



Merchant Taylors'
School

Attendance Policy MTGS

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

Pupil attendance at Merchant Taylors' Girls' School is generally excellent. Many girls will go for an entire year without missing any school and most girls and their parents will usually keep any absence to a minimum. In cases of more prolonged absence the role of the school is usually to reassure families that such absence will not be detrimental to their daughter's progress. The attendance policy should therefore be read with this background in mind and Heads of Houses and the Pastoral Team will use sensitivity in applying it.

Procedures to be followed in case of absence during normal School opening:

- Tutors will only mark as present girls who are actually in the room at am or pm registration (Period 4 lesson).
- Reception will amend the register to record the presence of those who are late who have been attending a school activity such as music.
- Parents are asked to notify Reception and the form tutor when their child is absent as appropriate. Any absences which have not been reported are first checked to see if the student is in school. If she is not, reception will ring home to find out the reason for absence.
- If further attempts to contact the parents are unsuccessful, friends will be asked if they know where the child is. Our primary concern in these cases is that a child has left for school and has failed to arrive.

Codes used in the event of an absence:

All absences must be followed up to ensure that we have an explanation and the correct code should be entered in the register by the Form Tutor, Head of House or receptionist and will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department for Education.

Mark	Mark_Description	Statistical_Meaning
-	All should attend / No mark recorded	No mark
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Attendance not required
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
8	Late Medical	Present
B	Off-site educational activity	Approved Educational Activity
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised
D	Dual Registered	Approved Educational Activity
E	Excluded	Authorised
F	Extended Family Holiday	Authorised
G	Family holiday (Not agreed)	Unauthorised
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised



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I	Illness	Authorised
J	Interview	Approved Educational Activity
K	Late lunch / Conversation lesson	Present
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised
O	Unauthorised Abs	Unauthorised
P	Sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity
Q	Late Bus	Present
R	Religious observance	Authorised
S	Study Leave	Authorised
T	Traveller absence	Authorised
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised
V	Educational visit	Approved Educational Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity
X	Not required to be in school	Attendance not required
Y	Exceptional circumstances	Attendance not required
Z	Not on register	Attendance not required



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Monitoring Attendance

The Heads of House are asked to produce a weekly attendance report for the school at the Pastoral Meeting. The trigger point for intervention is between 95% -97%. Please see the monitoring grid below:

Attendance below 97% but above 95%	Emerging cause for concern. Discussion between Form Tutor to identify if there are any underlying concerns or worries indicating that extra support needs to be put in place. If so this will be addressed.
Attendance below 95% but above 90%	Frequent Absence. A cause for concern Email/ phone call home from Head of House and a meeting with the Form Tutor and Head of House. Should there be an underlying concern or worry, parents will be contacted, and the Form Tutor will work with the student and her parents to put a plan of support in place. The school may liaise, in collaboration with parents, with external services or professionals such as the pupil's GP and Local Authority Early Help Services as additional support may be needed.
Attendance below 90%	Persistent Absence A serious cause for concern: Email home from Head of House, meeting with the Head of House. Support Plan out in place/reviewed.
Attendance below 85%	Email/phone call home from Assistant Head Pastoral or Assistant Head Operations. Meeting with Head of House, Parents and Assistant Head. Support plan reviewed. Refer to Local Authority for advice and intervention, where appropriate
Attendance below 75%	On-going intervention in conjunction with Local Authority and external agencies.



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Assistance

Pupils who are training for Sports at international level competitions are provided with work that can be accessed remotely and completed via our firefly learning platform. Subject tutors are able to review work set and give regular assessments and feedback. If training takes that pupil away from school over a prolonged period of time then a weekly TEAMS meeting is arranged between Head of House, parents and external tutors to ensure that the work covered is appropriate to ensure progress alongside their peers.

Pupils with ongoing health concerns that have necessitated hospitalisation or substantial time away from school have been provided with written work and online access to work via Firefly: though the expectation is that pupils will only access this if their health allows and school is guided in this respect by the medical advice of health professionals involved with that pupil's care. Heads of House communicate regularly with parents and relevant external agencies to establish what level of work is appropriate in each individual case.

In certain circumstances where pupils have missed a significant portion of schooling due to poor health and long-term absence, then that pupil has been advised/asked to repeat the affected school year.

- Continued absence – without parental contact, report to DSL and treated as a safeguarding concern
- Ten days' absence – DfE guidance on reporting to Local Authority
- Unauthorised absence – Requests for absence due to holidays during term time are declined. The time allocated for Half term holidays and holidays at Christmas, Easter and the Summer are particularly generous.
- Appointments – parents are encouraged to make dental and medical appointments outside of schooltime, but we recognise that this is not always possible and facilitate where possible. Where medical appointments are available online, we have on occasion facilitated this taking place at MTGS, reducing the need to be absent for a whole session.
- Lateness – Form tutors monitor lateness each week. Pupils who have received three lates are flagged, receive a detention, and parents are informed. Sixth form pupils do not receive a detention, but three lates results in a loss of privileges, and they are unable to sign in and out for a day. All parents are able to view daily, weekly and termly attendance and Lateness records for their daughter on firefly.
- Lateness – Parents will receive an email if their daughter has accumulated three lates and therefore will sit an after-school detention. (Do we need to mention Medical lates? – pupils with a known medical condition have permission to arrive late for school – they will be recorded as late for fire records and school records but these do not generate an automatic detention)
- Sixth Form – Sixth form pupils are able to self-certify when they are absent due to ill health, University interviews etc. However, we hold the same high expectations of attendance and punctuality as for all pupils at MTGS. Receptionists, Form tutors and



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HOH will monitor sixth form attendance and lateness in the same way as for all other pupils. Unreported absence will be flagged with parents.

Registration Procedures during a school closure/lockdown/remote learning

- **Online Registration for pupils attending remotely**

An electronic contact list has been set up for each form group within the School. An email should be sent by each form tutor, each morning, to all pupils in their form between 8:00 and 8:15 am to give pupils a longer time to respond by 8:40am. Pupils need to register by 8.45 so that they are ready for lesson 1. Form tutors should then complete their registration for their form on 3Sys in the normal way. Reception will then follow up with phone calls to parents for those pupils who have failed to register.

- **Online registration for vulnerable pupils or children of critical workers attending in school**

While parents and carers who are critical workers should keep children at home if they can, children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school if required. Schools should speak to parents to identify children of critical workers who need to go to school; those that do not, and are instead accessing remote learning, should be recorded as Code X.

Where parents of critical workers only need their child to attend school part-time, schools should use Code X to record the sessions that the child is not expected to attend

Where the child of a critical worker is expected to attend a session and does not do so, the school should record the absence as Code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable

As usual, Code X should be used if the child is self-isolating or quarantining because of coronavirus (COVID-19).

As vulnerable children are still expected to attend school full time, they should not be marked as Code X if they are not in school (except if they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining). If the parent of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent, the parent should let the school know. The Department expects schools to grant applications for leave of absence given the exceptional circumstances. This should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

Where schools grant a leave of absence to vulnerable children they should still speak to parents and social workers (where applicable) to explore the reasons for this and any concerns raised. The discussions should focus on the welfare of the child and ensuring the child is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home.



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- **Reporting cause for concerns during a School closure**

During a period of remote learning the School will use the pupil concerns spreadsheets to monitor any concerns relating to specific pupils. Respective Heads of Houses will then follow-up with cause for concern pupils following normal School policy and Procedures.