School Dynamics

THE SCHOOL DYNAMICS MANUAL · CHAPTER 10

Messages and notices

Text parents, choose which messages go by themselves, and post notices and the school calendar.

1	6	7	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.

Contents

10 **Messages and notices**

How text messages work
Send a message to parents or staff
Automatic messages and templates
When a text does not arrive
Notices, news and events
The school calendar

10

Messages and notices

Text parents, choose which messages go by themselves, and post notices and the school calendar.

Texts to parents and staff, the automatic messages (all off until your school turns them on), what to do when a text does not arrive, and the notices and calendar everyone sees.

How text messages work	6 min
Send a message to parents or staff	6 min
Automatic messages and templates	8 min
When a text does not arrive	6 min
Notices, news and events	4 min
The school calendar	4 min

How text messages work

The SMS wallet and what a text costs, the switches that let your school send, and why every automatic message starts off.

For: Bursar, Secretary, Head teacher, School administrator · app.schooldynamics.ug/help/messages/how-sms-works

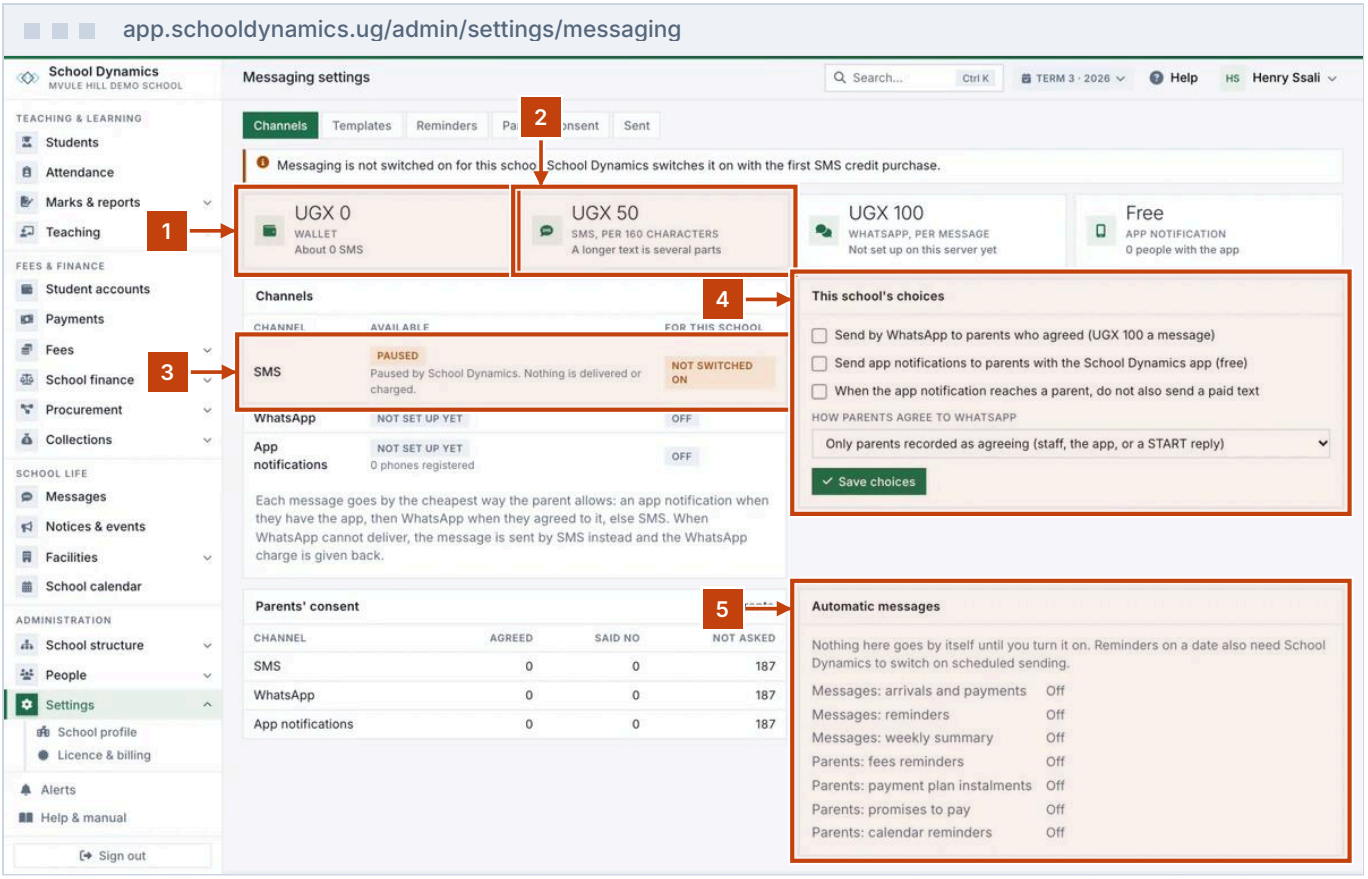
Text messages (SMS) are paid for from your school's SMS wallet. This lesson explains where that money comes from, what each text costs, and the switches that decide whether anything is sent at all. Read it before you send your first message.

Before you start

The **Messages** pages and **Settings › Messaging** are for the school administrator, the head teacher, the deputy, the director of studies, the bursar and the secretary.

The settings page

Open **Settings › Messaging** (or the **Settings** tab on the Messages page). The first tab, **Channels**, shows everything on this page at a glance.



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1 The wallet: what is left for texts. Click it to see every movement.

2 What an SMS costs: UGX 50 for each 160 characters.

3 SMS: whether School Dynamics is delivering texts, and whether your school is switched on.

4 Your school's choices for WhatsApp and app notifications.

5 Automatic messages: nothing goes by itself until you turn it on.

- The wallet 1: what is left, and about how many texts that buys. Click it to open the wallet.
- The price 2: UGX 50 for each SMS part. WhatsApp and app notifications have their own figures beside it.
- The SMS row 3: **Available** says *Paused* when School Dynamics has paused texts. **For this school** says **On**, or **Not switched on**.
- **This school's choices** 4: which other ways your school uses (see below).
- **Automatic messages** 5: the jobs that send reminders by themselves, and when each last ran.

The wallet

Every school has one wallet for texts. SMS credit you buy goes in. Every SMS part that is sent comes out.

Open **School life › Messages** and the **Wallet** tab to see:

- **Balance**: what is left, and about how many texts that is.
- **Spent this month**.
- **Messaging**: **On** when your school can send texts.
- Every movement, newest first, with the **Balance after** it: each credit bought and each SMS part sent.

- **Credit purchases**: each one, whether it is paid, and whether it is **In the wallet** yet.

When the balance runs low, the page says so, with about how many texts are left. Nobody at the school can change the wallet by hand. It moves only when credit is bought or texts are sent.

Once your school can send texts, those who send messages also see the wallet in the top bar, with signal bars like a phone's: the fewer bars, the less is left. Click it to see what was spent this month, how long the balance lasts at this pace, and the last top-up; **Open the wallet** goes to the Wallet tab. When the wallet falls low, the alert *The SMS wallet is low* (or *is empty*) appears under **Alerts**. See Alerts.

Buy SMS credit

1. Open **Settings › Licence & billing** (the **Top up** button on the Wallet tab goes there too).
2. Under **SMS credit**, press **Buy SMS credit**.
3. Type the amount, from UGX 5,000 to UGX 5,000,000. UGX 50 buys one SMS part.
4. Press **Order and pay** to pay online. When online payment is not available, the button says **Order — get the invoice**: pay the invoice the usual way.

The credit goes into the wallet as soon as the payment is confirmed. Your school's first purchase also switches messaging on. Licence & billing is open to the school administrator, the head teacher, the deputy, the bursar and the finance officer. See Licence and billing.

What a text costs

Way	Cost	Used when
SMS	UGX 50 for each part of up to 160 characters	Always, while your school may send
WhatsApp	UGX 100 a message, any length	School Dynamics has set it up, your school switched it on, and the parent agreed
App notification	Free	The parent has the School Dynamics app, and your school switched it on

A message longer than 160 characters is cut into parts, numbered 1/2, 2/2 and so on. The numbers take a little room, so each part holds a few characters fewer. Before anything goes, the page shows the number of parts and the cost.

A part is charged only when the SMS company accepts it. Nothing is charged for a person with no valid phone number, for a parent who asked not to get SMS, or while School Dynamics has paused texts.

The whole cost is checked against the wallet first. If the wallet does not cover it, the message does not go, and you see a sentence like *This message costs UGX 12,500 (250 SMS); the wallet has UGX 8,000. Top up the wallet first.*

Which way a message goes

Messages you write yourself on the **Messages** page always go by SMS.

The school's ready-made messages (templates, reminders, and reminders about notices) go by the cheapest way each parent allows:

1. an app notification, when the parent has the app (free);
2. WhatsApp, when the parent agreed to it (UGX 100);
3. otherwise SMS (UGX 50 a part).

When WhatsApp cannot deliver a message, it is sent by SMS instead and the WhatsApp charge goes back into the wallet.

Choose the ways your school uses under **This school's choices** 4 : tick **Send by WhatsApp to parents who agreed**, **Send app notifications to parents with the School Dynamics app (free)**, or **When the app notification reaches a parent, do not also send a paid text**, then press **Save choices**. A way that you switched on but School Dynamics has not set up yet says *On, waiting for the server*.

The switches

All of these must be on before a text leaves the school:

1. **School Dynamics is delivering texts.** School Dynamics can pause texts for every school at once. While they are paused, the messages pages say *Text messages are paused by School Dynamics, so nothing is being delivered or charged.* Messages sent then are recorded as not sent, with the reason *Not sent: text messages are paused by School Dynamics. Nothing was charged.* They do not go later by themselves: send them again once texts are back.
2. **Your school may send messages.** This is switched on by itself when your school's first SMS credit payment is confirmed. Until then, the pages say *Messaging is not switched on for this school yet*, and **Send now** cannot be pressed (drafts can still be saved). After that, the school administrator or the owner can turn it off and on again: **Settings › School profile**, tab **Messages**, press **Edit**, then set **Send messages** to **On** or **Off**. With it off, no SMS leaves the school, whatever is in the wallet.
3. **The wallet covers the cost.**
4. **For a ready-made message: that message is On.** Each message template is switched on or off by itself. A message that is off is never sent, by hand or by itself.

Automatic messages start off

A message that goes by itself (when a payment is recorded, when a child arrives at school, on a reminder date) starts **Off** in every school. Nothing goes by itself until someone at your school switches it on.

The one exception is the code a parent asks for to open the parents' pages on the web. It starts **On**, because the parent is waiting for it as they ask. If you switch it off, your parents cannot sign in there. See Signing in with a parent code.

Messages that a person sends by hand, such as **Report card ready** or **Early closure or emergency**, start **On**. They still go only when someone presses **Send now**. Three of them (**Balance and how to pay**, **Visiting day** and **Exam timetable**) can also go by themselves on a date, but only after you type that date on the message.

Reminders on a date also need School Dynamics to switch on scheduled sending for your school. Until then, the **Automatic messages** box 5 says *Nothing here goes by itself until you turn it on. Reminders on a date also need School Dynamics to switch on scheduled sending.*

To switch messages on and change their words, see Automatic messages and templates.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Messages go out one by one in the background, so a long list takes a few minutes. You can leave the page: sending carries on.

QUESTIONS

How much does one text cost?
UGX 50 for each SMS part of up to 160 characters. A longer message is cut into parts, and the page shows how many before anything is sent.

We bought credit, but nothing can be sent. Why?
Open **Settings › Messaging**. Check that the wallet shows the credit (it arrives once the payment is confirmed), that the SMS row says **On** for your school, and that the page does not say texts are paused by School Dynamics.

Is a text charged when it fails?
No. A part is charged only when the SMS company accepts it. Nothing is charged for a person with no valid number, for a parent who asked not to get SMS, or while School Dynamics has paused texts.

Can someone at the school change the wallet balance?
No. The wallet moves only when credit is bought or texts are sent. Every movement is listed on the **Wallet** tab.

Send a message to parents or staff

Write a text, choose who gets it, check the cost before it goes, then follow how each one went.

For: Secretary, Head teacher, Bursar, Director of studies, School administrator · app.schooldynamics.ug/help/messages/sending-a-message

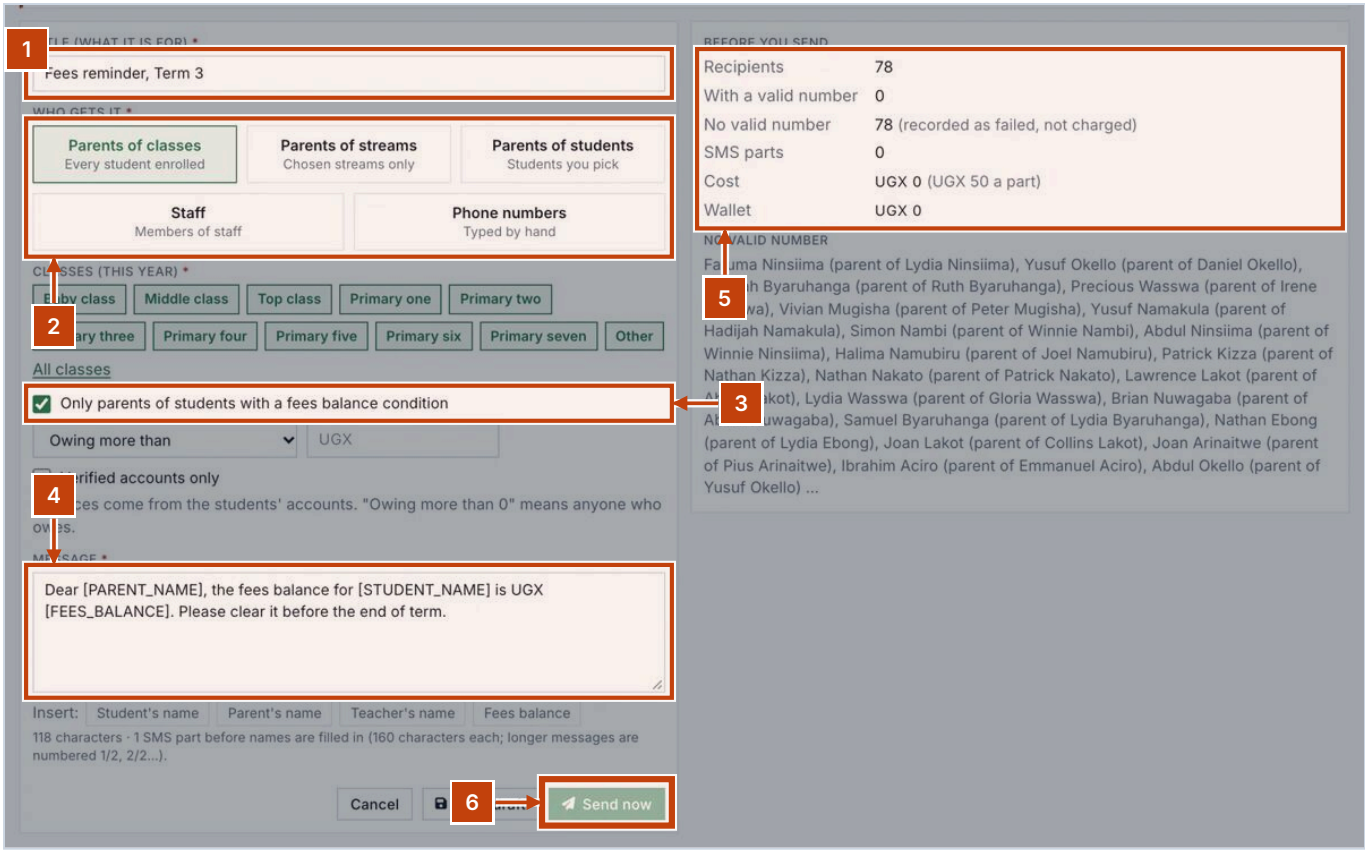
Use **Messages** to text the parents of whole classes, streams or chosen students, members of staff, or any phone numbers. Each text is paid for from the school's SMS wallet, and the page shows the cost before anything goes.

Before you start

- You need to be the school administrator, the head teacher, the deputy, the director of studies, the bursar or the secretary.
- Your school must be able to send texts, and the wallet must cover the cost. See How text messages work.
- The classes and streams you can choose are those of the school's active academic year.

Write and send a message

Open **School life › Messages** and press **New message**.



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1. A title, so you can find the message later. Parents do not see it.
2. Who gets it.
3. Only parents of students who owe (or whose balance is exactly an amount).
4. The message. The buttons under it put in names and the fees balance.
5. Before you send: how many people, how many SMS parts, the cost and the wallet.
6. Send now asks you to confirm the number of people and the cost.

1. Type a **Title (what it is for)** 1, for example *Fees reminder, Term 3*. Only staff see it: it names the message in the list.
2. Choose **Who gets it** 2 (see the table below), then tick the classes, streams or staff, pick the students, or type the numbers.
3. To text only parents who owe, tick **Only parents of students with a fees balance condition** 3. Choose **Owing more than** and type an amount (0 means anyone who owes), or **Balance exactly**. Tick **Verified accounts only** if you want only verified accounts.
4. Write the **Message** 4. Use the buttons under it to put in names and the balance (see Names and the balance in a message).
5. Read **Before you send** 5, and the examples under **As they will read it**.
6. Press **Send now** 6. A box asks, for example, *Send to 245 recipients for UGX 12,250?* Press **OK**.

The message's own page opens, and a note says how many it went to. The texts go out one by one in the background: the page shows **Sending** until they have all gone.

Who gets it	Who receives the text
Parents of classes	The parent of every student in the classes you tick, active or pending. **All classes** ticks them all.
Parents of streams	The same, for the streams you tick.
Parents of students	The parents of the students you pick. Type a name or student number, then click the student.
Staff	The members of staff you tick. **All staff** ticks everyone.
Phone numbers	The numbers you type, one per line or separated by commas: 07..., 256... or +256....

For a student, the text goes to the parent on record. With no parent on record, it goes to a parent whose phone is the student's emergency number, and failing that to the numbers on the student's own record.

> ⚠ **CAREFUL**
>
> A text cannot be called back once it has gone. Read the examples under **As they will read it** before you press **Send now**.

Before you send

The box on the right 5 works itself out again each time you change the message or the people:

Line	Means
Recipients	Everyone the message is for.
With a valid number	Those it will be sent to.
No valid number	Their texts are recorded as failed and not charged. Their names are listed below.
Asked not to get SMS	Parents who said no to texts. They are left out and not charged.
Same text, same number	Texts merged because the same words would go to the same phone twice.
SMS parts and **Cost**	The number of SMS parts in all, at UGX 50 a part.
Wallet	What the wallet holds now. If it does not cover the cost, the box says so.

Under the message, a line counts the characters and the SMS parts *before names are filled in*. A long name or balance can add a part for some people; the **Cost** line counts every text as it will really go.

Names and the balance in a message

The buttons under the message put a placeholder where the cursor is. Each person's text gets their own detail:

Button	Puts in	Becomes
Student's name	[STUDENT_NAME]	The student's name. For a message to staff, the staff member's name.
Parent's name	[PARENT_NAME]	The parent's name.
Teacher's name	[TEACHER_NAME]	For a message to staff, the staff member's name.
Fees balance	UGX [FEES_BALANCE]	The student's fees balance, as a number: *UGX 280,000*.

> ⚠ CAREFUL
>
> The balance is shown without its minus sign, so a student who has paid in advance would also show an amount. Texts about money owed should use the condition **Owing more than** 0 3 . Use **Teacher's name** only in messages to staff: in a message to parents it becomes the student's name.

Save a draft

Press **Save draft** to keep the message without sending it. You can save a draft even while your school cannot send.

A draft keeps the title, the message and who it is for. The recipients and their balances are worked out only when it is sent, so a draft sent next week uses next week's balances. To finish it later, choose **Drafts** in the list and press the pencil button (or **Edit draft** in its quick view, or **Edit and send** on its page).

When the page refuses

You see	Do this
Give the message a title (what it is for).	Type a title.
Choose at least one class. (or stream, student, member of staff)	Tick or pick someone.
These are not valid Ugandan phone numbers: …	Correct the numbers listed.
No one matches this audience.	The classes chosen have no students, or nobody meets the fees condition.
None of these people has a valid phone number on record.	Correct their numbers first. See When a text does not arrive.
This message costs … Top up the wallet first.	Buy SMS credit, or send to fewer people.
The message is too long: at most 1000 characters.	Shorten it.

The list of messages

School life › Messages opens on **Bulk messages**: every message, newest first, with who it went to, **Recipients**, **Sent**, **Failed** and **Cost**. Use **All**, **Sent** and **Drafts**, or search the title and text. At the top, **Failed this month** opens the failed ones.

Click a title for a quick view: the text, how many were **Reached** and **Not sent**, and the first numbers not reached with the reason. From there, **Every recipient** opens the message's page, and **Copy into a new message** starts a new draft with the same people and words.

A message's page

The page of one message shows the text and, beside it, who it was for, the **State** (**Draft**, **Sending**, **Sent**, **Partly sent** or **Not sent**), the counts, and **SMS charged**.

Below is one row per person: their name (and the student it was about), the number used, the **Status**, the SMS **Parts** and the **Tries**. Search for a name or number, or choose a status. The eye button opens the full details of one text.

- **Send failed ones again** sends every failed text again. It asks first: *Each part sent costs UGX 50.*
- **Copy into a new message** starts a new draft from this one.
- **Edit and send** shows on a draft.

What each status means, and how to fix a failed text, is in When a text does not arrive.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> Parents who asked not to get SMS are never texted and never charged for, even when their child's class is chosen. Their row says why.

QUESTIONS

A parent has three children in the classes I chose. Do they get three texts?
Only if the text is different for each child, for example because it names the child. The same text to the same number goes once.

Can I text a number that is not in the system?
Yes. Choose **Phone numbers** under **Who gets it** and type the numbers, one per line or separated by commas.

Can I send a message later, on a set day?
Not from this page: **Send now** sends at once. For reminders on a date, use the school's ready-made messages. See Automatic messages and templates.

Can I change a message after it has gone?
No. Open it, press **Copy into a new message**, change the copy and send that.

Some messages say "From the old app". Can I send them again?
They were sent by the old School Dynamics. You can read them and copy them into a new message, but they are not sent from here.

Automatic messages and templates

Choose which of the school's ready-made messages may go, change their words, set reminder dates, and send one by hand.

For: Secretary, Head teacher, Bursar, School administrator · app.schooldynamics.ug/help/messages/automatic-messages

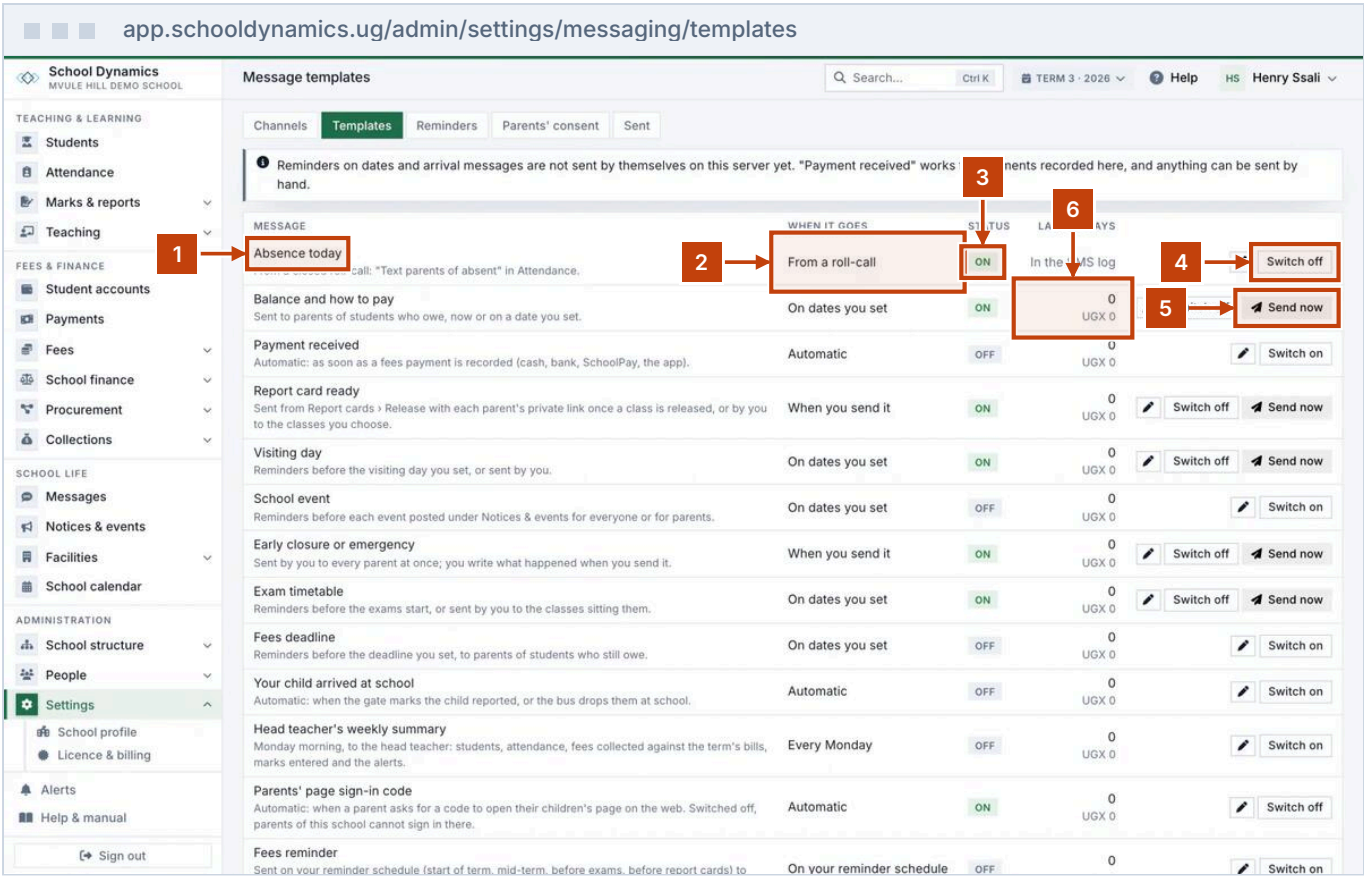
The school has a set of ready-made messages: a text when a fees payment is recorded, a fees balance reminder, *report card ready*, an emergency message, and more. Each is a message template with its own words, and each is **On** or **Off**. You choose which ones may go, change their words, and send some of them by hand.

Before you start

- You need to be the school administrator, the head teacher, the deputy, the director of studies, the bursar or the secretary.
- Every automatic message starts **Off**. Nothing goes by itself until you switch it on. Why, and the other switches, are in How text messages work.

The messages

Open **Settings › Messaging** and the **Templates** tab.



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1 The message. Click it to read or change its words.

2 When it goes: automatically, on dates you set, when you send it...

3 On or Off. An Off message is never sent.

4 Switch it on or off.

5 Messages sent by hand have Send now.

6 How many went in the last 30 days, and what they cost.

Each row is one message 1, with a line saying what it is for. **When it goes** 2 says what sends it:

It says	The message goes
Automatic	By itself, when the system sees it happen (a payment recorded, a child arriving).
On dates you set	On the days before a date you type on the message, at the time you choose.
When you send it	Only when someone presses **Send now**.
From a roll-call	From a closed roll-call, when someone presses the button to text parents of absent pupils. See Taking a roll-call.
Every Monday	Monday morning, to the head teacher.
On your reminder schedule	By the **Reminders** tab (below).

The **Status** 3 is **On** or **Off**. Press **Switch on** or **Switch off** 4 to change it. Messages sent by hand have **Send now** 5. **Last 30 days** 6 counts what each message sent and what it cost.

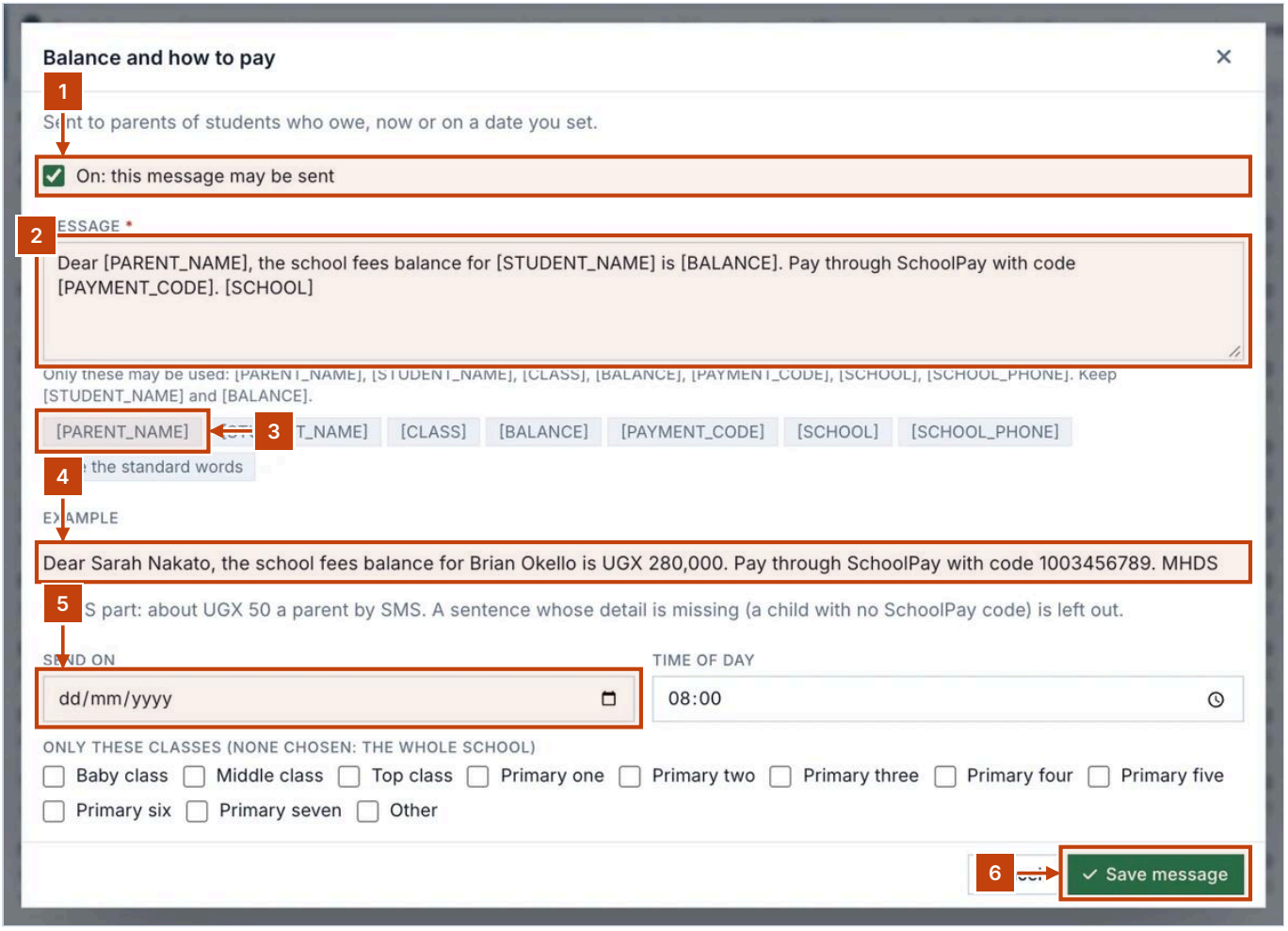
These are the messages, and how each one starts in a new school:

Message	When it goes	Starts
Absence today	From a roll-call	On
Balance and how to pay	On dates you set, or by hand	On
Payment received	Automatic, when a fees payment is recorded	Off
Report card ready	By hand, or from Report cards › Release	On
Visiting day	On dates you set, or by hand	On
School event	Before each event posted under Notices & events	Off
Early closure or emergency	By hand, to every parent	On
Exam timetable	On dates you set, or by hand	On
Fees deadline	On dates you set, to parents of students who owe	Off
Your child arrived at school	Automatic, from the gate or the school bus	Off
Head teacher's weekly summary	Every Monday	Off
Parents' page sign-in code	Automatic, when a parent asks for a code	On
Fees reminder	On your reminder schedule	Off
Payment plan instalment	On your reminder schedule	Off
Promise to pay	On your reminder schedule	Off
Calendar reminder	On your reminder schedule	Off
Your children's page	By hand	On
Record copy answered	Automatic	Off
Missing at night roll-call	Automatic, to the matron, patron and head teacher	Off
Seen at the sick bay	Automatic	Off
Serious sick-bay case	Automatic, to the head teacher	Off
Visiting time reminder	Automatic, the day before a visiting day	Off

Messages marked **On** that go by hand still wait for someone to press **Send now**. **Balance and how to pay**, **Visiting day** and **Exam timetable** go by themselves only once you type a date on them.

Change a message's words

Click the message's name, or its pencil button.



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1. On: this message may be sent.
2. The words parents get.
3. The details this message may use. Click one to add it.
4. An example as a parent would read it, with its SMS parts and cost.
5. For a reminder: the date, and the time of day it goes.
6. Save the message.

1. Tick or untick **On: this message may be sent** 1.
2. Change the **Message** 2.
3. To add a detail, click its button 3, for example **[STUDENT_NAME]**. Hover a button to see what it becomes. **Use the standard words** puts the original words back.
4. Read the **Example** 4: the message as a parent would get it, with its SMS parts and what it costs a parent.
5. For a reminder, set the date 5 (for example **Send on**, **Visiting day** or **Exams start**), **Days before, to remind** (for example *7, 1*: a week before and the day before), the **Time of day**, and **Only these classes** (none ticked means the whole school).
6. Press **Save message** 6.

A message with your own words shows **Your words** in the list.

The rules:

- Each message may use only its own details. Otherwise you see, for example, *This message cannot use [BALANCE]. It may use [STUDENT_NAME], [TIME], [SCHOOL].*
- Some details must stay: *Keep [STUDENT_NAME] in the message, so the parent knows what it is about.*
- A message is at most 1,000 characters.
- A sentence whose detail is missing for someone is left out of their text. A child with no SchoolPay code gets the message without the "SchoolPay code" sentence.

Common details:

Detail	Becomes
[SCHOOL]	The school's short name
[PARENT_NAME], [STUDENT_NAME], [CLASS]	The parent's name, the child's name, the child's class
[BALANCE]	What is still owed, with the money sign: *UGX 280,000*
[PAYMENT_CODE]	The child's SchoolPay code
[AMOUNT]	The amount paid
[DATE], [TIME], [TERM]	The date the message is about, the time, the term
[EVENT], [PLACE]	An event's title and where it happens
[MESSAGE]	What you write when you send it (the emergency message)
[LINK]	A private link to the parent's own page on the web (for **Report card ready**, the report card itself)

Reminders on a date

For **Balance and how to pay**, **Visiting day**, **Exam timetable** and **Fees deadline**, type the date on the message and save it. The reminder goes at the **Time of day** (08:00 unless you change it) on each of the **Days before** you chose, to the classes you ticked, while the message is **On**. **Balance and how to pay** has no days before: it goes on its **Send on** day.

School event needs no date: it reminds parents before each event posted under **Notices & events** for everyone or for parents.

- Fees reminders go only to parents of students who owe.
- If a whole batch costs more than the wallet holds, it is not started. The row then says, for example, *Not sent on 05 Nov 2026, 08:00: 412 messages cost UGX 20,600 and the wallet has UGX 9,000. Top up; it is tried again at the next run.*
- A reminder missed while the server was off is still sent if it is no more than two days late, and never once the event it is about has passed.

When School Dynamics has not yet switched on scheduled sending for your school, the Templates tab says *Reminders on dates and arrival messages are not sent by themselves on this server yet.* "Payment received" still works for payments recorded in School Dynamics, and any message can be sent by hand.

Send a message by hand

1. Make sure the message is **On**.
2. Press **Send now** on its row.
3. Tick the **Classes** it is for. None ticked means the whole school.
4. For some messages, choose the date. For **Early closure or emergency**, write **What happened**: short and clear, under 600 characters.
5. Read the figures: how many **Messages**, the **Cost** (SMS, WhatsApp and app notifications), and what is **In the wallet**. Read the examples.
6. Press **Send** (the button says how many, for example **Send 230 messages**).

Only parents of active students get these messages. A message about a child goes once for each child; a message about the school (an emergency, an event) goes once to each parent.

The dialog does not let you send when, for example, *This message is switched off. Switch it on first.*, *No active student in this choice owes the school.*, or the wallet is short. Pressing send twice in the same dialog sends nothing new: *Nothing new to send: these were already sent.*

Report card ready is usually sent from the release page, with each parent's private link to the card. See Checking, approving and releasing.

The Reminders tab

The **Reminders** tab gathers the reminders to parents that follow the school's own dates. Each has **Switch on** and **Switch off**, and shows what the next one will cost against the wallet before anything goes.

- **Fees reminders**: the balance and how to pay, to parents of students who owe. Press **Change the schedule** to choose the moments: **Days after the term opens**, **Mid-term**, **Days before exams**, **Days before report cards** (and the day **Report cards come out on**), the **Time of day**, **Only students owing more than (UGX)**, and the classes. Leave a moment empty to skip it. Press **Save the schedule**. Each moment of the term is then listed as **Coming**, **Due now**, **Sent** or **Passed**.
- **Payment plan instalments**: before an instalment falls due, on the day, and after it is missed, while it is unpaid.
- **Promises to pay**: before the day a parent promised to pay by, on the day, and after it is missed, while the promise is not kept. See Promises to pay.
- **Calendar reminders**: before each entry for parents on the school calendar, on the days set on the entry. See The school calendar.

The words of these reminders are changed on the **Templates** tab. The fees side of reminders is in Reminders and demand notices.

Who got what: the Sent tab

The **Sent** tab lists every ready-made message: who it went **To**, which message, **By** which way (SMS, WhatsApp or app notification), the **Status** (**Sent**, **Failed**, **Not sent (opted out)**, **Waiting** or **Sending**) and **When**. Choose a message or a status, or search the text or number.

Click a name to read the text, the number, why a cheaper way was not used, and why it failed. For a text, **SMS log** opens **All messages**. When a message failed, see When a text does not arrive.

Good to know

- Switching a message on records the moment. **Payment received** and **Your child arrived at school** never text about payments or arrivals from before that moment.
- Each message goes once: a payment once, an arrival once a day for each child, a reminder once for each date and child.
- Payments recorded in School Dynamics are texted at once. Payments that arrive another way, such as SchoolPay, are picked up by the regular check, which runs only when scheduled sending is on.

QUESTIONS

If we switch on "Payment received", will parents get texts about old payments?
No. It texts only payments recorded after the moment you switch it on.

Why can I not press Send now on a message?
The message is switched off. Press **Switch on** on its row first.

Can I take [STUDENT_NAME] out of a message?
Not from a message that needs it. Some details must stay so the parent knows which child it is about; the dialog says which.

A child has no SchoolPay code. What does the parent get?
The message without the sentence that holds the code. A sentence whose detail is missing is left out.

We switched a reminder on but nothing went. Why?
A reminder on a date needs its date typed on the message, the wallet to cover the whole batch, and School Dynamics to have switched on scheduled sending for your school. The row shows a note when a batch could not go.

When a text does not arrive

Find a text that failed, read why, fix the phone number or the wallet, send it again, and record a parent who wants no texts.

For: Secretary, Bursar, Head teacher, School administrator · app.schooldynamics.ug/help/messages/when-a-text-does-not-arrive

Most texts that do not arrive have a plain reason: no valid phone number, an empty wallet, or a parent who asked not to get texts. This lesson shows where to find a failed text, what its reason means, and how to fix it.

Before you start

You need to be the school administrator, the head teacher, the deputy, the director of studies, the bursar or the secretary.

Find the text

- **School life › Messages**, tab **All messages**: every text the school sent or tried to send, one row per person. Choose **Failed** under the status, a bulk message, or dates, or search a name, number or words. The **Failed this month** figure on the Bulk messages tab opens this list with the failed ones.
- On a message's own page: one row per person it was for, with its status.
- **Settings › Messaging**, tab **Sent**: the school's ready-made messages and reminders, with the way each went.

Click a name, or the eye button, to open the text's details: the text itself, the number used, how many **SMS parts**, the student it was about, when it was created and sent, **Tried again** (for example *1 of 3 times*), and **Why it failed**. A long text also lists its parts, each with its own status.

What the status means

Status	Means	Do this
Sent	The SMS company accepted it for that number.	Nothing.
Pending or **Sending**	Waiting to go, or going now.	Wait a minute.
Partial	A long text: some parts went, some failed.	Send it again: only the failed parts go.
Failed	It did not go. The reason is under the name.	See the table below.
Stuck	It has said **Sending** for more than 15 minutes. It stopped half way and may or may not have arrived.	Ask the person. Then press **Mark failed** in its details, and send it again if they did not get it.

On the **Sent** tab, the statuses are **Sent**, **Failed**, **Not sent (opted out)**, **Waiting** and **Sending**.

Why it failed, and the fix

The reason says	Why	Fix
Invalid phone number: ... or *No valid phone number on record.*	No number on the person's record can be read as a Ugandan mobile number.	Correct the number (see below), then send it again.
Insufficient funds. Message requires 2 parts (UGX 100). Current balance: UGX 40	The wallet ran out.	Buy SMS credit, then send it again.
Messages are not enabled. or *Messaging is not switched on for this school...*	Your school's messaging switch is off.	See How text messages work.
Not sent: text messages are paused by School Dynamics. Nothing was charged.	School Dynamics had paused texts.	Send it again once texts are back.
Not sent: this person asked not to get SMS from the school.	The parent said no to texts.	Leave it. Change their choice only if they ask (below).
Stopped while sending: it may or may not have been delivered. Marked failed by a person.	It was stuck and someone marked it failed.	Check with the person before sending it again.
A message from the SMS company, such as *EUROSATGROUP API Error ...*	The SMS company refused it.	Check the number and send it again. If it keeps failing, ask for help: see Getting help.

Send it again

- One person: press the round-arrow button on their row, or **Send again** in the text's details.
- Every failed text of one bulk message: on the message's page, press **Send failed ones again**.

Both ask first: *Each part sent costs UGX 50.* The wallet must cover it, or you see, for example, *Sending again costs UGX 100; the wallet has UGX 40.*

Only texts sent from this School Dynamics can be sent again here. A text written by the old app can be copied into a new message instead. Messages on the **Sent** tab cannot be sent again from there.

> ⚠ **CAREFUL**
>
> **Send again** uses the number on the text, unless that number was not valid at all. If you corrected a number that looked valid but was wrong, send a new message to that parent instead.

How the phone number is chosen

For each person, School Dynamics looks at these numbers on their record, in this order, and uses the first that is a valid Ugandan mobile number:

1. the mobile number (phone 1);
2. the second phone;
3. the father's phone;
4. the mother's phone;
5. the spouse's phone;
6. the emergency phone.

A parent with no valid number gets the text on the first valid number of their child's record (the child added first). In a message to a class, a student with no parent on record is texted on the numbers of the student's own record.

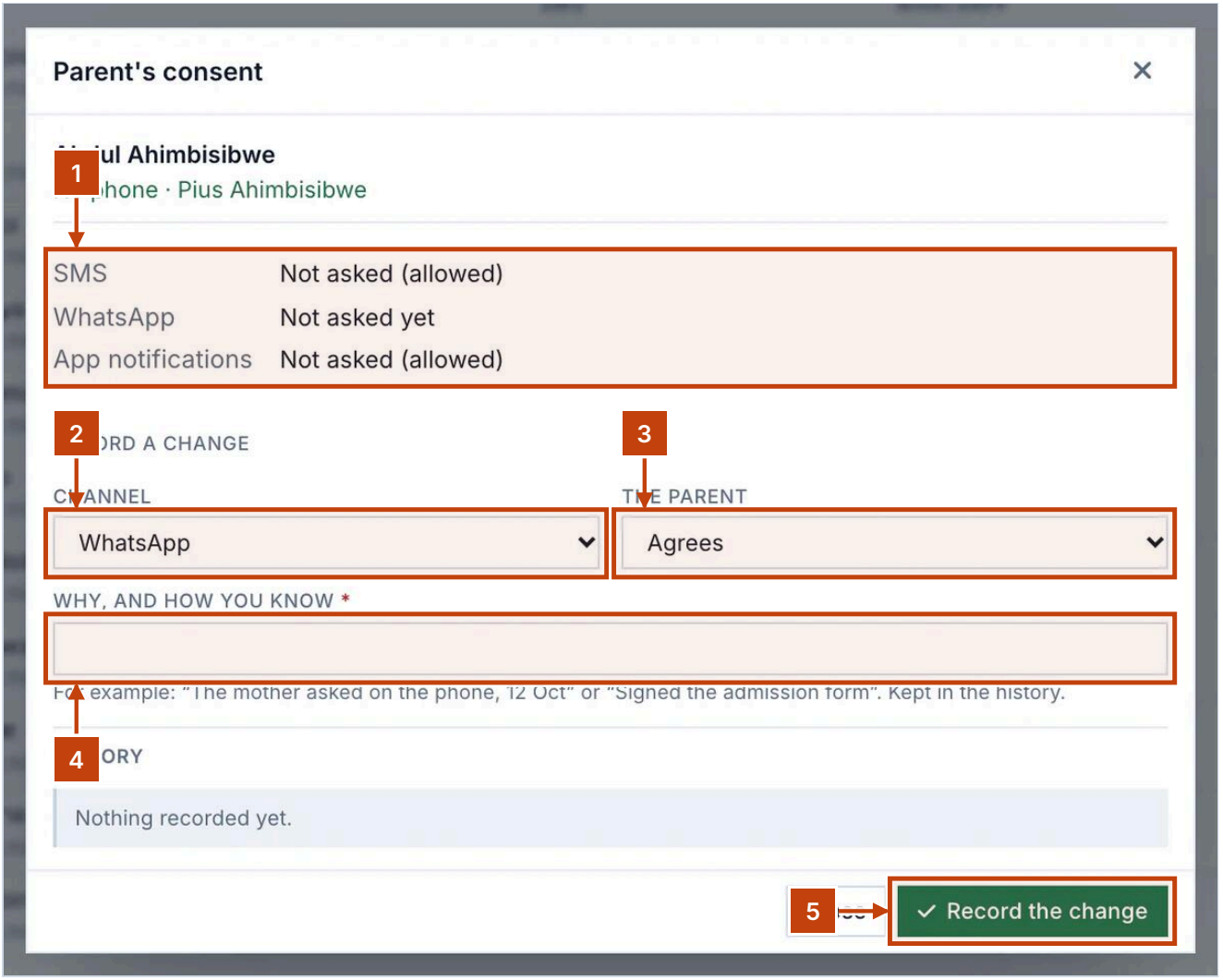
A number is valid when, once spaces and signs are taken out and the *256* or *0* at the front is dropped, nine digits are left. All of these work: *0772 123456*, *256772123456*, *+256 772 123456*, *+256 0772 123456*, *00256 772 123456*. When one box holds two numbers (*0772 123456 / 0701 234567*), the first valid one is used. A number with too few or too many digits is refused.

To correct a number, open the parent under **People › Parents**, or the student's page, and change it. See Parents and guardians.

A parent who does not want texts

Each parent chooses for each way of messaging: SMS, WhatsApp and app notifications. Open **Settings › Messaging** and the **Parents' consent** tab. The figures at the top count the parents who agreed to WhatsApp and those who said no. The list shows each parent's choice for each way; search a name or phone, or choose a way and a choice.

Click a parent to see their choices and record a change.



The demo school · invented names and figures

1 What this parent has agreed to, way by way.

2 The way: SMS, WhatsApp or app notifications.

3 Agrees or Says no.

4 Why, and how you know. It is kept in the history.

5 Record the change.

1. Read what the parent has agreed to 1.
2. Choose the **Channel** 2.
3. Choose what **The parent** wants 3: **Agrees** or **Says no**.
4. Type **Why, and how you know** 4, for example *The mother asked on the phone, 12 Oct.*
5. Press **Record the change** 5.

Every change is kept in the **History**, with who made it and why. Parents can also say no themselves: in the phone app, with the stop link, or by replying on WhatsApp. The history says which.

- A parent who said no to SMS gets no texts from the school. Their row says *Not sent: this person asked not to get SMS from the school.*, and nothing is charged.
- WhatsApp goes only to parents who agreed, unless your school chose on the **Channels** tab that its admission form already asks parents to agree.
- When WhatsApp cannot reach a number, the parent is marked *not on WhatsApp*, and they get SMS instead.

Good to know

- Apostrophes and curly quotes are taken out of a text before it is sent, because the SMS company's system does not accept them.
- A parent's sign-in code is hidden in the log as six stars once the text has gone or the code has been used.

QUESTIONS

The text says Sent, but the parent did not get it. Why?
Sent means the SMS company accepted the text for that number. School Dynamics gets no later report from the parent's phone. Check that the number on the text is the parent's current number.

How many times can a failed text be sent again?
A few times. The text's details say how many, for example *Tried again 1 of 3 times*. After that you see *This message has been tried the most times allowed.*

A parent wants no more texts from the school.
Record it on **Settings › Messaging › Parents' consent**, with the reason. From then on they get no SMS from the school, and nothing is charged for them.

I fixed a parent's number. Will "Send again" use the new one?
Only if the old number was not a valid number at all. If the old number looked valid but was wrong, send a new message instead.

Notices, news and events

Post news, notices and events to the School Dynamics app and the parents' pages, see who opened them, and remind parents who did not.

For: Secretary, Head teacher, Director of studies, School administrator · app.schooldynamics.ug/help/messages/notices-and-events

Notices & events is the school's notice board in the School Dynamics app and on the parents' pages. Post news, a notice or an event, with a photo or a file, for everyone or for one group. For notices meant for parents, you see how many opened them and can remind those who did not.

Before you start

- Everyone on the staff can read the posts here. Posting, changing and deleting them is for the school administrator, the head teacher, the deputy, the director of studies and the secretary.
- The school needs an active term: every post belongs to a term. Without one, the post button is greyed out and says *Set an active term first*. See Academic years and terms.

The page

Open **School life › Notices & events**. The tabs **News**, **Notices** and **Events** each show how many posts they hold. Choose **Published** or **Draft**, or search the titles.

Each row shows the title (with a picture or paper-clip mark when it has a photo or a file), who it is **For**, the **Event date** for events, its **Status**, when and by whom it was **Posted**, and how many **Views** it had in the app.

Post news, a notice or an event

1. Choose the tab: **News**, **Notices** or **Events**.
2. Press **Post news**, **New notice** or **New event**.
3. Type the **Title**.
4. Write the **Description**. It is plain text: leave a blank line between paragraphs.
5. Choose who it is **For**: **Everyone**, **Students**, **Parents**, **Teachers** or **Non-teaching staff**.
6. Choose the **Status**: **Published** shows it at once; **Draft** keeps it hidden until you publish it.
7. For an event, choose the **Event date**, with its time.
8. If you like, add a **Photo** (JPG, PNG, GIF or WebP, up to 4 MB) and a **File** (PDF, Word, Excel or a picture, up to 10 MB).
9. Press **Post**.

Who sees a post

In the app and on the parents' pages, only published posts are shown:

For	Seen by
Everyone	Parents, and every member of staff
Parents	Parents
Teachers	Every member of staff
Non-teaching staff	Members of staff who are not teachers
Students	Not shown to parents or staff in the app. An event for students shows on the school calendar.

On the **Notices & events** page itself, every member of staff sees every post, whoever it is for.

Published events also show on the school calendar on their date. When the **School event** message is switched on, parents get a reminder before each event for everyone or for parents (see Automatic messages and templates). Posting itself sends no text.

Read, change or delete a post

Click a title, or the eye button. The post opens with its text, photo and event date, who posted it and in which term, a link to **Open the file**, and its **Views in the app**. For a post meant for parents, **Opened by parents** says how many of them opened it out of how many it was meant for, and how many were reminded. **Lately** lists the names of those who opened it last.

- **Edit** changes the post. A new photo or file replaces the one shown in the app. A post stays in the term it was posted in.
- **Delete** removes it, after asking *Delete this post? It disappears from the app.*

Remind parents who did not open it

A published notice for **Everyone** or **Parents** has **Remind those who did not open it** while some of its parents have neither opened it nor been reminded. The button is for those who send messages: the school administrator, the head teacher, the deputy, the director of studies, the bursar and the secretary.

1. Open the post and press **Remind those who did not open it**.
2. Check the **Reminder** text. It is filled in for you; keep it under 480 characters (three SMS).
3. Read the figures: how many **Parents**, and how many get it in the app, by WhatsApp or by SMS; the **Cost**; and what is **In the wallet**.
4. Press **Remind** (the button says how many, for example **Remind 64 parents**).

Parents with the app get a free notification; the others get WhatsApp or SMS, paid from the SMS wallet. Each parent is reminded only once about each notice. A parent *opened* a post when they opened it in the app or on the parents' pages.

The dialog does not let you send when the post is a draft, is not for parents, everyone has opened it or been reminded already, your school cannot send messages, or the wallet is short.

> **TIP**
>
> For an urgent notice, publish it, wait a day, then remind those who did not open it. You pay only for the parents who missed it.

QUESTIONS

Does posting a notice text the parents?
No. Parents see it in the app and on their page. To text them too, use **Remind those who did not open it**, or send a message from **Messages**.

Why is the button to post greyed out?
Every post belongs to a term, so the school needs an active term first. Set one under **Academic years**.

Can I see which parents opened a notice?

You see how many of the parents it was meant for opened it, and the names of the people who opened it lately.

How do I take a notice down?
Open it and press **Delete**, or edit it and set its **Status** to **Draft**. Either way it leaves the app.

The school calendar

Terms, holidays, events, exam weeks and visiting days on one calendar. Add entries, remind parents before them, and put the calendar on a phone.

For: Secretary, Head teacher, Director of studies, Everyone · app.schooldynamics.ug/help/messages/school-calendar

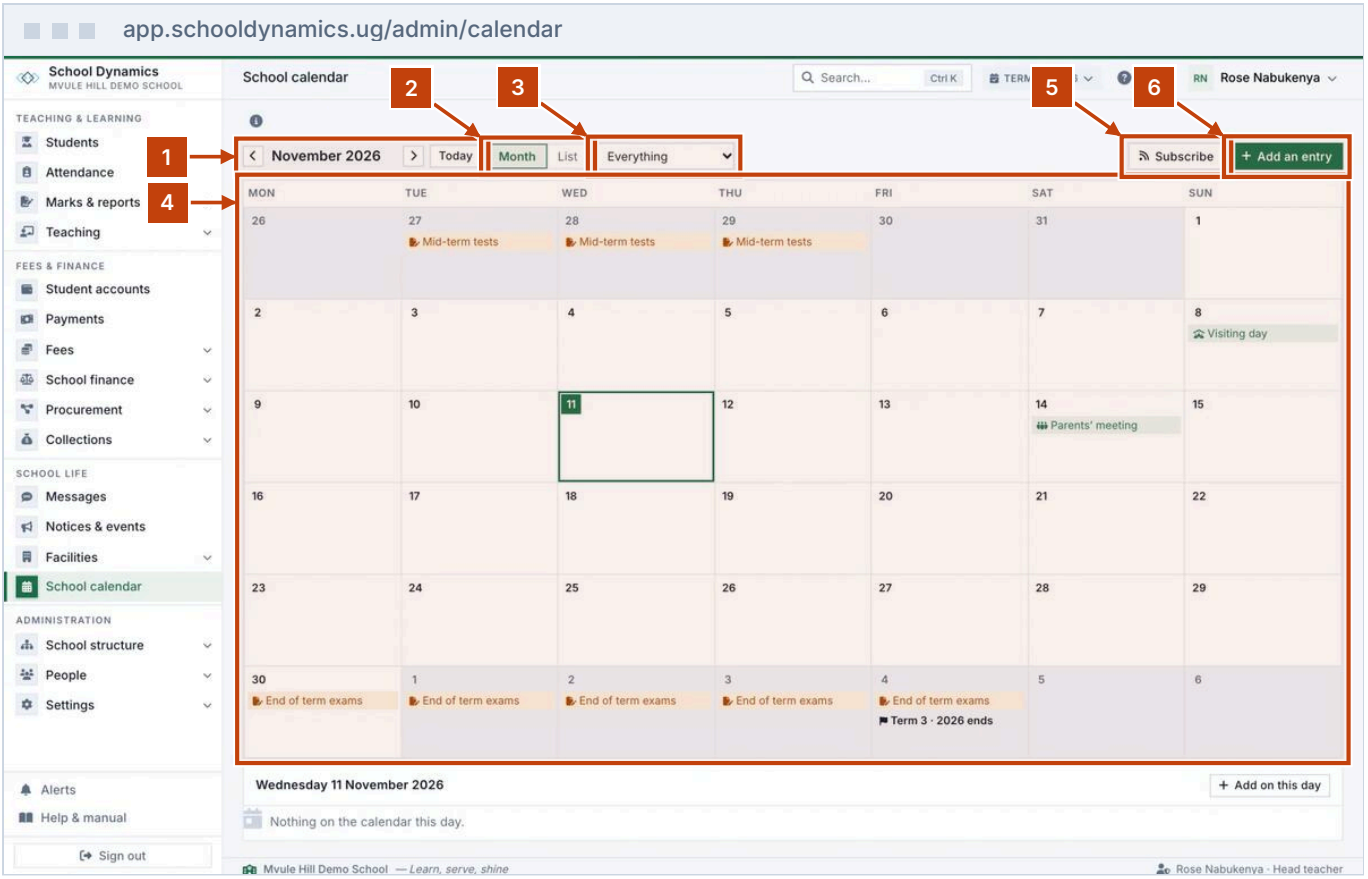
The school calendar puts the whole year in one place: the terms, holidays, events, exam weeks, visiting days and events posted as notices. Everyone on the staff can read it. The head teacher's office, the director of studies and the secretary keep it.

Before you start

- Every member of staff can open the calendar. Adding, changing and removing entries is for the school administrator, the head teacher, the deputy, the director of studies and the secretary.
- Some entries come from other pages and are changed there: the terms (from **Academic years**), exam weeks (from published exam timetables) and events posted under **Notices & events**.

Read the calendar

Open **School life › School calendar**.



The demo school · invented names and figures

1 The month. The arrows move a month; Today comes back.

2 A month grid or a list.

3 Show only one kind: terms, holidays, exam weeks, visiting days...

4 Click an entry to read it. Click a day to list its entries below the month.

5 Put the calendar in your phone's calendar.

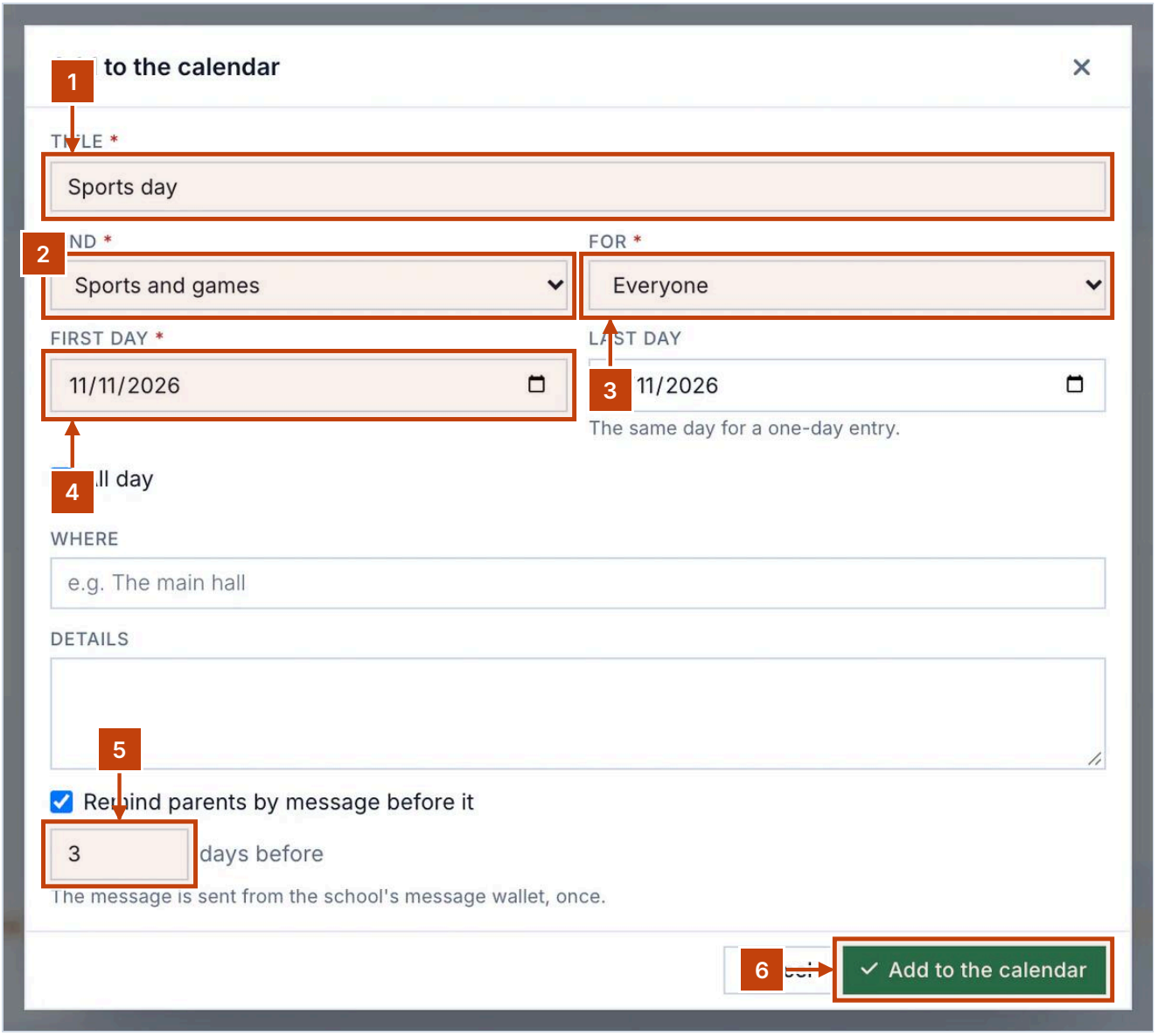
6 Add an entry.

- Move between months with the arrows 1. **Today** brings you back to this month.
- Choose **Month** or **List** 2. The list shows the month's entries in a table, with who each is for and its reminder.
- **Show only** 3 one kind: **Terms**, **Holiday**, **School event**, **Exam week**, **Visiting day**, **Meeting**, **Sports and games** or **Notices**.
- Click an entry 4 to read it: when, who it is for, where, and its reminder. Click a day's number to list that day's entries under the month (on a phone, this is the easiest way to read a day).

When you open an entry that comes from another page, the dialog says where it is kept and has a button to go there: **Academic years** for a term, **Exam timetable** for an exam week, **Notices & events** for an event posted as a notice. Your own invigilation duties from the exam timetable show on your calendar too.

Add an entry

Press **Add an entry** 6, or the small + on a day of the month to start on that day.



The demo school · invented names and figures

1. What it is.
2. The kind of entry.
3. Who it is for: everyone, parents, or staff only.
4. The first day. Add the last day for an entry of several days.
5. Remind parents by message this many days before.
6. Add it to the calendar.

1. Type the **Title** 1, for example *Sports day* or *Half-term break*.
2. Choose the **Kind** 2: **Holiday**, **School event**, **Exam week**, **Visiting day**, **Meeting** or **Sports and games**.
3. Choose who it is **For** 3: **Everyone**, **Parents** or **Staff only**.
4. Choose the **First day** 4, and the **Last day** if it lasts more than one day.
5. Untick **All day** to give **Starts at** and **Ends at** times.
6. Add **Where** and **Details** if you like.
7. To remind parents, tick **Remind parents by message before it** and type how many days before 5 (1 to 60).
8. Press **Add to the calendar** 6.

The calendar opens on the entry's month. To change an entry, open it and press **Edit**, change it, then press **Save the entry**. **Remove** takes it off the calendar after asking.

The rules:

- An entry cannot end before it starts, and lasts at most a year.
- Give both times or neither: an entry without times is all day.
- Only an entry for **Everyone** or **Parents** can remind parents.
- A **Visiting day** is one day, for **Parents** or **Everyone**. Its **Details** box becomes **Rules for visitors**, which parents read when they book, and you can tick **Only parents of boarders may book**. Then set its visiting times under **Visiting days** (see Visiting days). Once families have booked, it stays a visiting day and cannot be removed until their bookings are cancelled.

Reminding parents

An entry with a reminder sends one message to each parent of an active student (for a visiting day only for boarders, to parents of boarders), the number of days before that you set, at the time of day chosen on the Reminders tab. It is paid from the SMS wallet; parents with the School Dynamics app may get it as a free app notification instead.

The reminder goes only when **Calendar reminders** is switched on under **Settings › Messaging**, tab **Reminders**, where the coming reminders are listed with their cost. Like every automatic message, it starts off. See Automatic messages and templates.

Put the calendar on a phone

Press **Subscribe** on the calendar page.

- **Your own calendar**: press **Make my calendar address**. Copy the address into your phone's calendar app, or press **Open in my calendar app**. It holds everything on the school calendar, with your timetable lessons and invigilation duties. Keep the address to yourself. **New address** stops the old one working.
- **The school's calendar for parents**: those who keep the calendar press **Make the school's address**. It holds the terms, holidays, exam weeks, visiting days and everything meant for parents. Share it on the school's website or in a parents' group. **New address** replaces it; **Switch off** stops it.

Phones subscribed to the calendar pick up changes the next time they refresh.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> Parents also see the next three months of the calendar on their own page, with the entries for everyone and for parents.

QUESTIONS

Why can I not change the term dates here?
Terms come from **Academic years**. Change them there, and the calendar follows.

I set a reminder on an entry, but no text went. Why?
Check that **Calendar reminders** is switched on under **Settings › Messaging › Reminders**, and that the wallet covers it. Reminders also need School Dynamics to have switched on scheduled sending for your school.

Can parents see the calendar?
Yes. The parents' pages show the next three months of entries for everyone and for parents, with the terms. You can also share the school's calendar address with them.

Can I remove a visiting day that families have booked?
Not until their bookings are cancelled, so they can be told. Cancel them under **Visiting days** first.



School Dynamics

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

app.schooldynamics.ug/help