



8 September 2023

Dear Parent / Carer

You will be aware of the news coverage in recent weeks that has highlighted concerns nationally that students' school attendance is still well below pre covid levels. Nationally that number sits at around 90% for secondary schools. At BGLC we have a long history of having attendance well above national figures and while our attendance last year of around 92% continues that pattern it is still well below our own pre covid levels of around 95%.

Given that there is long standing and irrefutable evidence that once an individual student's attendance drops below 95% it has a negative impact on GCSE outcomes (and the lower it falls the greater the impact) we are keen to do all we can to improve our students attendance at school and so improve their chances of academic success.

With that in mind we have been invited to take part in some national research looking at how schools communicate attendance to families and how, if the messaging is done differently, attendance can be improved. There is nothing that students or families will need to do as part of this research. Once the project begins 50% of our school cohort will receive information about attendance in the same way that we have done for a number of years at BGLC while the other 50% will receive messaging advised by the research. At the end of the year researchers will use our data, and that of around 100 other schools nationally, to determine whether the different messaging has had an impact on attendance.

The letter that follows this introduction is from the research group. It invites those who wish to, to withdraw from the research. Students who do so will simply receive the messages about attendance from school in the way that we have always reported. As the researchers will create their groups entirely randomly it is also the case that approximately 50% of families will see no change this year. At the end of the year we will use the findings to decide what, if anything, we wish to change about our attendance procedures to improve chances of academic success for our students.

Yours sincerely

Greg Godwin
Senior Deputy Headteacher