



OUR REF :

TRN : 100259955100003

Friday, 28th February 2025

To: The Parents of students in Years 1-13

WEEKLY CIRCULAR BEFORE WEEK TWENTY-FOUR

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:

- **RAMADAN TIMINGS.**
- **REMOTE LEARNING ON FRIDAYS DURING RAMADAN (Years 1-10 & 12) -Please see separate circular.**
- **SUBJECT CHOICE -Year 8 -Class teachers will send the form via class group email.**
- **SUBJECT ORIENTATIONS YEAR 8.**

1) RAMADAN TIMINGS: Ramadan Timings for our school from Mondays to Thursdays – **7:10 am to 12:10 pm.** Fridays – **7:10 am – 11:55 am.**

2) REMOTE LEARNING FRIDAYS DURING THE HOLY MONTH OF RAMADAN (Years 1-10 & 12): Please read the separate circular on this. Years 11 and 13 will continue with their Mock Examinations on those days with no change to the schedule.

3) SUBJECT ORIENTATIONS FOR YEAR 8 STUDENTS ON 6th & 10th MARCH for girls and on 11th and 12th March for boys : We have organised subject orientations for YEAR 8 students. Students need not bring any books on this day as they will be engaged in the Main Hall during the day. They must have a refill pad and a pen to note down key information. They must also have their regular snacks and water.

4) NO MARCH MID-TERM ASSESSMENTS: Given that many children will be fasting during the Holy month of Ramadan and lessons will also be shorter during Ramadan, the school has taken a decision NOT to have the March mid-term assessments and therefore NO third report will be issued. This is also with a view to maximise curricular hours for instruction /teaching time.

5) APTITUDE TESTING FOR STUDENTS OF YEAR 8 & 11: We have attached a separate circular for this. This is completely optional. The cost is AED 250/- per child if you choose to register and is completely optional. Payment is to be made on SKIPLY. Please email your child's class teacher the Skiplly receipt. **FINAL DEADLINE TO PAY TO REGISTER IS 3rd MARCH 2025.**

6) RAMADAN OFFERING TO THE MOSQUE: As we do every year, we will be inviting all our children to bring in a small fast-breaking package which we will be sending to the mosque daily during Ramadan. This is optional of course, but we would like to teach ALL children the values of charity and generosity and inculcate in them a deeper sensitivity for those who are less fortunate. A schedule for each class is attached to this circular.

IF THE CLASS OFFERING IS FALLING ON A REMOTE LEARNING FRIDAY, PLEASE SEND THE OFFERING ON THURSDAY.

7) ADMISSIONS TO YEAR ONE FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026: We would like to inform all parents that the admissions notice for YEAR ONE for the Academic Year 2025 – 2026 has been uploaded to the school website. Link to the circular is here.

<https://www.stmarysdubai.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Admissions-for-YEAR-ONE-for-the-Academic-Year-2025-2026.pdf>

8) ADMISSIONS TO YEARS TWO- TEN FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-

2026: We would like parents to please note that places for these year groups are limited. Please check the admissions notice for years 2-10 that has been uploaded to the school website. Link to the circular is here.

<https://www.stmarysdubai.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Admissions-for-the-Academic-Year-2025-2026-YEAR-2-TO-YEAR-10.pdf>

9) MOCK EXAMINATIONS YEARS 11 AND 13 AND SERIOUS TIME FOR STUDY

NOW : Please note that the Mock Examinations for years 11 and 13 will run from 14th of March to 21st of March before the Spring Break and 7th April to 14th April 2025. Students must report to school at sharp 7:00 am. No leave will be sanctioned during Mock Examinations. **Any medical illnesses even for one day will require a medical certificate.** The Mock Exam Timetables have been uploaded to the school website and have been attached to this circular.

We urge parents to monitor students doing board examinations as we have found a lack of seriousness among many students. This is a critical time for solving past papers, clearing doubts and undertaking intensive revision. We are still seeing many students not displaying a fairly responsible attitude towards their studies and this will impact them negatively in the long run. Parents will need to be more active in monitoring their social media use and any other time that is not spent fruitfully. We urge children to use this short time left to maximise their revision and preparation for Board Exams.

10) RECYCLING CHALLENGE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BIC PENS UNTIL JUNE 2025

: Students are invited to collect all used plastic pens and markers for recycling from now until June 2025 for a chance to win exciting prizes .

11) SECOND TERM FEES TO BE PAID WITHOUT DELAY :

All parents are requested to please pay the second term fees . The timely payment of fees is crucial to the sustainable functioning of the school. We urge those parents who have not yet made the First Term fee payments to kindly do so without any further delay. First Term fees that have not been paid will now be considered as outstanding and we will not be able to issue corrected assessment papers, report cards and any other official documents .

We would also like to clarify that when late payments are made, papers and reports cannot be released immediately. There is a fairly lengthy process to be completed and so we request all parents to kindly be patient in this regard.

12) PROPOSED FEE INCREMENT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026 (Years 1-

12): Parents are asked to please check the link below to the separate circular.

<https://www.stmarysdubai.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/PROPOSED-FEE-INCREMENT.pdf>

13) 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.

14 th -21 st MARCH 2025 7 th to 11 th APRIL 2025	Mock Examinations years 11 and 13
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 st 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.

14) 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.**

15) 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.

16) 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.

17) 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.

18) 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.

19) NO FEE PAYMENTS MUST BE DEPOSITED INTO THE SCHOOL ACCOUNT:

Parents are reminded that fee payments MUST not be deposited into the school account. Kindly come to school if you wish to pay fees in cash so that we can issue the fee receipt immediately.

20) URGENT QUERIES AND CONCERNS: If you have any urgent queries and concerns, kindly send an email to our Vice Principal , Ms. Lise-Ann on lpinto-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 long weekend.

Yours sincerely



Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)





OUR REF :

TRN : 100259955100003

Friday, 28th February 2025

To: The Parents of students in Years 1-10 and Year 12
REMOTE LEARNING ON FRIDAYS DURING
RAMADAN (7th March, 14th March and 21st March)

Dear Parents,

Greetings from Saint Mary's. This is an update regarding **Remote Learning** during the Holy month of Ramadan.

In line with the directives of His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, and Chairman of the Executive Council of Dubai, and in His Highness's dedication to strengthening family bonds during the holy month, it has been decided to implement the remote learning option for private school students in Dubai on Fridays throughout the blessed month of Ramadan.

However, students from Years 11 and 13 answering their Mock Examinations will attend their exams in school as planned.

In case of any overwhelming circumstances, please inform your child's class teacher by email by Monday, 3rd March 2025, if you wish to send your child to school on these three Fridays so that we can make provision for them in the library to do their work. If teachers do not receive any emails, then we will understand that children will be at home.

- For years 1-8, teachers who have lessons on Friday will send out the work to their students in Google Classroom (GC) on Thursday itself.
- Years 9, 10 and 12 will have Zoom links sent to them by their teachers.

Yours sincerely

Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)





OUR REF :

TRN : 100259955100003

DATE: Friday, 21st February 2025

**To: Parents of students from Years 1 to 13 -
RAMADAN OFFERING**

Dear Parents,

Greetings from St. Mary's. The Holy Month of Ramadan will soon be upon us, and this is a beautiful time of sharing and being charitable, especially with those less fortunate. As we do every year, we are inviting our students to bring in a simple Iftaar package that we send to the mosque just opposite our school. There are hundreds of workers who access the mosque daily for Iftaar and these little packages go a long way towards meeting this urgent need.

We believe that the values of charity and empathy are key values that we would like the children to imbibe from a young age. Of course this is optional. Please find below the contents for the Iftaar package: (**PLEASE SECURE ALL IN A NEATLY SEALED PLASTIC PACKET**)

1. 3-4 dates (neatly wrapped in cling wrap or in a small, sealed packet.
2. Any of these: Apple/ orange / Banana
3. A small bottle of juice or Laban
4. A small bottle of water

Please send this only on the day scheduled for your child's class as these are perishable items.

Monday, 3rd March 2025	YEAR 12 & 13
Tuesday, 4th March 2025	YEAR 2 A, B, C, D, E
Wednesday, 5th March 2025	YEAR 3 A, B, C, & YEAR 11 A, D, E
Thursday, 6th March 2025	YEAR 3 D, E, F & YEAR 11 B, C, F
Friday, 7th March 2025	YEAR 4 A, B, C
Monday, 10th March 2025	YEAR 4 D, E, F

Tuesday, 11th March 2025	YEAR 5 A, D, E
Wednesday, 12th March 2025	YEAR 5 B, C, F
Thursday, 13th March 2025	YEAR 6 A, D, E
Friday, 14th March 2025	YEAR 6 B, C, F
Monday, 17th March 2025	YEAR 7 A, B, C, D, E, F
Tuesday, 18th March 2025	YEAR 8 A, B, C, D, E, F
Wednesday, 19th March 2025	YEAR 9 A, B, C, D, E, F
Thursday, 20th March 2025	YEAR 10 A, B, C, D, E, F
Friday, 21st March 2025	YEAR 1 A, B, C, D, E

May your kindness and generosity be blessed.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)





OUR REF :

TRN : 100259955100003

Friday, 21st February 2025

To: The parents of students in Years 8 and 11 :
Psychometric Aptitude Testing

Dear parents,

Greetings to you from St. Mary's Catholic High School! Year 8 students are soon going to be asked to make choices regarding the subjects that they would like to pursue in year 9 for their GCSE/IGCSE exams . This is one of the most important decisions that your child will be making in the course of their educational career. As a school, we understand how important it is that they are provided with all the support we can offer to help them make decisions that will ultimately bring out the best of their potential. Similarly, Year 11 students are planning their next course of study.

An understanding of their interests, strengths and personality type will go a long way in helping them make this choice. In this context, we are once again arranging for an aptitude/ psychometric testing to be done for our Year 8 and year 11 students. These tests are in no way obligatory but completely optional.

St. Mary's Catholic High School in conjunction with Varsity Connections has been conducting psychometric assessments at the school for the past ten years. Please see below details of the test.

VC MAP Psychometric assessment Overview

VC MAP is an in depth and accurate psychometric tool which explores 3 key areas which are used in making career choices.

1. Motivation

- Highlights student's interest in 7 different areas
- Identifies the type of activity that appeals most to the student
- Guides student in stream Selection viz Arts & Humanities /Science/Commerce

2. Aptitude

- a) Battery of tests in 9 different areas
- b) Identifies the skill sets of the student
- c) Maps student skill sets against the skill requirements for numerous careers
- d) Shortlists Career Clusters that best fit the student's skills

3. Personality

- a) Analyses dimensions of personality that are useful to students in planning their careers.
- b) Helping them understand what it is about the way they feel and behave that might make them more suited to certain careers

Students will undertake all 3 modules of VC MAP online. Candidates receive a comprehensive, modular report upon completion of VC MAP which analyses all 3 modules of Motivation, Aptitude and Personality in detail. The report clearly indicates the students' level of aptitude for a range of career clusters thus helping them arrive at realistic decisions while keeping Motivation and Personality in perspective. In addition, the VC MAP Report also includes a recommended list of subjects for each one of the career clusters detailed in the report. This ensures all possible career options are explored before making informed career choices ensuring academic success.

VC MAP – Group Counseling

The VC MAP Report analyses are done via group Counselling scheduled with the students and parents during an online session. The reports will be sent to the students via email prior to this. During the group counselling session, a sample report is displayed, and each page of the report is discussed. This will provide students and parents with tools and guidance to understand/interpret their own reports. This comprehensive session will also have an FAQ section which will address common queries and any specific doubts that arise.

The test is an online test that will need to be done at home. The team conducting the tests are certified by the British Psychological Society – Certificate of Competence in Occupational Testing. **The test will be conducted at a price of AED 250 (inclusive of 5% VAT)**

Please return THE REGISTRATION SLIP to the class teacher by the 3rd of March 2025. The payment for this test must be made on Skiplly directly on the separate section for Aptitude Test latest by the 3rd of March. Please attach the Skiplly receipt to the slip below.

Yours sincerely



Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)



REGISTRATION SLIP – APTITUDE TEST

_____, I WISH TO REGISTER MY CHILD
FOR THE APTITUDE TEST. Attached is the Skiplly receipt.

Name of student: _____

Year and Section: _____

Email id of parent: _____

Email id of student: _____

Mobile contact: _____

DATE: _____ SIGNATURE : _____