



Merchant Taylors' School

Ambition | Character | Excellence

Pastoral Care Policy

MTGS

Pastoral Policy

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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 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

We aim to embed a pastoral system so that it is seen to be a real strength of the school. MTGS is a warm, supportive and close-knit community, with a diverse social and cultural mix of students. It is in this environment that our girls learn to be respectful of themselves and others, to take responsibility for their actions and what they say to others, and to be resourceful when looking to find solutions to the challenges that they will inevitably encounter. Underpinning this will be a strong House System that will form the basis for social and emotional support as well as provide existing opportunities for pupils to involve themselves in the life of the School.

2.1. House System

MTGS has three Houses: Minerva, Gaia and Thalia. The House System is overseen by the Assistant Head, Enrichment and Cocurricular and a senior member of staff will oversee each House. Each Head of House will be supported by an elected House Captain in Year 13 and House Coordinators from Year 10. Each House has a group of House tutors who will oversee the day to day pastoral provision for the pupils. The House Tutor will be your first point of contact for you as a parent if you have anything you wish to raise with them.

Each House tutoring team is made up of staff who have a wealth of experience of tutoring pupils within the different key stages and they will be supported by Head of Year Coordinators. The Head of Houses for 2020-21 are as follows:

House	Head of House	Contact details
Minerva	Mrs Jo Mayne	j.mayne@merchanttaylor.com
Thalia	Mr Francis Lawell	f.lawell@merchanttaylor.com
Gaia	Mrs Belinda Miller	b.miller@merchanttaylor.com

2.2. Head of Year Coordinators

For each year group, a Head of Year will have an oversight of the academic and pastoral priorities within the specific year group and will work with the Head of House, House tutors and the Director of Pupil Progress and Development to ensure that every pupil is on track to at least meet their potential if not exceed it.

For the next academic year, the Heads of Year are:

Year Group	Head of Year	Contact details
7	Mrs Erica Moore	e.moore@merchanttaylor.com
8		
9	Mrs Natalie Houghton	n.houghton@merchanttaylor.com
10	Ms Kerri Taws	k.taws@merchanttaylor.com
11	Mr Francis Lawell	f.lawell@merchanttaylor.com
12	Mrs Jo Mayne	j.mayne@merchanttaylor.com
13	Mrs Vicki Mee	v.mee@merchanttaylor.com

2.3. Tutoring developments

Over the course of 2020-2021 we will be moving towards a vertical tutoring system. Due to COVID-19, we have postponed doing this for September and have instead put all pupils into three house tutor groups within their horizontal year group with a view to phasing it in during the Summer term in 2021.

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 Policies.

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 (MTGS), 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.

6.1.1. 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.

6.2. 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.

6.3. 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.

6.3.1. 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

- MTGS Parents' Handbook
- Code of Conduct for Pupils
- School Policy on Relationships and Sex Education
- School PSHE Policy and Curriculum documents

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Rewards and Sanctions Procedures
- Terms and Conditions
- Behaviour Policy
- Rewards and Sanctions procedures
- Safeguarding Policy
- First Aid Policies
- Supervision of Pupils Policy