



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Previous Date of Policy	August 2024
Reviewer(s)	Assistant Principal Pastoral
Approved by	Principal September 2025
Review by Date	January 2027

Roles and Responsibilities:

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Vice Principal	Ms Liz Jennings
Senior Attendance Champion	Mr Mike Bell
Assistant Principal Pastoral	Mr Mike Bell
Assistant Principal Academic	Ms Rebecca Champion
Attendance Officer	Ms Nadia Dearca
DSL (Director of Welfare)	Mr Martyn Rogers
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INTRODUCTION

Excellent attendance at The Worthgate School is necessary for students to fulfil their potential. It is a statutory requirement for Compulsory School Age (CSA) students entering the UK with a visa. The policy reflects the age range of students attending the school: CSA, 16-17yrs and 18+yrs.

AIMS

- To promote and maximise student attendance, promoting student achievement and safety
- To provide accurate daily, weekly, and termly information on attendance through efficient use of registration systems and reporting
- To facilitate monitoring of patterns of absence
- To ensure prompt and effective liaison with the Attendance Officer (AO), Personal Tutors (PTs), parents and agents. To ensure PTs, and House Pastoral Directors (HPDs) are targeted in following up issues efficiently
- To comply with the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) and Independent School Standards on school attendance and ensure accurate reporting to parents and the executive committee
- To comply with the 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (DfE, 2024) statutory guidance and The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- To comply with the UKVI's requirements for Student and Child Student visas (UKVI, 2023)

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

The academic school day begins with Form Time from 08:45 every weekday. The academic day finishes at either 16:05 or 17:00 depending upon timetabling for individual students.

A **student's** timetable shows the start time of each lesson. Students are released from their previous lesson 5 minutes before the scheduled start of the next lesson, to allow transit time and preparation. Students are expected to arrive punctually to every timetabled lesson. Registers are kept 'open' for a fixed period of 30 minutes. Students arriving after the start of a lesson are recorded with code 'L' (late), with the number of minutes recorded. Students arriving later than 30 minutes, when registers close, are marked with the code 'U' by teachers. Students who do not attend a lesson are marked with code 'N'. The Attendance Officer monitors attendance of every lesson, ensuring the safety of every timetabled student and investigating records of absence. Please see Appendix 1 for all attendance codes. Students are made aware during their induction that 10% absence is approximately equivalent to 1 day in 10 missed. Across an academic year, this equates to one day missed per fortnight. Students are expected to attend 100% of the lessons, and must provide timely, valid reasons if they do not.

If a **student is unable to attend a lesson**, they should follow the appropriate procedure:

- Illness or injury: The student should attend the Wellness Centre from 8:30am, sign in on the "Reach" app, await triage and cooperate with the Medical Team's advice. If unable to attend the Wellness Centre, the student should contact the Medical Team and Attendance Officer

via MS Teams explaining their situation and await instructions. Where a student feels ill or an injury occurs during the school day, the student should report to the Wellness Centre following the same protocol as above.

- External medical/professional appointment: Prior to the appointment, the student should send proof of the appointment (with time) to The Attendance Officer and Medical Team for code 'M' Medical authorisation (or other code as appropriate). Upon returning to campus, they should check in with the Attendance Officer.
- Term time exeat – The student should apply for an exeat using the standard exeat procedure after seeking authorisation in writing from the Principal. Whilst a term time exeat may be approved, absence will be recorded code 'G' (unauthorised holiday not granted by the school). If a student misses lessons without having sought approval nor had their exeat confirmed, attendance will be unauthorised as code 'O'.

Absence can only be authorised by either the Medical Team (if medically related) or by the Principal if leave is required for other reasonable requests such as compassionate leave. Requests for a leave of absence must be communicated by the **parents / approved carers** (e.g. a UK host) of the student in writing to the Principal, and must detail the reason(s), times and dates of requested absence. Once authorised, the standard exeat application procedure fully applies.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

- The Senior Attendance Champion will oversee the school's attendance procedures, ensuring students, staff and parents understand their respective and collective responsibilities.
- All staff will follow procedures for checking student non-attendance, based on a shared understanding of registration codes, authorised / unauthorised absence and an understanding of the differences between CSA, 16-17 and 18+ students.
- Authorised absences are individual sessions, mornings or afternoons away from School for a good reason such as illness, pre-booked and authorised appointments or an unavoidable cause. Unauthorised absences are those which the School does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. Only the medical team can permit an authorised absence due to illness or injury.
- Registers will be marked by teaching staff within ten minutes of the start of the lesson and checked by the Attendance Officer. All under-18 students are scrutinised more closely, and absences chased directly by the Attendance Officer. An hourly attendance review is carried out for all students, with CSA students prioritised for immediate follow-up.
- Every day, the 'unmarked register' report in iSAMS is sent to any teachers with outstanding registers. Every Monday, an 'unmarked registers' report is sent to the Assistant Principal Pastoral (APP), Assistant Principal Academic (APA) and Vice Principal (VP). Teaching staff are reminded twice about any unmarked register, and then it is followed up by the line manager for disciplinary action.

- The pastoral team and Attendance Officer will liaise weekly to review low attendance, reasons for it, sanctions, support, and outcomes. Other relevant staff will be engaged where it is in a student's interest to receive specialist support.
- Attendance statistics will be published according to statutory and school requirements.
- The school target for annual attendance is 100% and the school will seek to maximise student attendance year on year.
- The school will observe the requirements of the UKVI. This will include being proactive in monitoring student attendance and ceasing to sponsor students who continue not to meet attendance requirements despite support.
- The school will report all unauthorised non-attendees to the UKVI and local authority once they have missed 10 consecutive contact points. A contact point is defined as an entire school day for this purpose. In addition to timetabled classes, contact points may also include meetings with residential staff or other school welfare staff.
- A student who is reported to the UKVI for 10 missed contact points may, in exceptional circumstances, be allowed back into the school and it does therefore not signify that the school has ceased sponsorship. The student will be required to document any reason for the absences and continued sponsorship will be at the discretion of the Principal.
- New teachers will receive an induction on their role in attendance matters regarding authorised/unauthorised absence and the prompt and accurate marking of registers.
- Where strategies in place do not lead to improvement, a clear change in approach could be instituted which may include:
 - Whole-School Detention (WSD) session(s)
 - Personal hourly lesson checks by the Attendance Team.
 - Specialist support based on any outcomes / recommendations from investigation.
 - A formal attendance meeting with the Local Authority at which the possibility of court action may be raised if the student is British and of compulsory school age (CSA).
 - Increase in Discipline Stage.
 - Meetings with senior staff.
 - Academic and/or visa status warning letters.
- There will be recognition of critical times in the life of a student after absences (e.g. after long-term illness, bereavement, family pressures, etc.) when we need to be proactive to ensure the routines of good attendance are quickly re-established and the student is well supported in this. Every case must be judged on its merits, but the following strategies should be automatically considered:
 - Staff awareness, so there can be tailored responses to student need.
 - Some work set and marked prior to return under the management of the subject departments, overseen by the APA.
 - Enhanced monitoring of attendance upon return, perhaps through the Daily Report system to encourage and motivate the student to succeed.

- Late return to the school or early departure caused by flight schedules will need to be confirmed by the school on an individual basis and can be authorised only when there is a very good reason.
- The school recognises that certain multi-cultural and mixed faith community religious festivals will fall in term time and may be recognised locally as a significant day and as such could be considered as authorised absence where appropriate permissions have been sought and provided.
- Parents of students will be contacted promptly regarding attendance issues as per the Terms and Conditions of the school.
- Students falling below 95% attendance are at increased risk and will have their attendance monitored closely through use of the Discipline Stages and other relevant strategies.
- A student may not undertake paid employment during their time as a member of the school without the written permission of the Principal. Visa restrictions must also be adhered to.

INDIVIDUAL STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Senior Attendance Champion

The Assistant Principal Pastoral is responsible for overseeing every aspect of attendance.

Contact details: Mr. Mike Bell mbell@worthgateschool.com

Attendance Officer

Contact: Ms. Nadia Dearca ndearca@worthgateschool.com

It is the responsibility of the school Attendance Officer to ensure that all registers are marked and recorded accurately on iSAMS. For all students the register should be checked 10 minutes and then 35minutes (for updates) into the lesson, beginning with the Form Time each teaching day. If unauthorised absence is identified, the Attendance Officer should contact and locate the student, before sending them to lessons or referring them for Medical / Welfare support.

The Attendance Officer compiles the following reports:

Report	Staff involved
Daily absence & lateness report	AO
'N' code identification, investigation and updating to appropriate code	AO
Updating, maintenance and communication of the WSD register	AO, APP, DSL, HPDs
Weekly Attendance Progress report to APP, HPDs and BTLs detailing low attenders, their support and sanctions; plus outcomes from the previous week's students of concern	AO, APP, HPDs, DSL & BTLs
Unmarked registers report daily	AO, teachers
Weekly unmarked register report	AO, APP, APA, VP
Check "Reach" every period for students under the care of the Wellness Centre	AO, Medical Team

Weekly code 'I' reports to assess levels of illness for individuals	Medical Team & APP
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The Attendance Officer (along with HPDs and PTs) is also responsible for identifying possible trends and checking for regular absence patterns which could give rise to concern, and reporting this and the actions taken for remediation, to the APP.

Teachers

It is the teacher's responsibility to mark students as 'absent' or 'present' for every class using iSAMS. The register must be marked in the first 10 minutes of each lesson. Teachers must only indicate a student is Present (/am, \pm), Absent (N) or up to 30mins Late (L), or over 30mins late (U). Any authorised lates or absences will have their codes altered by the Attendance Officer / Medical Team in a timely manner. The list of attendance codes is shown at the end of this document in Appendix 1, which also shows which members of staff are permitted to authorise absence. Teachers are not allowed to authorise absence. It is essential that only the approved members of staff are involved in authorising any absence under DfE and UKVI mandates.

If a student arrives after the timetabled start of the lesson, they are 'Late' and must be marked as late (L), with the number of minutes (since the timetabled start of the lesson) recorded. At the end of the lesson, teachers should speak with the student about their punctuality. Where there is a lack of reasonable excuse, instruct the student it must not happen again, and that the student can expect to attend WSD the following day (30 minutes per late). Repeated failure to follow staff instructions will warrant a Stage warning. Where a student is regularly absent from classes in just one of their subjects, the teacher should initiate a subject attendance report as part of their Stage warning, annotated on iSAMS.

Where a student is on a whole school attendance report issued by AO/HPD, teacher should review and sign the report at the end of the lesson if the student is punctual. If late, the teacher indicates this, using the number of minutes late, with an 'L'. This should match the register mark.

Personal Tutor (PT) and House Pastoral Director (HPD)

The Personal Tutor must monitor their tutees' attendance and raise this as part of their 1-2-1s, checking the relevant notes in iSAMS. If a student's low attendance is not seen to be being addressed, the PT must raise this with the AO and HPD immediately, along with details of their conversation with that student. Those whose weekly overall attendance falls below 95% are identified, investigated and supported / sanctioned where appropriate to highlight the concern and triangulate support with home. Students whose overall attendance falls below 85%, will have their student status reviewed. Without reasonable and timely improvement, they may be reported to UKVI, which could result in a visa sponsorship withdrawal. Where the school has reason to believe the student is unable to successfully complete their course the school will be unable to maintain their place at school. The PT should work with the AO and HPD in supporting improved attendance for a student.

If the student's attendance does not sufficiently improve (this will be monitored by the AO, HPD and PT), The Pastoral Team can implement the following sanctions:

- Whole School Detention (WSD) sessions.
- Place student on report. This will be a subject-based or departmental if the student's absence is entirely or predominantly from one subject or department. Where regular absence is across different departments, the HPD instigates and monitors the report.
- Gate the student to residence or early curfew.
- Exeat refusal.

On the Friday of the penultimate week of every half term, that term's attendance report is run by the Attendance Officer. This should be filtered for 100% attenders (for that half term) and sent to HPDs, who will incorporate celebratory recognition into House messages and assemblies.

Medical Team

Where an absent student has attended the Wellness Centre for triage and treatment, Medical staff should ensure the student signs in and out (recorded in Reach) and that medical attention and notes are properly administered. Whilst the student has a recorded location of 'Wellness Centre' they are assumed to be under the care of the Medical staff. When the Medical staff discharge a student and send them back to lessons, a note must be made in iSAMS under 'Pastoral' - 'Pastoral note' stating when the student was released back into lessons. All medical information is stored in Reach.

Where a student is showing persistent absence over a weekly period due to ill health (physical or mental) or has ALN (Additional Learning Needs), the AO and Medical Team will inform the SENCo (also APP) and DSL (Also Director of Welfare). The school will abide by the obligations set in the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

STUDENT SUPPORT AND SANCTIONS

For any students identified as late or truanting, the school will contact the student to ascertain they are safe and their whereabouts. Reason for absence will be sought and appropriate advice given. All staff promote and work towards excellent attendance, and are aware that only the Medical Team, SLT and Pastoral Team can authorise unplanned absence depending upon the reason established and evidenced. If an absence cannot be authorised, the deterrent is a sanction (as detailed in the table below). A student's time in WSD should include a conversation with supervising staff (middle leaders and AO) and/or the AO/HPD/teacher, taking the opportunity to discuss and remedy potential barriers to attending.

Breach	Consequence	Procedure
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Late to lesson	Attend WSD in PSA on next available day from 4:05pm for 30 minutes per recorded 'late'.	'Daily Lates' report produced by AO and checked for validity. Reviewed 'Daily Lates' report emailed to HPDs, CDs, BTLs, APP and APA before subsequent day's Form Time. HPDs will filter (for PTs in their House) and send list to respective PTs. PTs will speak to previous day's late students during PT time informing them of their resultant WSD. Where PTs take credible excuses from student, the student should be told to inform AO directly. AO will contact (via MS Teams) all of previous day's late students individually, informing them they must attend WSD from 4:05pm on their next available day. [Note: some students have 4:05pm classes which clash with WSD time – classes and Electives take priority] AO will update WSD register with names of expected students.
Absent from lesson (truancy)	Attend WSD in PSA on same day (or next available day) from 4:05pm – 5:00pm.	AO contacts the truanting student during that period via Teams, Outlook* and mobile phone if necessary. After establishing that the student is safe, inform the student they are being issued with a 60-minute WSD if unauthorised absence (and when). PTs monitor the WSD register, identifying students in their Form who have attendance issues, raising concerns with them. *where unauthorised absence is repeated (2+ in one week) absences occur, AO to copy parents into emails sent to students. Use template.
Missing a Supervised Study without prior notice / good reason	Give one more opportunity to attend WSD. Roll any other WSD sessions forward. If no attendance, set SLT detention (Mon 4:05pm)	Only applicable if Supervised Study is timetabled. AO informs offending student of next WSD session. If student does not attend without valid excuse, AO updates SLT detention tracker and informs student and parent of the sanction.
Persistent lateness / absences	Meeting with HPD and Weekly Attendance report	HPD to explore barriers to attendance and their remediation. Liaise with relevant internal departments and agents/family as appropriate. Weekly Attendance report issued by HPD. Monitored by HPD & AO. Student must provide teachers of every lesson with the report and ensure it is complete before collecting it at the end. Teachers continue with registers as usual. Absence type(s) to be identified and applied to policy. Where absence is predominantly or exclusively for one reason such as term-time exeat (code 'G') or illness (code 'I'), any policy

		contraventions should be raised with the APP and appropriate action taken.
Less than 85% attendance in a week.	SLT detention (Mon 4:05pm)	AO & APP weekly meetings highlight causes for concern. Those below 85% attendance in the previous week immediately qualify for SLT detention.

Note: Where a student has sat (or missed) WSD for any attendance related issues, they are gated that evening. BTLs to monitor WSD register daily – gate any student who has a 60min detention, whether they attended that detention or not.

Examples of support that could be offered as appropriate in addition to the sanctions above: ✓ Meeting with pastoral staff – target setting and review ✓ Communications with guardian/parents ✓ Daily wake up calls and specialist support with sleep patterns ✓ Time management skills support ✓ Peer mentor ✓ Meet with APA / ALS Coordinator	Additional note on attendance: Unless in exceptional circumstances approved in advance by the Principal, no single cause of authorised absence (including medical) can exceed 20% Overall, and no combination of authorised absence can exceed 30% Overall, in a consecutive 5-week period. Any absences beyond these figures are to be recorded as Unauthorised.
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OVERSIGHT

The Assistant Principal Pastoral (APP) is responsible for oversight of the attendance procedures. They receive information from other school staff and take appropriate action in accordance with the Policy.

Admission and attendance registers will be kept electronically, and all entries in these registers will be preserved for 6 years.

The school will comply with Local Authority (LA) requests for attendance data where officially requested.

Vice Principal, Assistant Principal Academic, Assistant Principal Pastoral and Head of Boarding

They are responsible for implementing Stage 4 of the disciplinary process. It is the responsibility of the Vice Principal or the DSL to inform the Police, agents and parents of any serious absences. It is the responsibility of the Registrar to liaise with UKVI when required. The Vice Principal will intervene at a Stage 5 in the absence of the Principal for the disciplinary/attendance process.

They will:

- Liaise with the APP and Attendance Officer
- Meet with the student and HPD(s)

- Review the HPD's action plan with student and relevant colleagues to raise attendance
- Inform parents/agents via Cause for Concern letter
- Review PT's/HPD's meet(ings) with student to review progress
- Record action plans on iSAMS and monitor through Attendance Officer

The Principal is responsible for making the final decision on whether a student will be suspended or expelled for continued poor attendance. Following a Stage 4 warning, a student must meet regularly with their HPD or an SLT member. Progress will be tracked carefully and failure to improve will be dealt with by the APP. Whilst students will be supported to improve their attendance, a continual failure to improve is taken very seriously. The visa sponsorship of a student will be withdrawn if they are expelled.

STUDENTS LIVING IN INDEPENDENT ACCOMMODATION

If a student is absent, they should contact the School to speak to the attendance officer or Medical Team if the reasons are medical. Students under 18 years old must report before 8:30am that day using Teams and/or email. Students over 18 years old must report illness/absence as soon as possible that morning. A parental / doctor's note or email is required from an authorised source to authorise any non-attendance and should be sent to the Student Communications Team and Attendance Officer.

UK DFE REGULATIONS AND LINKED SCHOOL POLICIES

1. [Working together to improve school attendance \(2024\)](#)
2. [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\)\(England\) Regulations \(2024\)](#)
3. Equality and Diversity Policy
4. Disability, Discrimination and Accessibility (DDA) plan
5. Worthgate Admissions Policy
6. Worthgate Exeat Policy
7. Missing Student Policy
8. Student Behaviour Policy

APPENDIX 1 ATTENDANCE AUTHORISATION PROCESS AND REGISTER CODES

If a student wishes to have absences out of school authorised, the following process should be followed.

- For medical absences the student must contact a member of the Medical Team if unwell via Microsoft Teams or Outlook (email).
- For other general absences (appointments/interviews/lateness/other reasons) students must contact the Attendance Officer in first instance and copy in the House Pastoral Director (HPD), with the details of the absence.
- Attendance Officer can authorise up to half a day's absence where proof of reason is valid. Up to one day can be authorised by the HPD, who can consult the Assistant Principal Pastoral (APP) if necessary, and more than one day must be in agreement with the APP / SLT.
- Once the evidence is received and verified **the Attendance Officer (AO) should scan a copy of the evidence/save a copy under the** appropriate category (Attendance Documents) Intakes - Student Files. The evidence is usually received via email or Teams.
 - o Global drive has attendance folder in, each school has a folder.
 - o Each school folder contains individual evidence folders: Medical (restricted), Educational, Other.
- Once the evidence has been saved, the student's attendance records need to be updated. They should be block marked, with the appropriate attendance mark used and a note entered detailing the reason.
- The mark is updated appropriately after having received evidence from student and authorisation from member of staff, as per below:

Medical	Other absence
Nurse	Attendance Officer (AO) in consultation with HPD

- A student attendance event should then be entered on an iSAMS note, detailing the dates authorised, reason for (sensitive information being written in a private note box) and the evidence noted as seen.
- Below are the attendance marks that must be used to monitor student attendance together with their definition, when they should be used, and the required evidence.

Attendance codes ('Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (National Codes for absence, UK Govt. 2024)

Please note that our reporting system is managed by CATS Global Schools (CGS), who are managing the updates. The school will use the appropriate national attendance and absence codes

(as stated in School Attendance (Pupil Registration)(England)(Regulations) 2024 wherever possible, subject to student record system restrictions.

Code - Meaning

/ \ - present for morning (am) and afternoon (pm) sessions.

The following are classified as **authorised absence**:

I - Illness.

M - Attending medical/dental appointment.

C - Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.

R - Religious observance.

E - Suspended or permanently excluded.

T - Parent travelling for occupational purposes. (NB Unable to have this code meaning due to information system. Hence currently this code refers to 'Transferred subject choice')

S - Study leave.

C1 - Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.

J1 - Attending an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.

C2 - Pupil is absent from school for part of the week (on a part-time timetable) - then also use the code for the reason why absent.

The following are **NOT classified as absences**:

B - An offsite educational activity.

D - Dual registration, so attending another school where registered.

K - Alternative provision arranged by the LA.

L - Late arrival before the register is closed (during the 30 mins 'grace' period).

P - Approved sporting activity.

V - Attending an educational visit or trip. W - Work experience.

The following are classified as **unauthorised absence**:

G - Holiday not authorised by the school (despite exeat being granted).

N - Reason for absence not yet established (code must be updated appropriately within 5 working days)

O - Absent in other or unknown circumstances.

U - Arrived in lesson after the register closed (after 30 mins 'grace' period). Student attended lesson for a short period and is accounted for. Counted as absent and used for statistical purposes.

The following are classified as '**not a possible attendance**':

X - Pupils of non-compulsory school age absent when they are not timetabled to attend (e.g. EYFS).

Q - Lack of access arrangements by LA.

Y - Transport normally provided not being available.

Y2 - Widespread disruption to travel.

- Y3 - Part of school premises being closed.
 Y4 - Whole school site being unexpectedly closed.
 Y5 - Pupil is in criminal justice detention.
 Y6 - Public health guidance or law not to attend.
 Y7 - Any other unavoidable cause.

The following codes are **not collected for statistical purposes**:

- Z - Prospective pupil not on admission register.
 #- Planned whole school closure (holidays).

Evidence of absence:

- Word documents will not be accepted.
- Scan of appointment letter or forwarded appointment email can be accepted.
- Evidence must include names, date/times and email addresses on the documents to confirm ownership and details.

APPENDIX 2 CONSEQUENCES FOR BREACHING ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance	Late to lesson (arriving after timetabled start).	Issued by: Teacher • record student as late on register (inc. number of minutes since timetabled start of lesson) • if late/absent on 2+ consecutive occasions and/or you identify a trend, raise a concern in iSAMS and set departmental detention. Pastoral record → Attendance • inform student they must attend Community Hub at 4:05pm for 30 minutes the following day (per late mark each day) <i>Note: Attendance Officer will also communicate with student & PT after processing Daily Late report.</i>
	Truancy (missing a timetabled session).	Issued by: Attendance Officer • Attendance Support meeting with Attendance Officer, then remain in WSD for 1 hour. • No permission slip that evening. Student contact teacher, catch <u>up</u> work. • Weekly – 2/3 unauthorised absences → Stage 1. 4+ unauthorised absences → Stage 2
	Failure to attend WSD.	Issued by: Attendance Officer • Attend the next WSD for 1 hour. AO alerts PT and HPD. • Repeated failure to attend WSD results in SLT detention and Stage Warning increased by 1 level.

APPENDIX 3 KEY ABBREVIATIONS

ALN: ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEED

- AO: Attendance Officer
 APA: Assistant Principal Academic
 APP: Assistant Principal Pastoral
 BTL: Boarding Team Lead

CSA: Compulsory School Age
DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead
HPD: House Pastoral Director
MS: Microsoft
PSA: Private Study Area
PT: Personal Tutor
SENCo: Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SLT: Senior Leadership Team
WSD: Whole-School Detention