



**MONTPELIER
HIGH SCHOOL**

Attendance and Punctuality

2021 - 2022

A Guide for Parents/Carers

Missing school seriously affects life opportunities

Attendance & Absence

All students should be targeting to achieve 100% attendance. Good school attendance and punctuality to lessons gives your child the opportunity of success and helps develop skills for life. Students should attend school every day unless there is an unavoidable cause such as illness.

Each year there are 180 days when students are expected to attend Montpelier High School on time and ready to learn. We will not authorise absence for shopping trips, birthday treats, non-urgent medical and routine dental appointments and other events, which should never fall within this critical learning time.

It is important to remember that it is up to the school to authorise a student's absence from school in all situations. A letter or telephone call from a parent/carer does not in itself authorise the absence. Attendance will be monitored on a weekly basis by the Attendance Officer and tutor. A planned absence will only be authorised if a fully completed absence request form has been received and authorised by the school.

Missing school seriously affects life opportunities.

Authorisation of all leave of absence requests will be based on the student's attendance to date, whether the absence will be detrimental to their education and whether the reason for the leave of absence is deemed by the School to benefit the student.

Montpelier High School appreciates that students are unwell from time to time and there can be exceptional circumstances for absences but asks that parents/carers think carefully about keeping their child out of school. There is a strong connection between attendance and achievement at school. Absence is proven to have a significantly negative impact upon a child's educational attainment and future opportunities in life.

A student who misses a day of school per week throughout Years 7 to 11 misses an equivalent of nearly one year of their learning time in school.

Attendance over one academic year if a student had:

98% attendance = fewer than 4 days absent from school

90% attendance = 4 weeks absent from school

80% attendance = 7½ weeks absent from school (equivalent to one day per week absence for the whole year).

ABSENCES

Leave of Absence

The procedure for requesting Leave of Absence is as follows:

1. A Leave of Absence form is available from Reception or from the school website. This form must be completed by a parent/carer and returned to the Attendance Officer.
2. This form plus a Leave of Absence Response Form will then be forwarded to the Assistant Principal (or delegated staff member) who will liaise with the Head of House and a decision will be made regarding authorisation.
3. The Attendance Officer will return the Leave of Absence Response Form with a final decision.
4. Leave of Absence requests will not be approved retrospectively.

A Leave of Absence request will need to be made for such events as music/dance exams, external GCSE exams. Schools are not allowed to grant absences for holidays.

Visits to consulates for passport/visa renewals should be made for during the school holidays and will not be authorised.

Absence for Illness

The procedure for advising the school of an absence due to illness:

1. Parents/carers are asked to telephone the Student Absence telephone line on **0117 942 4328 (option 1)** or by email (currently attendance@colstonsgirls.org but to change to Montpelier High School email address) as early as possible on the first day of illness, **but no later than 8.30 am**. They must clearly state the student's full name, year group and house, details of illness (rather than "unwell") and expected date of return.

It is useful for the school to be aware of specific illnesses to monitor trends within the school. We will not accept a telephone call or email from a student.

2. If the student continues to be ill then parents/carers are requested to call again every day of the absence to update the school giving a new expected date of return. If the illness persists for longer than one week, then evidence that the student has been taken to see a doctor will be required.

0117 942 4328
option 1



The school will not authorise absence for repeated recurrence of the same illness without valid evidence.

Medical/Dental Appointments

Only emergency medical appointments and unavoidable medical appointments, such as orthodontic or hospital visits, will be authorised and supporting official documentation (i.e. appointment card, copy of email confirmation) will need to be provided in advance of the appointment. This information will be recorded in the register so that your child's teachers are aware that the student may need to leave the classroom part way through a lesson. Students will not be permitted to leave the school site unless we have a record of this notification. For their own safety, students will not be able to leave the school premises on their own to travel to an appointment and must be collected by a parent/carer, unless there is explicit permission from the parent/carer.

Parents/carers may wish to bear in mind that students receive two session marks per day, at 8.35 am and 1.45 pm, and being absent due to medical appointments at these points in the day will affect your child's overall attendance figure.

All routine medical and dental appointments must be made outside of school hours. These appointments, and those not pre-notified to the school, will be recorded in the register as an unauthorised absence.

If an urgent medical appointment is required and your child will miss the first lesson of the school day, parents/carers should leave a message on the Student Absence telephone line (0117 942 4328, option 1) with an indication of when the student is expected to arrive at school. The student should hand in evidence of the urgent medical appointment when signing in at Student Reception on arrival.

Request for absence during term time

Parents/carers do not have the right to take their children out of school for family holidays and are strongly advised to avoid this.

If parents/carers are considering this, they must seek approval from the Assistant Principal by completing a Leave of Absence request form, in advance. It is not possible to seek authorisation retrospectively.

The Assistant Principal will judge each request on a case by case basis.

Should parents/carers wish to appeal they should contact the Principal, who will review and determine if the request is reasonable.

The following, according to Department of Education guidance, could be considered reasonable justification for the use of the Principal's discretion:

- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- Significant family events or circumstances – these will be considered on an individual basis. However, the following would **not** be considered reasonable:
 - Relatives coming to visit
 - Cheaper holidays in England and abroad
 - Family day trips
 - Visiting family/friends who have different half terms or holidays.

It is for the Principal to determine if a request to take a child out of school on a family holiday is reasonable.

Absence for Religious Observance

Requests for leave of absence for days of religious observance should be made in writing (procedure as above). Where a leave of absence has not been authorised in advance, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Release Home

If a student is taken ill or injured whilst in school, the School First Aider will obtain permission from the student's Head of House and arrange to contact parents/carers to organise collection.

Special circumstances

PE/Games: A letter from the parent/carer is required to exempt a student from games or physical education. Exemption from games or physical education, other than for short breaks, will be granted only on receipt of a medical certificate.

Religious Studies/Services and PSHE: Parents/carers should contact the Principal in writing if there is good reason to ask for exemption from religious education or services, or other activities of the school.

Traditional School Celebration Days

School events such as Prize Day, Commemoration Day, Charter Day, the Carol Service and the Summer Fair are part of the school tradition and attendance is compulsory.

Parents/carers have committed that their child will attend such events when joining the school.

Students are also expected to attend school events, such as Sports Day.

Any absence will be recorded as unauthorised and may count towards any penalty notice issued.

Unauthorised Absences

If a student's absence is not verified by 8.35 am then it will be deemed as unauthorised and the code changed in the register. A message will be sent out by Schoolcomms to request that you contact the school immediately. **Unauthorised absences will remain on the student's record.**

It is important that parents/carers understand their responsibilities to ensure their child attends school, and the consequences of their child having unauthorised absence from school.

Penalty Notices

Parents/carers commit an offence if a student reaches 8 sessions of unauthorised absences (4 school days). Montpelier High School will request a Penalty Charge Notice is issued.

The charge is £60 per parent/carer, per student. However, parents/carers should be aware that this amount increases if unpaid. If the local authority is successful in proceeding to court regarding unpaid fines, parents/carers can face a criminal record and fines of over £500 per parent/carer per student.

Penalty Charges Notices will also be requested for students who persistently arrive after registers have been closed at 9.05 am and recorded with a 'late' mark.

Punctuality

We expect students to have a punctuality record of 100%.

The school day begins at **8.20 am, when all students should aim to arrive. Students arriving after 8.35 am will be asked to sign in at Student Reception. The first session register is taken at 8.35 am and the second at 1.45 pm.** The school day ends at 3.45 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays, 3.15 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 2.45 pm on Fridays. This is subject to change and will be confirmed to parents/carers.

The first lesson starts promptly at 8.35 am. Students are expected to be punctual at the start of each day and for every lesson and other time-tabled activities. Lateness hinders the education of students and wastes the time of others. Please ask them to try to think ahead and show consideration for others.

Minutes late per day during the school year	Days' worth of teaching lost in a year
5 Minutes	3.4 Days
10 Minutes	6.9 Days
15 Minutes	10.3 Days
20 Minutes	13.8 Days
30 Minutes	20.7 Days

Frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning lost and can seriously disadvantage your child. Please help your child to be punctual.

Parents/carers are asked to telephone the Student Absence telephone line (0117 942 4328, option 1 or e-mail attendance@colstonsgirls.org as early as possible on the first day of illness, **but no later than 8.30 am.**

Registers close at 9.05 am. If your child arrives after this time, the lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence until it has been explained by a parent/carer, and an automatic detention with the Assistant Principal will be issued.

If due to exceptional circumstances your child arrives after the start of the school day, they must sign in at Student Reception giving the reason for being late.

Students arriving at school between 8.35 am and 8.45 am, without a valid reason provided by a parent/carer, will be given an automatic Level 2 detention of 15 minutes. Level 2 detentions are currently held on a Monday at the end of the school day, but it is the intention for these to be held daily.

Students arriving between 8.45 am and 9.05 am, without a valid reason provided by a parent/carer, will be issued with a 30 minutes detention. Parents/carers will be advised of the date and time of this detention via Class Charts.

Students arriving after 9.05 am, without a valid reason provided by a parent/carer, will be issued with a 60 minutes detention. Parents/carers will be advised of the date of time of this detention via Class Charts.

Delayed travel arrangements will not be accepted as a valid reason. Detentions will override any after school activity students may be involved in.