

Merits and Demerits

Rationale

The award of 'Merits' and 'Demerits' should be viewed as an essential element of the support system we offer our pupils to allow them to fulfil their potential, to accept and cope with new challenges and to prepare them for life beyond school. Only if we have an accurate picture of our pupils' performances across all aspects of their experiences in school can we comprehensively celebrate their achievements, improving self-esteem and confidence. All pupils should be aware of our high expectations in terms of attainment, behaviour and effort and should understand that our 'Code of Conduct' ensures the best conditions to allow all pupils to feel safe and confident, and to make the best possible progress. They should recognise that if they choose to behave inappropriately or to put little effort into their work that there will be consequences. It is essential that all staff award Merits and Demerits consistently within subject teams and across the wider school community. Staff, pupils and parents should be consulted and involved in the evaluation of our 'Merit and Demerit' system and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the system should be included in the school self-evaluation calendar.

Guidelines

Merits

- Awarding 'Merits' allows us to monitor the progress, successes and achievements of all pupils in as wide a variety of contexts as possible. (Achievements which recognise successes in terms of Successful Learners, Responsible Citizens, Confident Individuals and Effective Contributors.)
- Merit categories will be displayed prominently in all classrooms.
- Staff should praise the achievements of all pupils and discuss them openly as part of our positive ethos for recognising and celebrating success.
- Pupil Planners have pages where pupils record and keep a personal record of their achievements / Merits. (August 2010)
- Sharing our pupils' successes and achievements with parents is essential and a programme of 'Merit' reviews ensures this information goes home to parents on a regular basis.
- An award of a 'Merit' will automatically result in 'House Points' for each individual pupil and their 'House', as part of the school policy of encouraging participation and recognising achievements and successes.

Demerits

- Making appropriate 'demerit' entries allows us to quickly and effectively identify areas of concern.
- Demerit entries are for the benefit of all and should not be viewed in a negative light, but as means of ensuring an accurate picture of each pupil's achievements, effort and behaviour is painted, appropriate action is taken and support is put in place as quickly as possible.

- 'Demerit' categories should be comprehensive enough to ensure staff can identify all relevant low-level concerns.
- Staff must inform all pupils that a 'demerit' entry will be made and pupils should understand why this is so and what they have to do to improve.
- 'Demerits' should be entered as soon as possible by all staff.
- PTs PSN will review demerit entries on a weekly basis. When a pupil has only one 'Demerit' entry, a group call will be made. . PTs PSN will contact parents immediately by phone to discuss concerns where there is more than one 'Demerit'.
- Continued 'demerit' entries will result in a referral to an appropriate member of the school management team. Action will be taken to support pupils to modify their behaviour and improve their academic progress. This may include additional lunchtime support sessions
- A 'demerit' in itself is not a punishment and it is the responsibility of all staff to take appropriate action to deal with inappropriate behaviour and lack of effort.
- When a teacher perceives a pupil's behaviour, attitude and effort are becoming more major concerns it is essential that the school 'Referral' system is used.
- If a referral is made, learning leaders or deputies, as appropriate, will contact parents immediately by phone to discuss this in detail.