

St Mary's CBGS Belfast Home/School Agreement 2021-2022

In St. Mary's, we expect a high level of support from the parents of our pupils. By accepting a place in this School, parents and children implicitly agree to support the ethos and spirit of St. Mary's. It is our belief that parents and teachers must work together if pupils are to enjoy school and maximise their full potential. This Home / School agreement has been drawn up to elicit your co-operation and support in the implementation of the Code of Conduct, which gives further details of our expectations.

Attendance

Schools are required by the Department of Education to record details of attendance in the following categories:

Present	Authorised Absence
In school all day	Bereavement
Medical/Dental appointment for part of the day	Under suspension
Educated off site	Ill or all-day medical/dental appointment
Approved sporting activity	Enforced closure
Educational Visit	
Work Experience	

Any other absence is recorded as unauthorised. These categories are recorded on the official register and appear on pupils' records.

The Department of Education requires a **written** 'Reason for Absence' following a period of non-attendance at school. If this is not provided, the School is obliged to record the absence as 'unauthorised' and this will appear on the pupil's attendance record. Parents may phone the school reception in the event of a pupil's absence but this must be followed up with a written explanation.

The school does not approve absence for holidays during term time.

Procedures for pupils

Pupils should be in school at 8.50am. The bell for registration and assembly rings at 8.55. Registration takes place at 9.00am.

Pupils who arrive in school after 9.00am must sign the late register in the lunchroom on arrival. Otherwise they will be registered as absent. **Sanctions will be strictly applied.**

Pupils must have a written explanation of any absence signed by parent/guardian and this should be presented to the form teacher on the day of the return to school.

Pupils must not leave school before 3.15pm except in unavoidable circumstances. In such cases a written request must be made in advance to the Form Teacher. Pupils must be collected by a Parent/Responsible adult and both pupils and parents must sign the book in the school office before leaving.

Uniform

The School uniform is designed to foster a sense of identity, loyalty and pride in the pupils and the School and is compulsory for all.

All pupils from Year 8 – Year 14 inclusive are expected to attend school in the Regulation Uniform as stipulated below:

Years 8 to 12:

- School blazer with crest (**to be worn at all times**).
- Plain charcoal/black trousers.
- Grey shirt with School tie.
- School pullover (if required).
- School Blazer charcoal with school crest (new September 2020).
- The **only outdoor** coat for pupils in Years 8-12 is the **green school-crested fleece**.
- **Black shoes only** - **no** trainers / **no** trainer style shoes (no black trainers, no black canvas shoes, no black shoes with white markings).

Years 13 and 14:

- Formal plain white shirt with collar
- Black crested senior School tie
- Black School-crested jumper.
- Formal plain black /charcoal trousers.
- Black School-crested fleece.
- The **only outdoor** coat for pupils in Years 13 & 14 is the **black School-crested fleece**.
- Black shoes – no trainers.
- School Blazer (charcoal with school crest)

Please also note that:

The School Dress Code must be observed both on the School premises and on the way to and from school.

- **No** personal jewellery is to be worn and prohibited articles will be confiscated.
- Hoodies, sports tops, sweatshirts or jackets are not acceptable as a substitute for the school overcoat and may not be worn.
- **Hair must be neat, clean and tidy and acceptably cut. Dyed, shaved, unconventional styles etc. are not allowed. If worn to and beyond shoulder-length, hair must be tied back. We do not accept a haircut below a 'number 1'.**
- **Students must be clean shaven at all times.**
- Political emblems are not permitted.
- Where trainers need to be worn instead of shoes, a medical certificate is required if the problem persists for more than a few days. Otherwise a note from home is required on the first day.
- The Year Heads and the Senior Teachers in charge of each Key Stage are the arbiters of what is acceptable and within the provisions of the Dress Code.

Parents will be asked to come to school and collect their son if they do not conform.

While wearing our school uniform pupils represent their school and will behave accordingly. Pupils must bear this in mind on the way to and from school, on school provided transport and at school organised events.

Repeated infringements of the rules in relation to uniform and appearance may lead to suspension.

Academic Expectations

Pupils are expected to work to the best of their ability at all times in school and at home. Independent study is crucial for academic success. Getting into good habits early on will ensure that your son achieves his potential. All homework tasks are expected to be completed to a high standard and submitted on time. If homework is not completed, then appropriate action will be taken. If there is evidence of a recurring problem relating to homework, this will be referred to the Form Teacher, Year Head or parent/guardian.

All pupils will sit standardised class tests in all their subjects towards the end of each school term. Results from these tests will be analysed to determine each pupil's progress and identify any pupils who may also require additional support.

Mobile Phones (Including Smart Watches)

For Health & Safety and Child Protection reasons, Mobile Phones, iWatches, MP3 Players and IPOD **are not allowed to be used in school**. While our recommendation is that pupils should not bring their mobile phones etc. to school, if they choose to do so it is at their own risk. We do not accept liability for any loss or damage to these personal electronic devices. Pupils who do bring Mobile Phones, iWatches, MP3 Players and IPOD into school it is on the **understanding that they are turned off and kept out of sight when on the school premises** and whilst travelling on school transport.

Should a pupil be **seen** with a Mobile Phone, iWatch, MP3 Player or IPOD they will have it confiscated immediately by a member of staff who finds them with it, who will place it in the school safe to be collected by a parent or other responsible **adult the next school day**.

This is a 24-hour sanction.

Refusal to hand over the mobile phone, iWatch, MP3 Player or IPOD could result in suspension.

In order to collect the phone or device, a letter must be collected by the pupil from the office. This letter must be presented at reception and the phone will be returned **after 3:15pm the following school day**.

Pupils must not approach the office staff to have their phones/devices returned.

Should a parent/guardian wish to contact a pupil or vice versa, this must be done via reception.

Social Networking

For the purpose of Child Protection / Safeguarding:

- Pupils are not permitted to engage with or access any social networking site while on school premises. This applies to all school-based facilities and personal technologies.
- Pupils should not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate postings about the School, or anyone (e.g. other pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, visitors etc.) connected to the School. Note that 'postings' refer to ALL types of content on social media sites including (but not exclusively) text, photographs and video.

Behaviour

As we see the School as an extension of the home we seek your full co-operation in helping us implement our standards of courtesy and behaviour, as outlined in the Code of Conduct.

It is the school's practice to involve parents if and when behaviour problems become evident. This is to enable you to fulfil your obligation and to accept responsibility for the behaviour of your son at school.

The School reserves the right to interview pupils about disciplinary matters and academic progress should it be considered necessary.

Parents/Guardians

An essential element of the Pastoral Care system is partnership with parents, whom the school recognises as the first educators of their children. To this end, regular contact, formal and informal, with parents is promoted throughout the child's school career.

Year groups have parent-teacher meetings which provide the opportunity to discuss a pupil's progress with all the subject teachers and to speak to the Form Teacher and Year Head if necessary.

Attendance at the annual Parent Teacher and relevant Induction meetings for Years 8/11/12 and 13 is essential.

In addition to the above formal or timetabled meetings, parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the school at any time if they have concerns about their son's progress and/or wellbeing.

**If Parents/Guardians wish to speak to a teacher, they are asked to make an appointment.
Staff will not be available to speak to parents if they arrive without an appointment.**

PLEASE NOTE: Parents/Guardians are asked to adopt a civil manner at all times when speaking with staff in relation to issues concerning their son.

I have read and agree to abide by the School's Code of Conduct.

Name of pupil: _____ **Class:** _____

Signature of pupil: _____

I have read and will ensure that my son abides by the School's Code of Conduct

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

This Home/School Agreement is a working document, is subject to change and is updated on an annual basis.