



## Pupil Attendance Policy

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### Rationale

Our Mission is to educate the young people entrusted to our care in a Catholic, Christian way that ensures each one is valued and cared for and achieves the best of which he or she is capable.

**The highest possible level of attendance is one of the most essential prerequisites for the successful growth of every child and of the school. Ensuring it occurs for every child is one of our principal priorities.** The health and successful development of the school community also depends on all pupils' commitment to playing a full, constructive part and contributing to school life and work ethic. This can only be achieved with their fullest possible attendance. We aim to ensure each child is enabled to achieve and exceed his or her expected potential within and beyond the curriculum and so enabled to benefit from the highest possible quality teaching and learning.

### Purposes

The purposes of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy are:

1. To ensure all members of the school community; pupils, parents/guardians/carers and staff, are fully aware of the importance of full attendance for every child in maintaining at least 98% attendance for the full academic year.
2. To ensure all members of the immediate school community are fully aware all absences, authorised or otherwise, should be kept to an absolute minimum.
3. To minimise the disruptive effects of broken attendance for all involved – the absent pupil, those pupils whose continuity of learning is disrupted when absentees return, the staff responsible for maintaining the progress of individual pupils and the whole classes of which they are members.

4. To highlight the importance of punctuality both to registration sessions, and lessons, in order to maintain an orderly start to form and lessons and minimise the disruption caused to teaching and learning.
5. To provide pupils and staff with guidance on how to ensure highest levels of attendance.
6. To provide all school staff with the basis of clear procedures for promoting high attendance and responding appropriately and proportionately when problems arise.
7. To clarify our high expectations with partners in our work – pupils and parents/carers;
8. To maintain effective partnerships with other service providers and external agencies.

## **Guidelines**

1. The Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) is responsible for the operation of the Attendance strategy and its component systems.
2. The Children and Family Support Lead/Attendance Manager/Pastoral Assistants are responsible for liaising with outside agencies/the school nursing team, and for monitoring and responding to pupils whose attendance causes concern as per the schools' attendance framework.
3. All pupils and parents need to be made aware (by staff, as appropriate) of the value of full attendance and punctuality.
4. Good and improving attendance will be identified, celebrated and rewarded as a positive contribution to the progress of pupils and the school community. Attendance rewards are an integral part of the Rewards System.
5. All pupils are individuals and have different attitudes towards school. They have different reasons for wanting or needing to come to school. Others have powerful reasons for not wanting to attend. It is our responsibility to provide the greatest motivation for attendance, by meeting their different, disparate needs. It is also our responsibility to fully investigate when a pupil does not want to attend.
6. It is essential for all Form Tutors to actively pursue the goal of full attendance and punctuality of their Form groups, and apply sanctions where necessary.
7. Equally, it is essential for all subject specialists actively pursue the goal of full attendance and punctuality for their teaching groups.
8. To support the efficient recording of attendance and punctuality records, and the fast and efficient generation of the necessary reports and analyses, all school attendance data is maintained on the school's administration network via Class Charts.
9. The Attendance Register is a legal document; it is a legal requirement it is maintained accurately. We are required to define at any time of the day, if a child is present or absent.
10. The Attendance Register for each Form group must be completed at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session in the designated registration period. The school day starts at 8.45am with all children either attending Form or Assembly. Within this time a formal registration certificate is taken and recorded on Class Chart. It is from here Form Tutors and Pastoral Assistants/Managers identify absentees. If we have cause for concern you will receive a call or text to ask the whereabouts of your child.
11. If a child is late to school, it will be recorded on their registration certificate. If punctuality becomes a problem, a Punctuality Intervention Framework is followed, detentions are

issued and meetings conducted. Form Period starts at 8.45am, if a pupil arrives after 8.50am they will be given a late mark and will need to sign in at the main office giving reason for their lateness. The official school register closes at 9.30am; any pupils late after this time will be classed as unauthorised for that period. 10 unauthorised lates to school could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by Lancashire County Council.

12. If you know that your child for a specific reason is going to be late please ensure school is contacted by 8.30am to avoid a late gate detention being issued.
13. All pupils late to school, without a valid reason communicated before 8.30am to the school office will receive a 30 minute: 'Late Gate' detention at lunchtime of the same day. All pupils and parents are aware of this, so no detention letter will be sent home.
14. All absence is a hindrance to learning and significant issues will be carefully and sensitively investigated and support put in place where appropriate.
15. Home Visits will be completed to all pupils who have 3 days consecutive absence, or to pupils displaying irregular patterns of absence.
16. From September 2013 the law was changed regarding leave of absence and in accordance with that change, the Governors have agreed no leave of absence will be authorised, in exceptional circumstances. All applications for leave must be made, in advance, by the parent of residence using the 'Request for leave of absence' form from the school office or website. The forms must then be sent into school and presented to Mrs G Reader who will process the application, or emailed in to [g.reader@lsmchs.com](mailto:g.reader@lsmchs.com). Requests will only be authorised if the circumstances surrounding the request are considered to be exceptional and your child's attendance is at least 98%. Additionally, any medical appointments must be evidenced: appointment email/text/letter copied and forwarded to school or shown at school to avoid the absence being unauthorised.
17. A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for whatever reason. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral services and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.
18. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor, use of Pastoral Support Plans, Individual incentive programmes, parenting contracts and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Local Authority School Attendance Team.
19. In some cases, Parents/carers will be liable for Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) for reasons which can include truancy, unauthorised leave of absence in term time, unwarranted delayed return from an extended holiday (without school's agreement) or persistent late arrival after the register has closed. Changes in legal Interventions took place from September 2013 and focussed on the Government's statement of 'tackling the causes of absenteeism', therefore stating a FPN can be applied for when a pupil has 10 unauthorised absences in a term or 14 over two consecutive terms. These incur a charge of £120 per pupil, per parent, to be paid within a 28-day period and are issued by Lancashire County Council. School will try and use these as a last resort and will maintain the view that we

should try to work together with parents/carers where possible to resolve any attendance issues.

20. Attendance Framework and milestones are set out in the table below: -

Level	Action	Lead Staff
98% +	Positive rewards and data given	Form Tutor/Celebration Assemblies
97.9 - 95%	Targets set, Parents informed	Pastoral Assistant
94.9 - 93%	Weekly mentoring/ meetings	Pastoral Leader
92.9 – 90%	Attendance Panels / Home visits	Attendance Manager – D Burns
89% -	Collation of all evidence/external support	D. Burns/G Reader

## Conclusion

It is essential for all members of staff to support this crucially important policy and its procedures, fully and consistently. Any queries should be directed to the Assistant Head teacher (Pastoral) or the Head teacher as soon as possible.

## PROCEDURES

1. Any pupil who is not present when the register is taken must sign in at the office and be marked **late**; they will be given a printed sign in ticket. This can then be given to the teacher of the lesson they are late to. It is then recorded on the register and on class charts as a detention.
2. Registration sessions are 8.50am and 12.20pm
3. Explanation of Late symbols
  - 'L' indicates that a pupil, though not present when the register was called, arrived before the register was closed, **or** arrived after the register was closed but with a good reason;
  - 'U' indicates that a pupil arrived in school after the register closed, but without good reason. This counts as unauthorised absence.
4. The register should be called at the **beginning** of the session and any pupil not present must be marked absent and a missing pupil email sent unless they have a pre-recorded mark.
5. Form Tutors are requested to keep their registers until 9.00am and then return them to the school office.
6. The morning register session officially closes at 8.50am, any pupil arriving after this time must follow the procedure in 1. The pupil will be marked absent in the register for that session, although the 'Late Book' **must** be completed, in case of a fire drill. If no reason for absence is forthcoming by note/phone then the symbol 'N' should be used, until a

reason has been supplied. If after 10 days, no reason has been supplied, the session will be unauthorised.

### **How are lates dealt with?**

All staff should deal with pupils in the most appropriate way at the time, but to achieve consistency throughout school the following punctuality framework should apply.

1.
  - 1a If a pupil arrives **late**, he/she is given a **Late Gate detention**, this takes place for 30 minutes on the same day and a merit lost. 3 lates (in any given period) will mean a pupil enters stage 1 of the punctuality framework.
  - 1b Late after 9.30am, with no explanation, constitutes truancy and sanctions will be issued in accordance.
2. If any pupil fails to attend Late Gate detention, they will be given the opportunity to attend the following day. Failure to attend a second time will mean a 45minute Pastoral detention on Thursday of the same week (where possible), this will be entered on Class Charts and further merits lost.
3. If this action proves to be unsuccessful then further referral should be made to the appropriate **Pastoral Leader, Attendance Manager** or **Assistant Headteacher**.

**Punctuality Framework:** Late to school = Late Gate (LG)

<b><u>Stages</u></b>	<b><u>Implications of punctuality</u></b>
1. Pastoral Assistant – 3 lates	LG for each late & PA to log on SIMS
2. Pastoral Assistant – 6 lates	LG for each late, PA to meet with pupil & log on SIMS
3. Pastoral Leader – 10 lates	LG for each late, PL to meet with pupil, issue Pastoral detention, contact parents & log on SIMS
4. Attendance Manager – 15 lates	LG for each late, DBu to meet with parents & pupil in school, issue SLT & log on SIMS
5. Punctuality Panel - 20+ lates	LG for each late, DBu to arrange panel with pupil & parent to meet GRe, DBu, HB & HG & log on SIMS

### **Contact with parents:**

1. Parents should be aware of problems at an early stage through Class Charts.
2. Pastoral Assistant/Leader should inform parents of recurrent problems with punctuality/attendance at the earliest appropriate stage.

**All members of staff should deal consistently with all instances of lateness**

### **What this policy means for you as a member of staff**

- If you are **Senior Teacher** you must ensure there are **good systems** for monitoring attendance and that these are **communicated effectively** and used consistently
- If you are a **Pastoral Leader** you must ensure that all absences are accounted for. Pastoral Leaders have a role in **identifying why children are absent** and then helping the children overcome any barriers. Pastoral Leaders **interpret patterns**, communicate this to stakeholders and **monitor changes**.
- If you are a **Form Teacher** you have a **statutory duty** to take a register and process the information using the adopted school system. **You are in the best position** to see **changes in the behaviour** of children which may impact on attendance. Reasons for non-attendance are wide and varied from poor routines at home to extreme cases such as gender ambivalence which can cause stress for youngsters. Form Teachers have the first role in communicating expectations to pupils.
- All teachers should **take a register each lesson**. The school system must be used. If a child is absent, but known to be in school, it is expected that an **alert (e.g. using email) is sent out**. Teachers should monitor attendance at their lesson and **look for any patterns of absence**. Sometimes such patterns become pronounced in KS4.