

Tynecastle High School Guide for Parents / Carers: Frequently Asked Questions

Appointments, Absences and the Tynecastle High School Absence Line

What do we do if...

...my child is absent.

Please contact the school using our absence line, or by email on the first day of their absence to let us know. After that, please update us every day, unless you have stated when your child will return to school. If you do not inform the school, a text will be sent to the main contact number you have given to the school to inform you that your child is absent from school.

The school's telephone number is 0131 337 3488
The school's email address is admin@tynecastle.edin.sch.uk
The Absence Line number is 0131 337 0336

Education Authority Policy on Absence

Good attendance and punctuality are vital. Parents / carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly. In cases of unsatisfactory attendance, Student Support Staff will liaise with the school's Education Welfare Officer to visit the student's home, and discuss relevant issues with the parents / carers. If such unsatisfactory attendance persists, Student Support Staff, following discussions with the Education Welfare Officer and other agencies, will decide whether the case should be referred to the local Area Attendance Advisory Group. This group suggests recommendations to the Director of Education on the statutory responsibilities of the Authority, with regard to defaulting parents / carers.

What do I do if...

...my child has an appointment during the school day?

Please give your child the appointment card or a note and remind him / her to get a permission slip from the School Support Assistants' desk in the social area.

...my child is going on holiday during term time?

Holidays should not be taken in term time. Parents / carers are obliged to write to the Headteacher to provide notification of the dates and the reason why their child will be out of school. Parents / carers will receive notification from the school if permission has, or has not been granted.

... I wish to pass an urgent message to my child?

Please contact the school office with your child's name, class and a brief message. Please allow plenty of time for the message to reach your child. Mobile phones should not be used to contact students directly during class time.

...my address or telephone number or that of my emergency contact changes?

Please let the school office know as soon as possible giving your new details. It is particularly important that we have current contact numbers, whether mobile telephone or land-line.

...what would happen if there was an emergency?

If the school were to be closed in an emergency, every effort will be made to care for junior students who have no adult at home to receive them. If possible, all students will be given a letter to bring home, explaining the reason for closure and detailing any further action.

Uniform

Why is school uniform important?

At Tynecastle, we feel very proud of our smart school uniform. The vast majority of our students wear all items of our uniform every day, and parents / carers, students and staff are in favour of having school uniform because:

- it promotes a good image of our students
- it reinforces our school identity
- it helps improve school security

School uniform is:

- White shirt or blouse
- Formal black trousers or skirt (not joggers, leggings, tracksuit bottoms or any other fashion variety)
- School tie
- A plain black jumper or cardigan
- Plain black shoes with black laces
- Schoolbag with all necessary equipment
- Skirt lengths should be respectable

Please note:

- Outdoor garments must be removed in classrooms
- Belts must be plain black. Fashion belts are not allowed
- No hats are allowed to be worn inside school
- Any jewellery must be minimal and in line with our Health and Safety policy

Students who are not wearing uniform will be sent by school staff to the Discipline for Learning Officer. Often in these circumstances, a 'one-off' letter to parents / carers is appropriate. If a student repeatedly arrives at school not in uniform, parents / carers are contacted directly and asked for support for our uniform policy. Occasionally, parental permission is sought for a child to go home to change into appropriate clothing. The school will always assist in cases of genuine hardship.

Lunch and Free School Meals

What do I do if...

...my child wants to have a school lunch?

S1 students are not permitted to leave the school premises at break or lunchtimes. Students can buy food from the school canteen using money, their cashless catering One Cards, or, they can bring a packed lunch. Several water fountains are available to use in school.

...my child is entitled to free school meals or other financial help?

We as a school are very committed to ensuring that all our students and their families receive all the support to which they are entitled. If your child is entitled to free school meals, you need to complete a new form every year, and if possible, by July. A copy of the form is in this pack. Please be aware that if you are entitled to free school meals, you may be eligible to receive a £100 clothing grant. We are also able to support you with completing the form for the council and making this as easy as possible for you. Please contact Mrs Yvonne McGregor, Pupil Support Officer here at school for more information. Your child's entitlement will be put onto their One Card, which can be used at break and / or lunchtime.

Student Support / Support for Learning

What do I do if...

I have a question or a concern about my child?

If you have any concerns about your child, or your family is experiencing upset or upheaval that may affect your child in school, please contact your child's Student Support teacher either by email or by telephone. A member of the Student Support team is allocated to each tutor group. Student Support teachers provide pastoral support and teach Personal and Social Education (PSE) to students. Personal and Social Education is timetabled for each year group and covers a vast range of emotional, social and health-related topics.

...my child needs additional help with their learning?

Tynecastle High School has an excellent Support for Learning team which is part of the welcoming Student Support wing. Students who need additional support for learning will become familiar with this department. Mrs Cheung is the Curricular Leader for Support for Learning (SfL) and you should contact her in the first instance if you have a query or a concern.

Communication with the school

How will the school communicate with me about my child's progress?

Here are key events for S1 communication over the next year:

- End of August 2020 – date TBC: S1 parents End of Transition meeting
- Regular Tracking and Monitoring: 5 reports throughout the year
- October 2020 - date TBC: S1 parents' / carers' evening
- Merits / demerits summary: 5 reports throughout the year

During the year, there are a number of ways in which we will communicate with you about the life of the school:

- Website: www.tynecastle.edin.sch.uk
- Email and text communication- Please ensure you have shared your email address, mobile and land line number with the school.
- Maildrops – throughout the year by post / through your child
- Newsletters

The Tynecastle website is the main point of information sharing for all age groups. News, events and achievements are all posted here, along with copies of general correspondences, information on dates and events.

How can I get involved with Tynecastle High School?

There are several ways of parental involvement opportunities available at the school, to suit parent / carer interests, which enable parents to keep in touch with High School life. Helping with school shows, volunteering in the school or becoming a member of the Tynecastle Parent Council are amongst those opportunities. If you are interested in joining our Parent Council, please contact the Chair of the Parent Council, via the school office at admin@tynecastle.edin.sch.uk