

Newsletter

Missing school can have an impact on pupils' wellbeing. This includes mixing with friendship groups, building resilience and accessing the mental health support that schools can offer.

(Parent Kind, 2023)

Saint David's CiW Primary – Spring Term 1 – Jan 2026

2026

We hope you had a restful and enjoyable break and that children are returning refreshed and ready for another exciting term of learning.

January can sometimes feel challenging. Dark mornings, colder weather and the return to routines after the holidays can affect motivation and confidence. It's also a time when many families start dreaming of sunshine and warmer days, and tempting holiday offers can make time away feel appealing. However, regular school attendance remains very important for children's learning, friendships and wellbeing.

Being in school every day helps children settle quickly back into routines, reconnect with friends and feel confident as learners.

A reminder about term dates and holidays

Any holidays taken during the school term will be recorded as unauthorised and may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice from the Local Authority.

Before booking any travel, please check the following term dates for the Spring and Summer term.

Spring Term 1: Monday 5 Jan to Friday 13th Feb

Half term: Monday 16 Feb to Friday 20 Feb

Spring Term 2: Monday 23 Feb - Friday 27 March

Summer Term 1: Monday 13 April to Friday 22 May

Half term: Monday 25 May to Friday 29 May

Summer Term 2: Monday 1 June to Friday 17th July

More info on INSET days can be found on the school website

If the attendance officer gets in touch, am I in trouble?

No! Their main role is to work alongside families, not judge them. Contact is about support, understanding and problem-solving, not blame.

What the School Attendance Officer does:

- Works with families to identify barriers affecting attendance
- Listens without judgement to concerns and circumstances
- Works together to find realistic, manageable solutions
- Helps agree clear next steps to support regular attendance
- Facilitates communication between home and school
- Strengthens support around the child, involving school staff or services where appropriate
- Maintains supportive contact while attendance improves

Formal escalation, including Fixed Penalty Notices, is only considered where there is persistent absence and a lack of engagement, and after opportunities for support have been offered.

In most cases, working together early prevents the need for any further action.

745 days of learning

were missed last term, including:

435
days

Illness & Medical appointments

93
days

Holidays

133
days

Other unauthorised (no reason given)

Unmissable Moments

Don't miss these events this half term...

St Dwynwen's Day
Islam Celebration Day
National Storytelling Week
Welsh Language Music Day
Children's Mental Health Awareness Week
Safer Internet Day
Chinese New Year

New Year Resolutions: 3 habits that support good attendance

1. Make school attendance predictable

Treat school as the normal, expected part of every weekday. Clear, calm expectations help children feel secure and reduce anxiety.

2. Keep routines structured and prepared

Consistent mornings, supported by preparation the night before, reduce stress and help children arrive settled and ready to learn.

3. Manage absence day by day

Only keep children off school when they are genuinely unwell. The 48-hour rule applies only to sickness or diarrhoea. For other illnesses, families must contact school each day.



8:45 - 8:55am - Gates open - on time
8:55 - 9:25am - Marked as late
After 9.25am - unauthorised late mark for the morning session (this counts as an absent mark)

Spotlight – ABSA

Some children find attending school difficult because of anxiety or emotional distress. This is known as Anxiety-Based School Avoidance (ABSA).

What is ABSA?

ABSA is when a child struggles to attend school due to anxiety rather than behaviour or lack of interest in learning. Children often want to attend school but feel overwhelmed. ABSA is not a choice and not a parenting issue.

What might ABSA look like?

- Worry, distress or physical symptoms on school days
- Difficulty separating from family
- Increased anxiety after weekends, holidays or illness
- Frequent minor illnesses or requests to stay at home
- Attendance dropping or following a pattern

What helps?

ABSA is best supported through early action, consistent routines, and regular attendance alongside emotional support. Long periods away from school can increase anxiety and make returning harder.

What should families do?

If attendance starts to feel difficult, please contact school early. Working together helps children feel safe, supported and confident to attend.

What support is available?

School staff can work with families to understand concerns and put support in place. This may include check-ins with a trusted adult, small adjustments to routines, or advice from specialist services where needed.

Miss school?

Miss out!

Worried about your child's attendance? Is your child struggling to come to school? Not sure how to improve attendance or punctuality? If you need any help, please get in touch with our School Attendance Officer:



Current school attendance: 94.7%

We are so close to our target of 95% Every day in school helps us reach that goal and gives our children the best chance to succeed



Is my child too ill for school?



scott.normanstephenson@cardiff.gov.uk



07812 433151



We use a Multi-Tiered System of Support to help improve attendance. This involves three levels of intervention, with different roles for teachers, school staff, parents, children and external agencies, including the Local Authority. The level of support a child receives depends on their level of risk. Children are considered at risk of persistent absence if they miss 19 days or more in a school year, which is 90% attendance or below.



Role of Teachers and School

- Meet and Greet children.
- Create positive classroom environments.
- Build positive relationships with all children and adults.
- Recognise individual and collective achievements.
- Implement evidence-based teaching strategies.
- Monitor daily attendance and punctuality

Role of Children

- Attend school regularly and be punctual.
- Engage actively in classroom activities.
- Support other children.
- Recognise the achievements of other children.
- Share when you have a concern.

Tier 1
Universal Strategies

Role of Parents

- Ensure children attend school regularly and on time.
- Understand and support any concerns your child may have.
- Communicate with the school regarding absence.
- Recognise personal achievements.
- Communicate with teachers about any concerns.

Role of External Agencies

- Provide resources and training to teachers on effective classroom strategies.
- Collaborate with schools on attendance initiatives.
- Support a comprehensive and inclusive school-wide approach that encompasses both attendance and mental health.



Role of Teachers and School

- Proactively use data information to identify children who are PA and at risk of PA.
- Work with each identified child and families to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school or out of school barriers to attendance.
- Implement agreed strategies in daily practice.
- Monitor progress.
- Recognise achievements.

Role of Children

- Co-create and participate in any targeted interventions.
- Recognise personal achievements.
- Share concerns with staff.
- Continue to engage in school life.

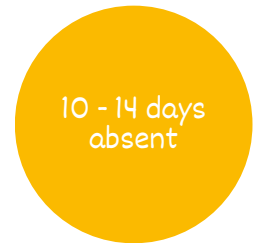
Tier 2
Individualised Strategies

Role of Parents

- Work with the school to help understand their child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.
- Continue to communicate effectively with the school regarding absence.

Role of External Agencies

- Signpost or provide access to services.
- Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified child and their family with access to services they need.
- Provide professional development and early intervention support to the school.



Role of Teachers and School

- Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other external partners.
- Use data driven information to identify children at risk of severe absence.
- Continuously assess and adapt strategies.
- Monitor progress.
- Recognise achievements.

Role of Children

- Actively engage in intensive interventions.
- Recognise personal achievements.
- Share concerns with staff.
- Continue to engage in school life.

Tier 3
Higher Needs Strategies

Role of Parents

- Collaborate closely with the school on creating and implementing highly specialised interventions
- Continue to communicate with the school.
- Take an active role in the multi-agency effort.

Role of External Agencies

- Offer specialised assessments and services for students with complex needs.
- Provide intensive training and consultation.
- Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other external partners.



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LET'S GET ATTENDANCE **BACK ON TRACK**

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www.caerdydd.gov.uk/presenolddebynyrysgol

#EveryDayMatters
www.cardiff.gov.uk/schoolattendance