



# Merchant Taylors' School

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# Pastoral Care Policy

## MTGS and MTPS

### **Pastoral Care Policy**

Author: Headmistress MTGS  
Headmistress MTPS

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## **DRAFT - PASTORAL CARE, DISCIPLINE AND EXCLUSION POLICY**

This policy is a summary of long standing procedures which are reflected in the School's Mission Statement and Values, in the Code of Conduct for Pupils and in the Parents' and Primary School Parents' Handbooks.

### **1. CONTEXT**

MTGS/MTPS is an academic school, which seeks to provide an atmosphere in which every pupil is able to achieve their maximum potential. It is a school which seeks to support and to develop the whole person and which recognises that pupils will achieve their best academically if they are provided with the opportunity to take part in the widest possible range of extracurricular activities, which contribute to the development of confidence and self-esteem. The school also recognises that pupils will only achieve their best in an orderly and purposeful atmosphere, where they feel known, safe, valued and respected.

### **2. THE SCHOOL'S PASTORAL STRUCTURE**

A House System exists to facilitate vertical integration, to offer informal pastoral support and opportunities to develop self-esteem and a sense of responsibility.

The School's formal pastoral system is horizontal. The Form Tutor is the person who takes responsibility for the daily pastoral care of a pupil, having an overview of their academic progress, personal relationships and social development.

Form Tutors work in teams with Heads of Section, as follows:

#### **MTPS**

Reception	Head of EYFS
Years 1 and 2	Head of Infants
Years 3 – 6	Head of Juniors

#### **MTGS**

Lower School Years 7 – 8	Head of Lower School and Assistant Head of Lower School
Senior School Years 9 – 10	Head of Middle School and Assistant Heads of Middle School
Sixth Form Years 12 & 13	Head of Sixth Form and Assistant Head of Sixth Form

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) oversees the work of Heads of Section and Assistant Heads of Section and meets with them regularly.

Both schools also offer a confidential counselling service to which pupils may self-refer or be referred by parents or staff. The School Counsellor/s are in school regularly each week and are fully qualified professional counsellors.

All pupils in the School are offered Personal Social, Health and Education, which is delivered by Form Tutors, other members of the school staff and in some instances by outside specialist speakers.

The School employs a full time School Nurse. In addition to her medical responsibilities and attending to the physical health of pupils, the School Nurse offers pastoral support to girls as required.

### **3. DISCIPLINE**

The school can only achieve its educational objectives within an orderly framework, where clear boundaries of acceptable behaviour and mutual respect are established.

The expected standard of behaviour is clearly laid out in the School Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy,

### **4. SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The School Council meets regularly, often dividing into groups along Year Group lines. Pupils have the opportunity to raise issues of concern to them and to discuss matters affecting the quality of their lives and learning. Meetings are chaired by members of the Head Girl Team (MTGS) and Staff (MTPS), who also set the agenda in consultation with members of the school's Senior Management Team.

### **5. REWARDS AND SANCTIONS**

The School seeks to reward and to encourage positive behaviour. To this end, a system of rewards and sanctions is in operation, as set out in the school's separate Rewards and Sanctions Procedures. Rewards include merit marks and letters of commendation sent to parents (only MTGS). When necessary, sanctions are taken against pupils who fail to behave in an appropriate manner. These sanctions are always intended to be proportionate and fair. They include

- Loss of privileges – particularly in the 6th form.
- Detentions are usually given during the school day. Within MTGS, detentions for more serious offences such as leaving school premises without permission can be given. A minimum of 24 hours notice must be given to parents with a detention form that must be signed by them and returned the following day via form tutors to the Heads of Section.
- Being put on "report" – Report systems exist for pupils who are failing to make a sufficient effort, for those who are failing to produce homework regularly and for those who are frequently late or unpunctual.
- Permanent or temporary suspension– Very rarely used for very serious misconduct or frequent and repeated failure to behave appropriately.

### **6. SCHOOL POLICY ON SUSPENSION, EXPULSION AND REMOVAL**

**6.1. Suspension** –is a temporary sanction in response to a breach of the school rules. There is no right of appeal to suspensions under 11 days.

**6.2. Procedures for suspension** are:

- The Headmistress (or in her absence a Deputy Head) will decide upon whether a pupil should be excluded.
- Before the decision is made, a full investigation will have taken place and the girl concerned will have been questioned fairly and been able to have stated her own position and version of events.

- Parents will be told the reasons for the suspension, how long it will last, what measures to support the pupil will be provided while they are suspended
- Parents and pupil will be told of the expectations and conditions for the return to the school prior to the end of the suspension period.

**6.3. Expulsion** – is permanent and a sanction of last resort. Expulsions are very rare within the schools. A pupil may be expelled for a single act which constitutes a major violation of discipline, such as breach of the school rules on substance abuse, or for a criminal offence. Expulsions can be appealed via the Board of Governors – see process below. The student will be required to remain away from school pending the outcome of the review.

**6.4. Removal** – is a permanent step, usually in response to repeated infringements of school policies, poor behaviour over a period of time and inability to benefit sufficiently from the educational opportunities and / or the community life offered by the school. Where removal is requested by the Headmistress, parents may be given a chance to withdraw their child as an alternative at the sole discretion of the Headmistress. The decision to remove can be appealed to the Board of Governors. The student will be required to remain away from school pending the outcome of the review. Further details on removal are found in the Terms and Conditions.

**6.5. Procedures for expulsion and removal are:**

- The Headmistress (or in her absence a Deputy Head) will decide upon whether a pupil should be expelled/removed.
- Before the decision is made, a full investigation will have taken place and the pupil concerned will have been questioned fairly and been able to have stated her own position and version of events.
- Parents will always be informed fully of the reasons for expulsion/removal and given a copy of the Review Procedure.
- The Chairman of Governors or the Deputy Chairman in the Chairman's absence will always be informed of expulsions/removals.
- Parents will be able to lodge an appeal against an expulsion/removal within seven calendar days of being notified of the expulsion/removal.
- An appeal review meeting will take place as soon as possible after the appeal has been lodged.
- The appeal review panel will consist of three members of the Board of Governors, who have not been previously informed of the details of the case in question. Parents may, if they wish, ask the school to nominate an independent person to take the place of the third Governor on the panel.
- The appeal review will be conducted in accordance with the Expulsion/ Removal of Pupils – Review Procedure (Annex A).
- The student will be required to remain away from school pending the outcome of the review.

**7. EXCLUSION**

The term exclusion is reserved for cases of non-payment of fees and is not used in the context of school discipline.

## **8. REFERENCES**

- MTPS Parents' Handbook
- MTGS Parents' Handbook
- Code of Conduct for Pupils
- School Policy on Sex and Relationships Education
- School PSHE Policy and Curriculum documents
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Rewards and Sanctions Procedures
- Terms and Conditions
- Behaviour Policy
- Rewards and Sanctions procedures