

Merchant Taylors' School



PUPIL ATTENDANCE & REGISTRATION

Policy Custodian: Senior Master

Approving Body: MTS Senior Leadership Team

Approved: September 2024

(This policy does not apply to Merchant Taylors' Prep.)

Merchant Taylors' School is required to follow the Government Department for Education (DfE) guidance on pupil registration. The most recent guidance entitled [Working together to improve school attendance](#) which came into effect from 19th August 2024. Merchant Taylors' understands the link between regular School attendance and the ability of its pupils to make academic progress in their time at the School.

Morning Registration:

Registration is a very important process for teachers and this should be the first task attended to in the presence of the boys in the morning and at the start of the first lesson in the afternoon. The potential reputational damage to the School caused by a pupil who is unaccounted for cannot be underestimated.

On days when boys begin their day at 8.35am with tutors, form teachers, House or Year Group Assembly, teachers are expected to verify the presence of the boys in their rooms or venue by inspection of the data held in the School database (or the yellow registration cards issues at the start of the academic year) and register any boys that have not already been registered, but are present in the room in question. Registration is an active process and any teacher registering the boys must have seen each boy in question. Registration cannot be accepted via methods such as word of mouth from other pupils or via an email sent by a pupil himself. Registration should not be delegated to a pupil. To facilitate registration on assembly days, pupils should be encouraged to sit in form or House groups. Heads of House or Heads of Section or their assistants may be needed to complete registration on Assembly days when Form teachers or tutor are not in School.

When a year group meets for an assembly, form teachers are expected to be in attendance with the exception of Sixth Form Teachers, unless otherwise stated in the School's Daily cover notice.

If a pupil arrives after 8:35am, he must report immediately to his Tutor or Form Teacher according to the details of the School's morning routines. If he arrives late on a day where there is an assembly, he should register with the Attendance Secretary and then proceed immediately to assembly. Pupils that travel to the School on a Coach that arrives at School after 8:35am should report to the Registration Secretary in the School Reception. If a pupil arrives after 8.55am, he should report to the Registration Secretary in School Reception and then proceed immediately to his next lesson.

In cases when a registration card is used (for example when emergency procedures have been initiated), attendance is indicated by placing a tick or cross in the appropriate box on the registration card. The card should be signed and dated by the teacher in charge and any alterations to the card should be initialed. Completed registration cards are handed in to Registration Secretary in School

Reception. This is usually done by the Form teacher or Tutor, but a reliable pupil may be asked to carry out this task. The Registration Secretary checks each card and records absentees using ISAMS (the school administrative system).

By about 9:10am, the Registration Secretary will have made a first scan of the day's attendance data and entered any attendance data that has been submitted using a card. An automatic routine is then used to email teachers who have boys in their classes who have still not registered or been registered by a teacher. Teachers are asked to respond to these emails as soon as possible without unduly interrupting the flow of the lesson. The automatic routine will be re-run at the beginning of period 2 and if needed at periods 3 and 4 and until all boys are accounted for.

Pupils who are repeatedly and avoidably late might expect to be in receipt of a School sanction.

Afternoon registration:

Boys are required to be registered at the start of period 5 which starts at 2:40pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. As in the morning, teachers are required to check and update where possible the register data for boys in the class in front of them. If there is a need for a registration card to be used, the completed Registration Card is collected by a member of the support staff. The same automatic routine used in the morning is run from 2:40pm. Teachers are asked to respond to these emails as soon as possible without unduly interrupting the flow of the lesson.

"Off-Games" and Games Registration:

If your son is not well enough to take part in Games a parent should email the Attendance Secretary, Ms Newcombe confirming the reason. This email should be sent to Ms Newcombe (not the member of staff running the session) before 8.35 am on the day in question. We also ask that the Sports injury record form below is completed so that we can monitor injuries and assist where required. A link to the injury record form is below.

[MTS Sports Injury Record Form \(office.com\)](#)

Pupils who are "off-games" must attend their Games activity at the start of the session to register. In the most cases, pupils will be required to stay with their Games option and assist the coach/teacher where required. In exceptional circumstances, the pupil will be allowed to leave the session, but this is at the discretion of the teacher in charge.

Pupils should not attend the library without prior authorisation. On Mondays, Lower and Middle School boys who are off games and not needed for the Games session are free to go home after 3.40pm with the written permission of the member of staff running their Games activity. These boys must sign out via Ms Newcombe in reception. Boys who are needed to assist with their Games session and travel home by the School Coach Service should work in the Library until 4.30pm.

Upper School pupils who are not part of a School Sports Team Squad are not required for Games on Mondays. All Upper School pupils should register with Ms Newcombe when they are leaving the School site or register by 2.30pm if they are staying at School to continue their studies or take part in Games that day.

On Wednesday afternoons, all boys in the Lower and Middle Schools who are "off-games" should report to the Teacher leading the Games Session at 2.30pm where a register will be taken by a member of staff. "Off-games" pupils may be required to assist with the Games session or may be permitted to study in the School Library until 3.30pm.

Boys in the Upper School who are "off-games" and not needed to support their Games session are

allowed to go home to study but must 'sign out' with Ms Newcombe when they leave the School site.

On Wednesday afternoon teachers in charge of games are expected to take absence at the start of each session and follow up any absentees not accounted for on the Absence list or 'off games' list. Staff who have been assigned to off-Games supervision will assist in collecting registration documents so that this data can be entered centrally at the earliest opportunity.

Registration must be confirmed in SOCS for Wednesday Games as this registration is needed for statutory purposes. This can be achieved using a variety of methods:

1. Via the SOCS app (via a personal phone or Surface tablet issued to a member for the teaching staff).
2. Via email to the Attendance Secretary of a list of boys who are present.
3. The Director of Sport will provide Games lists for colleagues to take registration. Attendance data must be recorded in SOCS at the earliest possible opportunity. This data is migrated into ISAMS overnight on Wednesday evening.

Teachers supervising boys who are "Off-Games" in the library should confirm the boys' registration in SOCS.

Notification of Absence:

When pupils are absent from School through illness or other unforeseen circumstances a parent (or guardian) is expected to telephone or e-mail the School as soon as possible after 8.00 am to explain the pupil's absence. In cases where a boy is not in School and his absence is unaccounted for, the Registration Secretary will telephone a parent/guardian to discover the reason for the boy's absence.

Merchant Taylors' can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school in specific circumstances. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad: **in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA)**;
- Attending an interview: for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with;
- Study leave: for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with;
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable: where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable;
- Exceptional circumstances: Merchant Taylors' can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at its discretion. Absence must be requested in advance (no later than 8.35am on the first day for which absence is requested) by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. Merchant Taylors' is expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school;

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

DfE requires that leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

Sixth Form Attendance: Period 5 and Home Study Leave

If a Sixth pupil does not have a lesson during period 5, and is not required for any other school commitment during that time or after school, then they are permitted to leave the school site to go home and study. Boys must sign out via the Registration Secretary and must have left the site by 2.40pm.

Any Sixth pupil remaining in school must “sign in” with Reception in the school office by 2.40pm. They must then remain in school until at least 3.40pm.

The privilege of home study leave can be withdrawn at any time, in which case Sixth Form pupils will be assigned to supervised private study periods for their afternoon lessons.

All pupils are expected to make themselves available to staff as needed in any afternoon when they do not have a lesson. Boys should not, for instance, schedule out-of-school commitments during this time.

Planned Absence (inc. Open Days):

Prior permission from the Senior Master is required for all planned absences from School. Upper School boys are allowed to miss up to two days of school (including match days) per academic year to attend scheduled university Open Days. A written request to the Senior Master as soon as possible but, at least three days before the planned absence in question.

Leaving the school site:

No L6 pupil is allowed to leave the school site without express permission of a member of staff. If this is granted, then they should follow the procedure outlined below.

U6 may only leave the school site during lunchtime. If they are planning to return to school (i.e. for a lesson, or other school commitment), they should ‘sign out’ in Reception, and then ‘sign in’ when they return.

Failure to follow the correct procedure, or abuse of this privilege, will see it rescinded.

Lateness and Data Publication:

Pupils who are repeatedly and avoidably late might expect to be in receipt of a School sanction.

At the end of each month, the Attendance Secretary prints a Monthly Attendance Register (as required by law). This is bound and stored in the school safe and kept for a minimum of six years. Individual pupil attendance summaries can be viewed by pupils, their parents and teachers in MySchool Portal. There is a 24 hour delay in updating this portal.

Sharing of Attendance Data

Merchant Taylors’ will work with local authorities and other local partners and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to the pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familial harms). Further, to facilitate timely

collaborative working across partners, all schools are also legally required to share information from their registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

- New Pupil and Deletion returns: notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times.
- Attendance returns: providing the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and/or U).
- Sickness returns: providing the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age (this includes pupils up to the end of National Curriculum year 11) who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year. This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

Local authorities may seek more frequent or comprehensive sharing of data than the statutory minimum where it is essential to fulfilling their obligations under the relevant Education Acts.

Attendance Registers and Attendance Codes

Merchant Taylors' will take the attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session.

On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time.

The codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics. The data helps schools, local authorities, and the government gain a greater understanding of the delivery of education and the level of, and reason for, absence.

Code / \: Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session

Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as attending for statistical purposes. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending.

Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed

The pupil was absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. If a pupil is marked N but arrives later in the session after the register has closed, the attendance register must be amended to mark them as absent using code U or another absence code that is more appropriate. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending.

Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip

The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff. The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded. If the pupil does not attend the visit or trip the school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code P: Participating in a sporting activity

The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity. The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded. A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered;
- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code 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 school as part of the pupil's education. The work experience must take place during the session for which it is recorded. A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority
- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and
- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code B: Attending any other approved educational activity

The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded. A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority
- the activity is of an educational nature;

- the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity;
- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code D: Dual registered at another school

The law allows a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil is absent with leave to attend the other school at which they are registered. 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. Code D may only be used by either school for a session where the pupil is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance to avoid double counting.

Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.

Merchant Taylors' can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours in the following circumstances:

- Where the local authority have granted a licence for the pupil to take part in a performance regulated by section 37(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963.
- Where a pupil does not need a licence for such a performance because an exception applies under section 37(3) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- Where a Justice of the Peace has given the pupil a licence to go abroad for a performance or other regulated purpose under section 25(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933.

DfE guidance requires Schools should be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence issued by a local authority or a BOPA; as long as the school remains

satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a pupil's education. Where a local authority licence specifies the dates that a pupil is to be away from school to perform, the school should record the absence for those days as if a leave of absence had been applied for and granted. Where the terms of the local authority licence do not specify dates, however, or where a BOPA or other exemption or licence from a Justice of the Peace applies, it is at the discretion of the school to grant leave of absence. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment

Merchant Taylors' encourages parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, they should get the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

Merchant Taylors' can grant leave of absence 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 employment or admission to another educational institution. This interview must take place during the session for which it is recorded. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination

Merchant Taylors' can grant leave of absence for a pupil to study for a public examination and the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence). Study leave should not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete and should be used sparingly. If schools do decide to grant study leave, provision must still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise. Schools must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave that has been granted for the purpose of studying for a public examination. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school

Merchant Taylors' uses this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to attend. Where the pupil is absent when timetabled to attend the school, the absence must be recorded using the appropriate absence code not code X. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

All schools are able to grant a leave of absence at their discretion. A leave of absence must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Schools can only grant such a leave of absence where an application is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence). Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. Schools must still use this code to record where a pupil is absent with leave for a reason that is not covered by another leave of absence code. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code R: Religious observance

The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves). As a general rule, 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' is a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. If in doubt, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness.

Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences. Schools should only request reasonable medical evidence in cases where they need clarification to accurately record absence in the attendance register – i.e. making a decision that code I is the absence code that accurately describes the reason the pupil is not in school for the session in question. In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend school will be that evidence and can be accepted without question or concern. Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Where medical evidence is deemed necessary, school should not be rigid about the form of evidence requested and should speak to the family about what evidence is available. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made.

The pupil is suspended from school or permanently excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register, and no alternative provision has been made for the pupil to continue their education. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available

The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available. Walking distance in relation to a child under the age of 8, means 2 miles, and for a child of 8 or above, means 3 miles. In each case measured by the nearest available route. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Code 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. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance

Absent - unauthorised absence Code 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. A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence

Code N: Reason for absence not yet established

Schools 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. Where

absence is recorded as code N (reason not yet established) in the attendance register, 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 therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, schools must amend the pupil's record to Code O. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code 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. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session. Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Procedure to identify and respond to pupils who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions

A pupil who goes missing during the day – See *Missing Pupil Procedure*.

Senior Master
September 2024