



OUR REF :

TRN : 10415399800000

Friday, 30 January 2026

To: The Parents of students in Years 1-13
WEEKLY CIRCULAR BEFORE WEEK NINETEEN

Dear Parents,

Greetings from Saint Mary's. Please read on to find out important information that is relevant to your child and their year group.

NEW UPDATES:

- **3rd February- Hag Al Laila: Years 1-6- A healthy cultural initiative at St. Mary's (Traditional clothes).**
- **4th February - Sports Day, Years 5-8 (in-school event).**
- **5th February - Sports Day, Years 9-13 (in-school event).**
- **CHANGE OF PRIMARY SPORTS DAY DATE FROM 20th February to 12th February: Years 1 - 4 - Change made due to Ramadan.**
- **DENTAL CHECK UP - 13th & 20th February: Years 2, 3, 4 and 5.**
- **COLOURED CLOTHES DAY, YEARS 1- 4: 13th February.**
- **ETHNIC DAY, YEARS 5-13: 13th February - Traditional clothes.**
- **BEAT DIABETES WALKATHON 2026, 8th February @ 8:00 AM - ZABEEL PARK - Years 9, 10 and 12.**
- **ONLINE SCHOOL ON THE 2nd and 3rd April - Years 1 - 13.**

- **PEARSON EXCELLENCE AWARDEE CERTIFICATES:** Last year's GCSE and GCE awardees-Certificates available for collection at the school office during working hours.
- **FEBRUARY 2026 CALENDAR.**

IMPORTANT PARENT AWARENESS: *KHDA has alerted all private schools about observations regarding dangerous physical behaviours among students, including choking, breath-holding, applying pressure to the neck, forceful contact to the head, and participation in social media trends such as the 'skull breaker challenge'. These actions are often presented as joking or play but they pose serious immediate risks to students' health and even have the implications of being life threatening.*

We have attached an infographic from DHA regarding these dangerous physical behaviours. We are strongly urging ALL parents to have age-appropriate conversations with your children about the risks involved with various dangerous physical behaviours which could also be life threatening. The school would also have to report any of these to the relevant external authorities.

Parents are strongly reminded to kindly monitor your child's online usage and use of social media including online games so that you are aware of the content that your child is accessing.

St. Mary's Catholic High School has a strict 'NO TOUCH' policy wherein NO STUDENT is allowed to TOUCH another student or have any PHYSICAL CONTACT with another student even as a form of play, a joke, a game etc. Kindly reiterate this to your children.

It is for this reason that games like tag, black shoe etc are strictly prohibited because what often starts out as a game ends up with someone getting hurt.

ACHIEVEMENTS:



First Place in Chevron Readers Cup - Primary
(Catheren Remon, Raghad Mohammed, Armia Rady, Karas Kamal)

Stories don't always speak loudly – some are meant to be felt.

Rochelle Barboza, a young author from St. Mary's Catholic High School Dubai (Year 10A), opens the doors to a thoughtful and imaginative world through her book **"A Library For The Unseen."**

Published on Bribooks, her work explores quiet narratives, hidden perspectives, and the power of stories that exist beyond what the eye can see. A beautiful reminder that sometimes, the most meaningful stories are the ones waiting silently to be discovered.



ATTENTION TO ALL PARENTS: "PANTSING" – An overview for ALL PARENTS. Pantsing is an act of physical bullying where a victim's trousers are pulled down in a public setting. While many children and students view Pantsing as a prank or a joke or a playful act, we MUST remind them that in the UAE this is strictly viewed as a form of Bullying and will be treated in that context. This act could have serious psychological trauma on students and cause lasting embarrassment. We ARE STRONGLY REMINDING ALL PARENTS to talk to your children and explain to them that under NO CIRCUMSTANCES MUST ANYONE COMMIT THIS ACT.

DANGEROUS GAMES THAT HAVE POTENTIAL FOR INJURY: We would like to bring to the attention of parents that some students, particularly boys in years 5-9 have been playing games like 'black shoe' or 'shoe tag' during the break. This involves large groups of boys, running after each other, trying to stamp another's shoe/foot. This happens in the setting of a crowded quadrangle of children during the breaktime, many of whom are sitting and eating their snacks. The act of strongly stamping another's foot/shoe could lead to serious injury and we urge parents to kindly speak to your children about the potential dangers. We will not be permitting them to indulge in such games.

NOT STANDING NEAR ANY DOOR (EITHER AT HOME OR AT SCHOOL): We would also like parents to talk to children and reiterate to them the dangerous implications of hanging around or standing near doors. We have quite often noticed that children tend to move near the door to peep out in between lessons to look for the arrival of the next teacher, sometimes a child returning from the washroom may not see them and upon suddenly opening the door could potentially and unknowingly injure the person near the door. Proximity to any door could always have the potential for fingers getting jammed or other injuries and we would urge ALL parents to sit with children and have these important conversations with them.

1) HAG AL LAILA, YEARS 1-6: Hag Al Laila is a traditional Emirati celebration held ahead of Ramadan, centred on generosity, community and the joy of shared moments. It marks a time when neighbourhoods come together in anticipation of the Holy Month, reflecting values that are deeply rooted in local culture. We would like our primary school children to learn more about this beautiful Emirati culture by coming to school dressed in traditional clothes and bringing in any one fruit from the following (banana/ apple/ pear/ orange). Students will have these together. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY SWEETS/ CANDIES/ CHOCOLATES OR ANY OTHER CONFECTIONERY ITEM.**

We will also be inviting every class to make one small bag with a few essential items like tea bags/ toothpaste / a toothbrush / and a few other essential provisions to offer to support staff and all the unsung heroes who work behind the scenes. Emirati families have kept the tradition of celebrating Hag Al Laila with children dressed in traditional clothes enjoying old songs and playing games. Families have also kept the practice of decorating their homes in bright colours and distributing special treats to children. We would like ALL our children to gain greater insights into the Emirati culture and share in these cultural traditions.



2) SPORTS DAYS, 4TH February Years 5-8 and 5TH February Years 9-13 @ Saint Mary's Catholic High School, Dubai: All parents are reminded to please keep note of the dates above. Students **MUST** come to school in their sports uniform on the days when they have their Sports Day. Children must carry a cap, their school jacket and enough water and snacks. Those children who use an INHALATOR, must carry it with them.

3) CHANGE OF PRIMARY SPORTS DAY DATE FROM 20TH FEBRUARY TO 12TH FEBRUARY, YEARS 1-4: All parents of children in Years 1-4 are requested to kindly make note of this change. The change was made keeping in mind the well-being of children and staff who will be fasting during the Holy month of Ramadan.

4) DENTAL CHECK UP, 13TH FEBRUARY, YEARS 2, 3, 4 and 5: Drs. Nicolas and ASP Centre will be conducting a complimentary dental screening for students in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 and a Topical Fluoride Application for students in Years 2, 3 and 4 only, at Saint Mary's

Catholic High School only on 13th and 20th February 2026. The procedures will be carried out by DHA- licensed dentists following strict Dubai Health Authority Infection Control Guidelines, using sterile instruments for each child.

Parents who do NOT wish for their child to take part in the dental screening are kindly requested to PRINT, SIGN and RETURN the opt-out-form attached to this circular. For the Fluoride application, please also print and sign the consent form which will be shared by the class teacher in the class group email. Kindly note that if consent for the fluoride application is not received, it will be considered as a refusal. The last day to submit both forms is 5th February 2026. Forms must be submitted in hardcopy form and not sent via email to teachers.

5) BEAT DIABETES WALK, 8TH FEBRUARY 2026 FOR YEARS 9, 10 AND 12:

Please see attached circular. Please save the date for this event. Parents are most welcome to join our school group. Children aged 12 years and above must pay AED 20.

<https://www.stmarysdubai.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/BEAT-DIABETES-WALK-YEAR-9-10-and-12.pdf>

6) ONLINE SCHOOL ON THE 2ND AND 3RD OF APRIL 2026, YEARS 1-13: All parents are requested to kindly note that we have received permission from KHDA to have two days of online school on the 2nd and 3rd of April 2026. This is to ensure the safety of our students and staff due to the large crowds that will be accessing the area on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. More details about lessons and online lesson links will be sent before the Spring Break.

7) SCHOOL JACKET/HOODIE IDENTIFICATION: All parents of children are requested to kindly sew clear name tags on the inside of school jackets/ hoodies. This is to help clearly identify lost items especially in situations where one jacket might be claimed by more than one student as their own and without any clear identification becomes impossible to determine the rightful owner of the lost item.

8) VARSITY JACKET (INITIATIVE BY THE YEAR 12 CLASS): Parents of Year 12 students are informed that students of Year 12 arrange to have Varsity Jackets bearing the school logo that we permit them to wear instead of the regular winter jacket. Please note that this is entirely a student initiative and there is no obligation for any child to purchase the same. It is completely optional.

9) BUILDING OUR FUTURE STARS:- We are happy to announce the extension of our Building Our Future Stars Programme to include Years 5-10. Parents are invited to kindly check the below link. <https://www.stmarysdubai.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Building-Our-Future-Stars-Term-2.pdf>

10) NO BARTERING / EXCHANGE OF GOODS OR SHARING OF FOOD FOR THE GOOD OF ALL CHILDREN: We have recently come across a few cases of children across various year groups bringing in items from home to exchange with their classmates for food or a snack item. These items have included but are not limited to small toys, gift cards, collectible cards, stickers, etc. We are certain that as parents you understand that many children suffer from food allergies and in the excitement could consume something that has ingredients to which they are allergic. The act of trading has many potential implications that are beyond the maturity of young children to deal with. It has the potential to cause arguments and fights. Often, children are trading for an item that you as parents do not allow them to consume, for example chewing gum. We are urging all parents to kindly ensure that children are not bringing any items to school other than what is required for their learning in lessons.

11) FOURTH SUBJECT DROP (GCE / IAL SUBJECTS ONLY) -YEAR 12 STUDENTS: We have been receiving subject drop forms signed by parents and these are being duly processed where required evidence of the requirement of only three subjects has been provided. Once a subject has been dropped it cannot later be re-taken due to a loss of curricular hours. Parents are therefore requested to carefully consider this decision There is no deadline for dropping the fourth subject.

12) ENOUGH WATER TO BE SENT WITH CHILDREN OR A FEW AED 1 COINS TO PURCHASE WATER FROM THE MACHINES: Parents of students especially those in lower primary are requested to kindly send enough drinking water with your child or one or two AED 1 coins so they can be assisted with getting water from the machines. For reasons of hygiene and safety there are no drinking water fountains.

13) BREAKFAST/ SNACK FIRST THING IN THE MORNING: We recognise that many children, especially those travelling on long bus journeys to reach school every morning, find it difficult to have their breakfast so early in the morning and some suffer travel illness. We would like to inform parents that its perfectly alright to send a packed snack or

breakfast with your child so that they may eat it in class first thing in the morning when they reach school. This is a much healthier option than children being on a empty stomach for long hours.

14) INAPPROPRIATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA & CYBERBULLYING: Please see the link to the circular.

https://www.stmarysdubai.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/CYBERBULLYING-BULLYING-SANCTIONS-AND-CONSEQUENCES-REMINDER-CIRCULAR.pdf#new_tab

15) 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.

16) ADMISSION TO A-LEVELS (PARENTS OF CURRENT YEAR 11 STUDENTS):

Parents of Year 11 students are requested to kindly go through the separate circular on A-Level admissions. Link here.

https://stmarysdubai.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/ADMISSION-TO-A-LEVELS-for-the-ACADEMIC-YEAR-2025-2026.pdf#new_tab

17) UNIFORM INFRACTIONS: Parents are hereby notified that we have been very disappointed with the large number of uniform infractions, especially among senior students.

These include very long and unruly hair of boys (kindly ensure that proper haircuts are undertaken this weekend) , long hair of girls untied, coloured and highlighted hair of girls (we have specifically reminded parents at the end of last year that this is strictly not allowed) , multiple ear piercings for girls, shorter than acceptable skirt lengths , long fingernails of both boys and girls, heavy make -up on girls. What is even more disappointing is the lack of

collaboration from parents when we correct students for the same. Parents are requested to please check on your children before they leave home in the morning. Please refer to the uniform policy.

18) STUDENT SCHOOL EMAIL ID: Your child's school email will be a focal point for our communication to you. **We will use a parent's email only to communicate outstanding fee or disciplinary issues.** A **CLASS GROUP EMAIL** has been created using the students 'official email ID for every class. This is for the dissemination of information daily from the class teacher to the parents of this class and we request parents not to write back to this address. We recommend that every parent checks this email after 6:00 pm everyday for important updates.

19) APPROVED KHDA CALENDAR FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026: Parents are requested to check the approved KHDA School Calendar for the Academic Year 2025-2026 that has been attached to this circular for your easy reference. This will help you plan ahead. If the regulators make any changes to the same, we will inform you immediately. Please note that only emergency medical / bereavement leave will be approved during school days. Leave for family holidays and celebrations must coincide with the school holidays as per the KHDA calendar. **Leave for events like graduations, weddings, parties etc will not be granted during school days and if absences like this occur during exams, there will be no re-exams in that case. We expect parents to respect these dates and not request leave during school days.**

KEY DATES IN THE APPROVED KHDA CALENDAR

Parents are strongly reminded not to plan holidays/ celebrations and other events outside the approved holiday slots in the calendar as these will not be approved.

20) INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARK TESTS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026 AND APPLICABLE PAYMENTS: Parents are requested to kindly go through this table carefully so that you will be aware of which International Benchmark tests are applicable to your child. Payments will be via Skiply and will be advised as these come up.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

YEAR GROUP	NGRT	CAT-4	GL	IBT ARABIC A	IBT ARABIC B
YEAR 1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
YEAR 2	YES	NA	NA	NA	NA
YEAR 3	YES	NA	NA	NA	NA
YEAR 4	YES	YES	YES	NA	NA
YEAR 5	YES	NA	YES	YES	YES
YEAR 6	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA

SECONDARY SCHOOL

YEAR GROUP	NGRT	CAT-4	GL	IBT ARABIC A	IBT ARABIC B
YEAR 7	YES	NA	YES	YES	YES
YEAR 8	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
YEAR 9	YES	NA	YES	YES	YES
YEAR 10	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
YEAR 11	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
YEAR 12	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
YEAR 13	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

PLEASE CHECK ERRATUM CORRECTED NOW IN BOTH RED BOXES ABOVE.

21) PREDICTED GRADES POLICY FOR YEARS 12 & 13: We would like to remind all parents and students to carefully go through this Policy that is available on our school website. The situation that unfolded over the last few years made many children realise, albeit too late the true value of being consistent with their study habits and not waiting until the last minute before exams to prepare and study. It is always best for every child to be **CONSISTENT AND HIGHLY REGULAR** with their study and ensure that they maintain a good level of attainment across all their assessment opportunities and prepare as well as they can for their Board Examinations. This will also help them to achieve better predicted grades as every assessment and examination counts towards the calculation of the same.

22) SUBJECT CHANGE POLICY, YEARS 9 TO 13: We would like to request all parents of children in these year groups to please go through the Subject Change Policy which is available in the Parents' Info section of the school website.

23) 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.

24) PARENTS TAKING PICTURES AND VIDEOS ON SCHOOL PREMISES: All Parents are reminded that taking pictures and videos of children on the premises is a strict violation of Child Protection Policies. We understand that as parents it is exciting to capture memories, but when other children are involved, it goes against all Child Protection Policies. We will do our best to send you all memories of various activities captured in school.

25) GATE ACCESS TO THE PREMISES: Parents are requested to kindly not use the church gates to access our premises for drop off and pick up. GATE 4 and GATE 5 are the school gates to be accessed.

26) 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.

27) 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 one of you a safe and happy weekend.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)





ST. MARY'S Catholic High School, Dubai

FEBRUARY 2026 CALENDAR (FOR PARENTS and STUDENTS)

VERSION 1.0 - 30th JANUARY 2026

Mon, 2 nd Feb	YEAR 4 D/E/F OUTING TO WADI AL HAMMAR
Tue, 3 rd Feb	Hag Al Laila - Years 1 - 6 (Traditional Coloured Clothes Day)
Wed, 4 th Feb	Sports Day -Years 5 - 8 @ school - Please come in PE uniform
Thu, 5 th Feb	Sports Day -Years 9 - 13 @ school -Please come in PE uniform
Fri, 6 th Feb	
Sat, 7 th Feb	SCHOOL OFFICE CLOSED Year 13 Extra classes: PHYSICS & MATHS YLP (8:00 - 10:00 AM) FINAL SESSION
Sun, 8 th Feb	BEAT DIABETES WALKATHON 2026
Mon, 9 th Feb	
Tue, 10 th Feb	
Wed, 11 th Feb	
Thu, 12 th Feb	PRIMARY SPORTS DAY, YEARS 1-4
Fri, 13 th Feb	ETHNIC DAY - YEARS 5 - 13 TRADITIONAL COLOURED CLOTHES DAY DENTAL CHECK UP- YEARS 2, 3, 4 and 5 OVERNIGHT SCHOOL STAY - YEAR 13 Building Our Future Stars
Sat, 14 th Feb	Building Our Future Stars SCHOOL OFFICE OPEN (8:00 am to 12:00 pm)
Sun, 15 th Feb	

Mon, 16 th Feb	
Tue, 17 th Feb	
Wed, 18 th Feb	
Thu, 19 th Feb	
Fri, 20 th Feb	DENTAL CHECK UP-Years 2-5 Building Our Future Stars
Sat, 21 st Feb	FIRST REPORT DAY AND PARENT TEACHER MEETING - 7:30 AM TO 12:30 PM Year 13 Extra classes: PHYSICS Building Our Future Stars
Sun, 22 nd Feb	
Mon, 23 rd Feb	VACCINATIONS YEARS 2, 3, 4 & 5
Tue, 24 th Feb	VACCINATIONS YEARS 2, 3, 4 & 5
Wed, 25 th Feb	VACCINATIONS YEARS 2, 3, 4 & 5
Thu, 26 th Feb	
Fri, 27 th Feb	Building Our Future Stars
Sat, 28 th Feb	OFFICE OPEN 8:00 AM TO 12:00 PM Year 13 Extra classes: PHYSICS & MATHS



الدكتورة نيكولا وآسپ
DRS. NICOLAS & ASP



Dear Parent,

Drs. Nicolas & Asp Centers will be conducting a complimentary dental screening and Topical Fluoride Application for the children of St. Mary Catholic School (YEAR 2,3 and 4). This will take place on the 13th and 20th of February 2026.

The Dental Screening and Topical Fluoride Application will be conducted by a team of a highly qualified, DHA licensed General dentists' who strictly follow the Dubai Health Authority's infection control guidelines (Sterile gloves, mirrors and dental probes for each child).

A dental screening report indicating the status of your Child's Oral Health will be sent to you. This report will indicate the status of your child's Oral Hygiene, Gum Condition, and whether any Cavities or Orthodontic Disorders have been detected.

This screening should not replace your child's regular six monthly dental checkups.

Kindly inform the school nurse /clinic should your child be recently on Fluoride Tablets

We will conduct dental screening for all students unless you send a separate email to the clinic refusing your child to undergo the dental screening.

For the Fluoride application, please print and sign below to indicate whether you consent or do not consent to your child receiving the complimentary topical fluoride application.

NB:Please note that for the Fluoride application, if we do not receive your consent marked YES or NO, it will be considered a refusal.

Side effects: Kindly note that Fluoride may in rare cases cause side effects like allergic reaction to ingredients in the topical Fluoride, local irritation like burning itching or soreness, Fluorosis, gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea or vomiting, acute toxicity only if taken in large doses.

I want my child to receive topical fluoride.

I do NOT want my child to receive topical fluoride.

Student's Name: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____