



7th July 2023

Dear Parent / Carer,

Re: the importance of good punctuality to school and lessons

We are writing to you because there has been a decrease in student punctuality this year. Since September, 75% of students have been late to school once or more. For some students there will have been good reasons for arriving late, and of course we understand that there can be exceptional circumstances, but this is a very high number and is of great concern to us, as we are sure it is to you. Therefore, we thought that it was worthwhile highlighting the importance of good punctuality and the impact that poor punctuality has on learning - both for the child that is late and also for their classmates.

Research shows that there is a direct link between a child's level of school attendance and their level of school attainment: persistent absence and lateness **will** affect a child's achievement and progress in school. Arriving at school prepared for learning, in correct uniform, with full equipment and a well-focused attitude for learning is of crucial importance. Put simply, being on time is key to a positive start to the day's learning.

The table below shows how even small amounts of lateness soon add up to a significant quantity of lost learning time.

Minutes late per day	Days lost from school per Year	Lessons lost per Year
5	3	12
10	5	20
15	8	32
20	11	44
30	16	64

Punctuality to lessons is as important as punctuality is at the start of the day. Punctual attendance to lessons is vital if students are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities that are offered to them within the school. Being late doesn't only affect the child that is late, it disrupts the learning for other children in the class as well. Students have told us that individuals arriving late to class is one of their greatest frustrations and we are taking action to address the issue and ensure that punctuality improves.

One strategy is our new system of late detentions:

- From September 2023, any student who is late to school will also automatically be placed into a same day break time detention.
- Failure to attend the break time detention will result in the student being automatically scheduled to a 1 hour detention after school on Friday with a member of SLT.
- Students who are persistently late (two lates or more in a week) will be given an after-school one-hour Friday detention.
- Should a student have more than two lates and/or multiple break time detentions which they fail to attend, they will be placed into a 2-hour detention after school on a Friday with a member of SLT. If the student fails to attend these, there will be further sanctions put into place which may include a fixed term suspension.

How you can help

Firstly, please look at Class Charts each day to see if your child has arrived on time to school. At secondary school, children are more capable of getting themselves to school and lessons every day on time but it is worth

HEADTEACHER: Mr G Rule

remembering that as a parent it is still your legal responsibility to ensure your child receives a suitable full-time education. This also means that it is your responsibility to ensure your child attends school each day and on time. Class Charts allows you to check this instantly.

It is important to set the expectation of good attendance right from the beginning of school so children grow up with 'good habits'. Here are four steps to discuss with your child:

- Make sure school bags are packed the night before and that your child gets up with plenty of time to eat and get ready.
- Students must have their timetable with them and know what their lessons are for the day.
- Students should be on site for 8:30am, and at their homebase door between 08:30am- 08:35am.
- Students must be at their classroom before the lesson starts at 08:40am, ready to learn.

If your child is going to be late, please do not keep your child off school for the rest of the day. Being late and in school is better than being absent and missing out. If your child is late for a genuine, unavoidable reason please contact the absence line on 0161 337 3838 or log this via the Class Charts parent app.

What else is important to know about lateness?

A school has to take a register of all pupils first thing in the morning and during the afternoon. This forms our legal record of attendance. Our school day starts at 08:40am.

If a pupil arrives late to school but whilst the register is still open, they are marked as late (L on the attendance register).

If a pupil arrives at school after the register has closed without a satisfactory reason, this will be classed as an unauthorised absence (U code on the attendance register). Unauthorised absences may lead to prosecution for not ensuring your child has regular school attendance.

How have we communicated our plans to students?

Denton Community College is committed to improving the learning experience as well as the well-being and safety of all students. During recent student voice surveys it was clear that our student body is supportive of the College's increased expectations concerning attendance and punctuality. They made valuable comments about the impact of students who arrive late on their learning; comments we must respond to.

We are communicating our expectations to students through assemblies and form time. We ask that you also discuss this letter with your child to ensure they are clear regarding the steps we are taking and the consequences of not meeting our expectations.

We appreciate your support in this matter and thank you in advance for helping to ensure the College's expectations are consistently upheld. We are confident these actions will improve the engagement, attainment, safety and well-being of all students.

Yours faithfully,



Mr James Haslam
Deputy Headteacher



Mrs Candice Wilson
Assistant Headteacher



Mrs Katherine Kilbane
Assistant Headteacher