or the whole school, mark each student present, late or absent (or scan their ID cards), close it, and text the parents of absent students.

For: Teacher, Director of studies, Head teacher · app.schooldynamics.ug/help/attendance/taking-a-roll-call

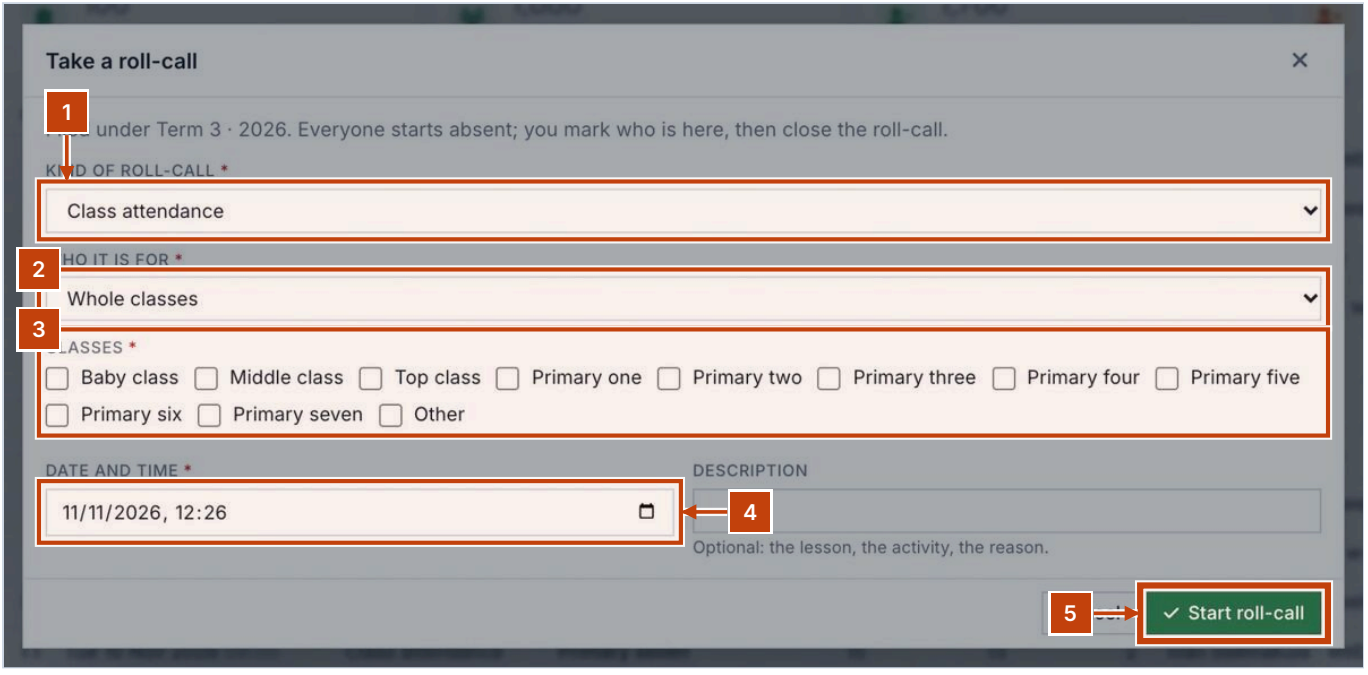
A roll-call records who is here: a class in the morning, a stream for a lesson, the students taking lunch, or everyone reporting at the start of term. You start it, mark each student, and close it. Closed roll-calls feed the attendance dashboard, each student's **Attendance** tab and the reports.

Open **Teaching & learning › Attendance**. The first tab, **Roll-calls**, lists every roll-call taken.

Before you start

- Teachers, wardens, the director of studies, the head teacher, the deputy and the school administrator can take roll-calls. Others who may see students can read them.
- The school needs an active term: every roll-call is filed under it. Without one, the dialog says *There is no active term. Make a term active first.*
- Only active students are expected on a roll-call.

Start a roll-call



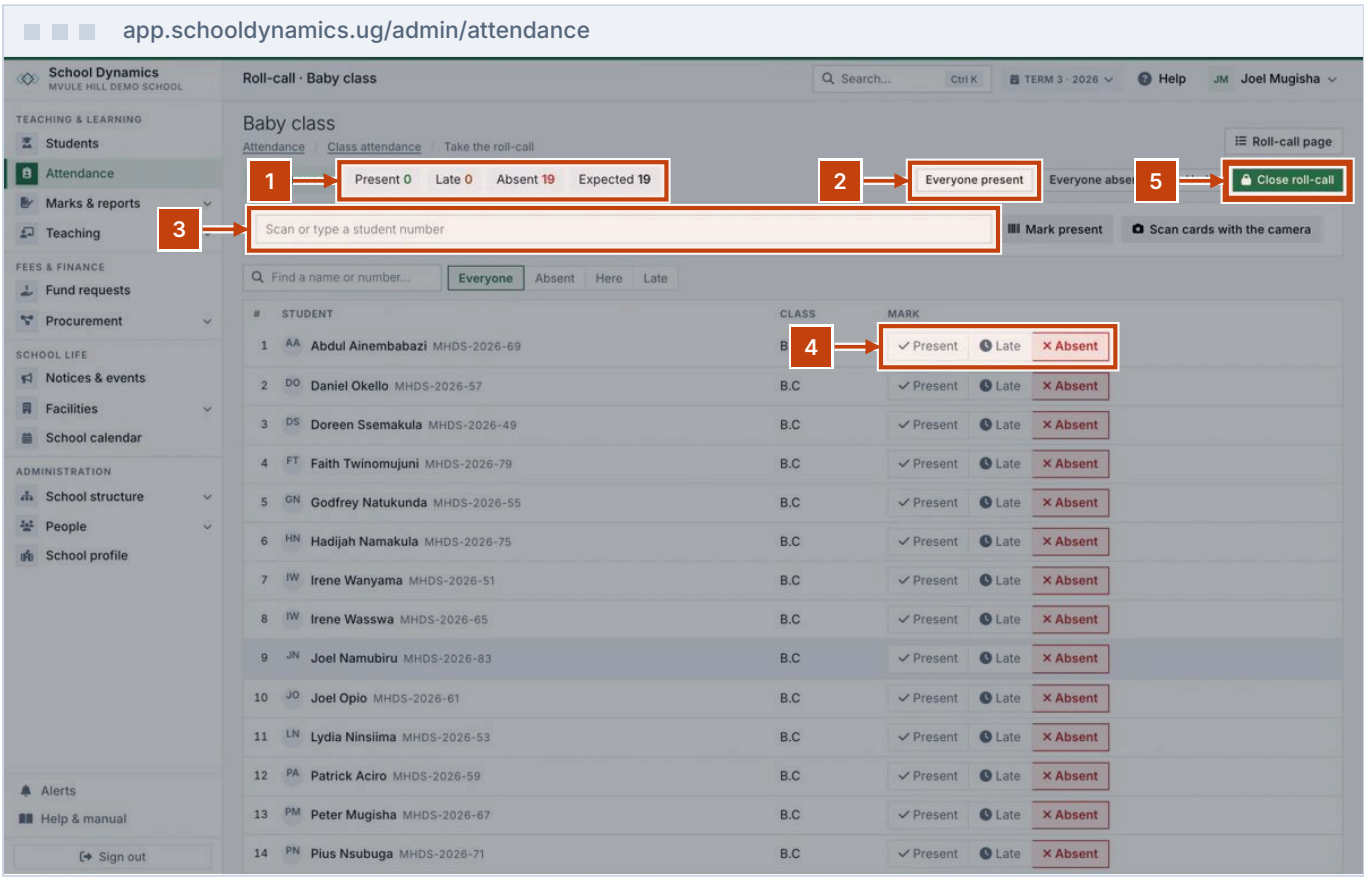
The demo school · invented names and figures

1. The kind of roll-call: class attendance, meals, reporting at school …
2. Who it is for: whole classes, one stream, a service or the whole school.
3. Tick the classes.
4. When: now, unless you change it.
5. Start: everyone begins absent.

1. Press **Take a roll-call**.
2. Choose the **Kind of roll-call** 1 : **Class attendance**, **Reporting at school**, **Leaving school**, **Meals**, **Activity participation**, **Service attendance** or **Theology class attendance**.
3. Choose **Who it is for** 2 : **Whole classes**, **One stream**, **Subscribers of a service** (the students taking that service this term) or **All active students**. Schools with theology classes can also choose theology classes or one theology stream.
4. Tick the classes 3 , or choose the stream or service.
5. Check the **Date and time** 4 , and add a **Description** if it helps (the lesson, the activity).
6. Press **Start roll-call** 5 .

The message says how many students are expected, and the marking page opens. Everyone starts absent.

Mark the students



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1. Present (late included), late, absent and expected, as you mark.
2. Mark everyone present, then mark the few who are not.
3. Scan an ID card or type a student number.
4. Present, late or absent, one tap per student.
5. Close it when you are done. It cannot be changed afterwards.

The totals at the top 1 change as you mark.

- In a full class, press **Everyone present** 2, then mark the few who are not. **Everyone absent** does the opposite.
- On each row 4, press **Present**, **Late** or **Absent**.
- To scan ID cards, click in the box 3 and scan the card with a barcode scanner, or type the student's reg no. and press **Mark present**. **Scan cards with the camera** uses the device's camera instead. A student who was not expected is added and marked present.
- Find a student with the search box, and show **Everyone**, **Absent**, **Here** or **Late**.
- **Undo** (or Ctrl + Z) takes back the last change.

On a laptop, the keys are quicker: on a row, P present, L late, A absent, Space switches present and absent, and Up, Down or Enter move between rows.

Each mark saves by itself. While the internet is down, marks wait on the device and are sent when it returns; the line at the top says what is not sent yet.

Close the roll-call

Press **Close roll-call** 5 and confirm. The message says how many were present and absent.

> ⚠ CAREFUL
>
> A closed roll-call cannot be changed. **Close roll-call** cannot be pressed until every mark is saved and you are online.

Until it is closed, a roll-call counts everyone not marked as absent, and it is left out of the dashboard and the reports.

The list of roll-calls

Each row shows the date, the kind, who it was for, the numbers expected, present and absent, who took it (on the web or the app) and whether it is **Open** or **Closed**. Filter by kind, class, open or closed, and dates; the figures above the list add up what you see.

Click a roll-call for its quick view: the figures and the absent students. **Mark and close** continues an open one; **Open the roll-call** shows a closed one in full.

The roll-call's own page shows every student with their mark, and has **Export** (a spreadsheet of the students and their marks) and **Delete**. On the list, **Export roll-calls** and **Export student records** download what your filters show.

Text the parents of absent students

After a roll-call is closed, those who send messages (the head teacher, the deputy, the director of studies, the bursar, the secretary and the school administrator) can tell parents.

1. Open the closed roll-call and press **Text parents of absent** (or **Text parents** in its quick view).
2. Read or change the **Message**. Keep `[STUDENT_NAME]`: it becomes each child's name.
3. Check who it goes to, the cost and what is in the SMS wallet. Students with no phone on record, and parents who asked not to get SMS, are listed and left out.
4. Press **Send … messages**.

Each parent is texted once per roll-call: a parent already told is not texted again. It is not offered for **Leaving school** roll-calls, where absent means still at school.

The message is the school's **Absence today** message when the school has written one. If that message is switched off, or the school's messaging is off, or the wallet is short, the dialog says so and nothing is sent. See Automatic messages and How SMS works.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Boarders' night roll-calls are taken by dormitory. See Night roll-call.

QUESTIONS

The internet went off while I was marking. Are my marks lost?
No. Each mark waits on your device and is sent when the connection returns. **Close roll-call** waits until every mark is saved.

I closed a roll-call with a mistake. Can I change it?
No. A closed roll-call cannot be changed. Check the marks before you close.

Does a late student count as absent?
No. Late students count as present on every report, and the roll-call also notes that they were late.

Can I take the roll-call on the phone app?
Yes. Roll-calls taken on the app appear on the same list, marked *app* beside who took them.

Who can delete a roll-call?
An open roll-call can be deleted by whoever started it or by a leader. A closed one only by the head teacher, the deputy or the school administrator.

CHAPTER 4 · ATTENDANCE

The attendance dashboard and reports

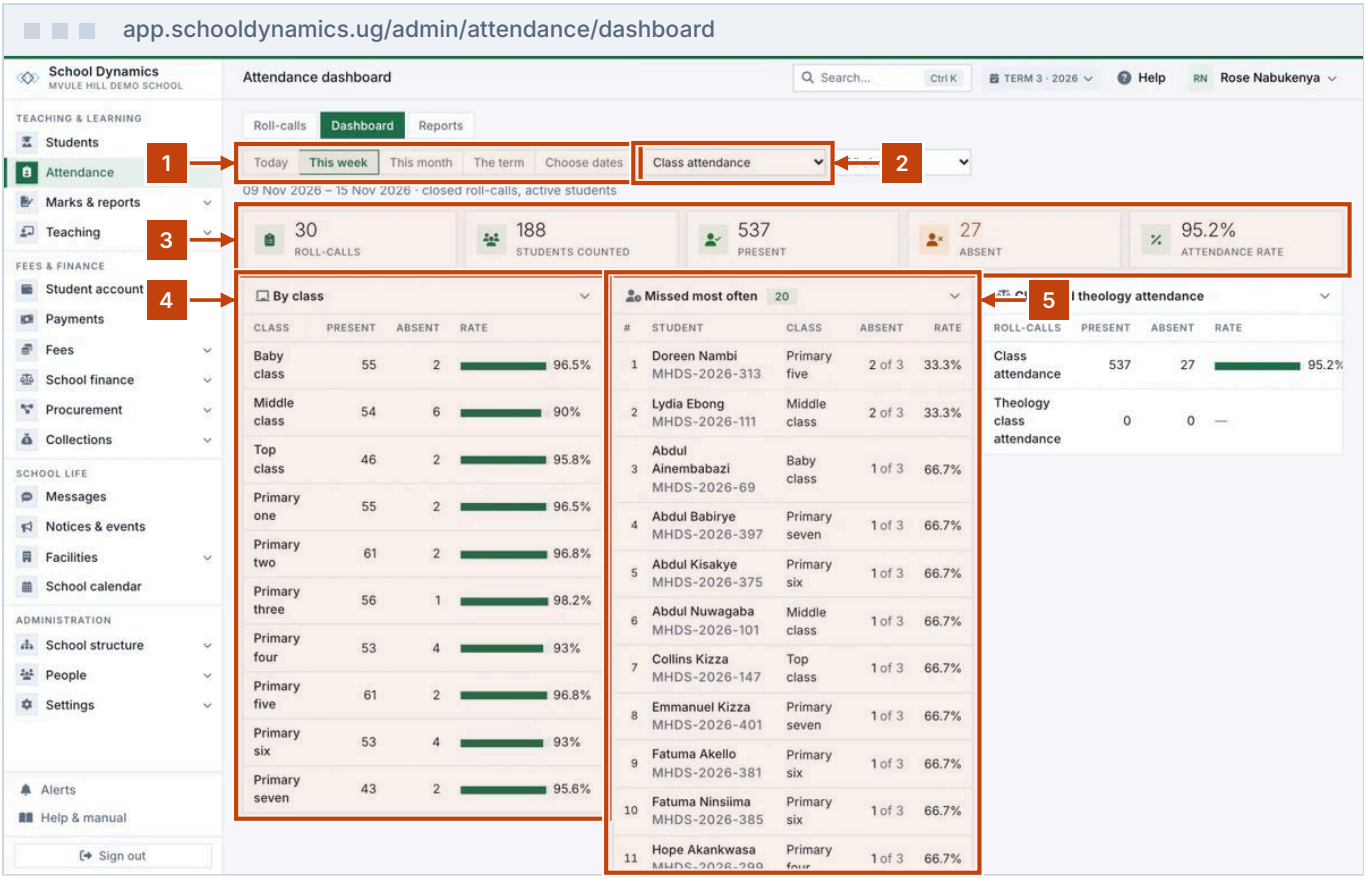
See how attendance is going today, this week, this month or this term - by class, stream, day, boys and girls - who misses school most, and make a printable attendance report.

For: Head teacher, Director of studies, Teacher · app.schooldynamics.ug/help/attendance/attendance-dashboard

The attendance dashboard turns the closed roll-calls into figures: how many were present, which classes are doing well, and which students miss school most. Attendance reports put a period's figures on paper, with the teachers on duty.

Open **Teaching & learning › Attendance** and choose the **Dashboard** tab. **Reports** is the tab beside it.

Reading the dashboard



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1. Today, this week, this month, the term, or dates you choose.
2. Which roll-calls count: class attendance at first.
3. Roll-calls, students, present, absent and the attendance rate.
4. Each class's present, absent and rate.
5. The students absent most often: follow them up.

Choose the period 1: **Today**, **This week** (the default), **This month**, **The term** or **Choose dates**. **The term** uses the term chosen in the top bar, up to today; if that term has no start date, the dashboard shows this week.

Choose the kind of roll-call 2 (it opens on **Class attendance**) and, if you want, one class. The line beside them gives the dates and reminds you that only closed roll-calls and active students count.

The figures 3 give the number of roll-calls, students counted, present, absent and the attendance rate. A rate under 80% shows in red.

Below them:

Section	What it shows
By class 4	Present, absent and the rate of each class, with a bar.
Missed most often 5	The 20 students absent most often, with how many times out of how many roll-calls.
Class and theology attendance	Class attendance beside theology class attendance.
By theology class	Each theology class, at schools with theology classes.
By stream	Each stream of each class.
Present most often	The 20 students present most often.
Day by day	Each day of the period.
Boys and girls	Boys and girls separately.
By kind of roll-call	Class attendance, meals, reporting at school and the others.

Click a student's name to open their quick view; their **Attendance** tab shows the same figures for this term, the last 90 days or this year. Each section's header folds it away, and the page remembers it.

> TIP
>
> Open **Missed most often** every Monday for the week before. Call the parents of the students at the top, or text the parents of absent students straight after a roll-call.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> A roll-call counts on the day it was taken, even when a phone sent it later. Late students count as present.

Attendance reports

An attendance report is a period's figures, by class or stream, with the teachers on duty, kept so it can be printed and compared later.

1. On the **Reports** tab, press **New report**.
2. Choose the **First day** and **Last day** (this week, up to today, at first) and the **Kind of roll-call**.
3. Choose the **Scope**: **All classes**, **Chosen classes** or **Chosen streams**, and tick them.
4. Choose the **First teacher on duty** (you, at first), and if you want the **Second teacher on duty** and the **Head of the week**.
5. Add **Remarks**: what you saw, what you recommend.
6. Press **Create report**. The report opens.

The report shows the period, scope and teachers on duty, then a table of each class (or stream) with boys and girls present and absent, the totals and the rate. Below it are the ten students **Absent most often** and the ten **Present most often**.

- **Download PDF** gives the report on the school's letterhead.
- **Recalculate** counts everything again, for example after roll-calls of that week were closed late. It keeps the same scope.

The **Reports** list shows every report with its period, days, boys and girls present and the teachers on duty. The eye opens a quick view, the PDF icon downloads it, and the arrows recalculate it.

QUESTIONS

Why does a roll-call taken today not show on the dashboard?
Only closed roll-calls count. A roll-call still being taken would show everyone absent, so it is left out until it is closed.

Why does the dashboard show only class attendance?
It opens on **Class attendance**. Choose **All kinds**, or another kind, in the second box.

A teacher's phone sent yesterday's roll-call this morning. Which day does it count on?
The day it was taken, not the day it reached the school.

Who can make an attendance report?
Those who take roll-calls - teachers, wardens, the director of studies, the head teacher, the deputy and the school administrator. Anyone who may see students can read and download them.

Staff attendance

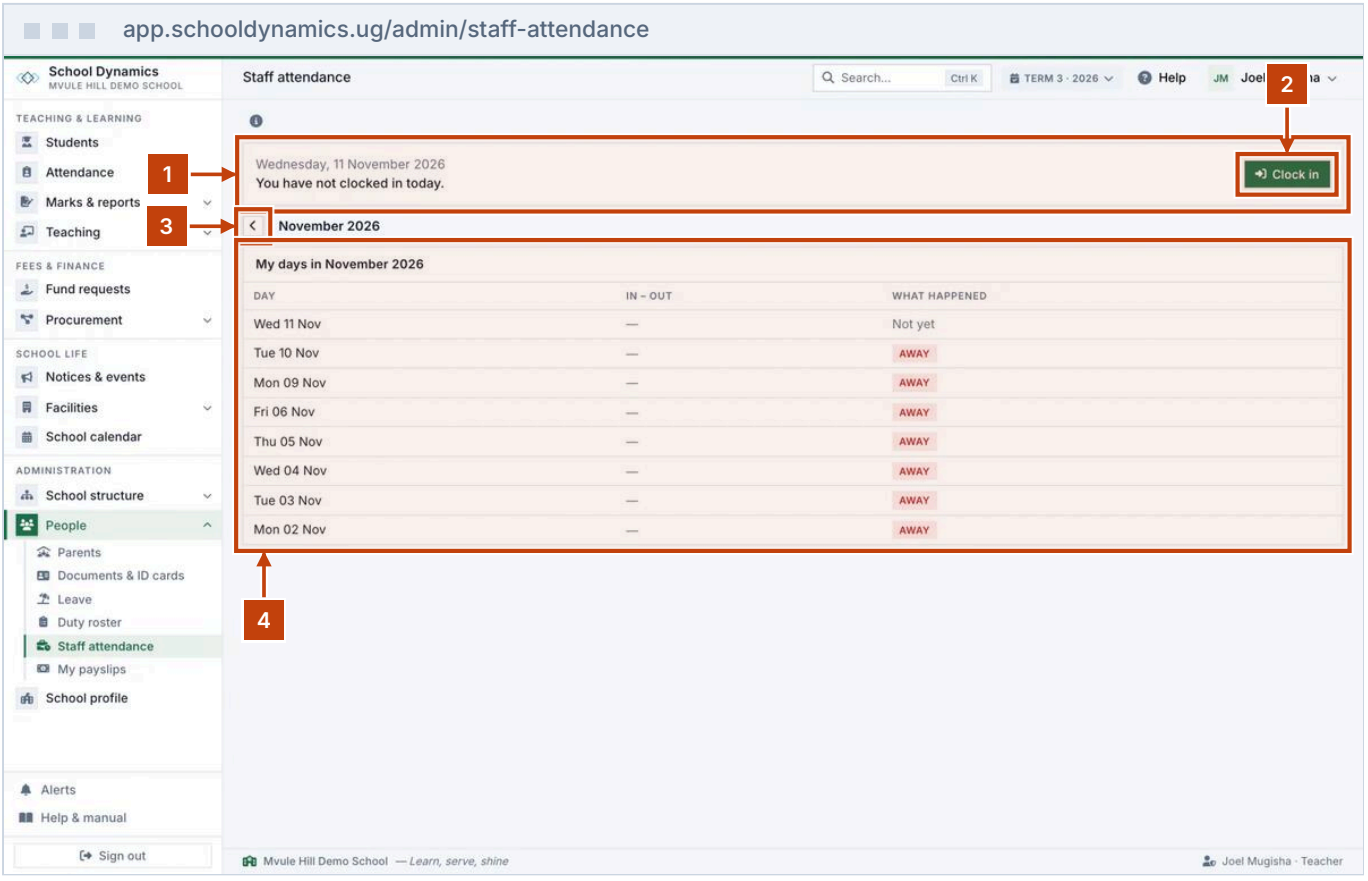
Every member of staff clocks in and out each day. Leaders see the month for everyone - present, late, on leave and away - and the office records a day someone forgot.

For: Everyone, Head teacher, School administrator, Secretary · app.schooldynamics.ug/help/attendance/staff-attendance

Staff attendance records whether staff came to school: each member of staff clocks in when they arrive and out when they leave. Leaders see the whole month for everyone, and the office puts right a day someone forgot.

Open **Administration › People › Staff attendance**. Every member of staff can open it.

Clock in and out



The demo school · invented names and figures

1. Today: whether you have clocked in, and when.
2. Clock in when you arrive. The same place then says Clock out.
3. Look back at earlier months.
4. Your month, day by day: in, late, on leave or away.

1. When you arrive, open **Staff attendance** and press **Clock in** 2.
2. When you leave, open it again and press **Clock out**.

The top card 1 says whether you have clocked in today, and at what times. You clock in once a day.

Below, **My days in ...** 4 shows your month day by day: the times in and out, and **In**, **Late**, **On leave** or **Away**. Use the arrows 3 to look at earlier months.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> The working week is Monday to Friday and the day starts at 08:00, until the office changes them. Clocking in after the start time counts as **Late**. A working day with no clock-in and no approved leave counts as **Away**.

The month for everyone

The head teacher, the deputy, the director of studies, the bursar and the school administrator also see the month for all staff:

- the **Working days so far**, the share **Present** (of the days expected, leave left out), the **Late arrivals** and the **Days away**;
- a row for each person: days present out of working days, late, on leave and away. For those who may read staff monitoring, a **Lessons monitored** column shows each teacher's lessons done and skipped that month; see Staff monitoring.

Search a name, and click it (or the eye) to see that person's month day by day. **Spreadsheet** downloads the month.

For the office: record a day, set the working week

The secretary, the head teacher, the deputy and the school administrator can put days right.

To record a day someone forgot:

1. Press **Record a day** (or open the person and press **Record a day** there).
2. Choose **Who** and the **Day**. The day cannot be in the future.
3. Add the **Time in** and **Time out** if you know them. A time out needs a time in.
4. Write **Why the office is recording it**, for example *Forgot to clock in; signed the book*. It is required.
5. Press **Record the day**.

In a person's month, the pencil on a day corrects it, and the bin removes it (the day then counts as away, unless there is leave). Every change the office makes is recorded with its reason.

To set the working week, press **Working week**, tick **Days the school works**, set **The day starts at**, and press **Save working week**. Leave days are counted on these days too. Uganda's fixed public holidays, Good Friday and Easter Monday are left out on their own; Eid days change each year, so adjust a leave request that spans one.

QUESTIONS

I forgot to clock in. What do I do?
Ask the office (the secretary, the head teacher, the deputy or the school administrator) to record the day for you. They give the reason, and the day shows as *Recorded by the office*.

Does clocking in record where I am?
No. No location is taken.

I was on leave. Will those days count as away?
No. Days of approved leave count as **On leave**. See Leave.

Can I clock in for yesterday?
No. You clock in for today only. The office can record an earlier day.



School Dynamics

Questions? Ask under any lesson in the app, or write to the team.

app.schooldynamics.ug/help