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Dear Parent/Carer,

Whilst we place great importance on the health and wellbeing of all of our pupils, we also need to minimise absence to ensure pupils are provided with a first-class education so that they have the opportunity to flourish in adulthood.

The importance of school attendance cannot be overstated: a pupil with attendance of below 91% is statistically likely to drop on average one GCSE grade per subject. If your attendance is between 96% and 100% you are twice as likely to achieve 5 or more GCSE at Grade 5 and above.

The statistics above provide stark evidence as to why we set all of our pupils an attendance target of 97%. We know this provides them with the greatest possible chance to achieve their best possible outcomes; this is a habit born in lower Year Groups and embedded in the culture and ethos of our school.

We are aware of incidences of 'winter bugs' which is impacting on pupils across all year groups at the moment and this has had a negative impact on attendance levels in recent weeks.

If your child is feeling 'under the weather' (i.e. cold, cough etc) we encourage them to still attend where possible; if they should continue to feel unwell, please rest assured that they will be supported appropriately by school staff. We have a number of first aid trained staff in school who, when a pupil is feeling unwell, can assess them and calls will be made home to seek parental opinion as to whether they should remain in school.

Of course, there may be times when pupils are indeed too unwell to attend; where this is the case, please try to minimise the length of absence to reduce the impact on your child's learning. Unlike in Primary School, we do not require a 48-hour period of absence following sickness - as pupils get older, infection control is easier due to improved hand washing and other levels of hygiene control.

We have pastoral support in place for all students where attendance becomes a concern and we actively try to engage with families to resolve attendance issues through telephone calls, letters, home visits and meetings with parents and students.

Should you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance level, please contact either their Head of House or our attendance officer Steve Hodgson.

His contact details are:

- email: shodgson1@st-wilfrids.org
- text: 079000 56510

Please include your child's name, Year Group and House and you will receive a call to discuss the issues and to plan to reach a solution.

If your child takes too much time off school, they will become categorised as persistently absent. (Attendance below 90% = persistent absence / 'PA').

This table shows how many days missed each half-term will make your child a PA student:

HOW MANY DAYS OFF WILL MAKE YOUR CHILD A PERSISTENT ABSENCE STUDENT?	
Half-term 1	3 ½ days off school from September until October half-term holiday will make your child a PA student.
Half-term 1-2	7 days off school from September until the Christmas holiday will make your child a PA student.
Half term 1-3	10 days of absence from September until February half-term will make your child a PA student.
Half term 1-4	Half-term 1-3 12 ½ days of absence from September until the Easter holidays will make your child a PA student.
Half-term 1-5	15 ½ days of absence from September until May half-term will make your child a PA student.
Half-term 1-6	19 days of absence for the full academic year (September to end of summer term in July) will make your child a PA student.

Finally, we see weekly increases in absence on Mondays and Fridays; each day missed equates to 20% of educational entitlement for the week. It is key that students attend every day including the last week of term. Please ensure your child attends up to and including Friday 22 December.

Thank you for your continued co-operation – we have the same goal, to empower your children to achieve the best possible outcomes in life.

Yours sincerely



Mr M. J. Price
Deputy Headteacher