





St Cyres School	
Policy: G8 School Attendance Policy	
Committee: Pupil Progress & Provision	
Member of staff responsible:	SMD
Date Adopted/approved:	4th March 2024
Signature of Headteacher:	
Signature of Chair of Governors:	
Date to be reviewed:	March 2025

G8 School Attendance Policy

Introduction:

St Cyres School prides itself on being an environment in which all children and young people can flourish as members of a happy, caring and safe school and wider community. It is our goal that all our children and young people attend school regularly, and on time, making the most of the opportunities available to them.

Our motto '**Strive Together; Challenge Yourself; Realise Everyone Can Succeed**' is built on the concept of all pupils being in school, nearly all of the time, and our aim is to continue to support learners in developing a sense of belonging, connectivity and engagement with St Cyres School, building their resilience and ability to cope and thrive within the challenges of modern day Wales in 2023 and beyond.

We work in partnership with learners and their parents or carers around the importance of regular and punctual attendance, and have developed partnership working with other agencies to support those learners who are struggling to attend regularly and consistently.

The St Cyres School Attendance Policy is written to ensure compliance with statutory requirements. This framework operates in conjunction with the Vale of Glamorgan Local Authority's Attendance Policy (Sept 2023).

This policy is underpinned by the following principles of law, which states:

- Parents and guardians are required under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that their child receives effective full-time education between the ages of five and sixteen.
- The Local Authority is required under section 437 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that a child for whom they are responsible is receiving suitable education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- The school is required under The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 to take attendance registers twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

This policy is duly designed to help school staff, parents and learners understand their rights, responsibilities, and roles when it comes to school attendance.

This policy aims to:

- Underline attendance and punctuality as a high priority.
- Outline our systems for monitoring and improving attendance, ensuring safeguarding remains central in all facets.
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities to ensure consistency and rigour.

St Cyres School Culture and Ethos:

‘Strive Together; Challenge Yourself; Realise Everyone Can Succeed’

To promote high levels of attendance, St Cyres school prides itself on its ethos and culture where:

- School is a safe place for all.
- School is an interesting and engaging place for all learners.
- School is a welcoming, happy, and caring environment.
- Positive use of language is present in all interactions between school staff and the school community.
- learning is supported by innovative and engaging teaching based on a purposeful and creative curriculum.
- Building, maintaining, and restoring relationships is central.
- Trauma informed work is embedded
- School offers support and appropriate challenge to bring about the best outcomes for all learners.
- There are clear expectations around bullying and discrimination and the processes to deal with it effectively.
- Strategic planning and support to reduce barriers to learning and engagement is embedded within day-to-day school practice.
- Working with other agencies and the school’s work as a Community Focused School is evident.
- Clear procedures, information, and expectations around attendance to school is available and promoted on a regular basis to all stakeholders.

The Law on School Attendance and The Right To A Full-time Education:

- The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any additional learning need they may have.
- Where parents decide to have their child registered at St Cyres School, they have a legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.
- For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Whilst the legal responsibility for regular school attendance rests with parents, St Cyres School shares with them, and the Local Authority (LA), responsibility for encouraging good attendance and improving poor attendance.
- St Cyres School is required by law to maintain specific records and to produce specified information on the attendance of its learners.

- Statutory obligations apart, St Cyres School is committed to improvements in attendance standards as a direct factor in raising pupil achievement. Poor attendance has a direct impact on educational achievement and undermines the well-being of learners.
- Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) of compulsory school age (5-16), receives efficient full-time education, suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude, and any Additional Learning Needs (ALN) the child may have. This can be through regular attendance at school or educated otherwise by the Local Authority.
- The law also permits parents to educate their child(ren) at home under the terms of Elective Home Education (EHE). The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that a child for whom they are responsible is receiving suitable education. St Cyres School will contact the Vale of Glamorgan Inclusion Team to inform them of a parental enquiry or decision to EHE.
- Only the Headteacher of St Cyres School can authorise an absence of their learners.
- Compulsory school age means that children and young people should attend school from the start of the first term commencing after their fifth birthday and are of compulsory school age until after the last Friday in June of the school year in which they have their 16th birthday.
- If a registered pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly, the parent could be guilty of an offence under section 444 (1) (1a) (z) Education Act 1996.

Promoting Good Attendance

St Cyres School takes every opportunity to promote good attendance, through all communications with parents / carers and pupils, by creating learning opportunities to reinforce the benefits of good attendance at school within classroom activities, assemblies and through visual and online campaigns.

All staff are reminded of the need to monitor attendance and engage in discussions with learners regarding the need for good attendance. Training is ongoing with regards to this, and remains a regular part of the annual inset schedule.

Heads of Year Offices engage appropriately on a first contact basis to engage relevant stakeholders, parents and carers on the need for good attendance. Communication and positive messaging via Class Charts, telephone conversations and face-to-face meetings form the basis for co-operative practice on building and maintaining good attendance. Dependent on need, these meetings can involve identified Emotionally Available Adults, Learning Coaches, Pastoral Support Assistants to Heads of Year, Heads of Year, Pupil or Learning Support and Senior Leadership links to the Heads of Year.

St Cyres School will support the local authority #MissSchoolMissOut campaign by engaging with the digital and physical materials that have been offered to schools, alongside communicating the need for good attendance at every opportunity. These include events such as PTC, Information Evenings and WARD events.

Governor Links

St Cyres School ensures that attendance is a standing agenda item for the Pupil Progress and Provision Committee (a sub committee of the full governing body), which is also responsible for the annual review of associated policies. A member of this committee (usually the chair in the first instance) can be available to discuss attendance and policy as required.

Attendance Targets

St Cyres School will work with the Vale of Glamorgan to set positive attendance targets on a whole school basis, but also works on an individual learner basis to support re-engagement of learners flexibly and creatively, where they have lower than expected attendance levels. The school will use a variety of stratagem dependent on need, but will not offer flexi-schooling and will not use the one-to-one Ipad technology as a remote learning offer.

St Cyres School embeds attendance priorities into the School Improvement Plan, evaluating attendance in self-evaluation documentation from each Head of Year. Targets, as agreed with the Local Authority, are shared with all staff at the start of the academic year, and are regularly reinforced with staff throughout the year.

The Whole School Attendance Target is discussed in reference to real time cumulative attendance statistics at every Senior Leadership Meeting.

Data Systems and Recording Procedures

St Cyres School recognises that it is imperative both for safeguarding and attainment and that a robust absence reporting and recording system is in place for ensuring that both authorised and unauthorised absences are tracked and flagged both individually, and by year group or cohort.

St Cyres School recognises that registers are legal documents, and it is essential that they are completed in a timely and accurate manner each day (AM and PM), and that parents / carers are informed at the earliest opportunity if their child is not present through first day response procedures. This is a key safeguarding duty for the school. These responses to absence use the Class Charts messaging service in the first instance, although telephone calls and engagement with the Inclusion Service are also used to engage with absence.

Daily Attendance Protocols.

Time	Action	Staff Responsible
0800-0900	Engage messages on the phone, email and Class Charts and document absences and reasons for these absences.	Pastoral Support Assistants.

	<p>Log accordingly on Class Charts.</p> <p>Message any staff accordingly - specifically with regards to CASP, CP list, CLA and ALN.</p> <p>Message External Agencies where appropriate.</p>	
0900-1000	<p>Monitor and engage recording of registers by staff, messaging and communicating with parents/carers on reasons for absence where needed.</p> <p>Message any staff accordingly- specifically with regards to CASP, CP list, CLA and ALN.</p> <p>Message External Agencies where appropriate.</p>	<p>Pastoral Support Assistants.</p> <p>Head of Year.</p> <p>CLA Designate.</p> <p>Safeguarding Team.</p> <p>ALNCo.</p>
1200-1300	<p>PM session.</p> <p>Monitor and engage recording of registers by staff, messaging and communicating with parents/carers on reasons for absence where needed.</p> <p>Message any staff accordingly- specifically with regards to CASP, CP list, CLA and ALN.</p> <p>Message External Agencies where appropriate.</p>	<p>Pastoral Support Assistants .</p> <p>Head of Year.</p> <p>CLA Designate.</p> <p>Safeguarding Team.</p> <p>ALNCo</p>

St Cyres School ensures that appropriate codes are being used, and that unknown reasons for absence are explored as soon as possible. Codes are checked on a bi-weekly basis in line with Government guidance below:

[guidance-on-school-attendance-codes.pdf \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/guidance-on-school-attendance-codes.pdf)

A parent / carer cannot authorise an absence. An absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher of St Cyres School and should only be authorised if the absence was due to illness, medical/dental appointment, or religious reasons.

School based interventions

St Cyres: Attendance In-School Graduated Support Check List	
St Cyres School Ethos / Culture and Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ethos of school embraces relationships and a Trauma Informed approach as central to organisation, policy, procedures, and decision making in school. ● Heads of Year Offices are in place to deal with everyday attendance, administer first day response Class Charts messages, emails and phone calls, make contact with parents, send letters including pre-warning FPN letters etc. ● Key member of school staff to produce biweekly data for SLT, Year Teams, ALNCO to analyse and act upon. ● Heads of Year Offices are in place, in the first instance, to meet with parents and plan and monitor interventions to bring about change in attendance patterns – e.g., curriculum changes, restore relationships, investigate bullying/friendship/staff relationship breakdowns, support with external family barriers where possible, work with other agencies. ● Focus on the importance of relationships runs throughout school – building, maintaining, and restoring relationships is central. Effective Learning Coach system/class-based system and Head of Year Offices with capacity to work in this area remove barriers to attendance. ● Excellent teaching and learning, provision, curriculum, external provision removes barriers to attendance and increases engagement. ● Attendance is a standing agenda item at full Governors' meetings. ● School counselling is in place and opportunities to signpost to other services to support learners and families is established and ongoing. ● Excellent safeguarding procedures connect Year teams

	<p>and other support teams within the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ALNCO and CLA Designate make input into attendance of vulnerable groups including those with ALN and CLA. ● INSET and training is ongoing to support above and keep attendance as a whole school priority.
Learning Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a positive welcoming environment where everyone is greeted daily / Wellbeing check ins and welcomed back after absence. ● Complete registers accurately and timely. ● Monitor attendance trends, irregular patterns of absence for learners in class. ● Discuss attendance during LC time and within teaching and Learning resources (linked with PSE / Health and Wellbeing curriculum). ● Call home to check on absence /and discuss irregular patterns of attendance, when appropriate. ● engage in discussions on Wellbeing and school and home based barriers to attendance and learning in WARD days and PTC, where appropriate.
Year Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check registers are being completed in a timely and accurate fashion. ● Identify % Triggers and activate letters / visits / meetings / Home school agreements etc as per attendance policy. ● Prepare attendance data for Heads of Years. ● Meet with Heads of Year to discuss attendance concerns, tracker updates etc and ensure regular tracker updates. ● Monitor pre and actual FP notices. ● Monitor offsite/external provisions' attendance as point of contact if relevant. ● Lead attendance promotion initiatives within Year groups / KS's / Whole School ● Meet with SLT Lead for attendance fortnightly to discuss attendance data and evaluate impact of strategies and levels of improvement etc. ● To promote good attendance and discuss current patterns in assemblies. ● To meet with LA Inclusion Team to complete attendance audits / analyse data / inclusion clinics/ sub 80% pre-triage.

Departments and Areas of Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To monitor attendance patterns as part of data analysis across year groups and classes, when liaising with Heads of Year, and when engaging in progress data. ● Contact home if absence is having an impact on progress in the subject area, after liaising with the relevant Head of Year. ● Organise catch up programmes for students who have been absent. ● Liaise with Head of Year Offices with any concerns.
LT links and SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet with Year teams regularly to share whole school data, discuss patterns and concerns and review strategies. ● Support Year teams to ensure teams have enough training / support with regards to meetings /home school agreements etc and use of SIMS/Class charts etc. ● Monitoring closely any attendance focused PSPs to promote re-engagement for persistent absentees. ● Co-ordinate assemblies that focus on attendance issues and strategies. ● Liaise with other schools during transition periods to ensure information to support learners is shared. ● Liaise with the Inclusion Team to ensure up to date training / awareness of policy changes / meetings to analyse data / complete attendance audits with LA / attend LA clinic sessions.

Penalties For Non-Attendance / FPNs / Prosecutions

Schools and the Local Authority may instigate legal penal measures for non-attendance. These include the use of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN). The full Welsh Government Guidance is located at <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/guidance-on-penalty-notices-for-regular-non-attendance-at-school.pdf>

Fixed Penalty Notices for non-attendance may be used after 10 unauthorised sessions of absence in a term. St Cyres School will have tried a range of interventions to bring about positive change, and penalty measures will be used only when reasonable efforts to engage with the family have been tried and have failed.

St Cyres School will contact and engage with the Vale of Glamorgan Inclusion Team to advise, and be led, on Education Act Prosecutions when required.

Holidays During Term Time

The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010, give schools discretionary power to grant leave for the purpose of family holiday during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw their child from school for a holiday and, in law, must apply for permission from the school in advance.

St Cyres School will only authorise family holidays where parents are able to demonstrate that **unique or exceptional circumstances** prevent the holiday from being taken outside of term time.

In general, holidays during term time will not be authorised.

The decision to authorise absence is at the headteacher's discretion, but it is the VOG's policy that absences will not be granted during term time and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances based on the school's assessment of the situation.

It is St Cyres School's view that term times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. For this reason, schools will rightly prioritise attendance to school.

If an event can reasonably be scheduled outside of term time, it would not be normal to authorise absence. Absence during term time for holidays is therefore not considered an exceptional circumstance.

The considerations that the Headteacher will take into account to ascertain whether the request is because of an exceptional circumstance are outlined below:

- Where a parent or child is experiencing a life limiting illness
- Absences to visit family members are also not usually granted during term time if they could be scheduled for holiday periods outside school hours. Children may however need time to visit seriously ill relatives
- Families may need time to recover from trauma, crisis or bereavement involving an immediate relative, i.e.: parent, guardian, carer, sibling, or grandparent
- Absence for a bereavement of a close family member is usually considered an exceptional circumstance but for the funeral service only, not extended leave
- Absences for important religious observances, civil or ceremonial activity are often considered but only for the ceremony and travelling time, not extended leave. This is intended for a one-off situation rather than regular recurring events
- The needs of families of service personnel will be considered if they are returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled holiday times

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable, and short. By 'unavoidable' we mean an essential event that could not so reasonably be scheduled at another time.

Procedure for potential Child Missing in Education (CME)

If it is believed / suspected that a child or family have gone missing, the school will NOT remove any child from their roll without first completing the CME checklist procedures found in the Welsh Government Guidance below – Appendix 9 and then referring to the Inclusion Team for support - InclusionTeamreferrals@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

[statutory-guidance-help-prevent-children-young-people-missing-education.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)

Where a pupil is missing for 10 school days, the school will notify the VOG Inclusion Team on the tenth day of school absence and email the completed 'Children and Young People Missing Education' Checklist to the Inclusion Team to advise that the pupil is believed to be missing.

A copy will be kept for school records and the My Concern records will be updated.

The school and the VOG Inclusion Team will then work in partnership to locate and ensure the safety of the pupil.

If the child is the subject of a Child Protection Plan and / or is a looked-after child, St Cyres School will notify the Social Services Key Worker within the first 24 hours of the unauthorised absence if no home contact can be made.

Where it is otherwise suspected or known that a child or young person is at potential risk of harm, or where the school has information or reason to suspect the child has been a victim of criminal activity, the school should notify Social Care Services and / or the VOG Safeguarding Team and Police Child Protection Team immediately; and inform the VOG Inclusion Team as soon as possible afterwards.

Procedure for Elective Home Education (EHE) enquiries

St Cyres School is aware that there are many reasons why parents may consider EHE. Sometimes it is due to philosophical / lifestyle decisions . However, there are occasions when families consider this option due to unresolved issues in school or breakdown in relationships. St Cyres School remains mindful of this and the potential impact on the learner and family, and works to resolve issues in a timely and appropriate manner to avoid such situations.

However, in the rare occasion that the school cannot fully resolve any issues that may lead to the consideration of EHE, the VOG Inclusion Team will be contacted to support the school and family and work together to help resolve any issues.

If the school is made aware that a parent/carer is considering EHE, the school will refer to the Welsh Government Guidance below for guidance and contact the VOG Inclusion Team at InclusionTeamreferrals@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
[Elective Home Education Guidance \(gov.wales\)](#)
[Home education: handbook for home educators \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

Reduced timetables / PSP

Where a learner is not able to access a full-time school provision then this must be documented by the school and the VOG, using the process and format of a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP). PSPs should only be put in place for medical and social, emotional, and mental health needs of the learner and only if in the best interests of the learner.

St Cyres School is aware that:-

- The PSP document is usually a multi-agency document and process and must include the engagement and consent of the parent / carer.
- There should also be regular reviews of the PSP where the parent/carer is in attendance. PSP's need to be reviewed at least every six weeks. The time threshold for a PSP to be in place should be limited to twelve weeks for actions to have taken place and progress made and for the learner to be ready to return to school full time.
- If a PSP is unsuccessful, it needs to be withdrawn and support from the inclusion service requested.

A PSP cannot be created and continued without the signed consent of the parent / carer.

The PSP will set out the reasons why a full-time education is not able to be accessed at that time, but will also set out the measures which are in place to increase the learners' access to full-time education as soon as possible .

The school will engage with the Local Authority Inclusion team training on the use of PSPs and reduced timetables.

The SLT closely monitors the use of PSPs and continually monitors and evaluates the impact of PSPs.

Referrals to LA Inclusion Team

St Cyres School works closely with its colleagues in the Vale of Glamorgan and referrals to support with low attendance issues are communicated when appropriate. St Cyres School will submit a referral where there is a continued lack of improvement in attendance for a learner following the implementation of all school based documented interventions.

St Cyres School supports pupils with low attendance on a needs-led basis which is tailored to the individual.

APPENDIX 1 – Resources

[School attendance and absence | Sub-topic | GOV.WALES](#)

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IF1_7h8kUbIKa_i8LlRy7rJbqct14016/view?usp=sharing

[St Cyres Attendance Strategy](#)