

Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic School

Ysgol Gatholig Bendigaid Carlo Acutis



Attendance Policy

Ratification date:	January 2024
Review Date:	January 2026
Staff member responsible for writing, reviewing & updating:	Mrs S J Hopkins
Person responsible for monitoring & implementation of the policy	Mrs S J Hopkins/ Head of Campus

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1. Purpose

Our school is committed to ensure regular attendance at school is a priority which will in turn provide pupils with the best possible chances in life to succeed and to achieve their goals. Regular school attendance is essential for all children and young people. Failure to regularly attend can increase the risk of leaving school without any qualifications and can also increase the likelihood of pupils being drawn into criminal and antisocial behaviour.

Our school will endeavour to work with parents, pupils, the Local Authority and the Education Welfare Service (EWS) to ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate education and to attend school regularly.

This attendance policy reflects the Local Authority Attendance Strategy.

2. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that attendance and punctuality remains a key focus for all, including governors, teachers, parents, pupils and partner agencies. We will strive to:

1. Offer a safe and friendly environment which welcomes children regardless of race, gender or ability.
2. Raise standards and ensure all pupils reach their full potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
3. Ensure all stakeholders receive communication about information on the importance of regular school attendance.
4. Identify those pupils with irregular attendance at an early stage and work with partner agencies to try and address any barriers that stop pupils from attending school regularly.
5. Keep accurate and up to date attendance data.
6. Ensure all pupils are safe, and for schools to follow the local authority's 'Children Missing Education' guidance.
7. Reward those pupils who have made significant progress in raising attendance levels

This document is supported by the All-Wales Attendance Framework.

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/pupilsupport/framework/?lang=en> Legal Framework

The law outlining attendance is: The Education Act 1996 which places a legal obligation on:

- the local authority to provide and enforce attendance.
- school to register attendance and notify the local authority of a child's absence.

Section 7 of the above act states that: 'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full-time education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

Section 444 further states that:

'The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable in law'.

3. School Attendance Orders (SAO):

Under the Education Act 1996 section 437- 443 a School Attendance Order applies when a parent of compulsory school age fails to prove that the child is receiving a suitable education and where the authority believes the child should attend school. A School Attendance Order may be used to direct a parent to send their child to a specified school, and should be used when a pupil is not on roll at any school.

4. The Education (Penalty Notice) Wales Regulations 2013:

This legislation came into force in September 2014 and has given Local Authorities powers to issue fixed penalty notices (FPN). A code of conduct has been agreed by the Local Authority on the issuing of the FPN which includes the following criteria:

- Minimum of 10 unauthorised absences in a twelve-week rolling term which do not have to be consecutive.
- Minimum of 10 sessions of lateness sessions.
- Parents/carers who chose to take their children out of school on holiday during term time without authorisation from the Head teacher for a minimum of 10 unauthorised sessions.
- Minimum of 15 medical absences. (Each case will be considered individually and depending on the circumstance.

The Head teacher will inform the parent by letter that the school may request a fixed penalty notice for unauthorised absence. If a FPN is requested, the Senior Education Welfare Officer (Senior EWO) for the Local Authority will review the case with the school, considering levels of absence, level of parental engagement, any equality implications, history of attendance and also any statement of special educational needs.

A fixed penalty notice warning may be issued, and a period of 15 days will be monitored for an immediate improvement. A warning may not be issued in respect of an unauthorised holiday in term time.

A penalty notice is £60 if paid within 28 days in receipt of the notice, increasing to £120 if not paid within 28 days. If not received by 42 days then the local authority can prosecute parents for the child's absence.

5. Definitions

Compulsory school age – under section 8 of the Education Act 1996, children and young people should attend school from the start of the first term commencing after their fifth birthday. A young person ceases to be compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they have their 16th birthday. 'Parents' section 576 of the Education Act 1996 includes:

- All natural parents whether married or not
- Any person who although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a young person or child, and any person, who although not a natural parent has care of a child or young person.

Meanings:

'EWS' – Education Welfare Service

'EWO' – Education Welfare Officer

'CME' – Children missing education'

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is everybody's concern, and the school will expect all stakeholders to play a part in improving attendance. This will contain all having clear expectations and roles which include:

Role of Executive Headteacher

- To be responsible for overall management and implementation of this policy.
- Work closely with the school's governing body.
- Set attendance targets with the Local Authority, EWO advisors and governors.
- To use discretion when receiving applications for holiday requests and to provide reasons to parents when a holiday in term time is not authorised.
- Regular attendance reports shared and provided to governors.
- Work closely with the local authority's Lead EWO and nominated school EWO, and other support services.
- To notify the local authority when a 'child is missing education' and follow the local authority's CME procedures.
- Ensure policy is readily available for stakeholders including on the school, and website.
- To work with the Local Authority to provide a comprehensive plan in terms of attendance.

Governing Body:

- Approve the policy and amend if necessary.
- Receive reports from the head teacher on a regular basis.
- Attend meetings as and when required.
- Ensure policy is shared with all relevant stakeholders. Lead governor for attendance is appointed.

Roles of Heads of Campus

- Work with all staff responsible for attendance and punctuality.
- To look at attendance data on a weekly basis, linking in with the school EWO.
- Regularly check registers.
- Ensure all absences are recorded in line with the guidance of codes document including those unauthorised absence and no reasons provided.
- Regular and updated training on attendance for all relevant staff, using the Local Authority school data team.
- Raise issues of those staff not compliant with the completion of registers.
- Discuss any initiatives with all staff.

Progress Leaders

- Ensure all student absences are recorded, and notes received.
- Registers are completed daily.
- Work closely with the school's attendance officer.
- Work closely with the schools EWO, providing valid attendance data on individual students.
- To attend set and pre-arranged meetings with the EWO.
- Truancy concerns are dealt with.
- To provide rewards to those students with improved or excellent attendance.

Class Teachers/Form Tutors

- To carry out the statutory role of completing attendance registers twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon.
- Ensure absences are accounted for by ways of a note provided by parents.
- Follow up unaccounted reasons for absence and concerns raised to the Head of year.
- To continue to raise the profile of attendance to all students.
- Contact attendance officer with any queries.

Students:

- Attend regularly and on time unless unwell or received an authorised absence.
- Bring to school a note explaining reasons for absence and give to class/form teacher.
- Inform teacher of planned absences.

Parents:

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- To notify the school if their child is unable to attend, on the first day of absence and every day thereafter.
- To keep the school updated on parents/guardians contact details, including mobile numbers and new addresses.
- To work with school and partner agencies to address any issues of irregular attendance of their children.
- To work with their child in relation to homework, not completing homework is not a reason for missing school.

Role of Attendance Officer:

- To speak with parents on a daily basis to establish reasons for student's absence.
- To record absences daily, registers as and when required.
- To 'mop up' missing marks and 'N' codes, providing reasons and inputting reasons on the red flag system on SIMS.
- To ensure all session registers are completed on a daily basis.
- To send text messages to those parents who haven't contacted school, or by telephoning parents individually in order to establish reasons.
- To work closely with EWO and support staff in school.
- To work with the Leadership Team and Head teacher closely.
- To ensure transfer of CTF of students are completed in a timely manner and students are not removed from roll unnecessarily.
- Contact parents/guardians of those students who have not attended and not provided reasons for absence on a daily basis.
- To check messages, if necessary, either on the school's answerphone or text messaging system.
- To arrange letters and meetings for those parents whose children's attendance poses a concern.
- To monitor patterns of irregular attendance.

7. Keeping School Registers

The school's register is a legal document and under The Education (student registration) (Wales) regulations 2010 the school is required to keep an accurate record of attendance. Registers need to be marked twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. It is also a requirement in the higher campus of Blessed Carlo Acutis school to complete the register for each 5 learning sessions.

Registers may be needed in a court of law if deemed appropriate. Schools Information Management System (SIMS) is used in all schools in the Merthyr Tydfil Local authority area to record all student's attendance.

By the end of the school week the school's overall attendance registers will be completed and an overall attendance figure will be calculated by the school.

8. Types of Absences

It is important for parents to understand the definition of the different types of absences. They are classed as unauthorised absence and authorised absence. The schools head teacher can only decide on whether an absence should be classed in either one of these categories, parents cannot.

Absences maybe authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Religious observance
- Medical/Dental appointments during school hours
- Fixed term and permanent exclusions
- Holiday agreed by the head teacher

Examples of what are classified as unauthorised absence are the following, however they are not limited:

Absences may be **unauthorised** for the following reasons:

- Truancy
- Late after the close of registration
- Staying at home for no reason – condoned absence
- Going shopping
- Birthdays
- Holiday not agreed by the head teacher

In addition, there are several codes classed as a **present mark** which include the following:

- Late before the close of register
- Educated off site, students attending vocational courses at college/students attending alternative provision agreed by school
- Sporting activity
- Educational visit
- Traveller absence
- Interview
- Work experience
- Where students are on roll at school and at another education establishment

9. Punctuality

Punctuality is a legal requirement and students must attend on time. Persistent lateness has a detrimental effect on a child's learning and disrupts other students within the class and throughout the school.

Those parents of students who are persistently late will be contacted by the class teacher/Head of year/Leadership team.

In the primary campuses, all students who are late must bring their child into the school through the main doors and sign the electronic Halo system. In the upper campus, if it is before register closes. Learners report straight to their form class. If it is after register closes, children must report to the reception area in Phase 2. For each other session, registers will close 30 minutes after the session starts.

10. Medical Absences

Where a child is continually absent from school on the grounds of medical reasons, it will be necessary for the parent to provide medical evidence to school. This will be initiated by the school and the EWO which will result in the student and family receiving the appropriate support in assisting in attending school regularly. There may be times where a reintegration plan may be necessary which will be a partnership agreement between the family, student, EWO and school.

11. Holidays during term time

Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw students from school during the school term for a holiday. Under the Education (student registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010, head teachers have discretion to authorise a holiday of up to 5 days during term time, over 5 days can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

The school will only authorise holidays during term time in exceptional circumstances and if the learner's current attendance is at least 95%.

12. School Procedures

Parents are expected to contact school on the first day of absence and to provide reasons for their child's absence. This will then need to be followed up by an explanation note and handed into the class teacher/form tutor which will be kept on record by school.

If parents fail to notify school, then the school will make every effort to contact the parents and other persons listed as a point of contact. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if no contact is made. Failure to receive any contact by 2.30pm on the day of absence may result in the involvement of the Local Authority EWO.

As a school we have a duty to safeguard all our students and under the Education & Inspections Act 2006, requires the local authority to decide to enable them to establish the identities of children residing within the Merthyr Local Authority area or pupils who are attending BCACS in the catchment area who are not receiving an education. For example, these may be students who have not attended school for an excessive amount of time without any contact or reason for the absence. The duty lies within the Local Authority to investigate further. There should be no 'N' codes on the system 2 weeks after the absence of the individual, however, it is best practice to manage those codes as soon as possible and change the code when the reason for the absence is obtained.

13. Schools Strategies to Improve Attendance

We aim that all students achieve 100% attendance, however there may be instances where students unfortunately are unwell or have other legitimate reasons for school absence. The school operates a 'Callio' process which provides parents with information of the links between attendance and attainment. This shows which category the child's attendance falls into when attendance is as follows:

97-100% - Green
92-97% - Amber
Below 92% - Red

NB: Where a child falls in between these categories they will be rounded up to the nearest whole figure.

Each parent will receive a 'Callio letter' on a termly basis informing them of which category they are currently in. This ensures that early intervention is received to students and families who are in need. (see Appendix 3).

The School Environment

The school will provide a happy, welcoming and organised environment to ensure all students enjoy learning which results in good attendance. It is staffs' responsibility to ensure that the classroom and the school is a happy place.

Staff Awareness

All staff are fully aware of the importance of regular school attendance, and students will regularly be made aware of this during the school day from staff.

Attendance Assemblies

Celebrating attendance should be a priority, and involving students gives them an incentive, motivation, and encouragement, with a sense of self - worth. This promotes the wellbeing of children as well as rewarding them.

This is sometimes delivered by power point, or by inviting our students on stage to receive their reward.

Transition Process

As we are all aware it is difficult at times to deal with change. We as a school appreciate that students find it hard to cope with the transition from year groups and from primary campuses to the secondary school campuses. Our school ensures that we have all staff involved in this process and taster days for all students are set.

Parents evening

Parent's evenings may offer the support of the EWO if parents need advice and guidance or additional support in trying to ensure the regular school attendance.

School Sanctions

Where students are continually absent from school, we instigate student sanctions if there is no improvement. This may be in the form of detention either during lunch time or after school. Parents will be notified on each occasion.

Rewards

Our reward scheme includes students, and local businesses within the community. Rewards can include the following:

- Class Trophy.
- 100% awards for the academic year for students.
- First In the queue for lunch.

Further examples can include students being entered into a draw at the end of term or the end of an academic year for some of the following:

- Cinema tickets
- Book vouchers/book vending machines
- iTunes/Spotify voucher

14. Additional Attendance Strategies

Role of the Local Authority Education Welfare Service

The Education Welfare service is a statutory service which supports schools in ensuring all students attend school regularly.

We have a designated EWO who is based in an office in school. The school, in a joint discussion will then refer the student to the EWO if necessary. Individual circumstances of each student will be considered. The EWO will then either send a letter home informing parent of your child's attendance, make a telephone call home, invite you into school or/and will conduct a home visit.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually, or otherwise, under the Education Act 1996. Where parents fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child or otherwise are committing an offence and the EWO will need to be informed.

It is unfortunate on occasions, but a punitive approach may be needed which may result in prosecution of parents.

Good Practice Strategies

In addition to the strategies above, other initiatives may be conducted at any point.

Attendance Panels

Attendance panels are seen as good practice in schools and involve school governors, member of senior staff, EWO, parent and on occasions include the student. Whilst the panel's aim is to address the attendance of students, it is not always in the best interest of the student to be out of class.

Parents are invited into school to discuss their child's attendance, with a view for an action plan to be completed and signed which will regularly be reviewed. Letters of invitation will be sent to parents in advance and parents are asked to notify school as to whether they will be attending or not. If they are not available to attend, then another letter will be sent. Failure to attend without notification may result in a visit or telephone call from the EWO.

Truancy Patrols

Truancy Patrols are initiated by the school's police liaisons officers. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 this gives the Police the power to remove truants on the day of the truancy patrol. Any child found unaccompanied by an adult can be taken back to school or to a designated place of safety. Parents and students' details are logged, along with the reasons for the student being out of school. These patrols are held as and when needed throughout the academic year.

First Day contact

Whilst we as a school operate a first day contact, there may be times where the Education Welfare Officer will conduct this and contact parents of those students who are absent on a specified day. This is deemed as good practice and identifies those students who are regularly absent at an early stage with a view to referring to additional support services.

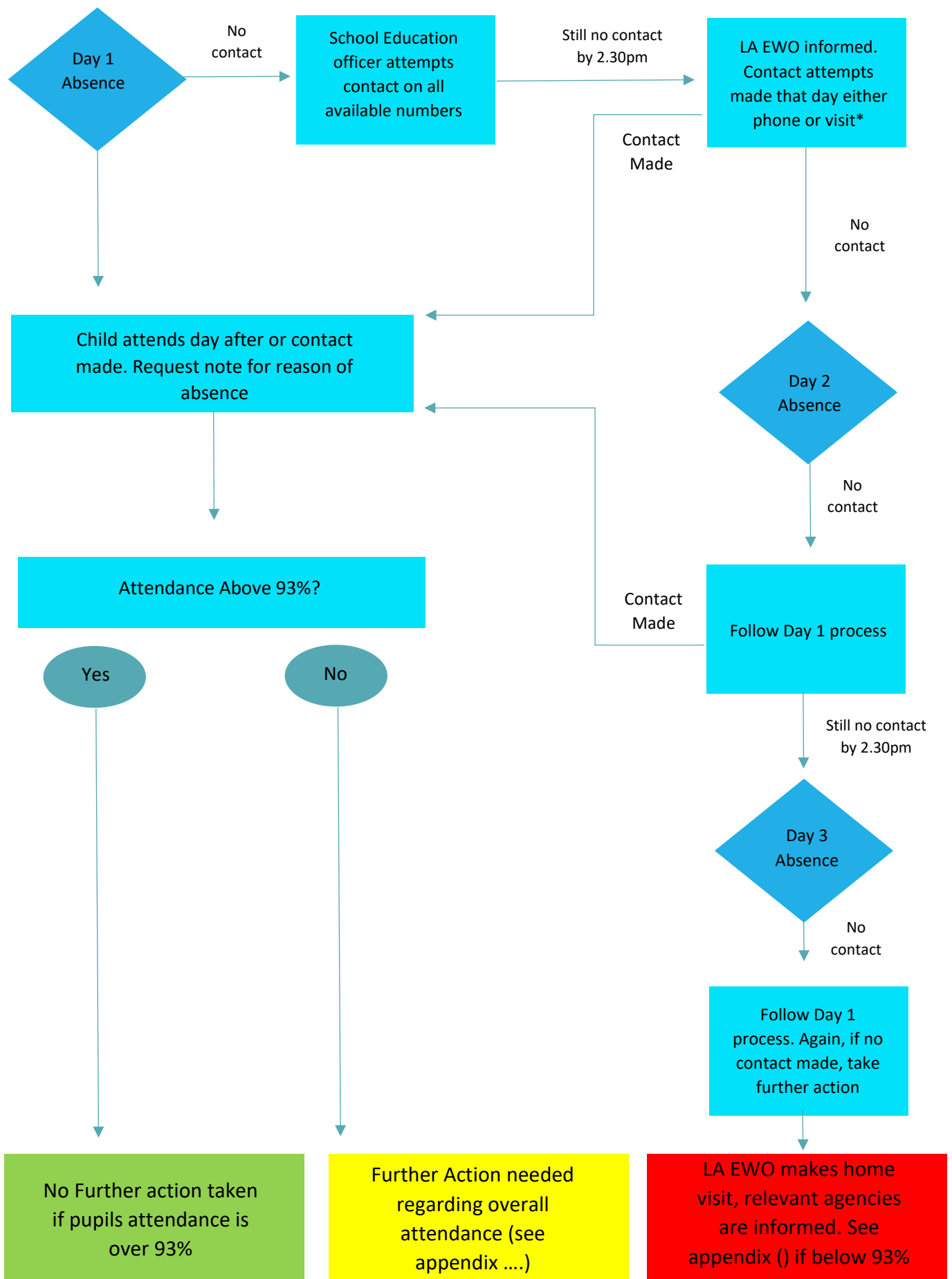
15. Data Collection

Our school's attendance data is continually being tracked and monitored electronically both on an individual student level and as a whole school.

16. Monitoring and reporting

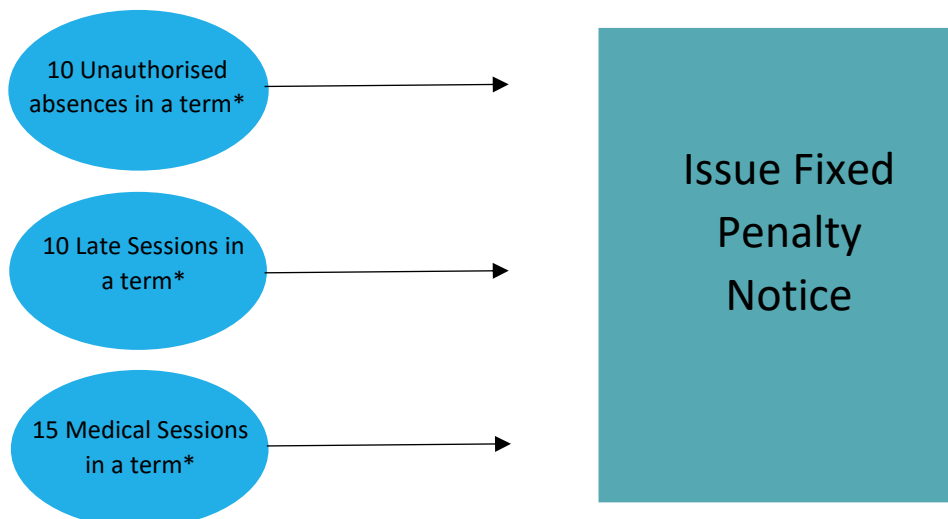
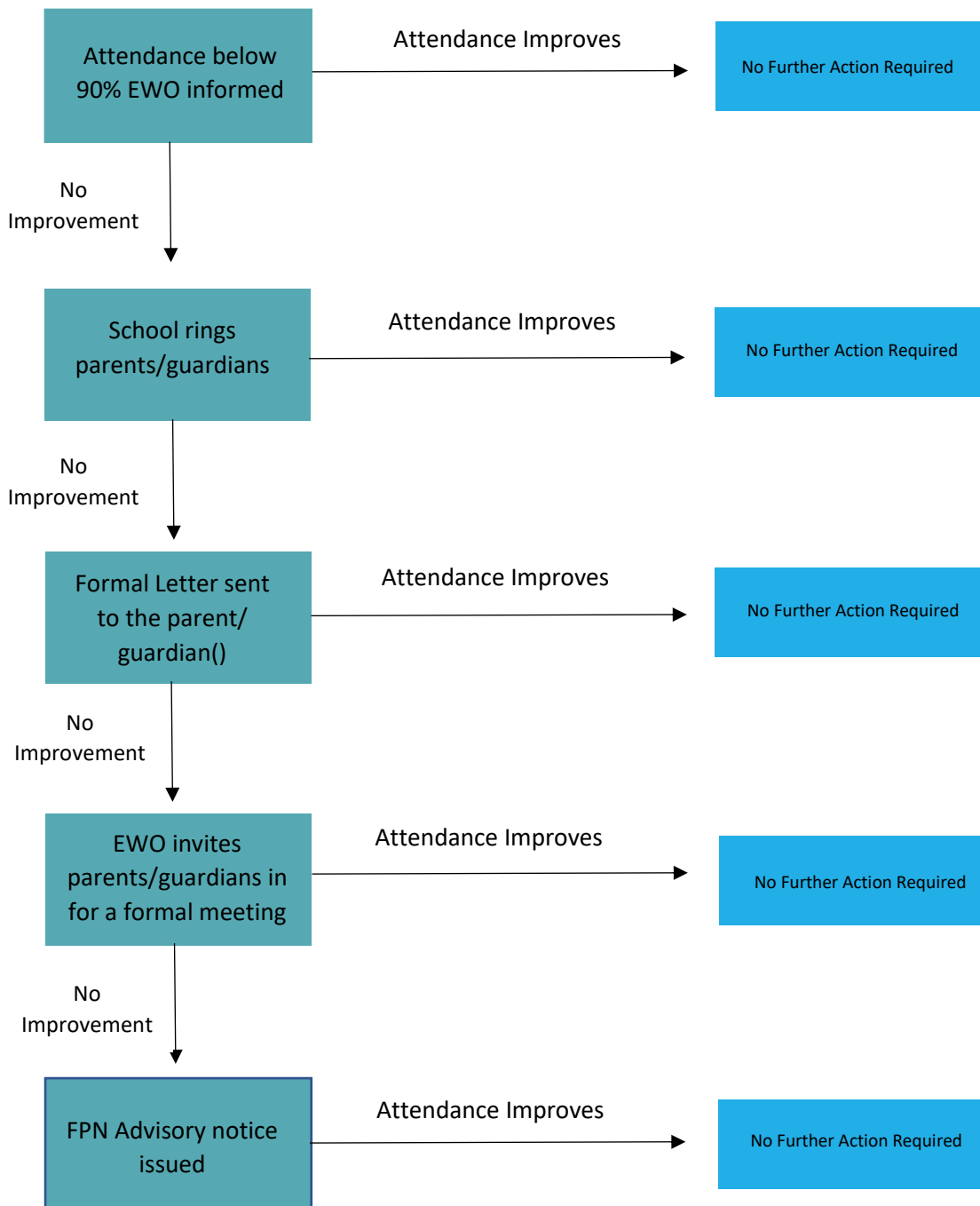
The school will regularly provide reports to the governing body, senior management and challenge advisors, and the local authority which will inform them of current attendance. In addition, parents will also be notified through the schools' regular communication channels. The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. Our target for Blessed Carlo Acutis School is to achieve 93% attendance.

Appendix 1 - Initial Response



**Schools will utilise their discrepancy on additional input from outside agencies, depending on the vulnerability of the pupil*

Appendix 2 - Long Term Absence



**Individual pupils will need to be considered to determine exceptional circumstances*



Appendix 3

Date

Dear

Re: Attendance between 96%-93%

Current Attendance:

In line with the 'Callio' Attendance initiative, I am writing to inform you of your child's attendance and the category they fall within. You will be aware that this communication is sent to all learners every half term and that we monitor attendance regularly.

Your child is in currently the Amber category of 96%-93% attendance. Across the school year, this could mean that your child is missing around 14 days of school. It is difficult to make up this amount of learning.

Green	100%	Not missing any lessons
	99%	Missing about 10 lessons
	98%	Missing about 20 lessons
	97%	Missing about 30 lessons
Amber	96%	Missing about 8 days of school. It will be difficult to catch up on the lost learning of about 40 lessons
	95%	Missing about 2 weeks of school
	93%	Missing about 14 days of school
Red	92% and below	Missing more than 3 weeks of education. A serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement and prospects

We want to work with families to improve school attendance; I would encourage you to contact your child's campus if you have any issues or concerns to discuss and how we can support you and your child.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S. Hopkins

Executive Headteacher



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YSGOL GATHOLIG BENDIGAIID CARLO ACUTIS

INSPIRING FAITH, FAMILY AND FUTURES WITH CHRIST

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Hopkins BA (Hons) MA NPQH

T: 01685 351870

Website: www.bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk



Date

Dear

Re: Attendance 92 and below%

Current Attendance:

In line with the 'Callio' Attendance initiative, I am writing to inform you of your child's attendance and the category they fall within. You will be aware that this communication is sent to all learners every half term and that we monitor attendance regularly.

Your child is currently in the Red category of 92% and below attendance. Across the school year, this could mean that your child is missing at least 3 weeks or 75 lessons. This is a significant amount of learning lost and will be very difficult to catch up on.

Green	100%	Not missing any lessons
	99%	Missing about 10 lessons
	98%	Missing about 20 lessons
	97%	Missing about 30 lessons
Amber	96%	Missing about 8 days of school. It will be difficult to catch up on the lost learning of about 40 lessons
	95%	Missing about 2 weeks of school
	93%	Missing about 14 days of school
Red	92% and below	Missing more than 3 weeks of education. A serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement and prospects

We will be closely monitoring your child's attendance over the next two weeks and if no significant improvement is made and sustained, a meeting will be arranged between yourself and the Education Welfare Officer from Merthyr Tydfil Local Authority to develop an action plan to improve your child's attendance. Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic School has been given guidance by the Local Authority to issue fixed penalty notices if there are:

- 10 or more unauthorised absences in a term
- 10 or more late sessions in a term
- 15 or more medical absences in a term (each child will be considered individually to take into account any extenuating circumstances)

Parents/ Guardians have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school and not doing so may lead to prosecution. As a school we are keen to work with parents/guardians to resolve any problems. On receipt of this letter, we would like you to arrange an appointment with the campus to discuss ways of working to improve your child's attendance together.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S. Hopkins

St Aloysius Campus
Cedar Way,
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 9PA
Mrs K Jones

St Illtyd's Campus
Dowlais,
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 3BT
Mrs K Rowling

St Mary's Campus
Caedraw Rd,
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8HA
Mrs C Cope

Bishop Hedley Campus
Penydarren
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 9AN
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Executive Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Hopkins BA (Hons) MA NPQH

T: 01685 351870

Website: www.bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk



Date

Dear

Re: Attendance 100%-97%

Current Attendance:

In line with the 'Callio' Attendance initiative, I am writing to inform you of your child's attendance and the category they fall within. You will be aware that this communication is sent to all learners every half term and that we monitor attendance regularly.

I am pleased to inform you, your child is currently in the Green category of 100% -97% attendance.

Green	100%	Not missing any lessons
	99%	Missing about 10 lessons
	98%	Missing about 20 lessons
	97%	Missing about 30 lessons
Amber	96%	Missing about 8 days of school. It will be difficult to catch up on the lost learning of about 40 lessons
	95%	Missing about 2 weeks of school
	93%	Missing about 14 days of school
Red	92% and below	Missing more than 3 weeks of education. A serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement and prospects

As well as being an excellent attendee, they are more likely to achieve higher attainment levels.

I would like to congratulate your child on this achievement and thank you for your support in making it happy. We would like to stress the importance of maintaining this level of engagement in their education as a drop in attendance could have an impact on their attainment levels. Thank you for continuing to support us in supporting your child to achieve the best they can.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S. Hopkins

Executive Headteacher

St Aloysius Campus
Cedar Way,
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 9PA
Mrs K Jones

staloyusoffice@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk

St Illtyd's Campus
Dowlais,
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 3BT
Mrs K Rowling

stilltydsoffice@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk

St Mary's Campus
Caedraw Rd,
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8HA
Mrs C Cope

stmarysoffice@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk

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Penydarren
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 9AN
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bhhsoffice@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk



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Appendix 4

Date:

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

As a new term begins, we want to remind all parents of the importance of school attendance and our commitment to our learners. Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic School are using the 'Callio' attendance improvement initiative which involves half- termly letters to parents categorising the attendance of every learner. We feel that it is important that this information is communicated regularly to ensure that parents/ guardians are informed of the facts regarding school attendance.

Please see the chart below which illustrates the relationship between attendance and achievement at school over the whole academic year.

Green	100%	Not missing any lessons
	99%	Missing about 10 lessons
	98%	Missing about 20 lessons
	97%	Missing about 30 lessons
Amber	96%	Missing about 8 days of school. It will be difficult to catch up on the lost learning of about 40 lessons
	95%	Missing about 2 weeks of school
	93%	Missing about 14 days of school
Red	92% and below	Missing more than 3 weeks of education. A serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement and prospects

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CF47 8HA
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stmarysoffice@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk

Bishop Hedley Campus
Penydarren
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 9AN
Mr R Davies

bhhsoffice@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk



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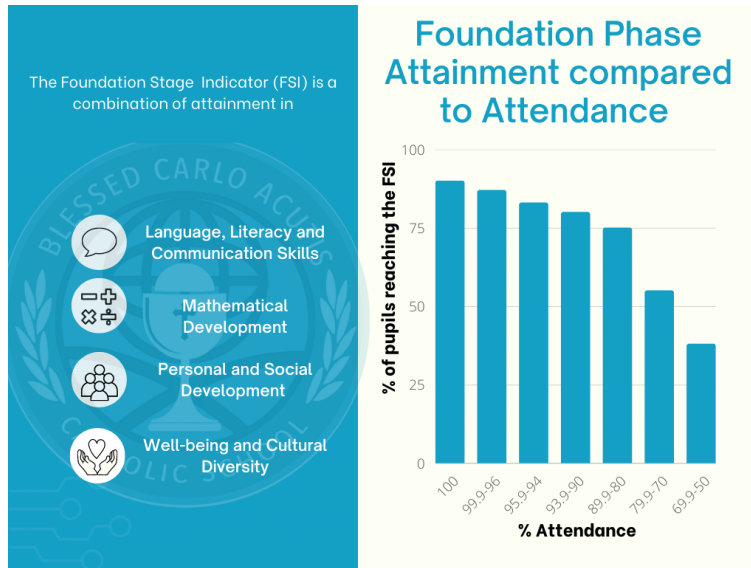
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The benefits of good attendance are clear. Pupils are more likely to achieve higher attainment levels, to enjoy school more and increase their prospects.



Our target for your child is a minimum of 95% attendance this year!

We ask all parents/ guardians to set the highest of expectations for attendance for the term and year ahead. As a school we recognise that in certain circumstances there is a need for your child to be absent from school, however we do ask that you keep the school informed of any absence. It is imperative that we work together to ensure high attendance for the best possible educational outcomes, if you require any support please do get in touch with your relevant campus.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs S. Hopkins

Executive Headteacher

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Cedar Way,
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 9PA
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Date:

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

As a new term begins, we want to remind all parents of the importance of school attendance and our commitment to our learners. Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic School are using the 'Callio' attendance improvement initiative which involves half- termly letters to parents categorising the attendance of every learner. We feel that it is important that this information is communicated regularly to ensure that parents/ guardians are informed of the facts regarding school attendance.

Please see the chart below which illustrates the relationship between attendance and achievement at school over the whole academic year.

Green	100%	Not missing any lessons
	99%	Missing about 10 lessons
	98%	Missing about 20 lessons
	97%	Missing about 30 lessons
Amber	96%	Missing about 8 days of school. It will be difficult to catch up on the lost learning of about 40 lessons
	95%	Missing about 2 weeks of school
	93%	Missing about 14 days of school
Red	92% and below	Missing more than 3 weeks of education. A serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement and prospects

St Aloysius Campus
Cedar Way,
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 9PA
Mrs K Jones

staloysiusoffice@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk

St Illtyd's Campus
Dowlais,
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 3BT
Mrs K Rowling

stilltydsoffice@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk

St Mary's Campus
Caedraw Rd,
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8HA
Mrs C Cope

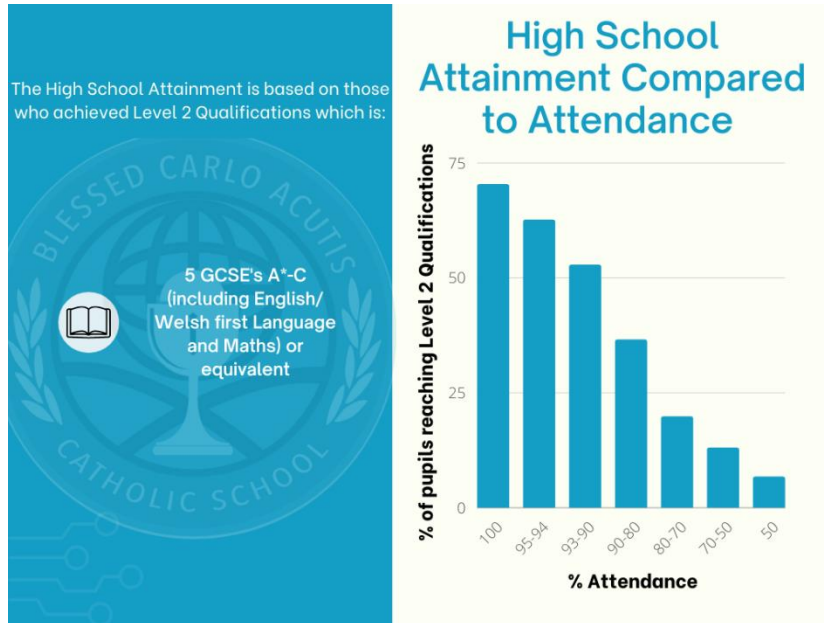
stmarysoffice@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk

Bishop Hedley Campus
Penydarren
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 9AN
Mr R Davies

bhhsoffice@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk



The benefits of good attendance are clear. Pupils are more likely to achieve higher attainment levels, to enjoy school more and increase their prospects.



Our target for your child is a minimum of 95% attendance this year!

We ask all parents/ guardians to set the highest of expectations for attendance for the term and year ahead. As a school we recognise that in certain circumstances there is a need for your child to be absent from school, however we do ask that you keep the school informed of any absence. It is imperative that we work together to ensure high attendance for the best possible educational outcomes, if you require any support please do get in touch with your relevant campus.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs S. Hopkins

Executive Headteacher



BLESSED CARLO ACUTIS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

YSGOL GATHOLIG BENDIGAIID CARLO ACUTIS

INSPIRING FAITH, FAMILY AND FUTURES WITH CHRIST

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Hopkins BA (Hons) MA NPQH

T: 01685 351870

Website: www.bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk



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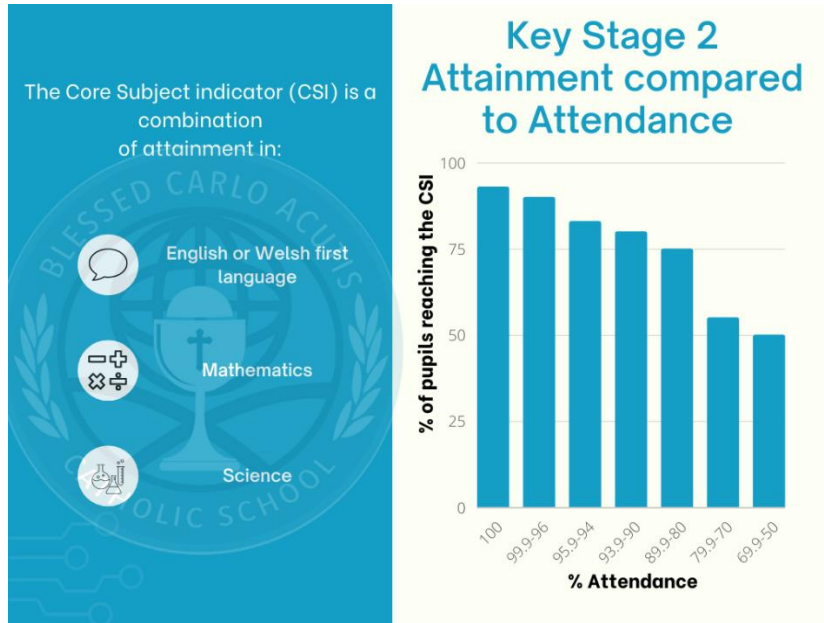
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