



OUR REF :

TRN : 100259955100003

Friday, 16th September 2022

**To: The Parents of students in Years 1-13 –
WEEKLY CIRCULAR AHEAD OF WEEK FOUR**

Dear Parents,

Greetings from Saint Mary's. We trust that this update finds you and your families safe and healthy. Please read on for all the latest updates. Information that is still relevant from last week's circular will be referenced from there so that it is not repetitive.

1) IRRESPONSIBLE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS, PARTICULARLY BY STUDENTS IN YEARS 9-11:

Parents are requested to carefully read the separate attachment to this circular.

2) IBT ARABIC EXAM FOR ARABIC A- ARAB SPEAKERS FROM YEARS FIVE THROUGH TEN:

Parents of native Arabic speakers in Years Five through Ten are requested to check **the** separate circular attached to this weekly circular and complete the necessary formalities at the earliest.

Please email the skiply receipt indicating payment of AED 35/- to the class teacher.

3) IBT ARABIC EXAM FOR ARABIC B- NON-ARAB SPEAKERS FROM YEARS FIVE , SEVEN and NINE ONLY :

Parents of non-native speakers in Years Five , Seven and Nine are requested to check the separate circular attached to this weekly circular and complete the necessary formalities at the earliest.

Please email the skiply receipt indicating payment of AED 35/- to the class teacher.

4) YEAR 11 STUDENTS REQUIRED TO HAND IN THEIR PHONES DURING MORNING REGISTRATION:

Parents are hereby notified that owing to recent events and the wrongful use of social media by many students of Year 11, we will now be requiring every student of Year 11 to hand in their mobile phone to the class teacher during morning registration. If a phone is not handed in and later found with a student, it will be confiscated and returned only to the parent at the end of the working week.

5) PERIWINKLE HAS DELIVERED SOME BOOKS TODAY (BOOKS THAT WERE SENT BY ARAB GULF) :

Parents are requested to kindly check with your children for books that Periwinkle handed over to them in school today. Books were delivered in school so there is no further delay.

6) SOCIAL MEDIA FREQUENT CHECKS BY PARENTS FOR SECONDARY & UPPER PRIMARY CHILDREN:

Parents of secondary and upper primary children are strongly encouraged to kindly make frequent checks of your child's use of social media. We have seen in many cases that minor children are being sought out on Instagram, Snapchat and other platforms by much older individuals for chats and conversations. It is important for parents to know who their children are conversing with to protect them from any potential safeguarding issues. We would also like to remind parents about your children's use of inappropriate content and language on Social Media Platforms which you will be aware of only if you make frequent checks of the same. Please have your child remove himself/herself from private social media groups that are not encouraged or recommended by us at St. Mary's. The school cannot take responsibility for private groups started by students and we strongly discourage the formation of these groups as well as discourage student participation in them. It is once again important here that ALL PARENTS check your children's digital activity frequently including group activity if your child is part of private groups created by students.

7) POST RESULTS SERVICES FOR JUNE 2022 BOARD EXAMS:

Please note that Post results services for the June 2022 London Board Exams close on the 22nd of September 2022.

8) PARENT ACCESS TO THE CAMPUS IN THE MORNING:

Parents are hereby notified that only children will be allowed on campus in the mornings. We have allowed parents access to the premises for the first two weeks to help new children settle

into their new environment. If you have any work with the office, kindly access it only through gate 4.

9) PARENT ACCESS TO THE CAMPUS AT HOMETIME:

Parents are requested to wait in the designated waiting areas only. Please do not go to any child's classroom and only GATE 5 must be used. GATE 3 IS EXCLUSIVELY FOR STS BUS USERS ONLY.

10) NO DISTRIBUTION OF ANY ITEMS (cakes/ candies/ chocolate/ and even non-edible items) FOR BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS:

Parents are reminded that while the class would be happy to sing for your child on his/her birthday, there should be STRICTLY NO DISTRIBUTION of any food/ sweets or even non-edible items like small toys etc on your child's birthday.

11) PARENT'S APPOINTMENTS WITH TEACHERS:

Parents are requested to kindly email a particular teacher that you wish to meet for any urgent reason. Please specify if you would like a telephone call, a zoom meeting or a face-to-face meeting. Please include your telephone number in the email. Teachers will get back to you.

12) EXISTING KHDA PROTOCOLS FOR FACE-TO -FACE LEARNING AT DUBAI PRIVATE SCHOOLS:

There have been no major changes to existing protocols from KHDA. **USE OF MASKS INDOORS IS MANDATORY AND MUST BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO by all staff and students.** We had a compliance inspection from KHDA today and they want us to reiterate to ALL parents that students must constantly be reminded about the critical importance of the correct usage of masks indoors. We are doing our best to remind them in school and your support in speaking to them at home will help us immensely.

13) IMPORTANCE OF HYGIENE KIT FOR ALL STUDENTS IRRESPECTIVE OF AGE:

Please refer to our circular dated 2nd September.

<https://www.stmarysdubai.com//WEEKLY-CIRCULAR-2-SEPTEMBER-2022.pdf>

14) CRITICAL AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE REQUIRED IF ANY STUDENT TESTS POSITIVE, EVEN AT THE WEEKEND:

Please refer to our circular dated 2nd September.

<https://www.stmarysdubai.com//WEEKLY-CIRCULAR-2-SEPTEMBER-2022.pdf>

15) ONLINE LESSONS ONLY FOR ACTIVE COVID-19 CASES/ SYMPTOMATIC CLOSE CONTACTS:

Please refer to our circular dated 2nd September.

<https://www.stmarysdubai.com//WEEKLY-CIRCULAR-2-SEPTEMBER-2022.pdf>

16) STUDENT SCHOOL EMAIL ID:

Please refer to our circular dated 2nd September.

<https://www.stmarysdubai.com//WEEKLY-CIRCULAR-2-SEPTEMBER-2022.pdf>

17) GOOGLE CLASSROOM:

Please refer to our circular dated 2nd September.

<https://www.stmarysdubai.com//WEEKLY-CIRCULAR-2-SEPTEMBER-2022.pdf>

18) NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES FOR STUDENTS OF YEARS 1-8 (EXCEPT FOR MOBILE PHONE):

Please refer to our circular dated 2nd September.

<https://www.stmarysdubai.com//WEEKLY-CIRCULAR-2-SEPTEMBER-2022.pdf>

19) PARENTS' WHATSAPP GROUPS:

While a WhatsApp group maybe very useful for sharing important information that can be very helpful – sometimes essential – for busy parents, it has increasingly been noticed that these groups seem to have become breeding grounds for gossip, Chinese whispers and criticism. We are noticing more and more that a personal experience of a child or a staff member has become fodder for public comment and this has extended to even the very private medical information of children being openly discussed on parent groups. There's a broader societal issue here. This is all very new to us adults. We must reflect on the example we're setting. We talk about what our children are doing online, but we don't reflect on our own behaviour; we don't have an agreed etiquette. We would like all parents , especially those in primary school to do some reflection on the unchecked chatter and quite often the vilifying of staff members in the parents' whatsapp groups over the past year and ask yourself if that is truly helping you or rather creating unwanted stress. As a school, we would like you to reach out to the teachers or to Ms. Lise-Ann (in more urgent cases) rather than allow what could be one parent's opinion or perspective or misinterpretation in many cases, cloud the perspectives of all the rest. Let us try not to micromanage the children but have more faith in their capacity for resilience and courage.

While we continue to encourage you to use emails as the official channels for communication, we would like to offer some useful guidelines for the ethical use of whatsapp groups should parents still feel the need for them.

Groups can be used to share :

- Reminders about deadlines, school activities, and events.
- Questions about school activities or special events e.g. what date the science project is due in, uniform or non-uniform day, when the deadline to pay for something is, etc.
- Sharing important information already posted in a circular to help reach more parents e.g. alerts about sickness, school policies, etc.
- Sharing information which can be useful to the other parents in the group e.g. where to buy costumes for dressing up days, ideas for projects, etc.
- Foster a sense of community
- Sharing relevant community notices e.g. road closures or new traffic lights in the local area, etc.
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We **STRONGLY discourage** the use of the groups to:

- Gossip.
- Voice grievances.
- Share personal problems.
- Point out another child's behaviour.
- Discuss the work of teachers: if a parent has a concern regarding the teacher, that parent should speak with him or her directly.
- Raise individual concerns or complaints: if a parent has a particular concern or complaint regarding the School or any member of the Staff, that issue should be raised directly with the School.
- Share political or religious posts or discussions.

20) OWN TRANSPORT DROP OFF AND PICK UP GATE:

All parents who drop off their own kids and/or pick them up are requested to only use GATE NUMBER 5. **Students in years One, two and three (Mon-Thu pick up time is between 1:20 & 1:25 pm and on Fri- between 11:40 & 11:45 am) Please park your cars sensibly and do not create unnecessary traffic jams on what is already a busy school road. Let us always keep CHILD SAFETY our priority.**

21) SCHOOL OFFICE WEEKEND SCHEDULES:

The school office will work on Second and Fourth Saturdays from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm. The school office will remain CLOSED on First and Third Saturdays and ALL Sundays.

22) SCHOOL UNIFORM SHOP (Boys' uniforms/ sports uniforms for boys and girls and hoodies):

The Uniform Shop will be open only on Second and Fourth Saturdays from 8:00 until 11:00 am. Students have been accessing the uniform store for the first hour in the mornings after their class registration.

23) PAYMENT OF TERM FEES:

Please check all information related to the same from our WELCOME BACK CIRCULAR dated 26th August 2022. **THE FEE PAYMENT DEADLINE FOR TERM ONE IS 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022. KINDLY RESPECT THIS DEADLINE.**

We would like to remind ALL parents that timely fee payments are important for the sustained functioning of the school. We urge parents not to delay fee payments and ensure that you have paid well within the stipulated fee payment window for each term.

24) FINANCE-RELATED EMAILS:

1) fee-smchs@smgeducation.org

ALL FEES Related matters (payments) : Kindly make sure to send the transaction details with the required SUBJECT Header for quick validation of your concerns and attached proof of payment.

(Mode of Payment / Particulars/ Amount / Student ID)

SKIPLY/ TERM 1 FEES/ 4,800 Dhs / 002563 / Kiandra Smith / 11A

SIMS Student Registration Number Request must also be sent to the email above.

2) finance-smchs@smgeducation.org

ALL INVOICE, ACCOUNTS RECONCILIATION, TC and other related matters

Kindly make sure to send the transaction details with the required SUBJECT Header for quick validation of your concerns and attached proof of payment.

(Particulars/ Student Details)

Request for Pro-Forma Invoice / 002536 / Kiandra Smith / 11A

25) SCHOOL CANTEEN:

The school canteen has been operational from Monday, 5th September 2022. However we strongly discourage primary students from buying food at the canteen, rather they would benefit from healthy snacks/ food carried from home. Parents must keep in mind that crowded canteen lines are not viable for younger children and as much as we do try to streamline the queues, it is not always possible to whittle down the crowds.

26) APPROVED KHDA CALENDAR FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-2023: Please

check all information related to the same from our WELCOME BACK CIRCULAR dated 26th August 2022. The calendar has been attached to this circular. The legend of key dates is below.

THE COLOURED ROW HAS BEEN UPDATED .

24th October	Diwali Holiday
18th November	Holiday
1st & 2nd December	Government Holidays
12th -30th December(inclusive)	Winter break
17th January - 2nd February (inclusive)	First Term examinations in the morning session and regular lessons after break.
3rd February	End of Term Holiday
15th to 24th March 2023 and 10th to 14th April 2023 (inclusive)	Mock Exams for Years 11 and 13
27th March to 7th April 2023	Spring Break
20th and 21st April 2023	Government Holidays
4th and 5th May 2023	Final exams (Years 1-10 and year 12) in the morning session and regular lessons after break
8th to 19th May 2023	Final exams (Years 1-10 and Year 12 in the morning and students go home after the exam.
22nd May	Holiday
26th June	Last day for students and staff

27) STUDENT ABSENCES MUST BE INFORMED BY PARENTS:

All parents are requested to kindly inform the class teacher via email whenever a child is absent , even if it is just for one day. A simple email with the reason for the absence will suffice but is mandatory. Unaccounted for absences will be marked as unjustified and will be reflected on students' progress reports.

28) BOARD EXAMINATION FEES:

We would like you to be informed well in advance that EDEXCEL LONDON BOARD EXAMINATION FEES will be collected in the month of NOVEMBER 2022 for students in years ELEVEN and THIRTEEN. We trust that this will help you to budget accordingly. You can check your KHDA Parent-School contract for the BOARD EXAM FEE AMOUNT for each year group.

29) KHDA PARENT-SCHOOL CONTRACT FOR NEW STUDENTS:-

The KHDA PARENT-SCHOOL CONTRACT has been published for ALL parents. **Please keep make sure you sign it without any delay. Today is the FINAL KHDA DEADLINE FOR THE SAME.**

30) URGENT QUERIES AND CONCERNS: If you have any urgent queries and concerns, kindly send an email to our Vice Principal , Ms. Lise-Ann on l.pinto-smchs@smgeducation.org and she will get back to you. Please include your telephone number in case she needs to call you.

We take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a safe and happy weekend.

Yours sincerely



Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)





OUR REF :

TRN : 100259955100003

DATE : Friday, 16TH September 2022

**To: Parents of Native Arabic speaking students in Years Five through Ten –
IBT ARABIC EXAMINATIONS**

**STUDENTS MUST BRING THEIR LAPTOPS OR TABLETS TO
SCHOOL ON THE 23RD OF NOVEMBER 2022 FOR THE TEST.**

Dear Parents,

Greetings from St. Mary's Catholic High School, Dubai. You will be pleased to learn that our school has been invited to participate in ***International Benchmark Tests for Improving Learning, 2022***. The Australian Council for Educational Research , one of the leading research organizations in the world , develops this test and provides a range of Assessment services in many countries and works in close tandem with the KHDA here in Dubai. The ***International Benchmark Test in Arabic*** will be held on the following day.

WEDNESDAY	23rd November 2022 – 9:00 AM	ARABIC A	YEARS 5-10
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The entry fee is AED 35/- for this exam , the exact amount of which must be paid ONLY THROUGH THE SKIPLY APP NO LATER THAN 25th SEPTEMBER 2022.

The International Benchmark Tests are designed to give an International benchmark of your child's performance vis-à- vis the participating countries in the world and in the region. Students will be able to see their intrinsic abilities and potential for learning, identifying their strengths and weaknesses on skills and concepts related to their class level and helps clarify concepts , making them very valuable as a remedial instrument. Questions are interesting and thought provoking, and encourage students to develop the skills related to problem solving, data interpretation , reasoning and critical thinking in the global context.

THE INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARK TESTS (IBT) PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH :

- A comprehensive assessment of student performance and ability
- High quality test items that engage students across all ability levels;
- Individual reports that highlight skills, strengths and weaknesses;
- Reports that include a clear description of skills and concepts that have been mastered;
- A Scale Score to measure their progress over time
- Students and schools with high quality feedback that can be used to improve learning
- School, regional and international percentiles to compare and benchmark student performance;
- Recognition of student performance

Since the Tests will be delivered on ACER's Online Assessment and Reporting System (OARS), please refer below to the system requirements for your computers/devices in the school. This will check suitability for conducting the Tests on this online interface. Technical Requirements and Browser Check Normally, standard PC's /devices meet the below requirements:

- Minimum screen resolution: 1024 x 768
- Minimum DSL or cable internet connection: 56 kbps
- Compatible computers and devices:
 - PC or laptop
 - Apple Mac
 - iPad
 - Other tablet devices
- Compatible browsers:
 - Google Chrome (latest version)
 - Mozilla Firefox (latest version)
 - Safari (version 10 or above)
 - Edge (latest version)
 - Internet Explorer (version 11 or above with compatibility mode disabled)

Browser Check We recommend that a browser check is done on all devices that will be used are given below: Open your preferred browser, click/copy and paste this link https://oars-z3.acer.org/browser_exam/#/ and a browser examination will run. This will check whether your

internet browser is compatible, and you will also receive a recommendation for how many students you can test at a given time with your technical set up if testing in school. We request you to advise students to also do the browser check at home on their devices before these are used by them in school for the test.

Yours sincerely,



**Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)**





OUR REF :

TRN : 100259955100003

DATE: Friday, 16TH September 2022

**To : Parents of Non-Native Arabic speaking students in Years Five, Seven & Nine
- IBT ARABIC EXAMINATIONS -ARABIC B**

**STUDENTS MUST BRING THEIR LAPTOPS OR TABLETS TO
SCHOOL ON THE DAY THEY HAVE THE TEST.**

Dear Parents,

Greetings from St. Mary's Catholic High School, Dubai. You will be pleased to learn that our school has been invited to participate in **International Benchmark Tests for Improving Learning, 2022**. The Australian Council for Educational Research , one of the leading research organizations in the world , develops this test and provides a range of Assessment services in many countries and works in close tandem with the KHDA here in Dubai. The **International Benchmark Test in Arabic** will be held on the following days.

WEDNESDAY	23rd November 2022	ARABIC B	YEAR 5
THURSDAY	24th November 2022	ARABIC B	YEAR 7 & YEAR 9

The entry fee is AED 35/- for this exam , the exact amount of which must be paid ONLY THROUGH THE SKIPLY APP NO LATER THAN 25TH SEPTEMBER 2022. The

International Benchmark Tests are designed to give an International benchmark of your child's performance vis-à-vis the participating countries in the world and in the region. Students will be able to see their intrinsic abilities and potential for learning, identifying their strengths and weaknesses on skills and concepts related to their class level and helps clarify concepts , making them very valuable as a remedial instrument. Questions are interesting and thought provoking, and encourage students to develop the skills related to problem solving, data interpretation , reasoning and critical thinking in the global context.

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- Reports that include a clear description of skills and concepts that have been mastered;
- A Scale Score to measure their progress over time
- Students and schools with high quality feedback that can be used to improve learning
- School, regional and international percentiles to compare and benchmark student performance;
- Recognition of student performance

Since the Tests will be delivered on ACER's Online Assessment and Reporting System (OARS), please refer below to the system requirements for your computers/devices in the school. This will check suitability for conducting the Tests on this online interface. Technical Requirements and Browser Check Normally, standard PC's /devices meet the below requirements:

- Minimum screen resolution: 1024 x 768
- Minimum DSL or cable internet connection: 56 kbps
- Compatible computers and devices:
- PC or laptop
- Apple Mac
- iPad
- Other tablet devices
- Compatible browsers:
- Google Chrome (latest version)
- Mozilla Firefox (latest version)
- Safari (version 10 or above)
- Edge (latest version)
- Internet Explorer (version 11 or above with compatibility mode disabled)

Browser Check We recommend that a browser check is done on all devices that will be used are given below: Open your preferred browser, click/copy and paste this link <https://oars-z3.acer.org/browserexam/#/> and a browser examination will run. This will check whether your internet browser is compatible, and you will also receive a recommendation for how many students you can test at a given time with your technical set up if testing in school. We request you to advise students to also do the browser check at home on their devices before these are used by them in school for the test.

Yours sincerely,



**Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)**





OUR REF :

TRN : 100259955100003

Friday, 16th September 2022

To: Parents of students in Years 5- 13 – CYBERBULLYING / BULLYING / INAPPROPRIATE USE OF OR BULLYING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Dear Parents,

Greetings from Saint Mary's. I am sure that every child is precious to every parent, and it is our duty to safeguard every child in the school. We at St. Mary's hold this sentiment close to our hearts and we strive to offer all students a hazard free and emotionally safe environment in which they can achieve their full academic and personal potential. In light of this it has been a rather disappointing experience to have learned that some students have been resorting to Cyberbullying with the intention to emotionally and psychologically hurt another child or other children.

We have recently been made aware of several accounts on Instagram that are using the school's name and logo with content that is racially offensive, sexually inappropriate, has targeted staff and students by name in a manner that is vilifying and degrading.

Several senior students especially in years nine and ten have been identified as following these accounts, commenting on and even liking the offensive content.

Some of these accounts are **smchs_confess**, **smchs_sleep**, **smchs_eating**, **smchs_slapping** etc.

The school has provided all information regarding these accounts to the e-crime division of Dubai Police and those involved will have to face subsequent consequences as all that has been described goes completely against UAE cultural as well as cybercrime laws.

Please review your children's social media accounts, so you may advise them appropriately.

We believed that our O-Level students are mature enough to handle their devices in school but we have seen that a large majority of them have been following these accounts and so we will now be requiring them to hand in their phones every morning to their class teachers.

We would like for every parent to carefully go through the KHDA Parent-School Contract over the weekend with your child as well as this letter to be well reminded of the school's zero-tolerance policy for bullying in all its forms and the potential consequences that might arise from any behaviour that constitutes bullying. We will be updating our Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policies and shall make these available to you shortly.

FROM THE KHDA PARENT-SCHOOL CONTRACT

The school has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying in all its forms. Bullying is the intentional and deliberate intimidation of another person through emotional, physical, Psychological and / or cyber means. Instances of proven and intentional bullying may result in immediate suspension of the aggressor from the school. The matter will be referred to KHDA for ratification.

Aligned with the above, the school will not tolerate any form of defamation or intentional harm practiced through social media forums. The school has set clear policies for parents and students about the use of and participation in social media outlets and/or forums and these centre around UAE guidelines and protocols such as:

1. Parents and students in all year groups using any social media forum, must at all times, demonstrate respect for the members of the school community (including all students and personnel)
2. Parents and students must not breach confidentiality , defame or make threats to any person in the school community. Instances of proven and intentional breach of the above will result in sanctions which may include SUSPENSION from school.

WARNING LETTERS WILL BE ISSUED IN CASES WHERE ANY FORM OF BULLYING HAS BEEN OBSERVED: These letters will be also sent to KHDA and will be placed on the students' personal file.

1. The First Warning letter will be issued with clear cut details of consequences that will follow should the behaviour in question be repeated.
2. The Second Warning letter will result in a one-day suspension from school along with details of further consequences.
3. The Third Warning letter will result in a three-day suspension from school with the potential permanent suspension from the school after consultation with the KHDA.

The school also reserves the right not to re-enroll students for the following Academic Year when behavioural issues are repeated. This will be documented by the school through the issuance of dated warning letters supported with evidence and after obtaining KHDA approval.

We appeal to ALL parents to kindly make frequent checks on your children's use of Social Media as well as checking the statutory age limits for holding certain Social Media Accounts. While some parents may feel that checking on their Children's social media is intrusive, evidence that we have seen of many children's use of social media strongly points to the age old adage 'It is better to be safe than sorry'.

We trust that this reminder will be taken seriously by ALL parents and that you will set up a dedicated time this weekend to go over this letter with your children.

Yours Sincerely,



Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)

