



Smithdon High School
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Dear Parent

As the nights are drawing in, we have had a busy start to the school year - with this year's Duke of Edinburgh's Award launched to Year 9 (Bronze) and Year 10 (for those looking to complete the Silver Award), our Year 11 tutor evening and first round of Pre-Public Examination series, and rehearsals for this year's production, *Sister Act Junior*, in full swing, to name just a few things going on.

We have also had our annual Open Evening and I want to thank those of you who enabled your children to support the evening last Thursday, to talk about their passion for subjects, get involved in activities and show people around the school. I am so proud of the way all the children represented Smithdon so well - I received nothing but positive comments about their interactions with prospective families and how they conducted themselves. They were not just a credit to us but also a credit to you.

I also want to thank you for your support in our drive to improve attendance. Despite the usual round of colds, sickness bugs and covid at this time of year, students have been attending school in higher numbers - and to date we are 0.6% above our figure for this time last year. **Particular congratulations must go to Year 11, whose attendance to date compared to the same date last year (when they were Year 10) is up by 3%, which is excellent - keep up the good work!**

Unfortunately, current Year 8 students are 4.26% below where they were this time last year in Year 7, which is disappointing. The start of Year 8 tends to be where the biggest drop off occurs and where patterns of poor attendance can begin to creep in and become habit.

For all parents but particularly to help combat this decline, please find along with this letter our Attendance Matters Leaflet as well as a supportive guide for parents regarding different aspects of attendance and the ways we can offer help if you need it, to ensure your child attends school regularly. As a legal requirement, I also need to make you aware that the up to date attendance policy can be found on our website here:

<https://www.smithdonhigh.org.uk/site/data/files/67356EF09048453D3F2006BF49BB8B4D.pdf>

Dates for the diary

Upcoming events that you might want to be aware of are:

- Our Trust, Springwood Sixth Form, Open Evening - this Thursday, 9 October from 5.30pm
- Yr10 Step up to Success parent evening - 16 October from 4pm
- London 'Wicked' theatre experience - 22 October
- Yr7 'The Playground' activity day (team building) - 23 October
- *HALF TERM - Friday 24 October - Sunday 2 November*
- 'War Horse' theatre trip - 6 November
- Yr7 Settling in Tutor parent evening - 6 November
- DT Rotary tournament at KLA - 7 November
- Children in Need day and KS3 Disco - 14 November



I look forward to seeing you at the parent events and will share the next set of dates with you after half term.

Yours sincerely

A. Gibbins,

Mrs A Gibbins
Headteacher