

Ref: RRB/MNR

11 October 2011

Dear Parent/Carer

Improving school attendance remains high both in terms of our agenda and that of the Government's. A student who misses 15% of lessons is defined by the Government as 'persistently absent'. 15% absence is 1½ days absence each fortnight and is equal to 6 weeks off a school year. The Department for Education says that, "the poor attendance of pupils can disrupt their own learning and that of other pupils". Quickly these children begin to fall behind their friends and often fail to fill in gaps in their skills or knowledge. Moreover, there is clear evidence of a link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement. Nationally figures show that:

- Of pupils who miss less than 5% of school, 73% achieve 5A*-C including Maths and English.
- Of pupils who miss between 10-20% of school, only 35% manage to achieve 5A*-C including Maths and English.
- Of pupils who miss more than 50% of school, only 3% manage to achieve 5A*-C including Maths and English.

At Winterhill, we have worked with parents to improve attendance. By continuing to improve attendance we will continue to improve outcomes for our students and ensure they are not disadvantaged in relation to their peers. Our intention is to ensure that students maximise their educational opportunities and therefore we will be working hard to support students to achieve good attendance and punctuality levels.

On the reverse of this letter you will find a copy of this year's remaining term dates and INSET days (you can also find this information on our website). Please support us and your child by ensuring that he/she is only absent from school when too ill to attend as any other absence is at the expense of the child achieving. Given parents have been excellent in responding to requests to ensure high levels of attendance and good punctuality, I look forward to continuing this work in support of your son/daughter.

Yours sincerely

R D I Burman
Headteacher

TERM DATES 2011/12 School Year

Holiday	Last day of school	School re-opens
Half Term break	Thursday 20 th October 2011	Monday 31 st October 2011
Christmas	Friday 16 th December 2011	Wednesday, 4 th January 2012
Half Term break	Friday 10 th February 2012	Monday 20 th February 2012
Easter	Friday 30 th March 2012	Monday 16 th April 2012
May Day	Friday 4 th May 2012	Tuesday 8 th May 2012
Spring Bank	Friday 1 st June 2012	Monday 11 th June 2012
Summer	Friday 20 th July 2012	

INSET DAYS (School closed to students on these days)

Friday 21st October 2011
Monday 19th December 2011
Tuesday 3rd January 2012
Friday 29th June 2012