ST. PETER'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Date effective from	December 2022
Date of next review	December 2023
Review period	1 Year
Author	Mr N Ashton

Signed: **Chairperson**

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Introduction

1. It is the aim of St Peter's Catholic High School to support every pupil to have maximum attendance, this means that we want every student in the school to aim for a minimum target of 97% attendance. To realise this aim, we will work in partnership with parents and outside agencies to offer pupils academic and pastoral support.

2. The policy should be implemented alongside the Department for Education guidance document 'Working together to improve school attendance' and the School Behaviour Policy.

Aims

3. We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:
   - Promoting excellent attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
   - Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
   - Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Definitions

4. 'Session' is a term related to the recording of absence data - every school day must have two 'sessions' (morning and afternoon).

5. 'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

6. 'Unauthorised absence' is where the school is not satisfied with the reasons given for an absence.

Legal Duty

7. This policy meets the requirements of the Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:
   - Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
   - Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
   - Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
   - The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
   - The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

School commitment

8. Everyone in school is committed to promoting good attendance and punctuality.
9. St Peter's will support pupils and parents to achieve good attendance and punctuality, working closely with parents where absence is a cause for concern.
10. St Peter's strives for 100% attendance for all pupils. **The whole school attendance target is 97** %. If a pupil achieves at least 97% attendance in one whole school year, they will have missed 5 days from school.

Responsibilities

11. The **Governing Body** will:
    - Be responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.
    - Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

12. The **Senior Leadership Team:**

    The Headteacher has responsibility for ensuring there is named member of the senior leadership team overseeing the management of attendance.

The headteacher delegates the responsibility of whole school attendance to Mr Ashton

Mr Ashton will**:**

- Ensure the school ethos promotes and celebrates good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure the policy is followed by all staff (including non-teaching staff)
- Ensure the school adheres to KCSIE including CME/EHE and mid-year admissions.
- Monitor data on attendance via weekly reports.
- Determine, in collaboration with Mr McGlown whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the School's official request form, or absences for which no request was made/approved.
- Along with the Headteacher, authorise any Education Penalty Notices in relation to attendance.
- Contribute to the school improvement plan, with a focus on attendance and punctuality improvement.
- Provide the Governing Body with half-termly data on attendance and punctuality, including data about pupils who are persistent and severely absentees and review practice in relation to attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure appropriate levels of support are offered and impact of interventions is measured.
- Ensure safeguarding procedures are followed consistently and there is appropriate communication with external agencies where necessary.
- Manage the school Early Help provision, ensuring adequate staff supervision and CPD
- Monitor attendance data across the school and at an individual student level
- Support the pastoral team in line with the school attendance strategy
- Provide an Annual Report on attendance and punctuality to the Governing Body.

13. The **Heads of Year** will:

- Monitor attendance on daily, weekly, half-termly, termly, and annual basis, contacting parents of pupils who have been identified as at-risk, to challenge absences and encourage early return to school.

- Have attendance meeting with Mr Ashton and Gill Power to identify concerns and formulate action plans

- Contact parents of students whose attendance is causing concern
- Ensure data on attendance and punctuality is passed onto form tutors
- Where appropriate, visit the home and/or make any appropriate referrals to address barriers of attendance.
- Issue appropriate sanctions to pupils for whom attendance and punctuality is a cause for concern.
- Implement, monitor, and review attendance action plans

14. The **Local Authority Lead Attendance Officer** will:
- Attend Termly Targeted Support Meetings.
- The Attendance Service point of contact for the school and the school's attendance leads will identify, discuss, and agree joint targeted actions for pupils who are persistently or severely absent and those at risk of becoming so.

15. **Form Tutors** will:
- Provide regular advice, encouragement, challenge and support to the registration group as a whole and individually to pupils about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality using the data provided by the Head of Year.
- Ensure that the attendance register is taken at the start of the form period.
- Ensure pupils' absence notes or verbal messages related to attendance and punctuality are recorded.
- Promote excellent attendance and punctuality to school and ensure appropriate follow up to persistent absence or lateness.
- Liaise with parents to identify any barriers preventing students attending school.
- Deliver form time attendance education
- Implement individual intervention, if appropriate

16. The **Attendance administrator** will:
- Monitor registration on a daily basis.
- Be the first point of contact for parents and relevant school staff regarding pupil absence and appointment
- Communicate with parents of absent students via the truancy alert on a daily basis
- Produce a daily absence list.
- Be the first point of contact for students with attendance/illness issues and parents or carers with attendance queries
- Complete any attendance admin tasks
- Record and monitor student attendance data to ensure accuracy.

17. **Parents** will:
- Be aware that it is an offence for their child to be absent from school without a valid reason.
- Be aware that only the school can determine if an absence from school is 'authorised'.
- Ensure their child arrives at school on time, dressed in full uniform and ready and equipped

to learn.

- Inform the School if their child is unable to attend, including the reason for absence and the expected date of return. This phone call must take place each morning of absence before 8am.
- Ensure that all appointments, where possible, are arranged after school.
- Avoid arranging holidays/leave during term time except in exceptional circumstances.
- Ensure that all requests for leave during term time are made by completing the 'Leave of Absence During Term Time Request Form', where possible at least 1 month in advance.
- Be aware that for unauthorised absences, the Headteacher reserves the right to apply to the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice (fine) or remove a child from the roll of the school.
- Promote the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality to their child
- Ensure their child has the means to travel safely to school and arrive on time and in form, by 9:00am
- Supply medical evidence if their child is absent for more than 3 days (NB: If medical evidence is not supplied beyond 3 days, the absence will be deemed unauthorised)
- Work in partnership with the school to overcome barriers to school attendance. This may involve a multiagency approach
- Supply at least two accurate and up to date named contacts for school liaison

18. **Pupils** will:
- Aim to achieve 100% attendance and punctuality by arriving to school on time every day (in form by 9:00am).
- Come to school well prepared and with the right attitude; to enjoy and achieve.
- Be punctual to all lessons.
- Where necessary, work with external agencies who will help them to improve their attendance

Recording attendance

19. The school will keep an attendance register on their MIS, and place all students onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the school day and for each lesson. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

In addition, all teaching staff must check that the pupils timetabled to be in their lessons are present for each of the lessons.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students must arrive in school and be in form for 9:00am on each school day.

20. Registers will be marked using the Department for Education Attendance and Absence Codes (see appendix 3).

Absences

21. Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:00am or as soon as practically possible.

Parents and carers should notify the school of all unplanned absences by calling 01942747693 or using the reporting system on EduLink.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

At times, school may need to contact home to clarify the reasons for absence. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, we may ask the student's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

22. Planned absence

Parents and carers aim to schedule medical and dental appointments beyond the school day to minimise lost learning time.

If this is unavoidable, attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provide medical evidence of the appointment. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents and carers should notify the school of all unplanned absences by calling 01942747693 or using the reporting system on EduLink. Parents must state the full name and year group of their child and the reason for planned absence.

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

23. Lateness and punctuality

A student who is not in form at 9:00am is classed as late

- This is monitored by form tutors and heads of year.

Students who are persistently late will be issued with an appropriate sanction in accordance with our lates procedure (see appendix 2) and parents will be notified and expected to support the school.

24. Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason. In addition to this, the school will:

- Send an automated text each morning to inform parents of unexpected absences
- Phone any parents who do not respond to this text
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding action is taken where necessary. This may include measures such as home visits and/or liaising with safeguarding partners
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

25. Reporting to parents and carers

Parents and carers have live information about the child's attendance on EduLink.

In addition to this, Parents and carers will also be contacted if:

- A pattern of absence is identified

- Student attendance is declining and becoming a concern

- Student punctuality is declining and becoming a concern

- A student has been absent without an appropriate reason

- An attendance issue needs further intervention from the local authority and/or an external agency

Attendance and absence data

26. The tables below equate percentage attendance to time missed from school.

Table 1: Attendance over one whole school year for each pupil

Attendance	Missed Days
100%	0
98%	Less than 4 days / 8 sessions
97%	Less than 5 days / 10 sessions (school target)
95%	Less than 10 days / 20 sessions
90%	20 days / 40 sessions
85%	27 ½ days / 55 sessions
80%	37 ½ days / 75 sessions

Table 2: Attendance over 5 years for each pupil

Attendance	Missed Weeks
85-90%	19 weeks = ½ year absence from school

80%	**38 weeks = 1 full year absence from school**

Authorised and unauthorised absence

27. Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion. If a parent or carer intends to request an authorised leave of absence, they should do so in writing, in advance and addressed to the Headteacher.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and unavoidable medical/dental appointments (see point 24 for more detail)

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school and other outside agencies.

28. **Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is defined as:

- Any student who has 3 days absence or 6 sessions in a 30 day period

- Any student who has 19 days absence or 38 sessions in an academic school year

- Any student who has below 90% attendance

Severe absence is defined as;

- A pupil becomes a severe absentee if he/she has missed 50% or more of school.

School will speak with parents/carers to discuss the situation, and referrals may be made to wider services for support. In some cases, partnership working will result in a range of strategies being deployed to improve attendance; including being heard at Targeted Support meetings, consideration of multi-disciplinary support for families, referrals to School Health where relevant and legal intervention as a last resort.

Working in partnership with students, parents/carers, and external agencies, we aim for all students to have excellent attendance and avoid persistent or severe absence.

To do this, a range of measures and interventions will be considered. These include:

- Universal offer of attendance education, advice guidance and support

- The delivery of clear messages about expectations, routines and consequences to new and existing students and families through admission/transition events and our regular channels of communication

- Rewards for attendance and punctuality and sanctions for absence and lateness

- Regular whole school data monitoring to identify reasons for absence, patterns, attendance of particular groups and the impact of interventions
- Robust arrangements to identify, report and support children missing education (CME)
- Effective support for children with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and special educational needs (SEND)

Where attendance concerns have been identified and/or a student is at risk of persistent or severe absence, escalation procedures will be initiated. These may include:
- Written communication with parents and carers
- Attendance review meetings with students and parents
- Attendance action plans and/or contracts
- Attendance panel meetings with senior leaders and the governing board
- Support under the Early Help Framework where appropriate
- Liaison with external agencies, including the local authority attendance teams, alternative provisions and/or safeguarding partners
- Use of Education Penalty Notices

The most vital part of encouraging good attendance is to ensure that school is a

place where:
- children want to come;
- children are treated with respect and feel valued;
- needs are recognised and addressed;
- all children can experience success within an enriched, relevant, and diverse curriculum.

As a school we are committed to promoting good attendance in order to give our pupils the best start.

29. **Legal sanctions**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.
If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.
Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.
The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may consider:
- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute a prosecution against the parent.

Children missing in education (CME)

30. **Responsibilities for Children Missing from Education (CME)**:

The school will enter students on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the setting has agreed, or been notified, that the student will attend. If a student fails to attend on the agreed

or notified date, the education setting should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity

The school will monitor students' attendance through their daily register. We agree to inform local authorities of the details of students who fail to attend regularly or have missed ten school days or more without permission. We will monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance

The school must also arrange full-time education for excluded students from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. This information can be found in the *Exclusion from maintained schools, academies, and student referral units in England* statutory guidance. As part of our duty, we will investigate any unexplained absences. Further information about schools' safeguarding responsibilities can be found in the KCSIE.

The school will make reasonable enquiries for children missing in education. The term 'reasonable enquiries' grants schools and local authorities a degree of flexibility in decision-making, particularly as the steps that need to be taken in each case will vary. The term 'reasonable' also makes clear that there is a limit to what the school and local authority is expected to do.

In line with the duty under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, the expectation is that the school and the local authority will have in place procedures designed to carry out reasonable enquiries. The type of procedures may include the appropriate person checking with relatives, neighbours, landlords – private or social housing providers – and other local stakeholders who are involved. We also record that we have completed these procedures. If there is reason to believe a young person is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care (and the police if appropriate).

Staff have a responsibility to report immediately to the DSL, if they know of any child who may be:
• Missing – whereabouts unknown and unable to make contact (as a result of making reasonable enquiries)
• Missing education – (compulsory school age (5-16) with no school place and not electively home educated)

The Local Authority requires Education Settings to complete the **'Children Missing Education'** referral form. This form should be completed once the setting has completed reasonable enquires but failed to locate the child following 10 days of absence. Further check will be completed to ensure all lines of enquiry have been exhausted, before it is agreed the child is removed from roll.

Making these enquiries may not always lead to establishing the location of the child but will provide a steer on what action should be taken next, for example, to contact the police, children's social care and, in cases where there may be concerns for the safety of a child who has travelled abroad, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Where a student has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days they can only be removed from the admission register under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraph (f)(iii) or (h)(iii) if the school and the local authority have failed to establish the student's whereabouts after **jointly** making reasonable enquiries. Local authorities and education settings should agree roles and responsibilities locally in relation to making joint enquiries. This only applies if the setting does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

Strategies for promoting attendance

31. **A range of strategies are employed to promote excellent attendance. These include:**

-   High expectations for excellent attendance – shared with students, families, and staff
-   Regular communication with students and families regarding the importance of excellent attendance, linked to student outcomes and career pathways
-   Attendance education through form time activities and the assembly programme
-   Personal action plans and regular reviews
-   Attendance incentives and rewards
-   Communication with external agencies, including the local authority and safeguarding partners

Attendance monitoring

32. Attendance is monitored in a few ways:

The attendance administrator monitors student absence daily and appropriate action is taken.

A student's parent/carer is expected to call the school or send a message via EduLink before 8:00am if their child is going to be absent due to ill health.

The parent/carer is expected to call or EduLink the school each subsequent day their child is ill. This call should also be completed before 8:00am.
If a student's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider additional measures to support the student to return to school.

The school monitors and stores attendance data using MIS. This data is used for internal purposes. For example, to:

-   Track the attendance of individual students
-   Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
-   Monitor and evaluate those children identified as needing intervention and support
-   Monitor whole school trends over time

33. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as a minimum annually by Mr Ashton.

Links with other policies

34. This policy links to the following policies:

> Safeguarding policy

> Behaviour policy

> KCSIE

Appendix

Appendix 1: Leave of Absence During Term Time Request Form

Leave of Absence During Term Time

CHILD'S DETAILS			
Surname		First Name	
Date of Birth		Year Group	
Address			
PARENT/GUARDIAN'S DETAILS			
Surname		First Name	
Relationship to child			

Address (if different to above)			
Telephone no.		Mobile no.	
Email			
DETAILS OF REQUEST FOR LEAVE			
Date of Departure		Date of Return	
No. of School Days Absence		Destination	
Local emergency contact name		Emergency contact number	
Address resident at whilst on leave			

Please provide details and reasons for requesting leave of absence and in particular any 'exceptional circumstances' If necessary, please provide any documentary evidence in support of your request.

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I certify that the information provided on this form is correct. I understand that the School reserves the right to issue a penalty notice or remove my child from the school register for unauthorised leave.

Signature		Date	

– FOR COMPLETION BY THE SCHOOL –

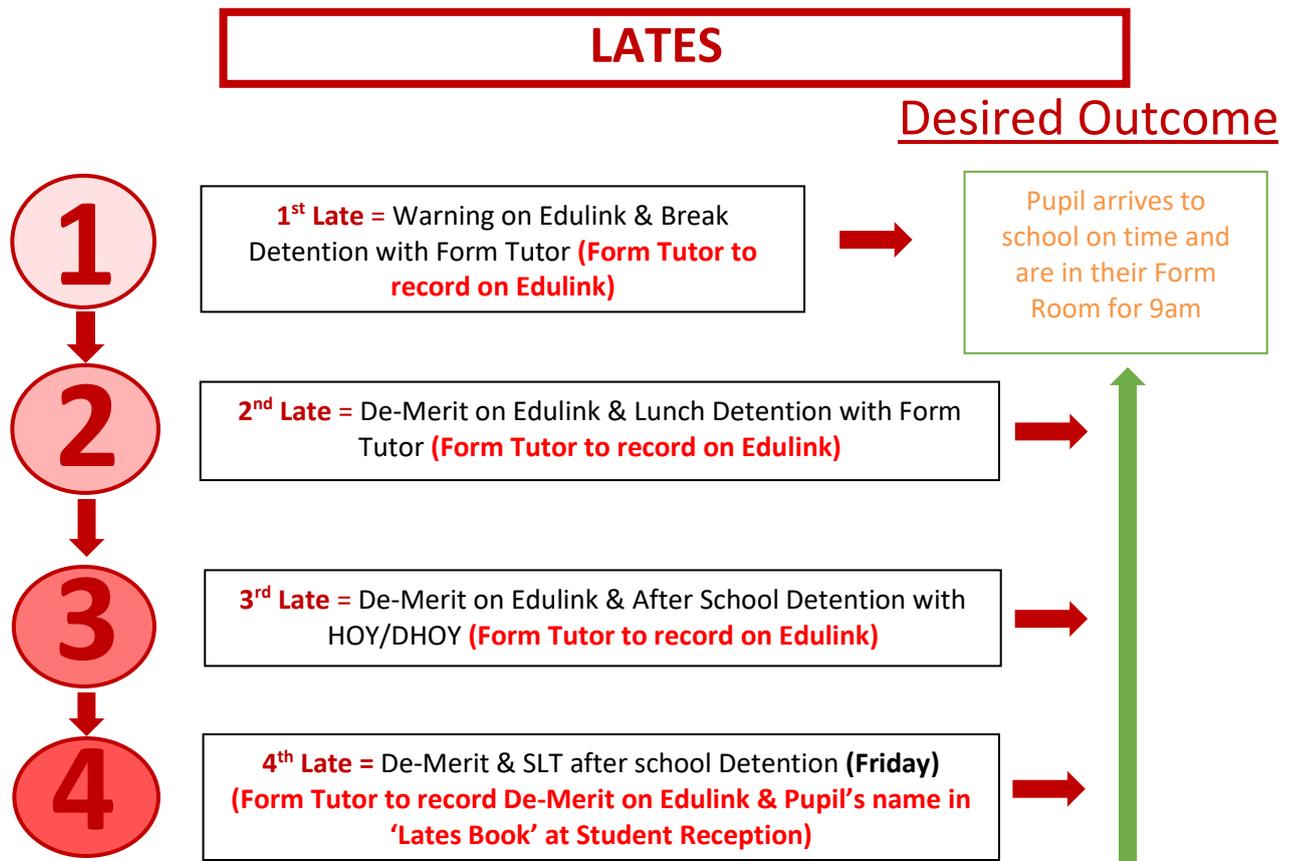| Authorised	YES / NO		
Exceptional Circumstances			
Signature		Date	
Name		Position	

Guidance Notes

‒ Please ensure this form is completed at least 1 month prior to requesting leave. Completing this form does not mean your request has been approved.

‒ The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2013 states that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are *exceptional circumstances (see below)*.

‒ If your leave of absence is either approved and you fail to ensure that your child returns to school by the agreed date or your child takes leave when your leave of absence request is not approved, then the absencewill be marked as 'unauthorised' on the attendance register.

‒ For such 'unauthorised' absence, you may be liable to be issued with a penalty notice (fine). The fine is £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 per parent per child if paid between 21 and 28days. If one or both parents fail to pay the penalty notice in full, then you may be prosecuted. The School also reserves the right to remove your child from the roll of the school. Where this happens, please be awarethat it may not always be possible to re-admit your child to the school.

Exceptional Circumstances: In considering whether any 'exceptional circumstances' apply, the Principal / Headteacher will consider if the reasons are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. The Principal / Headteacher will also take into consideration the factors listed below:

‒ can the event for which leave of absence is requested be reasonably taken during school holidays
‒ levels of attendance and unauthorised absence over the last 12 months
‒ any leave of absence taken previously
‒ whether the leave is during the exam period, controlled exam periods or will result in not meeting assessment deadlines
‒ age and year group of the pupil.

LATES

Desired Outcome

1st Late = Warning on Edulink & Break Detention with Form Tutor **(Form Tutor to record on Edulink)**

→ Pupil arrives to school on time and are in their Form Room for 9am

2nd Late = De-Merit on Edulink & Lunch Detention with Form Tutor **(Form Tutor to record on Edulink)**

3rd Late = De-Merit on Edulink & After School Detention with HOY/DHOY **(Form Tutor to record on Edulink)**

4th Late = De-Merit & SLT after school Detention **(Friday)** **(Form Tutor to record De-Merit on Edulink & Pupil's name in 'Lates Book' at Student Reception)**

FORM TUTOR	HOY/DHOY	SLT
Monitor pupils who arrive to form late and the daily lates sheet	Standing Agenda Item for Tuesday Year Team Briefings	Check 'Lates Book' on Friday Morning
Complete 'Lates Tick Sheet'	Pick up repeat offenders and place on HOY/DHOY detention (3rd Late – Detention with HOY/DHOY & De-Merit)	SLT Detention Friday evening after school. (4th Late & De-Merit)
Implement sanctions in line with Lates Policy (1st late = Break Detention & Warning – 2nd late Lunch Detention and De-Merit).	Parent meeting after 4 lates.	
Put pupil into the 'Lates Book' at Student Reception when they have their 4th Late.	DHOY to print report from 'Pastoral Genie' each week to ensure no pupils slip through and can liaise with FT to ensure all is up to date.	

- Form Tutors to mark anyone who comes into Form after 9am as 'Late' and follow 'Lates Policy' (see key below)
- Karen to ask pupils to sign in on the 'Lates Signing in Sheet' at Main Reception if pupils arrive after 9:20am
- Susan to share 'Lates Signing in Sheet' with **Form Tutors/DHOY/HOY**
- Form Tutors to follow up the morning after during Form Time.

*If a Form Tutor is not in school, HOY/DHOY to follow up lates the morning after, when Form Tutor returns.

Appendix 3: Attendance codes

Code	Definition
/	Present (am)
\	Present (pm)
B	Off-site educational activity (not dual registered)
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual registered
E	Excluded
G	Unauthorised holiday
H	Authorised holiday
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late arrival
M	Medical/Dental appointment
N	No reason of absence yet provided
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Sporting Activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller Absence
U	Late (after registration has closed)
V	Educational trip or visit
X	Not compulsory
W	Work Experience
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
#	Planned whole or partial school closure
Z	Pupil not on roll
-	All pupils should attend