



OUR REF :

TRN : 100259955100003

Friday, 4th October 2024

To: The Parents of students in Years 1-13

WEEKLY CIRCULAR BEFORE WEEK SEVEN

Dear Parents,

Greetings from Saint Mary's. We trust that this update finds you and your families safe and healthy. Please read on to find out important information that is relevant to your child and/or his/her year group.

NEW UPDATES:

- **KHDA ACADEMIC AND CAREER GUIDANCE SURVEY - for parents and students YEARS 7- 13. Please see separate letter.**
- **10th October - WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY-COLOURED CLOTHES DAY- THEME COLOUR - GREEN**
- **OCTOBER 2024 CALENDAR- VERSION 1.0 - Please see attached.**

1) WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY, 10TH OCTOBER 2024, COLOURED CLOTHES DAY-THEME GREEN -YEARS 1-13: All children are invited to come dressed in coloured clothes, with the theme colour being GREEN on the 10th of October to mark World Mental Health Day.

2) KHDA ACADEMIC AND CAREER GUIDANCE SURVEY, YEARS 7-13: Please see the separate circular attached. If you do not wish for your child to participate in the survey, please send an email to the class teacher. Link to the parent survey is available on the school website.

3) STUDENT'S HAIR AND APPEARANCE: We had sent out a separate circular on student's hair and appearance on Wednesday and we would like to appreciate the many students who really made an effort to neaten up their hair the next day. It was reassuring to see that many tried their best to improve their overall grooming and appearance. We are reaching out to all parents to ensure that this good practice continues.

4) YEAR 13 EXTRA LESSONS ON SATURDAYS: Please check the separate circular attached.

5) OCTOBER 2024 ASSESSMENT TIMETABLES AND PORTIONS: Please check the school website for this information. These have been sent to you via the class group email.

6) GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR THE CLASS OF 2023-2024 (Current Year 12 students and parents) 8TH NOVEMBER 2024 evening ceremony: Parents are requested to kindly save this date and check the separate attachment.

7) GEMA INTERNATIONAL ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION 2024: Parents are requested to please check the GEMA FLYER attached.

8) PEARSON EDEXCEL EXAM REGISTRATION FORMS FOR YEARS 11 & 13: Parents of students in Years 11 and 13 are reminded to please check the Pearson Edexcel Exam Registration forms that have been sent with the children today. Payment for London Board Exams must be made through Skiplly. Please send the forms with the relevant documents (mentioned on the form) and the printed Skiplly receipt.

9) IBT ARABIC A & B (ARABIC A- Years 5-10) (ARABIC B – Years 5, 7 & 9): Please see attached circulars that were issued on 10th September 2024.

10) SEPTEMBER CALENDAR 2024: Please refer to the circular of 13 Sept.

11) WELLBEING WEDNESDAYS (COMMENCING OCTOBER 2024) : With a view to improving overall student wellbeing and following through with some suggestions from students themselves, the school will champion Wellbeing Wednesdays on **EVERY WEDNESDAY** . *We would request that every child bring in ANY ONE FRUIT of their choice and/or ANY ONE DAIRY (milk, laban , yoghurt, a fruit juice could substitute for those children who are lactose intolerant)* for breakfast , that they will have together in class first thing in the morning during the morning registration with their class teachers.

12) GL CAT-4 TEST FOR YEARS FOUR, SIX, EIGHT AND TEN ONLY: Parents of students in Years Four, Six, Eight and Ten are requested to kindly check the separate attachment to this circular regarding the GL CAT4 examination. Please email the Skiplly receipt indicating payment for the same to your child's class teacher. **CHILDREN MUST BRING A FULLY CHARGED DEVICE – ONLY A TABLET OR LAPTOP (THE TEST WILL NOT RUN ON A MOBILE PHONE) ON THE DAY THE TEST HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR THEIR CLASS. GL CAT-4 SCHEDULES WILL BE SENT NEXT FRIDAY.**

Tue, 8 th October 2024	YEAR 4 A B C D E & F
Tue, 15 th October 2024	YEAR 6 A B C D E & F
Tue, 22 nd October 2024	YEAR 8 A B C D E & F
Tue, 29 th October 2024	YEAR 10 A B C D E & F

13) 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.

14) INAPPROPRIATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA & CYBERBULLYING: Please see circular of 6th September 2024.

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 attached to this weekly notice.

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. New students will receive their school email Ids on Monday.

19) APPROVED KHDA CALENDAR FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-2025: Parents are requested to check the approved KHDA School Calendar for the Academic Year 2024-2025 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 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.

26 th AUGUST 2024	School re-opens for ALL STUDENTS
30 th SEPTEMBER 2024	Holiday for student's
10 th to 23 rd OCTOBER 2024	Window for mid-term assessments
1 st NOVEMBER 2024	Diwali Holiday
11 th NOVEMBER 2024	Holiday for all students
2 nd & 3 rd DECEMBER 2024	National Day Holidays
14 th DECEMBER 2024 – 5 th JANUARY 2025 (Inclusive)	Winter Break
6 th JANUARY 2025	School re-opens after the Winter Break
10 th - 24 th JANUARY – 2025	First Term Examinations in the morning. Regular lessons after break. Students will not be allowed to go home after the morning's exam.
13 th FEBRUARY 2025	Sports Day Years 5-13 (subject to change)
17 th FEBRUARY	Holiday for all students
21 st FEBRUARY 2025	Sports Day Years 1-4
7 th to 21 st March 2025	Window for Mid-term assessments
14 th -21 st MARCH 2025	Mock Examinations years 11 and 13
7 th to 11 th APRIL 2025	
22 nd MARCH – 6 TH APRIL 2025 (inclusive)	Spring Break
17 th & 18 th APRIL 2025	Holiday for all students
13 th MAY 2025	Study Holiday
14 th 15 th & 16 th MAY 2025	Final exams in parallel with regular lessons
19 th to 28 th MAY 2025	Final Exams and students go home at 11:30 am
5 th & 6 th JUNE 2025	Eid Al Adha (subject to government declaration)
26 th JUNE 2025	Government Holiday
27 th JUNE 2025	Last day of school

Please note that the GL EXAMS usually take place during the month of May and June.

20) INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARK TESTS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-2025 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.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

YEAR GROUP	NGRT	CAT-4 Amended	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

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) 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.

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.

28) 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)



Links:

- [PERSONAL APPEARANCE-PARTICULARLY HAIRSTYLES AND UNCOMBED HAIR](#)
- [Year THIRTEEN – EXTRA LESSONS OCTOBER 2024](#)
- [SUSTAINABLE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION](#)
- [LETTER WRITING – STORY WRITING COMPETITION](#)
- [NAJAH DUBAI EXPO2024](#)
- [GEMA INTERNATIONAL ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION](#)
- [MUZIKMINDS YOUNG TALENT MUSIC COMPETITION](#)
- [ASSESSMENT FOR THE NOVEMBER 2024 REPORT](#)
- [IBT ARABIC EXAMINATIONS – ARABIC A](#)
- [IBT ARABIC EXAMINATIONS – ARABIC B](#)
- [GL CAT4 EXAMINATION](#)
- [KOMODO WELLBEING PLATFORM 2024-2025](#)
- [CYBERBULLYING/ BULLYING / INAPPROPRIATE USE OF OR BULLYING ON SOCIAL MEDIA](#)
- [ADMISSION TO TWO YEAR A-LEVEL GCE PROGRAMME](#)



ST. MARY'S *Catholic High School, Dubai*

OCTOBER 2024 CALENDAR - FOR PARENTS

VERSION 1.0

Tue, 1 st Oct	ZERO PERIOD
Wed, 2 nd Oct	NGRT YEAR 2 / WELLBEING WEDNESDAYS COMMENCE GEMA International Story Writing Competition Assembly awarding.
Thu, 3 rd Oct	NGRT YEAR 4 Business Challenge Cup @ SP JAIN UNI. Year 13 (fifteen students) Art Competition Awarding ceremony @ morning assembly
Fri, 4 th Oct	Sports Teams training for BOYS- 5:00-7:00 PM COLOURED CLOTHES DAY - PINK DAY FOR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS.
Sat, 5 th Oct	Office closed. Year 13 Extra classes: MATHS , ACCOUNTS & PHYSICS Sports Teams Training for BOYS- 5:00-7:00 PM
Sun, 6 th Oct	
Mon, 7 th Oct	Outdoor break commences Community Service commences
Tue, 8 th Oct	CAT-4 EXAM YEAR 4 ZERO LESSON & FIRST
Wed, 9 th Oct	Sports Teams Training for GIRLS commences (2:00 -4:00 pm)
Thu, 10 th Oct	OCTOBER ASSESSMENTS COMMENCE. YEARS 2-10 Zero lesson – Whole school on Monday's timings WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY-COLOURED CLOTHES DAY -THEME GREEN ENDERUN COLLEGE (PHILIPPINES) visit 10:30 am Main Hall- interested students from years 10 -13. Sports Teams Training for GIRLS (2:00 -4:00 pm)
Fri, 11 th Oct	Sports Teams Training for BOYS- 5:00-7:00 PM
Sat, 12 th Oct	OFFICE OPEN YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME commences today Year 13 Extra classes: BIOLOGY & CHEMISTRY Sports Teams Training for BOYS- 5:00-7:00 PM
Sun, 13 th Oct.	
Mon, 14 th Oct	



ST. MARY'S *Catholic High School, Dubai*

OCTOBER 2024 CALENDAR - FOR PARENTS

VERSION 1.0

Tue,15 th Oct	Zero lesson - Whole school on Monday's timings Years 2-10 - tests run through ZERO & first lesson WELLBEING SURVEY-Years 7,8 & 9 CAT-4 YEAR 6
Wed, 16 th Oct	WELLBEING WEDNESDAY Sports Teams Training for GIRLS (2:00 -4:00 pm)
Thu,17 th Oct.	Zero lesson - Whole school on Monday's timings Sports Teams Training for GIRLS (2:00 -4:00 pm)
Fri,18 th Oct	The FIRST and SECOND lessons of the day are for testing Sports Teams Training for BOYS- 5:00-7:00 PM
Sat, 19 th Oct	OFFICE CLOSED. Extra classes: MATHS , ACCOUNTS & PHYSICS Sports Teams Training for BOYS- 5:00-7:00 PM
Sun,20 th Oct	
Mon,21 st Oct	
Tue,22 nd Oct	DPS Sports Tournament begins. CAT-4 YEAR 8
Wed,23 rd Oct	WELLBEING WEDNESDAY OCTOBER ASSESSMENTS END. YEARS 2-10 Sports Teams Training for GIRLS (2:00 -4:00 pm)
Thu,24 th Oct	Sports Teams Training for GIRLS (2:00 -4:00 pm)
Fri, 25 th Oct	COLOURED CLOTHES DAY Sports Teams Training for BOYS- 5:00-7:00 PM
Sat,26 th Oct.	Office Open. Extra classes: MATHS , BIOLOGY & CHEMISTRY Sports Teams Training for BOYS- 5:00-7:00 PM
Sun,27 th Oct	
Mon,28 th Oct	
Tue,29 th Oct	CAT-4 YEAR 10 -Zero lesson
Wed,30 th Oct	WELLBEING WEDNESDAY Sports Teams Training for GIRLS (2:00 -4:00 pm) Rehearsal for Graduation Ceremony
Thu,31 st Oct	COLOURED CLOTHES DAY for DIWALI NO SPORTS TEAM TRAINING FOR GIRLS



OUR REF :

TRN : 100259955100003

Tuesday 1st October 2024.

To: The Parents of students in Years 7-13
Invitation to participate in KHDA's Academic & Career Guidance

Dear Parents,

The Knowledge and Human Development Authority (**KHDA**) is conducting a study to better understand current practices and perspectives surrounding academic and career guidance in schools. Your support is essential to this study, and we kindly request your consent to allow your child to participate.

The purpose of this study is to gather feedback from students in Years 7 to 13, parents, academic and career guidance counsellors, and school principals on how academic and career guidance is delivered. The input will contribute to shaping future policies that enhance student outcomes.

Your child's participation will involve completing a questionnaire that takes approximately 20 minutes. The questionnaire will ask about your child's experiences and opinions on the guidance they receive at school and the careers they want to pursue in the future. **Students will complete the survey during their ICT/CS practical lessons in the lab.**

Confidentiality of the data gathered is maintained at all times. KHDA will use the data in an aggregated manner and personal information of participants will not be reported or disclosed to any external parties.

In addition, we invite you to participate in the study by completing a separate questionnaire for parents. Your feedback is equally important in helping us assess the level of parental engagement and satisfaction with the guidance provided to your child.

Questionnaire link for Parents:

[**Parent Survey on Academic and Career Guidance**](#)

We encourage all parents and students to collaborate with us in this study. However, if you object to your child's completion of the survey, please contact your child's school.

Please feel free to reach out to your school if you have any questions or concerns. We thank you for your time and support in helping us improve academic and career guidance for all students.

The KHDA Team.

Yours sincerely

Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)

