

St Cuthbert's Catholic High School
ATTENDANCE NEWSLETTER

Spring Term 2025 Issue 1

Well done to our
students
and **families** for
excellent attendance
since September

**MOMENTS
MATTER,
ATTENDANCE
COUNTS.**

- ⇒ **138** students had **100% attendance**
- ⇒ **352** students met our target of **97%**

Thank you from the attendance team!



Attendance Team

Mrs Larkin

Deputy Headteacher

Designated Attendance Lead

Mr McAuley

Assistant Headteacher

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Wilson

Attendance Officer

Mrs Connor

Attendance Officer

Mrs Irvine

Early Help Support Officer



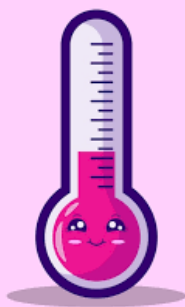
Why is good attendance important?

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. Excellent attendance underpins academic achievement. At St Cuthbert's, we aim for all students to have an attendance record of greater than 97%.

Absence from school

We understand that it can sometimes be difficult to know when to send your child to school. Unless they have a temperature of 38 or above they're usually good to go. Whilst we do not want any child who is generally ill to come to school, your child should come in if they have, for example, a headache, feeling sick, stomach ache or toothache.

The school will always contact you if your child is unwell. Please see NHS guidance 'Is my child too ill for school'



<http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Did somebody say Just Eat?

If your child is in school every day from Monday 10th until Friday 14th Feb, they will be entered into a prize draw to win one of three £20 Just Eat vouchers. Just attend for a chance to win!

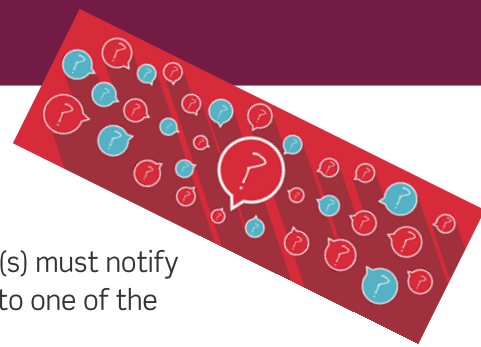


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Key Information



Frequently Asked Questions

How do I report my child's absence?

Telephone us on the first day of absence. To report a student absent, parent(s)/carer(s) must notify school by calling **01744 678123 (option 2)** and either leaving a message, or speaking to one of the Attendance team. Calls should be made to notify school between 7.00-8.30am.

We will still text you if your child absent.

You may receive a telephone call on the first day of absence from a member of the attendance/pastoral team. This is a courtesy call and is supportive. It is to discuss any issues and to offer any support. Please do not worry if you receive one of these calls, they are common practice.



What do I do if my child has a medical appointment?

Please try and make all medical appointments out of school hours so that your child does not miss out on learning. If this is unavoidable, please send the appointment card (or equivalent) to the attendance team. This helps us to authorise your child's absence

What is an unauthorised absence?

This applies when no satisfactory reason can be provided for your child's absence, in line with government guidance. This may also happen if your child has too many absences.



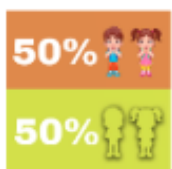
What is Persistent Absence (PA)?

This is where absence escalates and a student misses more than 10% of school. Their attendance is below 90%. Persistent absenteeism seriously affects students' learning which can result in lower levels of achievement and grades, which in turn results in lower employment prospects.



What is Severe Absence (SA)?

This is where there is significant absence from school and a student misses more than 50%. Other agencies are likely to be involved if your child is SA.



What happens if my child is PA or SA?

The school always offer support to try and improve your child's attendance. However, if they remain in PA or SA the school will work in consultation with the Education Welfare Officer to decide on appropriate next steps. This may included Notice to Improve, a penalty notice or a full referral to our Education Welfare Officer.



What is a home visit and how does it work?

A member of the attendance team/safeguarding team or our Education Welfare Officer will make a home visit regarding an attendance query or concern. This may be triggered for various reasons, including attendance issues and consecutive absences from school. The staff member will try to speak to the parent or carer and the child by knocking on the door to talk about attendance. If no contact can be made, a calling card will be left, and we ask for communication in return to confirm that you have received this calling card.



What is Notice to Improve?

A notice to improve is a final opportunity for a parent or carer to help improve their child's attendance before a penalty notice is issued. This will include the end date of the monitoring period.



Our New Attendance Banding System

This half term we have introduced a new Attendance Banding system based on colours. This replaces the Attendance Stages we have used previously so that students can be rewarded if their attendance figure moves them into a higher colour band. They will receive a Queue Jumper Lunch Pass if they manage this.

If they are in the Persistent Absence (PA) or Severe Absence (SA) bands their form tutor and pastoral team will work with them to encourage consistent attendance.

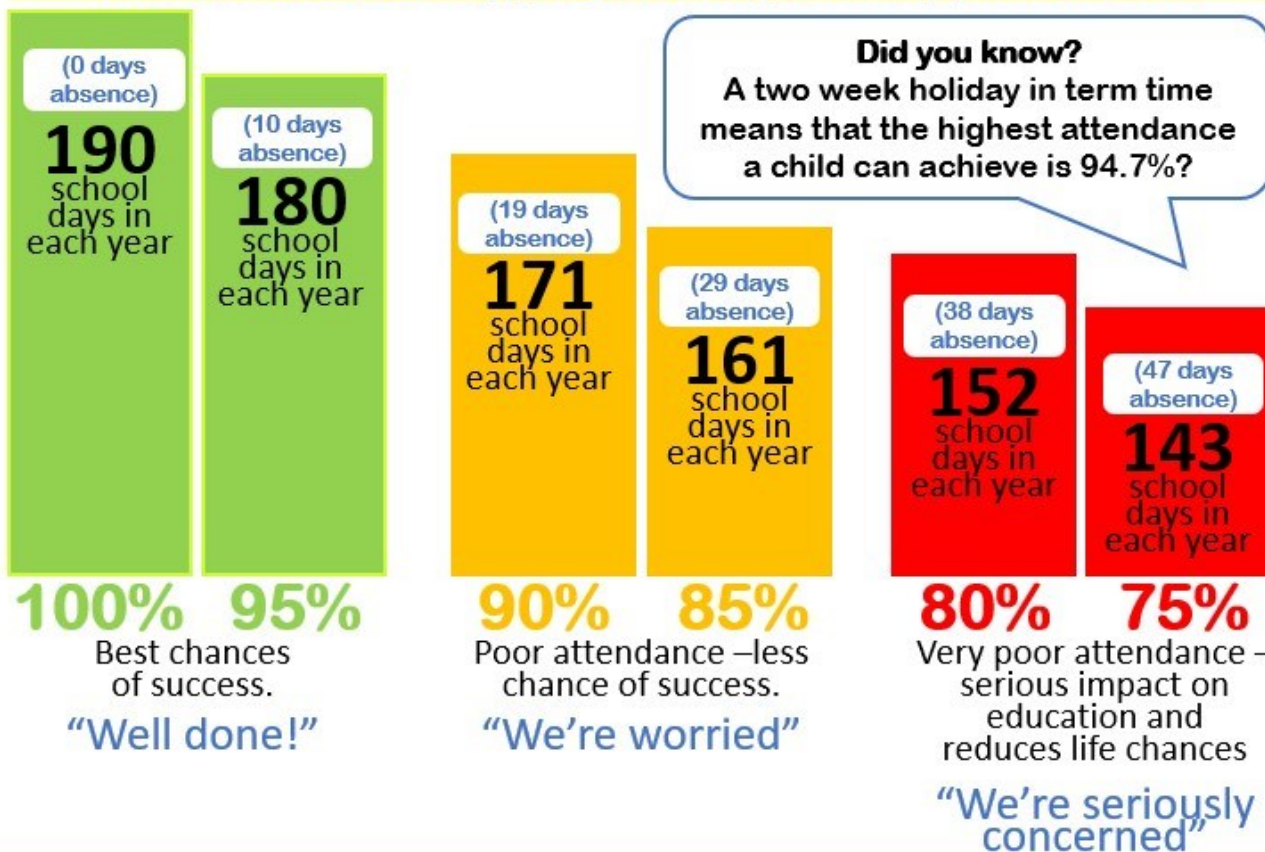
Bands	Form Tutor Graduated Response
Platinum - 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praise
Gold - 95% - 99.99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praise
Silver - 90% - 94.99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form tutor to warn how close you are to tipping into PA
Bronze - 85% - 89.99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PA sticker on attendance tracker. Form tutor will discuss with you how many days attendance will take you out of PA
Purple - 80% - 84.99%	
Lilac - 75% - 79.99%	
Pink - 70% - 74.99%	
Blue - 65% - 69.99%	
Cyan - 60% - 64.99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PA sticker on attendance tracker tutor to initial each morning Form tutor will discuss with you how many days attendance will take you out of PA Form tutor will tell you that you will have a meeting with pastoral staff about attendance and a meeting with parent/carers will be arranged
Yellow - 55% - 59.99%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form tutor will discuss with you how many days attendance will take you out of SA Form tutor will tell you that you will have a meeting with pastoral staff about attendance and a meeting with parent/carers will be arranged
Orange - 50.01% - 54.99%	
Red - 50% & below	

Good attendance means ...

being in school at least 97% of the time or 184 to 190 days

Students have 175 days holiday away from school every year
All this time for shopping, holidays and appointments

365 days in a calendar year



Always make school a priority

- ⇒ Avoid making doctor, dentist or optician appointments during school time unless this is absolutely necessary.
- ⇒ If you do need to make an appointment in school time try to ensure that your child misses as little of school as possible.
- ⇒ We know that travel companies don't make it easy for families, but never book a holiday during term time (it won't be authorised, your child will fall behind and you may be fined).
- ⇒ Don't allow your child to stay off school to make things easier for yourself – this is against the law.
- ⇒ Don't allow your child to miss school on Mondays and Fridays if you are going away for the weekend.
- ⇒ Don't allow your child to take a day off because of the weather.
- ⇒ Don't allow your child to take a day off for their birthday – this is completely unacceptable.

Think Pharmacy First

Did you know that pharmacists can give you advice on a range of conditions and suggest medicines that can help. They may also be able to offer treatment and some prescription medicine for some conditions, without you needing to see a GP (this is called Pharmacy First).

www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/how-pharmacies-can-help/



Providing NHS services

Most pharmacies can help you with **seven common conditions** without needing a GP appointment

Speak to your pharmacist if you suspect you have:

- **Sinusitis**
(adults and children aged 12 years and over)
- **Sore throat**
(adults and children aged 5 years and over)
- **Earache**
(children aged 1 year to 17 years)
- **Infected insect bite**
(adults and children aged 1 year and over)
- **Impetigo**
(adults and children aged 1 year and over)
- **Shingles**
(adults aged 18 years and over)
- **Urinary tract infection**
(women, aged 16 to 64 years)



Visit your Pharmacy First!



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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

Emotionally Based School Avoidance is a term used to refer to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. It's often rooted in emotional, mental health or wellbeing issues. The rate of children who miss school more than 10% of the time in England has more than doubled since before the pandemic: rising from 10.9% in 2018-19, to 22.3% in 2022-23.

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.

PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include complaining of a tummy ache, headache, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.

IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.

CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity which is making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and limited time on screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for the child's school day, if required.

MANAGING OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

While there may be times you feel frustrated or angry, try to stay calm; acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss a range of coping strategies together to help them face the discomfort and overwhelming feelings. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk and practice the strategies in less overwhelming situations first.

REDUCE STIMULATING ACTIVITIES AT HOME

If a child is avoiding school, reduce their access to more stimulating activities (such as watching television, playing games and spending time with friends) during school hours, where possible. This reduces the potential for the child having rewarding experiences at home, which could be interpreted as a positive aspect of avoiding school.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College



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Thank you

Thank you for your continued support in striving for the best attendance and outcomes for your child.

The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- ⇒ Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- ⇒ Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- ⇒ Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- ⇒ Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- ⇒ Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.

Term Dates for rest of the academic year 2024-2025



Spring Term

Close for the spring half-term on: Friday 14th February 2025

Re-open after the spring half-term on: Monday 24th February 2025

Close for the Spring Term Fixed holiday on: Friday 4th April 2025

Summer Term

Re-open after the Spring Term Fixed holiday on: Tuesday 22nd April 2025

Bank Holiday: May Day (**closed to students and staff**) Monday 5th May 2025

Close for the summer half-term on: Friday 23rd May 2025

Re-open after the summer half-term on: Monday 2nd June 2025

Close for the summer holiday on: Friday 18th July 2025

Attendance Information

After the half term break, you will receive a MyED communication providing you with your child's attendance percentage from 4th September to 14th February

