

Caldervale High School



Strategy for Improving Pupil Attendance

Improving pupil attendance is an identified priority in Caldervale High School

A school culture with a clear focus on positive relationships, where young people feel included, respected, safe and secure and where their achievements and contributions are valued and celebrated is essential in promoting good attendance.

We must have robust procedures in place to ensure that we respond quickly when pupils do not attend school.

While every member of staff has a role to play in improving pupil attendance, there are delineated responsibilities across the school.

This strategy defines the role that each member of staff has in supporting pupil attendance. Please ensure you are familiar with the section relating to you.

Teaching Staff

Teachers have a legal responsibility to keep an accurate record of pupil attendance.

Period-by-period registration should be undertaken for every class timeously and must be 100% accurate.

Registers should be completed by calling out the names of each pupil in the class. If you don't know the class in front of you, it is recommended that you also undertake a head count.

When completing registers, teaching staff should not leave the box blank in Seemis, if a pupil is not present in the class, then this should be changed to **not in class**; a blank box indicates that a pupil is present.

When a pupil arrives in school late, on entering the building, they should give their name to the member of staff at reception before reporting to their class. Class teachers should refresh their register before the end of the period to check that **TBC** has been changed to **late**.

The office staff will send the daily attendance sheet via email to all staff once registration has been completed and this can then be used to check for anomalies.

Teaching staff should raise any concerns about individual pupil attendance with pupil support staff at the earliest opportunity. This can be done via email to the PT Pupil Support and relevant Year Head.

Supply teachers are added to seemis when covering lessons which allows them to complete the register and remove the need for PTs to provide them with class lists for their department.

Pupil Support

As defined by North Lanarkshire's Improving Pupil Attendance Policy, the Principal Teacher of Pupil Support in Secondary Schools is responsible for tracking and monitoring attendance and timekeeping within a school. They have a key role in both promoting good attendance and building positive relationships with children and young people, parents and carers.

In Caldervale High School, the Principal Teacher Inclusion (Support for Learning) also has a caseload of vulnerable pupils, and the same procedure applies with regards to attendance procedures.

Daily Tasks

Attendance monitoring is a task that should be undertaken **every single day** and is an extremely important part of the role of Pupil Support.

Pupil Support should ensure that they check the daily absence report when it is published.

Pupil Support should check emails from the office staff, if any, with absence details to ensure that all pupil absence is accounted for.

Attendance anomalies should be checked and corrected in the system.

Vulnerable Pupils

Any pupil who has been identified by the pupil support team as being vulnerable will benefit from a more targeted approach with regards to any unexplained absence.

Pupil Support will ensure that any unexplained absence of a vulnerable pupil identified will be followed up as a priority and in a timely manner. If a child on our vulnerable list has not arrived in school by the time the absence report is to be issued (approx. 9:30am) and we have not received any notification from their parent/carer as to why they are not in school, then their pupil support teacher will contact home to check on their welfare.

If a PT Pupil Support is class committed during periods 1 and 2, they will arrange for a member of the office staff to call home and check on the absent child, then they will update the vulnerable pupil attendance spreadsheet accordingly.

Text messages will be sent to the parents/carers if calls go unanswered.

If a child is on the Child Protection Register and, or under a supervision order and pupil support are unable to contact the parent/carer directly, then social work will be made aware.

Weekly Tasks

Appropriate codes should be used when a pupil is absent. Consideration should be given to the reason for absence and the best code to use. Any uncertainty around coding should be directed to SLT.

Clear communication with parents/carers is essential. Pupil Support should be proactive and engage in dialogue as early as possible with parents/carers to build communication and trust. Group call emails, texts or phone calls should be made if there has been no contact from home around a pupil absence.

- In the first instance, a text message will be sent to parents/carers asking for an explanation for an unexplained absence.
- An **Attendance Enquiry Letter** will be sent if there are unexplained absences.
- An **Attendance Alert Letter** will be sent if there are unexplained absences and attendance has dropped below 90%.
- An **Offer of Meeting Letter** will be sent if attendance falls below 80% This letter asks parents/carers to get in touch with the school to arrange a meeting to discuss the pupil's attendance.
- If there is no response or improvement, the Principal Teacher of Pupil Support will call to arrange a meeting with the parent/carer.
- If there is still no response or improvement, or the parents fail to engage, the pupil will be raised at AoN (Assessment of Needs) and, where appropriate, the CIIL will be alerted.
- If parents do not engage, or there is no improvement following other school-based interventions, a referral should be made to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration or Social Work to seek further support.

Pupil support teachers meet with pupils to establish reasons for absence and consider any intervention/support required with a wellbeing assessment completed as appropriate.

If the reason for ongoing absence remains unclear, parents/carers and pupils concerned will be asked to complete emotional based non-attendance surveys to ascertain the main reason for absence to allow the most appropriate support and interventions to be offered.

Pupil Support should ensure that the appropriate Depute Head Teacher is made aware of any concerns around pupil absence and a discussion should take place about the involvement of partner agencies if appropriate.

If, despite normal interventions, including face-to-face meetings with parents/carers, a child's absence does not improve, then the child concerned should be raised at the next appropriate **Assessment of Needs** meeting which is the starting point of the **Caldervale High School Support and Planning Pathway**. The child's pupil support teacher, the DHT Pupil Support and relevant Year Head will attend this meeting. Subsequently, this could lead to a **Team Around the Child Meeting (TATC)** taking place, depending on the identified individual needs of the young person being

discussed. If despite being discussed at numerous **AON** meetings and having held a **TATC** meeting, still there is no improvement in attendance, we might consider discussing the young person at the next **Red Alert** Meeting for Red Alert Pupils (**RAP**). As well as the DHT Pupil Support, this meeting is attended by the CIL, Educational Psychologist and relevant year head.

Latecoming should be monitored, and the appropriate letter sent home to alert parent/carers if late coming is regular. Any concerns around persistent late coming should be discussed with SLT.

GIRFMe Planning and Attendance:

Some young people require additional support to overcome barriers to their learning. This may have an impact on attendance and should be considered when discussing attendance.

GIRFMe plans should be updated to reflect any issues that are proving to be a barrier to attendance. Additional support should be given as necessary. All teaching staff have access to the targeted spreadsheet which has links to each GIRFMe plan to allow appropriate planning to take place and ensure inclusion.

Inclusion Hub:

ASN assistants may be deployed to support young people with difficulties, even in the short term.

The Inclusion Hub keeps accurate attendance records of pupils, period by period, and ensures that this information is sent to the school office so attendance records can be updated on Seemis. For a very small number of pupils who attend the Inclusion Hub for all, or most of the day, they can be registered on Seemis directly by the member of staff supervising that period.

The Snug Room:

The Snug is accessible to specific pupils where there are attendance concerns; the pupils have a soft start to their day or have a relaxing area where they go to, should they experience levels of high anxiety and stress.

Family Engagement Support Assistant (FESA)

Caldervale High School currently does not have an allocated FESA. Once in post, the FESA will work directly with families where there are ongoing attendance concerns.

Depute Head Teacher

Daily Tasks

Depute Head Teachers should also be monitoring the attendance patterns of their respective stages weekly. Agreement should be made with the office staff about the text messages being sent to parents/carers each day.

DHTs should check the email from the office staff with the written daily absence details to ensure that all pupil absence is accounted for and that all absence and late coming is monitored.

Weekly Tasks

Regular discussion should take place with Pupil Support to ensure that all procedures are being followed. Individual pupils should be discussed as necessary. Parents should be invited to attend a meeting with the DHT and PTPS to discuss attendance.

Depute Head Teachers may consider the role of the local authority in supporting attendance. A meeting of the team around the child, in line with GIRFEC principles, may be considered. Accurate minutes of any such meeting should be taken and kept. There may also be a role for the school counsellor, educational psychologist.

Weekly AON meetings where attendance concerns are discussed are even more targeted during the last meeting of every month where the focus of discussion will be on a smaller number of pupils who, despite having been discussed at several AON meetings, there is little, or no improvement. This meeting will be chaired by the DHT Pupil Support and attended by the CIIL, Educational Psychologist and relevant year head.

Head Teacher

The HT will check all procedures are being followed and support teaching staff, Principal Teachers and Depute Head Teachers in undertaking their respective roles.

Period-By-Period registration will be monitored daily, and anomalies raised with teaching staff.

A decision may be taken by the HT to involve Education and Families personnel such as the CIIL or E&F manager to support the Promoting Attendance Strategy. Partner agencies may also be contacted to support the school when there is active non-compliance from parents/carers.

Concerns around any young person will be raised with the HT by the DHT when appropriate.

Home School Partnership Officer

Where a young person's attendance is causing a concern or there is prolonged non-attendance, the HSPO should be approached by PTPS/DHT for support. The HSPO should liaise between the home and school. This may be to offer family support while building and creating positive relationships between school and home, providing support strategies through groups or personalised support to encourage good attendance. Home visits may be considered as appropriate.

This year, our HSPO will work alongside pupil support to target and support specific pupils and their families in S1 and S2 where there are ongoing attendance concerns

Office Staff

The office staff log all communication from parents and maintain accurate records. This contact can be from an email, phone call, text or via parents' portal. Reasons for absence are then recorded directly on Seemis. If a child is absent for a more serious reason i.e., bereavement, hospitalisation etc, then the PT Pupil Support will be emailed directly and forewarned.

The office staff will send text messages to parents after the first register of the day has been taken to advise of non-attendance. This is a generic text that reads ***"John Smith did not register at school this morning (date). Please contact the school with a reason on (school phone number)."***

This procedure will be repeated in the afternoon, once we return from lunch break.

If a pupil arrives late to school, upon entering the building they will give their name before reporting to their class. Their attendance register will be amended accordingly (from TBC to late). Class teachers should also check their register before the end of the period to make sure that this change has been made.

Office staff send the daily attendance sheet via email to all staff.