

**St Cuthbert's
Catholic High School**
Live life in all its fullness

Attendance and Absence Policy

2025 - 2028

Person responsible for Policy:	Assistant Headteacher (PDBW)/Senior Leadership Team
Committee responsible for Policy:	Pastoral & Personal Development
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Statement of intent

St Cuthbert's Catholic High School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Students cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some students find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with students and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving student attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our students.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and students.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify students or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance officers are Mrs W Wilson and Ms C Connor, and can be contacted via the absence line or via email at hello@stcuthberts.com. Staff, parents and students will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

St Cuthbert's Vision

'A vibrant community uniquely created by God, which embraces everyone, especially those in need and celebrates difference. Enabled by a staff dedicated to our Catholic ethos and a culture of excellence, our young people will be inspired to know more, and be more.'

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Attendance Officer Home Visit Policy
- Students with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

2. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

Missing education:

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to support the work of the attendance officers and lead on whole-school attendance strategies.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every student has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring students do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual students to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance officer, supported by SLT is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with students and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any student being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

Students are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

4. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for students' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and students.

Students will be expected to:

- Attend school every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend every timetabled lesson.

The school day starts at **8:30am**, and students will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, students will be expected to be on the school site by **8:25am**. Students will have a morning break at **11:00am**, which will last until **11:20am**, and a lunch break at **1:20pm**, which will last until **2:00pm** – students will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

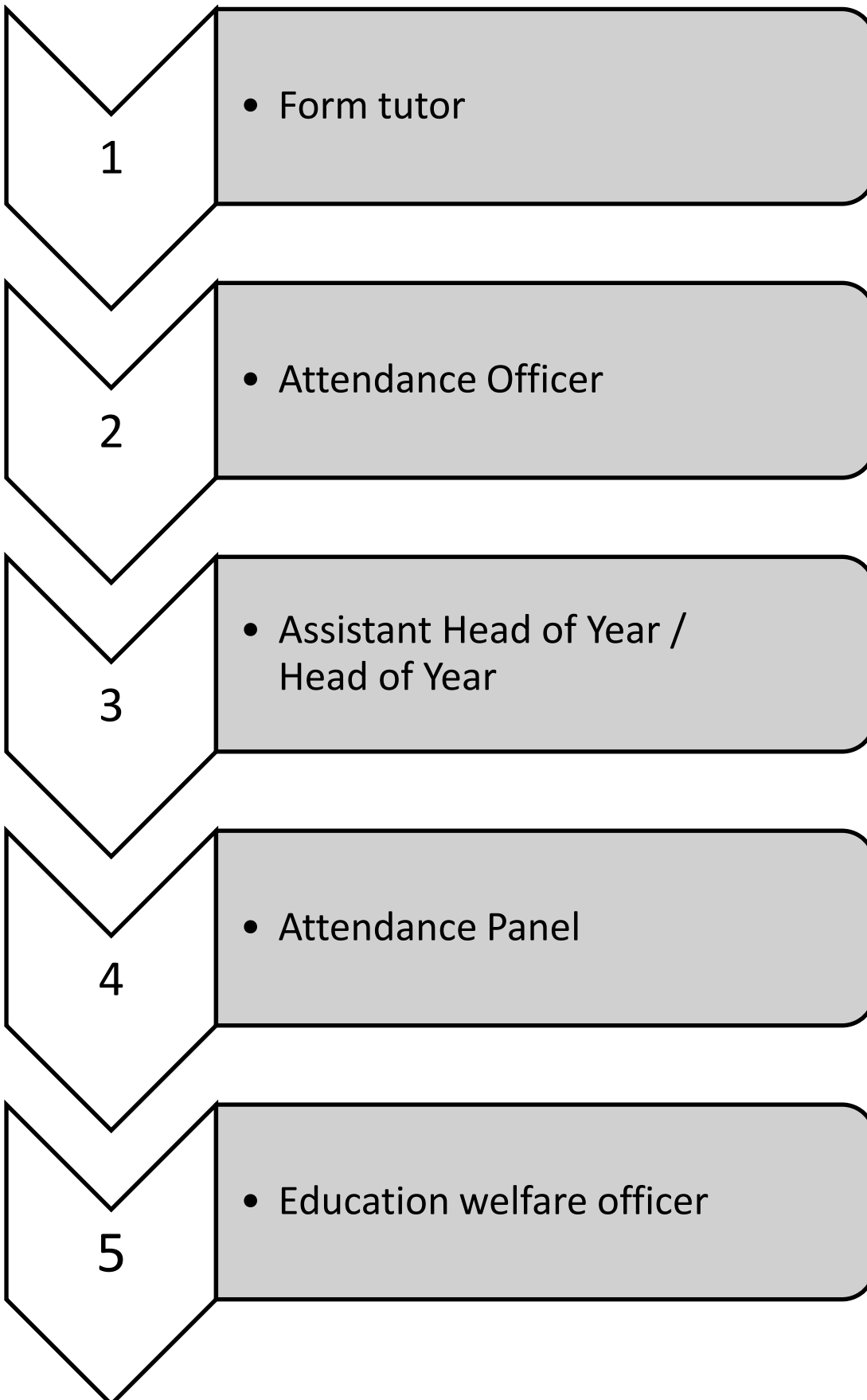
- The morning register will be marked by **8:30am**. Students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Students attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark
- The morning register will close at **9:30am**. Students will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time
- The afternoon register will be marked by **2:00pm**. Students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time
- The afternoon register will close at **2:10pm**. Students will receive a mark of absence if they are not present

Class teachers will also take informal registers at the start of each lesson period to ensure that students are attending all timetabled lessons. These registers will be analysed alongside formal registers in line with the section of this policy.

Students will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

5. Absence procedures

Attendance Reporting Structure



Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before **9:00am** on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a student is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent via telephone call or text **message** as soon as is practicable on the first day that the student does not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a student is absent for more than **three** school days in a row, or more than **10** school days in **one term**, the student's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a student is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of students who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a student's attendance becomes a concern, the attendance officer will arrange a formal meeting with the student and their parent.

Where a student has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the student from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the student after making reasonable enquiries.

6. Attendance register

The school uses SIMS to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether students are:

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

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school
- H = Authorised holiday

- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- S = Study leave
- T = Traveller absence
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- N = Reason not yet provided
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- D = Dual registered at another educational establishment
- B = Off-site education activity
- J = At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- V = Educational visit or trip
- W = Work experience
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Student not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant students who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Students who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

7. Authorising parental absence requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the student and the impact on the student's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason.

Leave of absence

The school will only grant a student a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the headteacher in writing with reasonable notice prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the student's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the student can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- During Year 7 when a student is settling into the school, unless certain exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. the death of a family member

- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a student's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a student's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a student out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all students engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for students engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the student.

The student will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the student would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a student receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the student would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a student's attendance would fall below 96 percent. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Religious observance

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance giving reasonable notice in advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the student's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a student's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance. Absences will not be granted for students from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

8. SEND- and health-related absences

The school recognises that students with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support students who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled students to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a student's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a student that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All students will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a student is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a student is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the student's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the student reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the student is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the student to stay in contact with other students during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any students with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the student is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of students with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying students' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a student to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a student can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby students can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

9. Absence in exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances will include when a student is unable to attend because:

- Transport provided by the school, LA or parent is not available and the student's home is not within walking distance.
- There has been widespread disruption to travel services which has prevented the student from attending.

- The student is in custody and will be detained for less than four months.

The use of the 'Y' code for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

10. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of students, and understand the importance of continuity in each student's learning.

Any student with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a student might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the student not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the student, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

Internal Truancy

- Students who are marked present but are then not in lesson will be reported to Call Out.
- Call Out will locate the student and depending on the circumstances will return to lesson or refer to SLT/Pastoral staff.
- These will be recorded on Class Charts so that parents/carers are aware of internal truancy.
- An appropriate sanction will be issued for students to catch-up on missed learning or a referral made to Pastoral/Farne/Counsellor if there is an SEMH need.

11. Absent students

Students will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a student going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing student will inform Call Out immediately.
- If there is no reason for them to be missing, or they can't be located within a reasonable time, the Headteacher will be informed.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- Parents will be contacted to support the search (ringing the child).
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff including staff on Call Out will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets

- Changing rooms
- The library
- Any outbuildings
- The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- Depending on the individual circumstance, if the student has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the student will be notified.
- If the parents have had no contact from the student, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- If the missing student has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the student has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the student to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the student has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that students understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out an investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced if necessary, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

12. Attendance intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the attendance officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish a range of specific, evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents.
 - Conducting attendance panel meetings.
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
 - Using fixed penalty notices.
 - Creating attendance clinics.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the '[Monitoring and analysing absence](#)' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the students whom the intervention is designed to target.

The school will aim to improve attendance in the overall school cohort by acknowledging good attendance in the following ways:

- Regular texts to share positive attendance data
- Reward trips and reward points

School trips and events will be considered a privilege. Where attendance drops below 90 percent, these privileges may be taken away. The school will develop strategies for ensuring that students with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards, e.g. by setting individualised targets.

13. Working with parents to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families and work to build trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with students and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with students and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are **two** sets of emergency contact details for each student wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a student where the student is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the student and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the student from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for student absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the student's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the student's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

14. Persistent absence (PA)

There are various groups of students who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Students who are eligible for FSM
- Students with EAL
- Students with SEND
- Students who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will ensure it provides support to students at risk of PA, in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.

The school will use a number of methods to help support students at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meeting with the student and their parent to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading **weekly** check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with the student's parent to discuss progress.

- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.

The school will focus particularly on students who have rates of absence over 50 percent and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these students are facing.

Where a student at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the student in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

- If a Student is absent for 3 consecutive days and no message has been received then a home visit is done by School Attendance Officer or Safer Schools Officer.
- The School Attendance Officer will send out letters to all Students whose attendance is under 90% every half term
- School will issue Fixed Penalties Notices to Parents/Carers of Students with 20 unauthorised absences. Pre-warning letters are sent when Students reach 10 unauthorised absences within a period of 6 weeks. Fixed Penalties can also be issued for Students who are persistently late and to parents who take their children out of School during term time for holidays without permission from the Headteacher.
- If the student fails to improve his/her attendance and is persistently {or intermittently} absent, then the Attendance Officer will invite parents by letter to attend a meeting to discuss the situation. A member of the Pastoral Team will also be present. Discussions will be made at this meeting depending upon the parents' explanation and parents attending.
- The School Attendance Team will decide to do 1 of 4 things:
 - Parent/carer and student asked to attend an Attendance Panel Meeting
 - Refer Student to Education Welfare Officer who will work with the family
 - Issue parent/carer with a Fixed Penalty Notice
 - Agree to monitor Student for 4 weeks

Children Missing in Education – guidance document from Dfe dated September 2025

When a Child is Missing Education (CME), St Cuthbert's will follow **Education Welfare's Child Missing Education Policy and Procedures.**

Child missing from education - St Helens Borough Council

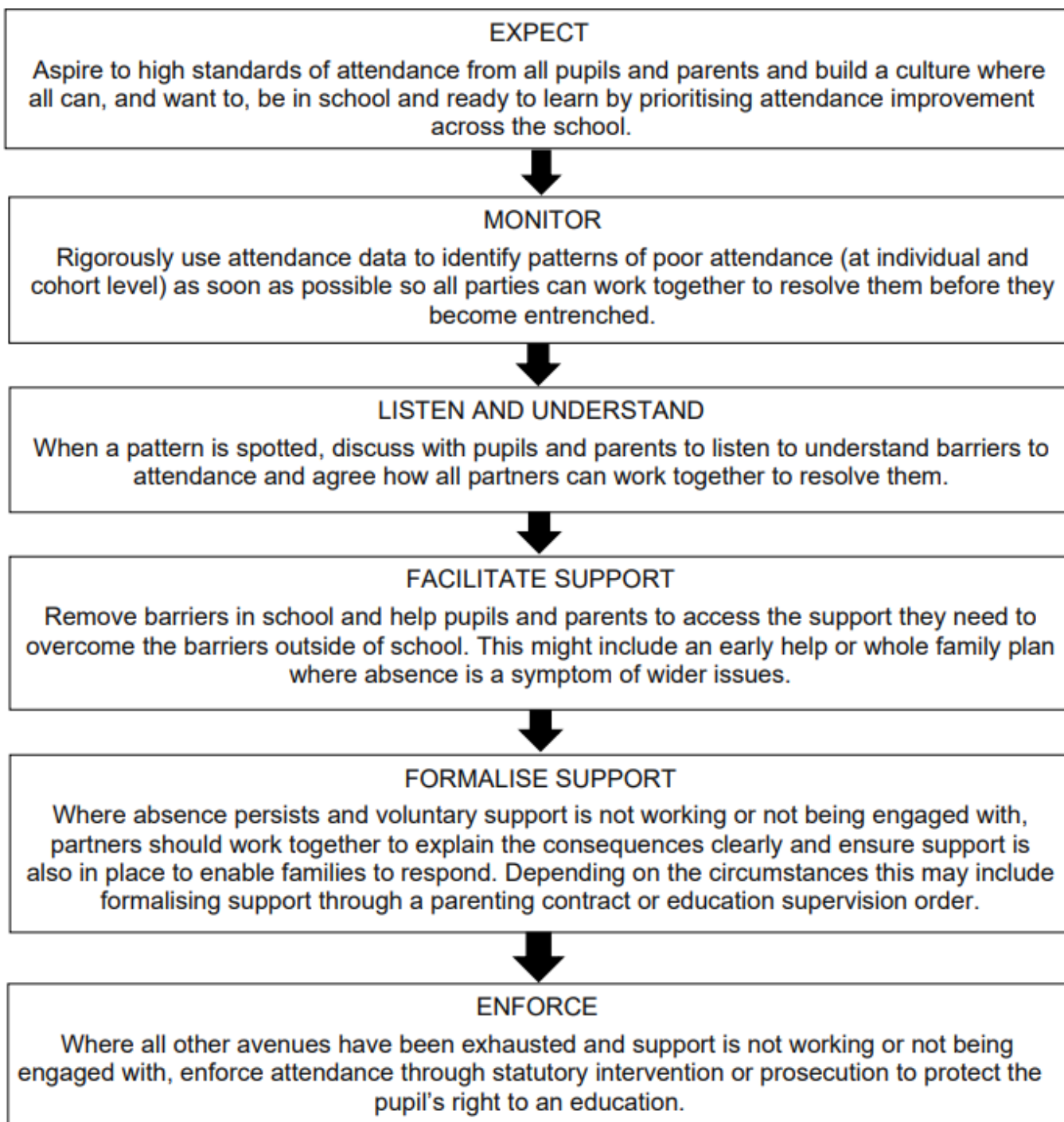
- There are named CME Officers within the Education Welfare Service. The named CME officers for St. Helens are: **Helen McCabe and Diane Russell – 01744 676636**
- There is also a dedicated CME email address for any enquiries relating to Children Missing Education. The email address is: **cme@sthelens.gov.uk**
- Where a handover protocol is in place this will only be done with a known and approved adult
- Any adult with Parental Responsibility has the right to collect their child from school, unless there is a Contact, Residency or Child Arrangement Order in place, or if there are child protection concerns surrounding a parent or carer. For families with orders in place, we ask parents and carers to inform us of any such instance and provide paper evidence where necessary. **Please not we will not keep original copies of orders but may take photocopies which will be stored securely within the child's individual safeguarding file.**

Strategies for Promoting Attendance:

- School will offer an environment in which students feel valued and welcomed. The School ethos must demonstrate that students feel that their presence in School is important, that they will be missed when they are absent /late and follow up action will be taken.

- Attendance data will be regularly collected and analysed in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievement, and support and inform policy/practice.
- Attendance display in school updated every half term.
- Form Tutors given weekly attendance % and monthly official registers to check attendance pattern and set targets.
- Good attendance awards will be presented at the end of each school year.
- Students whose attendance is a cause for concern will be set targets for improvement. The Attendance Team, Pastoral Team and Form Tutor will monitor and review these targets.
- Parents will be reminded regularly via letters and Parents' Evenings of the importance of good attendance.
- Students who are absent through sickness for any extended period of time will, when appropriate have work sent home to them and will be reintegrated back into school upon their return.
- Students who have been absent for whatever reason for an extended period of time will, when appropriate have individually tailored reintegration programmes prepared for them.
- Students returning to school following sickness may be seen by a member of the Pastoral Team for a back-to-school interview.
- The Headteacher will make an annual report to the school's governing body on attendance matters.
- The Pastoral Team, and the Attendance Team will, when appropriate, liaise with other agencies – Educational Psychology Service, Social Services and other agencies – when this may serve to support and assist students who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- The Attendance Team will have regular meetings with the school's Educational Welfare Officer in order to identify and support those students who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Regular visits will be made to feeder primary schools in order to ensure the smoothest possible secondary transfer. Discussions with primary school teachers will seek to identify those students who may require extra support during this process.

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:



Attendance Stages

Bands	Attendance Stage	Interventions	Person Responsible
Platinum - 100%	Excellent	Rewards	Form tutor
Gold - 96% - 99.99%	Good	Form Tutor level monitoring and intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance maintains/improves – no further actions, rewards will apply Attendance does not maintain– progress to pre-stage 	Form tutor
Silver - 94% - 95.99%	Pre-stage – Initial attendance concern <i>(94% – 95.99% or 4 unauthorised/sporadic absences, 7 days of illness)</i>	Pre-Stage letter and attendance certificate sent home Form tutor supportive conversation with student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance improves – monitoring continues Attendance does not improve over a two-week period – progress to Stage 1 	Attendance Officer Form tutor
Bronze - 92% - 93.9%	Stage 1 <i>(92% - 93.9% or 6-8 unauthorised absences, 10 sessions (5 days) within 10 weeks, 15 days of illness)</i>	Stage 1 letter and attendance certificate sent home Form teachers monitor weekly and establish dialogue/contact with student Phone call home from Pastoral staff (supportive but clear on expectations) Pastoral staff to follow up any actions necessary from phone call Improvement plan/meeting with student in school and monitored for 4 weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance improves – monitoring continues, rewards will apply for improved attendance Attendance does not improve over a four-week period – progress to stage 2 	Attendance Officer Form tutor Pastoral staff
Purple - 90% - 91.9%	Stage 2	After 4 weeks, Stage 2 letter and attendance certificate issued following no improvement Parent meeting arranged with Pastoral and Attendance officer; action plan completed Vulnerable groups (SEND and PP) closely monitored by SEND team and Pastoral Leads and appropriate support offered Home visits where necessary Form tutor continues to monitor and support with consistent dialogue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance improves – monitoring continues, rewards will apply for improved attendance Attendance does not improve over a four-week period – progress to stage 3 	Attendance Officer Pastoral staff/Attendance Officer SEND/Pastoral staff Attendance team Form tutor

Bands	Attendance Stage	Interventions	Person Responsible
Lilac – 84% - 89.9%	Stage 3	Stage 3 letter and attendance certificate sent home.	Attendance Officer
Pink – 78% - 83.9%		Invitation to Parental Emergency Attendance Panel Meeting held by Attendance Lead and Pastoral staff (as appropriate) - Risk of prosecution/referrals for support (EBSA/Farne/ADHD/Counselling/EHAT)	Pastoral staff/Attendance lead
Blue – 72% - 77.9%		Improvement plan EWO involvement Form tutor continues to monitor and support with consistent dialogue Attendance Action Plan agreed. Review Date set for 2 weeks later Home visits where necessary Following the meeting an action plan and a monitoring period will be agreed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance improves – monitoring continues • Attendance does not improve – progress to stage 4 (may lead to prosecution) Non-attendance to meeting leads to Standard Attendance Plan/ Medical Evidence requirement being issued.	Support staff EWO Form tutor Attendance Officer Attendance team
Cyan – 66% - 71.9%	Stage 4	Failure of stage 3 plan/SA/Continued pattern of absence A decision is made to apply for either a Fixed Penalty Notice or offer additional support with a First Warning Letter, a further Attendance Panel and/or referral to additional services	Attendance team
Yellow - 60% - 65.9%		Discussion with full pastoral staff at weekly meeting Penalty Notice Referral to EWS	Pastoral staff/Attendance Lead EWS
Orange - 50.9% - 59.9%		Within four weeks, a Final Warning Letter refers the case to the LA for further legal action.	
Red – 50% & below			

The lists of interventions above are a general overview and other specific interventions may be applied at any stage depending on the individual student. Please be assured that if we are aware of circumstances leading to genuine absence (on-going medical issues etc) a student will not necessarily move through the stages as specified above. These cases will be monitored on individual basis by Pastoral staff.

15. Legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve students' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

16. Monitoring and analysing absence

The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data weekly to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Year groups preparing for exams.
- Individual students.
- Demographic groups, e.g. students from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of students, e.g. students with SEND, LAC and students eligible for FSM.
- Students at risk of PA.

The attendance officer will conduct thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of students and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

17. Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk students as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will be offered regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD opportunities.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for students who need it

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting students to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

18. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96 percent – full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the school website.

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2028**.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

[The procedure below has been provided as an example only. Schools must amend the text to reflect their procedures.]

1. A red, amber, green (RAG) rated spreadsheet will be sent weekly to form tutors (FT) detailing weekly and annual attendance to date.
2. Attendance will be discussed with FT and students will record their attendance in planners. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by FT should be passed immediately to heads of year (HOY).
3. Contact will be made with parents on the first day of absence for any student absence not reported. Second day N codes will be sent to HOY daily by the attendance officer (AO). HOY should contact home by telephone. Any N codes not established after a week will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
4. Student attendance drops below 95 percent – HOY will speak to students to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance. AO will make a phone call home, if applicable.
5. Student attendance drops below 93 percent – a letter will be sent home raising concerns that attendance has fallen below the school target of 95 percent. The letter will also have a leaflet attached outlining how parents can work with the school and their child to help improve attendance.
6. Student attendance drops below 90 percent – a letter will be sent home explaining that a student's absence is now being monitored. AO will contact parents. Attendance monitored for two weeks. If attendance has not improved, then parents will be required to attend a meeting in school with their child's HOY. If parents are unwilling to co-operate, or genuinely unable to attend, a referral may be required to the local education welfare officer (EWO) who will then carry out a home visit.
7. If attendance has not improved within the two-week monitoring period (likely to be close to 85 percent or below), or if attendance has fallen rapidly, parents will be invited to either: a school attendance meeting with HOY, AO and EWO if appropriate, or a medical action planning meeting with the school nurse, HOY, AO and SENCO. Provision will be discussed and targets will be set for raising attendance. This will be monitored over a further two-week period.
8. After the two-week monitoring period, if targets are met, a letter will be sent home from the leadership team to congratulate the student and the family. Monitoring and communication with the family will continue until attendance stabilises – if targets are not met, the HOY will make a referral to the EWO.
9. Education Welfare protocol will be followed and a parental contract will be drawn up – there will be a four-week monitoring period. No improvements in this time will result in a final written warning. If there is still no further improvement following this, then a fixed penalty notice will be issued.

Attendance Agreement Form

Student Attendance Agreement

I agree to attend school and understand the consequences I may face if my attendance drops below 100 percent. I will ensure that the school is made immediately aware of when I will not reasonably be able to attend, and will give the school full details of my absence.

As a student of St Cuthbert's Catholic High School, I am dedicated to:

- Being in attendance every day.
- Always being punctual to school and lessons.
- Informing the school of the reason for any absence.
- Not absent from school for trivial reasons.

Student name:	Date:
Form tutor name:	Date:

Parental Attendance Agreement

I understand that it is my responsibility to send my child to school. I agree to send my child to school every day and understand the consequences if I fail to do so. When my child is absent from school due to exceptional circumstances, I will ensure the correct procedures are followed.

Parent name:	Date:
Form tutor name:	Date: