



## Merchant Taylors' Schools, Crosby

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# Attendance Policy and Procedure

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<b>Policy Owner</b>	<b>Assistant Heads Pastoral</b>
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Regulatory Body (if applicable)	Department for Education Independent Schools Inspectorate
Relevant legislation/guidelines	Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2014 (as amended)

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## Key School Contacts

Senior Attendance Champions		
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### 1 Aims

- 1.1 This is the attendance policy of Merchant Taylors' Schools, Crosby (the School).
- 1.2 The School aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances.
- 1.3 The aims of this policy are as follows:
  - 1.3.1 to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;
  - 1.3.2 to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;
  - 1.3.3 to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;
  - 1.3.4 to recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and
  - 1.3.5 to help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

### 2 Scope and application

- 2.1 This policy applies to the whole School, including the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- 2.2 This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

### 3 Regulatory framework

- 3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:
  - 3.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
  - 3.1.2 EYFS *statutory framework for group and school-based providers* (DfE, January 2024)
  - 3.1.3 Education and Skills Act 2008;
  - 3.1.4 Children Act 1989;
  - 3.1.5 Childcare Act 2006
  - 3.1.6 Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, July 2023);

- 3.1.7 The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- 3.1.8 Equality Act 2010;
- 3.1.9 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- 3.1.10 Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
  - 3.1.11 Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
  - 3.1.12 Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, September 2023);
  - 3.1.13 Guidance for parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, September 2023);
  - 3.1.14 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);
  - 3.1.15 Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2024);
  - 3.1.16 School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures (DfE, May 2020);
  - 3.1.17 Children missing education (DfE, September 2016);
  - 3.1.18 Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);
  - 3.1.19 Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);
  - 3.1.20 Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);
  - 3.1.21 Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);
  - 3.1.22 Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);
  - 3.1.23 Remote education guidance (DfE, updated February 2023); and
  - 3.1.24 SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015)].
- 3.2 The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:
- 3.2.1 Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures;
  - 3.2.2 Missing child policy and procedures
  - 3.2.3 SEND Policy
  - 3.2.4 Behaviour policy;
  - 3.2.5 Separated Parents Policy

## 4 Publication and availability

- 4.1 This policy is published on the School website.
- 4.2 This policy is available in hard copy on request.
- 4.3 This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

## 5 Definitions and interpretation

- 5.1 Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:
  - 5.1.1 references to **attendance** include references to attendance for all or part of the timetabled school day.
  - 5.1.2 references to the **Proprietor** are references to the board of Governors.
  - 5.1.3 references to a **Parent** means:
    - (a) all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
    - (b) any person who has parental responsibility for a pupil; and
    - (c) any person who has day to day responsibility for a pupil (i.e. lives with and looks after a pupil).
  - 5.1.4 References to a **pupil** includes anyone who is receiving an education at the school, except a person who is 19 or over for whom further education is being provided, or a person for whom part-time education suitable for people over compulsory school age is being provided.<sup>1</sup>
  - 5.1.5 **SAC** means the School's Attendance Champion.

## 6 Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

- 6.1 The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.
- 6.2 The Proprietor recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed a designated senior leader to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in School, referred to in this policy as the SAC.
- 6.3 To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Proprietor has allocated the following tasks:

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy	SAC	As required, and at least termly

<sup>1</sup> This is the definition as set out in section 3 of the Education Act 1996 and referred to in chapter 7 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance: applies from 19 August 2024.

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	SAC	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Proprietor	Annually

## 7 The importance of good attendance

7.1 The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:

- 7.1.1 the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;
- 7.1.2 the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils;
- 7.1.3 the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and parents;
- 7.1.4 that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and
- 7.1.5 children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

## 8 School responsibilities

- 8.1 The School acknowledges that attendance is the essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the School community.
- 8.2 The School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and parents.
- 8.3 Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.
- 8.4 The School will respond to non-attendance and / or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the School's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.

- 8.5 The School will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

## 9 **Staff responsibilities**

### **The SAC**

- 9.1 The Proprietor has appointed senior members of staff from the School's leadership team as SACs, to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school. Details of the individual appointed are at the front of this policy and are widely publicised within School.

9.1.1 The SAC's responsibilities are:

- (a) to set a clear vision for improving attendance in school;
- (b) to establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure the systems are followed by all staff;
- (c) to regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes;
- (d) to have oversight of and analyse attendance data; and
- (e) to communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and parents.

### 9.2 **Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance<sup>2</sup>:**

The staff identified in Appendix 1 of this policy have day to day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. They should:

- 9.2.1 have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;
- 9.2.2 seek explanations of absences required from pupils on their return to School;
- 9.2.3 make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with pupil to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School;
- 9.2.4 look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the SAC of any specific concerns;
- 9.2.5 deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly;
- 9.2.6 consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to a lesson in line with the School's behaviour and discipline policies; and
- 9.2.7 discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

<sup>2</sup> The School should provide information and contact details of the staff who pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day to day basis (such as a form tutor, head of year etc) and for more detailed support on attendance (such as a head of year, pastoral lead or family liaison officer etc) in Appendix 1

### 9.3 All staff

9.3.1 The School ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents about it.

9.3.2 The School provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

## 10 School arrangements

The School will accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence. These registers must be kept electronically.

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

- Tutors / Class Teachers will only mark as present pupils who are actually in the room at am or pm registration.
- Reception will amend the register to record the presence of those who are late or who have been attending a school activity.
- Parents are asked to notify Reception and the form tutor / class teacher 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 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.
- 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 Class Teacher, Form Tutor, Head of House or receptionist and will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department for Education



**Codes to be used in electronic register:**

Code	Full name	Description
<b>The student is counted as present.</b>		
/	Present at the school during AM registration	The session is a morning session and the pupil is present at the school when the attendance register begins to be taken.
\	Present at the school during PM registration	The session is an afternoon session and the pupil is present at the school when the attendance register begins to be taken.
L	Late arrival before registration has closed	The pupil is absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended.
<b>The student is counted as present, at an Approved Educational Activity.</b>		
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	The pupil is attending a place for any other approved educational activity; the place where the pupil is attending is not the school or any other school at which the pupil is a registered pupil. For MTS, this applies where a pupil has a lesson on a site that is not the site of the school at which they are registered.
K	Attending education provision provided by the local authority	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the 1996 Act(1) or section 42(2) or 61(1) of the 2014 Act.
P	Sporting Activity (Approved)	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity <b>organised by the school</b> that is a sporting activity.
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the proprietor and supervised by a member of school staff.
W	Attending Work Experience	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the proprietor as part of the pupil's education
<b>The student is counted as absent, authorised.</b>		
C	Other Authorised Absence	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of	Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad

	participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	The pupil is of compulsory school age and is absent with leave because, in accordance with an agreement between a parent who they normally live with and the proprietor that the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis, their timetable does not require them to attend.
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence) and the leave is to enable the pupil to attend an interview for <b>employment</b> or <b>admission to another educational institution</b> .
E	Suspended or permanently excluded	If a student is excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked E, for up to the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period ( <b>referred to as 'suspensions' by the DfE from Autumn 2021</b> ) or permanent exclusion.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment	The student is absent due to a medical or dental appointment that could not be made outside of school hours.
R	Religious Observance	The day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which a parent of the pupil belongs.
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils for public exams. Students should still be able to come into school to revise.
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child, their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with that parent. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode.
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related)

<b>The student is counted as absent, unauthorised.</b>		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday.
N	Reason for absence not yet established	The school must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has not yet been established before the register closes, the absence must be recorded with code N. The correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session. Code N must not be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, the school must amend the pupil's record to Code O.
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of Session ( <b>ie AM/PM session</b> ). This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes.
<b>These codes are not counted so will not affect attendance figures.</b>		
D	Dual registered at another school	The pupil is absent with leave for the purpose of attending another school at which they are a registered pupil. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	The pupil is not of compulsory school age and is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to attend.
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Absence due to transport normally provided not being available.
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the

	school premises being closed	school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use.
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being <b>unexpectedly</b> closed	The school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather) <b>Different from # for planned closures</b>
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in police detention,</li> <li>• remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• detained under a sentence of detention.</li> </ul>
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	The pupil is well enough to attend (otherwise Code I would have been recorded) but there are Government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend.
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	An unavoidable cause, that is not covered by one of the other 'unable to attend' codes detailed above, is preventing the pupil from attending the school. This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the pupil at school does not, in itself, mean the pupil has been prevented by unavoidable cause.
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	This code can be used when setting up registers in advance of pupils joining. Schools must take attendance for pupils from the first day the student should be attending the school.
#	Planned whole school closure	Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• days between terms;</li> <li>• half terms;</li> <li>• occasional days (for example, bank holidays);</li> <li>• weekends (where it is required by the management information system);</li> <li>• up to 5 non-educational days; and</li> <li>• use of the whole school as a polling station.</li> </ul>
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	A pupil is absent because the local authority has a legal duty to arrange home-to-school travel for the pupil and they have not done so, or because the pupil has no choice but to

		attend a school that does not qualify for such travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live.
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## 11 Monitoring attendance

The Heads of House/Year 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%	<p>Emerging cause for concern.</p> <p>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.</p>
Attendance below 95% but above 90%	<p>Frequent Absence A cause for concern</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Attendance below 90%	<p>Persistent Absence A serious cause for concern.</p> <p>Letter home from Assistant Head Pastoral (Primary) or Head of House (Seniors) and meeting with the Head of House. Support Plan out in place/reviewed.</p>
Attendance below 85%	<p>Letter/ phone call home from Assistant Head Pastoral or Assistant Head Operations. Meeting with Class teacher (Primary) Head of House, Parents and Assistant Head. Support plan reviewed.</p> <p>Refer to Local Authority for advice and intervention, where appropriate</p>

Attendance below 75%	On-going intervention in conjunction with Local Authority and external agencies.
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- 11.1 The School will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the School and develop strategies to address them. Such analysis may include:
- 11.1.1 monitoring and analysing weekly attendance patterns and trends and provide support in a targeted way to pupils and families;
  - 11.1.2 using this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator and designated safeguarding lead);
  - 11.1.3 conducting thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends;
  - 11.1.4 benchmarking attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level to identify areas of focus for improvement;
  - 11.1.5 devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;
  - 11.1.6 monitoring the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented; and
  - 11.1.7 providing data and reports to the Proprietor to support its work.

## 12 Pupil responsibilities

- 12.1 School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing and development. The School therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and manage poor attendance.
- 12.2 Pupils should be aware that:
- 12.2.1 they are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day;
  - 12.2.2 they are expected to arrive on time and attend all timetabled lessons;
  - 12.2.3 they should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules;
  - 12.2.4 they should engage with the School's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy;
  - 12.2.5 any unexplained absence will be followed up;
  - 12.2.6 persistent lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the School. This may take the form of:
    - (a) offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance;
    - (b) communication with parents;

- (c) reporting to other agencies such as children's social care; and
- (d) sanctions against them or their parents in line with the School's behaviour policies.

12.2.7 If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending School or specific lessons regularly, they or their parents, may speak to any member of staff, although the School encourages them to speak to their form or class teacher or those staff identified in Appendix 1 in the first instance. Pupils are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

### 13 Additional needs

- 13.1 The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. The School will make reasonable adjustments<sup>3</sup> where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.
- 13.2 It will also work with parents, and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupils education, health and care plan is accessed.<sup>4</sup>
- 13.3 Suitable strategies will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance<sup>5</sup>.
- 13.4 Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.
- 13.5 The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.<sup>6</sup>

### 14 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

<sup>3</sup> In this case to meet the school's duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010.

<sup>4</sup> The Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools states in the non-statutory summary of responsibilities document that 'in many cases the school may be able to agree with parents / carers adjustments to its policies and practices that are consistent with the special educational provision set out in the EHC plan. In other cases, additional or different attendance support identified may require the LA to review or amend an EHC plan.'

<sup>5</sup> See Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools which includes a Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance and Support for pupils where mental health is affecting attendance: effective practice examples

<sup>6</sup> See paragraph 57 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance: applies from 19 August 2024

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
- 10 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. 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 MTS. Receptionists, Form tutors and HoH will monitor Sixth-Form attendance and lateness in the same way as for all other pupils. Unreported absence will be flagged with parents.

## **15 Parent / carer responsibilities**

- 15.1 The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.
- 15.2 This means pupils must attend every day that the School is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the School.



- 15.3 The School will help parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short and long term consequences of poor attendance.
- 15.4 Expectations the School places on parents can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy
- 15.5 Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

## 16 Training

- 16.1 **Staff:** The School ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles. As a minimum this will include all staff understanding:
  - 16.1.1 the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances; and
  - 16.1.2 the School's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.
- 16.2 Dedicated attendance training is provided to any member of staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or and senior leaders. This should include:
  - 16.2.1 the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers;
  - 16.2.2 the process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it;
  - 16.2.3 the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and
  - 16.2.4 any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.
- 16.3 The School maintains records of all staff training.

## 17 Information sharing

- 17.1 Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.
- 17.2 The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familial harms).
- 17.3 The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:
  - 17.3.1 New pupil and deletion returns;

17.3.2 Attendance returns<sup>7</sup>;

17.3.3 Sickness returns.

- 17.4 The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.
- 17.5 The School must provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State.
- 17.6 Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences.

## 18 **Record keeping and confidentiality**

- 18.1 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.
- 18.2 The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

<sup>7</sup> Schools are required to provide attendance returns to the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been recorded as absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the national attendance codes (G, N, O, and/or U). Individual local authorities must agree the frequency that attendance returns are to be provided with all schools in their area. This should be no less frequently than once per calendar month - see chapter 2 and content on sharing information in the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance: applies from 19 August 2024.

## 19 Attendance Champions

	<b>DSL</b>	<b>Contact</b>
EYFS	Claire Trainor	c.trainor@merchanttaylor.com
Stanfield	Sarah Curwen	s.curwen@merchanttaylor.com
MTBS	Randal Yates	r.yates@merchanttaylor.com
MTGS	Natalie Houghton(Acting)	n.houghton@merchanttaylor.com

## 20 Heads of House & Heads of Year

<b>School</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>House/Year</b>	<b>Contact</b>
MTBS	Nathalie Hickie	7	n.hickie@merchanttaylor.com
MTBS	Tom Collins	8 & 9	t.collins@merchanttaylor.com
MTBS	Sam Sheen	10 & 11	s.sheen@merchanttaylor.com
MTGS	Vicki Mee		v.mee@merchanttaylor.com
MTGS	Natalie Houghton		n.houghton@merchanttaylor.com
MTGS	Kerri Taws		k.taws@merchanttaylor.com

## **Appendix 1 School arrangements<sup>8</sup>**

### **1 Managing attendance**

- 1.1 The School monitors, records and shares data about pupil attendance and as part of its duty to safeguard and protect pupils and promote attendance. It accurately completes admission and attendance registers<sup>9</sup> as required by law and set out in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 respectively. The admission and attendance registers must be kept electronically and retained by the School for the relevant time period as stated by law.
- 1.2 The School expects all pupils to be present at School for the whole of the School day, usually from registration at 8• 45am to close, but this period may be extended, for example for out of school clubs, sports fixtures or school trips.

### **2 The role of parents / carers**

- 2.1 The School expects all Parents to:
  - 2.1.1 make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;
  - 2.1.2 notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this; and
  - 2.1.3 cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

### **3 Registration and attendance checks**

- 3.1 Morning registration is at • 8:45am.
- 3.2 Afternoon registration will be at 1:40pm.
- 3.3 Registers will also be called at the beginning of each lesson at the secondary schools, in order to identify and follow-up on absences from lessons that might occur after morning or afternoon registration.

### **4 Reporting absence**

- 4.1 If a pupil is to be absent from School for any reason, the parent / carer should contact the following below by email / telephone by 8:45am on first morning of absence;
- 4.2 Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness.

### **5 Arrangements for reporting subsequent absence**

- 5.1 Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register as set out in Appendix 3.

<sup>8</sup> The School should tailor this section to ensure that its arrangements are set out clearly

<sup>9</sup> Boarding schools without day pupils are not required to keep an attendance register. Schools with a mixture of day pupils and boarders must keep an attendance register for the day pupils.

## 6 **Authorised absences**

Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

## 7 **Applications for an authorised leave of absence**

Applications for authorised leaves of absence during the School day will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if made in writing to the Head of School.

- 7.1 The School will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the pupil's past attendance record and the relevant background context behind the request.
- 7.2 Apart from illness, no pupil should be away from School without prior permission from the Head.
- 7.3 Dental or medical appointments should be made during School holidays except in cases of emergency when the School should be informed.
- 7.4 If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Head to determine the length of the time the pupil is permitted to be away from School. It will be recorded as an authorised absence.
- 7.5 A leave of absence will usually be authorised for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which parents and pupils belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance.

## 8 **Reporting duties**

- 8.1 The School has statutory reporting obligations if a pupil fails to regularly attend their absence is unauthorised. The School must report unauthorised absences for a continuous period of 10 days or more to the local authority.
- 8.2 In the event that a pupil holding a Student or Child Student visa sponsored by the School under the Points Based System goes missing<sup>10</sup>, the School will report to UKVI if the pupil misses ten consecutive expected contact points.
- 8.3 Each time the School's attendance register is completed it is treated as a contact point for these purposes.
- 8.4 The report will be made by the School's Level 1 user via the Sponsor Management and in accordance with prevailing UKVI guidance
- 8.5 Action will also be taken in accordance with the Missing Child Policy and safeguarding and child protection policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

<sup>10</sup> Children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and / or for prolonged periods and children missing education, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues, including exploitation. Exploitation can affect any child, however international students may be at greater risk than other children. UKVI's Student Sponsor Guidance states that a school must have appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection from exploitation of the children whom it sponsors to study in the UK under the Child Student route.

## Appendix 2 Admission register

### 9 Admission register

- 9.1 In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the School will:
- 9.1.1 maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and
  - 9.1.2 inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points.
- 9.2 The admission register must be kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- 9.3 The school must ensure that every entry in the School's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.
- 9.4 The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the School, including their date of admission, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school they last attended
- 9.5 A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted.
- 9.6 Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the School must provide it with the following information:
- 9.6.1 the full name of the pupil;
  - 9.6.2 the address of the pupil;
  - 9.6.3 the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;
  - 9.6.4 at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives or can be contacted in an emergency;
  - 9.6.5 the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
  - 9.6.6 name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;
  - 9.6.7 the ground (prescribed in regulation 9) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

### **Appendix 3 Attendance register**

#### **10 Attendance register**

- 10.1 The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024
- 10.2 The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.
- 10.3 The attendance register is kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- 10.4 The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.
- 10.5 The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- 10.6 On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is:
  - 10.6.1 physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken; or
  - 10.6.2 absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or
  - 10.6.3 attending a place other than the school; or
  - 10.6.4 absent.
- 10.7 The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:
  - 10.7.1 Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;
  - 10.7.2 For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;
  - 10.7.3 Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;
  - 10.7.4 Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;
  - 10.7.5 Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

#### **11 Recording absence**

- 11.1 Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance relating to:

- 11.1.1 leaves of absence;
- 11.1.2 other authorised reasons;
- 11.1.3 unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause;
- 11.1.4 unauthorised absence.

## 12 Remote education

- 12.1 The School is required to record all absence from in-person lessons.
- 12.2 The School may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the School site, to keep pace with their education.
- 12.3 In the limited circumstances when the School decides to use remote education for individual pupils when they are absent, the following will be considered:
  - 12.3.1 ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the School, parents or carers, potentially pupils, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision;
  - 12.3.2 if remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity;
  - 12.3.3 setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.
- 12.4 Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. The School will keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register. Where appropriate, this information may be used to make plans for a pupil's reintegration to school.
- 12.5 The School will utilise a digital education platform that will be kept up-to-date and keep pupils safe. Staff will remain trained and confident in its use.
- 12.6 The School will maintain pages on its website that provides information and guidance about the remote education provision and links to any trusted external education websites.]
- 12.7 The School has an established remote education plan in place which is reviewed at least annually in consultation with staff.

## 13 Unauthorised absence



- 13.1 The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:
- 13.1.1 holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Head;
  - 13.1.2 the reason for absence has not been provided;
  - 13.1.3 a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;
  - 13.1.4 a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.