

# St. Mary's Secondary School

## Parent's Handbook



Excellence

Community

Tradition

Innovation

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# WELCOME

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It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to St Mary's Secondary School, Mallow as a parent of first year class. Thank you for choosing St Mary's for your daughter's second level education and we look forward to working with you in partnership to ensure she receives an education which results in her reaching her full potential in all aspects of school life.

This handbook is designed to provide you with valuable information about St Mary's Secondary School for the school year. Please read this booklet carefully as the information is relevant and important for good communication and a clear understanding of the school's policies and how St Mary's operates.

I know you will support us in stressing the importance of hard work and commitment for your daughter's academic success, while at the same time helping us promote participation in extra-curricular and spiritual activities which promote the holistic development of our students.

We wish all our students and their families a safe and enjoyable summer. We look forward to meeting with your daughters and supporting their learning and development in the years ahead.

Yvonne Bane  
Principal



Sinead Luttrell  
Deputy Principal

Yvonne Bane  
Principal

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST. MARY'S SECONDARY SCHOOL

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Although the Sisters of Mercy came to Mallow in 1845 and the Primary School was established almost immediately, it was not until 1932 that St. Mary's Secondary School was founded. As early as 1903, as evidenced by the Convent records, the need for a Secondary School was recognised and acknowledged. Not until 1932, however, was it found possible for the Sisters to satisfy this so-obvious need. The old "1850" National School building, which had been vacated when the new Primary School had been built in 1911, was early in 1932, prepared and fitted for the accommodation of the group of Primary school leavers anxious to continue their education. When the new school year began on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1932, St. Mary's came into being. There were two teachers: Miss Kitty Whelton, (later Mrs. P. McSweeney), and a young, newly professed Sister, Sr. M. Benedicta, and there were 28 students enrolled in the school.

The story of the school in the next decades is a story of gradual growth, of much development, and of many academic successes. The original two-storey building had to be re-constructed many times to accommodate growing numbers and finally in 1966 it was decided to add an extension. A sudden spurt of growth in the numbers of pupils in the late sixties (partly due to the Free Education and School Transport Schemes) necessitated the building of new blocks of classrooms in the field in front of the Convent. In 1970 the new extensions were meant to provide for an enrolment of 400+ students. More extensions were built in 1974, 1982 and 1987 to accommodate ever increasing numbers. By the time the enrolment had reached 600+ the need for a completely new school was recognised. In Autumn 2003 this new building became a reality and a new chapter of the history of the school began.

## MERCY PHILOSOPHY

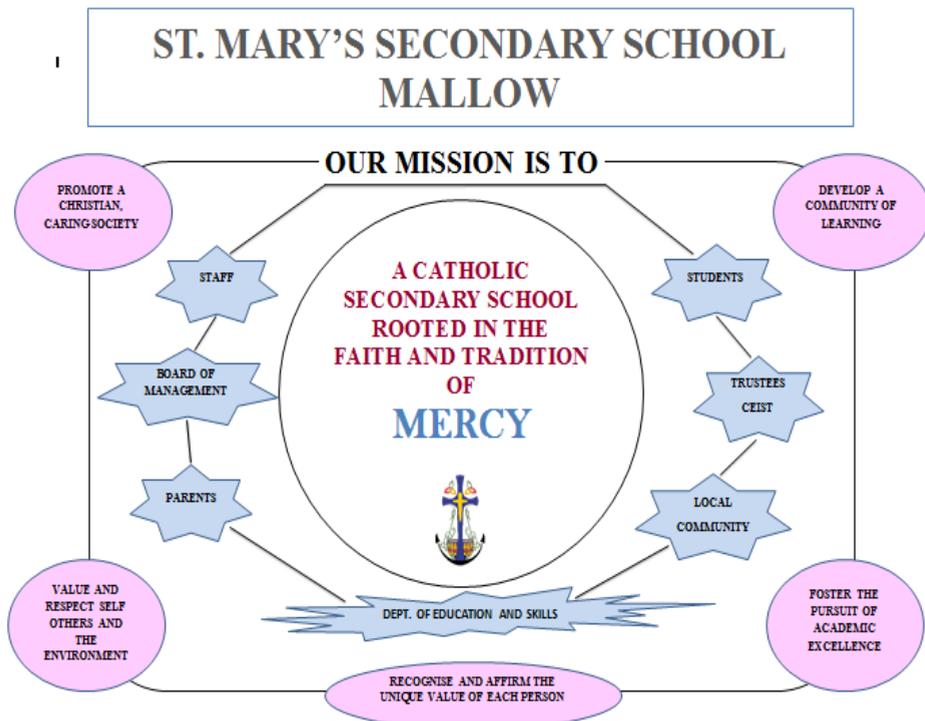
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Inspired by the vision of Catherine McAuley, Mercy education is committed to holistic development and to the achievement of the full potential of each student, particularly those who are disadvantaged or marginalised. It is a process informed and influenced by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and is conducted in an atmosphere of care, respect and joy.

CEIST Trustees are committed to the successful implementation of recent education legislation, in particular the Education Act (1998) and the Education (Welfare) Act (2002). CEIST fully subscribes to the underlying principles of the legislation; partnership, accountability, transparency, inclusion, respect for diversity, parental choice, and equality.

# MISSION STATEMENT

- ❖ St. Mary's Secondary School, Mallow is a voluntary Catholic secondary school under the trusteeship of the Sisters of Mercy.
- ❖ In co-operation with the Department of Education, with parental and community support and within the available resources our mission is:
- ❖ To develop a community of learning which is geared towards the holistic development of each student;
- ❖ To foster the pursuit of academic excellence, respecting the specific potential and talents of each student;
- ❖ To promote within the school community the values of a Christian, caring society;
- ❖ To value, within the total school community, self-respect, respect for others and for the environment;
- ❖ To recognise and affirm the unique value and contribution of each individual.



## OPERATING CONTEXT

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In accepting the role of management, the Board of Management acknowledges the leadership role and responsibility entrusted to it by the Trustees. In the exercise of its role, the Board operates within:

- ❖ The context and parameters of DES regulations and programmes
- ❖ The funding and resources available
- ❖ The rights of the trustees as set out in the Education Act and the Articles of Management.
- ❖ And supports the values of the CEIST Charter

## SCHOOL RESOURCES

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- ❖ The financial and teaching resources of the school are provided by a combination of DES grants and teacher allocations, voluntary contribution and fundraising.
- ❖ The school plan and school policies are implemented each year with due regard to the resources and funding available.
- ❖ The school operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time by the DES
- ❖ The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by DES, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Section 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

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St. Mary's Secondary School is a Voluntary, Catholic Secondary School under the Trusteeship of CEIST. It is a grant-aided, all-girls school.

## BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

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The Board of Management consists of two parent nominees, two teacher nominees and four nominees from the trustee body, CEIST. The Board is responsible for upholding and maintaining the ethos and policies of the School. Parent nominees are elected from the parent body and serve a three year term. The Principal serves as secretary to the Board.

## PARTNERSHIP IN ST. MARY'S

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### PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Parent's Association holds an AGM each September at which officers are elected on an annual basis. Meetings are held on a monthly basis and are open to all parents to attend where matters of relevance to the school are discussed and events including guest speakers for parents and fundraising activities are planned and organised.

All parents including those of 1<sup>st</sup> years are invited to join the Parent's Association.

### STUDENTS' COUNCIL

The aim of the Student Council is to provide students with an opportunity to be consulted on matters pertaining to St. Mary's. The Student Council is comprised of elected representatives from each of the six years and they meet on a regular basis throughout the year.

## PROGRAMMES AVAILABLE IN ST. MARY'S

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- ❖ Junior Certificate
- ❖ Transition Year
- ❖ The Established Leaving Certificate
- ❖ Leaving Cert Applied (LCA)
- ❖ Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)
- ❖ Special Needs Programme

## SUBJECTS ON OFFER AT JUNIOR CYCLE:

<b>Irish</b>	<b>History</b>	<b>Science</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Wellbeing: CSPE</b>
<b>Project Maths</b>	<b>Home Economics</b>	<b>Wellbeing: SPHE</b>
<b>Religion</b>	<b>Business Studies</b>	<b>Wellbeing: PE</b>
<b>French</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Wellbeing Units of Learning</b>
<b>German</b>	<b>Art</b>	

## SUBJECTS ON OFFER AT SENIOR CYCLE:

<b>Irish</b>	<b>Art, Craft and Design</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>Music</b>
<b>Maths</b>	<b>Accounting</b>
<b>Religion</b>	<b>Business</b>
<b>French</b>	<b>Biology</b>
<b>German</b>	<b>Home Economics</b>
<b>History</b>	<b>Physics</b>
<b>Geography</b>	<b>PE</b>
<b>Information Technology</b>	<b>Economics</b>
<b>Chemistry</b>	

# The New Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA)

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The new Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) affords a significant continuity of experience for your child as she makes the transition from primary to post-primary school. As we embark on introducing the new JCPA, we are reminded that students that are at the heart of all our endeavours. The broad range of student learning experiences, from oral presentations to project work will be reflected in classwork, prescribed homework and assessment reporting. The vision for the JCPA is to place *“students at the centre of the educational experience, enabling them to actively participate in their communities and in society and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives”*, (Framework for Junior Cycle, 2015, p.6). It provides greater choice of learning experiences in the curriculum and facilitates the development of 8 Key Skills and 24 Statements of Learning. The implementation of the JCPA started in September 2014 with the teaching of the new subject specification in English and other subjects will be phased in until 2022. For the 2017-2018 cohort of 1<sup>st</sup> Year students, your daughter will study the new specifications in English, Business Studies, Science, Modern Foreign Languages (French & German), Gaeilge, Art, Craft & Design and Wellbeing (PE, CSPE, SPHE and Other Units of Learning).

You as parents will also receive a richer quality of reporting over the three years, where Classroom-Based Assessments and other areas of learning will be reported to you using a template developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. The new curriculum specifications for subjects will be learning outcomes-based and in most cases, they will be common level specifications. The exception to this will be the subjects English, Gaeilge and Mathematics where the specification will be at two levels, Higher level and Ordinary level.

In each subject, students will undertake two Classroom-Based Assessments facilitated by their teacher. One Classroom-Based Assessment will take place in second year and a second Classroom-Based Assessment in third year. Classroom-Based Assessments provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and skills in a way which would not be possible in a formal examination. Classroom-Based Assessments cover a broad range of activities including oral presentations, written work of different types, practical or designing activities, projects, scientific experiments or other suitable tasks applicable to the subject area. After the second of the Classroom-Based Assessments, students will complete a written Assessment Task on what they have learned and the skills and competences that they have developed in that assessment.

Key skills will be embedded in the learning outcomes of every junior cycle subject and short course. Key skills help learners develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to face the many

challenges in today's world. They also support students in learning how to learn and take responsibility for their own learning.



The learning at the core of Junior Cycle is described in twenty-four statements of learning. They are central to planning for, the students' experience of, and the evaluation of the school's junior cycle programme. The NCCA stipulates in each subject specification which statements of learning are most relevant to that particular subject. The purpose of the 24 statements of learning are as follows:

- To ensure a rich educational experience for students
- Learning that has both breadth and depth and is varied
- To enable development of the key skills
- To give access to a varied curriculum of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

## 24 Statements of Learning

The student...

1. communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts
2. listens, speaks, reads and writes at a level of proficiency that is appropriate to her ability
3. creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts
4. creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved
5. has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making
6. appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she lives
7. values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts
8. values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change
9. understands the origins and impacts of social, economic, and environmental aspects of the world around her
10. has the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably
11. takes action to safeguard and promote her wellbeing and that of others
12. is a confident and competent participant in physical activity and is motivated to be physically active
13. understands the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices
14. makes informed financial decisions and develops good consumer skills
15. recognises the potential uses of mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning
16. describes, illustrates, interprets, predicts and explains patterns and relationships
17. devises and evaluates strategies for investigating and solving problems using mathematical knowledge, reasoning and skills
18. observes and evaluates empirical events and processes and draws valid deductions and conclusions
19. values the role and contribution of science and technology to society, and their personal, social and global importance
20. uses appropriate technologies in meeting a design challenge

21. applies practical skills as she develops models and products using a variety of materials and technologies
22. takes initiative, is innovative and develops entrepreneurial skills
23. brings an idea from conception to realisation
24. uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner

## Wellbeing

Our Wellbeing programme aims to foster happy, confident, responsible and resilient students who feel connected to St. Mary’s Secondary School. DES Circular 0015/2017 mandates 300 hours of Wellbeing to be included on the timetable over the 3 year Junior Cycle from September 2017. Wellbeing contributes directly to students’ physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing and resilience. Student wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community. Our Wellbeing Programme from 2017 onwards will comprise of a double Physical Education class, one SPHE class, one CSPE class and one class of rotating Wellbeing units of learning. The units of learning in 1<sup>st</sup> year will incorporate some of the following units: guidance related units to support the transition from primary to secondary school, drama, choir, healthy eating and digital media citizenship units. Wellbeing is one of the eight principles underpinning the JCPA.



## Changes to Junior Cycle State Exams

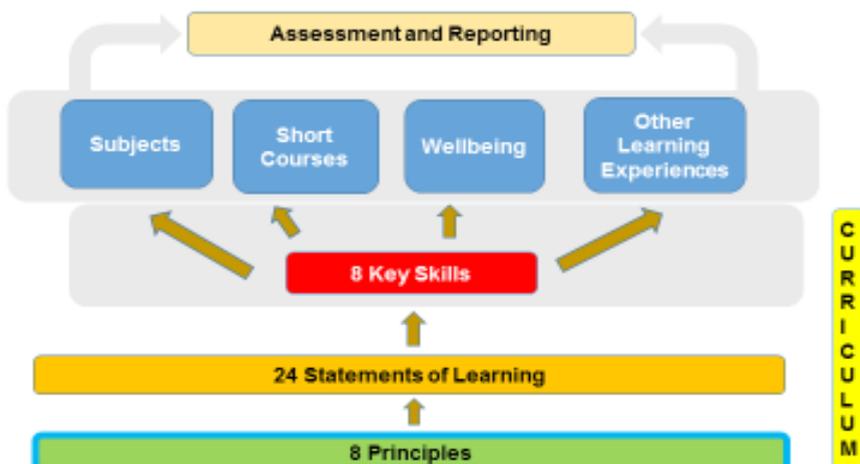
Subjects will continue to be examined by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) in June of third year, however each subject exam paper will be no longer than 2 hours in the case of new specifications. The results will form part of your child’s Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA), which will offer a more complete report on your child’s progress during their junior cycle education. The JCPA will also include descriptors awarded for levels of achievement in classroom-based assessments, short courses and other learning experiences. The Assessment Task mark (10%) will be included in the final examination grade (weighted at 90%) and both are graded by the SEC. The grading of new subject specifications will be as follows:

## Grading of the Final Examination:

- Distinction  $\geq 90\%$  to  $100\%$
- Higher Merit  $\geq 75\%$  and  $< 90\%$
- Merit  $\geq 55\%$  and  $< 75\%$
- Achieved  $\geq 40\%$  and  $< 55\%$
- Partially Achieved  $\geq 20\%$  and  $< 40\%$
- (not graded)  $\geq 0\%$  and  $< 20\%$

## An Overview of the new Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement

- 8 Principles
- 8 Key Skills
- 24 Statements of Learning
- Specifications instead of syllabus
- Learning-Outcomes based
- Teaching-Learning- Assessment are linked
- Promotes Student Ownership and Engagement
- Two Classroom-Based Assessments
- Assessment Task
- Shorter State Examinations in June of 3<sup>rd</sup> Year (usually 1 two hour paper)
- The JCPA provides a more comprehensive overview of a range of student learning experiences.



# SCHOOL CONTACT

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## School Office

The School office is open every day from 8.30am to 5.00pm on Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday. Please note the school office remains open during lunch time.

## Pastoral Care Structure

In keeping with our Mission Statement of a school community with the values of a Christian caring society we are particularly proud of our Pastoral Care Structure. It aims to meet the needs of our school community by providing each person, staff, student and parent/legal guardian an accepting and affirming environment in accordance with the Mission Statement and the values of the CEIST Charter.

The pastoral Care Team consists of a number of teachers including:

<b>Yvonne Bane</b>	<b>Principal</b>
<b>Sinead Luttrell</b>	<b>Deputy Principal</b>
<b>June Dillane</b>	<b>Year Heads</b>
<b>Pauline Cudmore</b>	<b>1st Year</b>
<b>Ann Cronin</b>	<b>2nd Year</b>
<b>Mary Higgins</b>	<b>3rd Year</b>
<b>Noirin O' Leary</b>	<b>Transition Year</b>
<b>Jill Mullins</b>	<b>5th Year</b>
<b>Sr. Ann Marie O'Carroll</b>	<b>6th Year</b>
<b>Pauline Cudmore</b>	<b>LCA Co-ordinator</b>
<b>Jennifer Hickey</b>	<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>
<b>Colette O'Shea</b>	<b>Guidance Counsellor</b>
	<b>Special Education Needs Teacher</b>

Pastoral Care in St. Mary's is supported by:

- Staff Members
- The Year Head
- The Principal
- The Deputy Principal
- The Pastoral Care Team
- Parents/Legal Guardians
- Students

# DAILY TIMETABLE

<b>Class</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Duration</b>	
	<b>8.30-8.45</b>		<b>Student Arrival Times/Access to lockers</b>
<b>Class 1</b>	<b>8.50 – 9.30</b>	40 mins	
<b>Class 2</b>	<b>9.30 – 10.10</b>	40 mins	
<b>Break</b>	<b>10.10 – 10.25</b>	<b>15 mins</b>	<b>Students access lockers</b>
<b>Class 3</b>	<b>10.25 – 11.05</b>	40 mins	
<b>Class 4</b>	<b>11.05 – 11.45</b>	40 mins	
<b>Class 5</b>	<b>11.45 – 12.25</b>	40 mins	
<b>Class 6</b>	<b>12.25 – 1.05</b>	40 mins	
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>1.05 – 1.50</b>	<b>45 mins</b>	<b>Students access lockers</b>
<b>Class 7</b>	<b>1.50 – 2.30</b>	40 mins	
<b>Class 8</b>	<b>2.30 – 3.10</b>	40 mins	
<b>Class 9</b>	<b>3.10 – 3.50</b>	40 mins	<b>School finishes Wednesday -Friday</b>
	<b>3.50</b>	<b>School finishes Monday &amp; Tuesday</b>	

A ten minute slot is available directly after classes finish at the end of the day in which students can visit the locker areas. Students must leave the school promptly unless they are attending Supervised Study. Students waiting for school buses are permitted to wait in the school canteen once a written request in the form of an application has been submitted by parents/guardians. This should be considered a short-term facility only as students are unsupervised.

## UNIFORM

St. Mary's school uniform is available to purchase from Philips Bookshop and Barry's Menswear in Mallow.

- a) School Jacket (compulsory)
- b) Jumper with School Crest, navy for Seniors, sky-force blue for Juniors
- c) Blue shirt (to be worn under jumper only)
- d) Short sleeve crested polo shirt (can be worn without jumper and for P.E.)
- e) Knee length check skirt
- f) Plain opaque black tights
- g) Black Shoes only
- h) Navy school fleece with crest for PE
- i) Student's choice of plain full length straight-leg navy tracksuit end for PE

Pupils shall at **all times** wear the school uniform and be clean, tidy and respectable in dress and appearance. Only very discreet makeup is allowed

Failure to wear the school uniform (except for medical reasons – Doctor's Cert. required) will result in the student being refused admission to class. Non uniform clothing may be confiscated. Earrings and studs to be worn on earlobes only.

Please Note: Students may, for reasons (eg religious, medical), request additions to the uniform. Individual requests should be presented to the Principal and decided on by the Principal in conjunction with the Board of Management. The basic school uniform must be worn at all times. All additional items must be in school colours as agreed with Principal.

## LOCKERS

Each student is provided with a locker at a cost of €10 for storing books, materials and equipment. Students will be allocated their own locker in the designated area of the school for 1<sup>st</sup> years, 2<sup>nd</sup> years etc. It is advisable that students use their lockers properly to ensure that they are organised and to keep the amount of materials that they carry in their schoolbags to a minimum. Each student is responsible for her locker and is required to keep it clean and secure. Defacement, internally or externally is prohibited. Students will not be permitted to swap or move lockers without permission. In the event of interference with or damage to your locker please report it immediately to Sinead Luttrell, Deputy Principal.

Students are only permitted to access their lockers at the beginning of the school day, at break times and at the end of the school day.

## LOST PROPERTY

Students are responsible for their own property and the School Management does not take responsibility for its loss. Students are advised to keep their lockers locked at all times.

Please consult the Deputy Principal regarding lost property.

## MOBILE PHONES, IPODS AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of MP3 players, iPod, mobile phones and other electronic devices are strictly forbidden under the school's code of behaviour. They will be confiscated and can only be collected by parents/guardians.

Possession of mobile telephones is not allowed at any time during the School Day. Students, on occasion, may need to contact home during the day. This can be done through the School Office.

## CANTEEN

There is a canteen in the school which opens at 10.10am (snack time) and 1.05pm (lunch time) serving hot pasta, soup and sandwiches and other items. Students can order lunch from the canteen at snack time and collect their order at lunch time. St. Mary's operates a healthy food policy in conjunction with the canteen provider.

## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

*A full copy of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy is available on the school website. This is a summary of relevant information.*

## SUMMARY OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Regular, punctual attendance maximises academic performance and progress as well as skills in sports, social interaction and personal development. Regular attendance supports and progresses students' intellectual, emotional and psychological wellbeing. Good attendance and punctuality lay the foundation stone for successful working lives, where they are perceived as mature, reliable and responsible persons.

All students must be in attendance at 8.45am each morning. Seniors who have permission to leave at lunch must return to school by 1.45pm each afternoon.

## PUNCTUALITY

- ❖ Students arriving late for school must present a note detailing reasons for late arrival signed by parent/guardian and sign in at the PE Hall door in the mornings. After the first class, students must sign in at the School Office. Failure to do so will result in the student being marked absent for the day.
- ❖ Classes commence at 8.50am and at 1.50pm, all students must attend punctually. Classes finish at 3.50pm on Monday and Tuesday and at 3.10pm on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
- ❖ A formal roll call is taken both morning and afternoon in keeping with the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) guidelines. The school is required to refer students with more than 20 days absence to the NEWB.

## ABSENCE

- ❖ Parents are requested to ring the school before 10.00am to report and explain absence.
- ❖ A written note in the student's journal explaining the absences is presented to the Principal by the student on the morning of their return to school between 8.30am and 8.45am. This note is kept on file. The signed stub is presented to each teacher at the start of each class that was missed. Where there has been a significant absence through illness the school may request a doctor's certificate.

## LEAVING THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

- ❖ In the interests of safety students may not leave the school premises without permission.
- ❖ Transition Year, 5<sup>th</sup> year and Leaving Cert students may leave the school premises at lunchtime but must return by 1.45pm.
- ❖ All other students must remain on school premises at all times.
- ❖ In the event of an accident or illness, the parent/guardian will be informed by the school so that arrangements can be made to collect the student.
- ❖ We strongly recommend that medical/dental appointments are made outside of school hours. If the student has to leave the school for an appointment the parent/guardian must sign a note in the school diary giving permission to their daughter to leave. This note must be presented to the Principal in the morning between 8.30 and 8.45am. Before the student leaves the school she must report to the school office to present the note and sign out.
- ❖ Students are encouraged to return to school immediately after the appointment.

Students must sign back in at the school office.

- ❖ Parents are reminded that students can only be collected from school at the break of class having first reported to the school office.

A student may never leave the school grounds without the express permission of the school authorities. Students who do not follow these procedures may be suspended.

## MEDICAL CARE

In the event of accident /illness, the parent/guardian will be informed by the school office, so that arrangements can be made to collect the student.

- ❖ If a student gets sick in school the following procedure is to be followed:
  - Inform the class teacher
  - Get permission to go to the office
  - Ask the office to ring home
  - Parent/guardian must call into the office to collect the student.
  - Sign out in the office
  - A note must be presented in school the following day to show to each class teacher that the student missed a class for.

When your daughter is starting in St. Mary's, Parents are asked to inform the school in writing of any underlying medical issues and/or any medication which needs to be taken by a student during school hours.

Please note: If your daughter's health situation changes at any time, updated written information should be sent to the Principal.

## STUDENT DIARIES

Student Diaries are provided for all students at a cost of €10. They will be available for purchase on return to school in August. Student Diaries are the main communication between home and school and are a useful source of information for parents/guardians. Teachers will communicate any issues of concern regarding homework, classwork or behaviour via the school journal.

Students are asked to maintain their diaries to the highest standard. Parents are asked to sign the journal on a weekly basis.

# AFTER SCHOOL

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## SUPERVISED STUDY

In September, students who opt for supervised study register for the first term and in January for the 2<sup>nd</sup> term. The programme begins on the first Monday in September and continues until the end of May. Supervised Study will take place each afternoon Monday to Friday.

At the end of each term, a Record of Attendance and receipt of payment will be posted home.

Full school rules apply.

## HOMEWORK CLUB

The Homework Club is run two days a week, currently on a Tuesday and Thursday.

The Objectives of the programme are to:

- Enable students to complete homework competently in a supportive and friendly environment
- Assist in the reading and understanding of questions assigned in all subjects areas
- Help students frame and structure questions
- Reinforce concepts and develop problem-solving skills
- Develop student's study, organisational and time-management skills
- Nurture and encourage student's confidence in his/her academic endeavours

Students who would benefit from this programme will be identified by subject teachers and their participation discussed with parents throughout the school year.

# SPORTS AND CLUBS

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In addition to academic pursuits, St. Mary's has an unrivalled choice of extra-curricular activities which are seen as an important part of the development of the whole person.

## SPORT

Basketball, Gaelic Football, Camogie, Soccer, Athletics, Orienteering, Rugby, Tennis, Golf, Equestrian Sports, Tag Rugby, Badminton.

## CLUBS

Choir, Traditional Group, Green Schools, Debating, Camera Club, World Languages, Games, St. Vincent de Paul, Club Gaelach, Silver Surfers, Gaisce Awards.

Timetables for all sports and clubs will be posted throughout the School – please encourage your daughter to get involved! It would be envisaged that all first years would get involved in at least one extra-curricular activity.

## LIBRARY

The School library is open at lunchtime on Tuesday – Thursday and is supervised by a member of staff. Students can avail of study facilities and have access to a wide range of books.

# PARENTS AND THE SCHOOL

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## TEXT ALERTS:

The School has a policy of using text alerts and emails to inform parents/guardians of up and coming events. The text alert is a non- reply service – the School name will appear at top of text message. Please notify the School if your contact details change throughout the year as it is essential that the School has up to date details for all parents/guardians.

## VISITS TO SCHOOL BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS

It is very important that if you are visiting the School for any reason you must first report to the Office. It is imperative that we know you are on the premises. This is not only essential for Health & Safety purposes but also necessary in order to comply with Child Protection Guidelines which are in place for the protection of all our students.

**Please see appendix for our Child Protection Guidelines**

## SCHOOL RULES

Good discipline in school helps create an atmosphere where each student feels secure and is taught responsibility for her actions. To help the school run safely, justly and comfortably for all of us, rules are necessary. They are seen as an essential means of promoting self-respect, respect for others and respect for the environment.

## PARENTS AND HOMEWORK

It is the school's policy that homework may be set every night. Homework will vary depending on the work done in class and the student's ability. The purpose of homework is to enhance learning, facilitate progress and to help form good study habits among others. All homework shall be meaningful and be related to work done by students in the classroom.

Parents/guardians can be a great help in establishing a regular routine for homework and we strongly recommend you find your daughter a distraction free place to work. Checking the homework is done and done neatly can also help, as can testing any learning work. However, don't be persuaded into doing the homework for her or interfering too much: the main aim is for your child to develop self-discipline and good work habits. Parents are asked to sign the journal on a weekly basis.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS HAVING PROBLEMS

Problems can be academic or social. Encourage your child to get to know and consult the Mentors. Their role is to help pupils with settling in to St. Mary's. If the problem is subject specific students should speak with their subject teacher. The main point of contact for parents should be the Year Head who has responsibility for students in her group. Please contact the School Office to arrange an appointment and please be patient: they may not be able to see you the same day, but they will make every effort to do so as soon as possible. The back of the homework journal can always be used to communicate with a particular teacher who can then reply in the same way: this could avoid the mislaying of notes. The Principal and Deputy Principal are always pleased to meet parents/guardians, but not every problem demands their attention. Please request such appointments through the school office.

## PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS

A parent teacher meeting is held for each year group once each school year. This allows you to meet with each of your daughter's subject teachers on an individual basis to discuss her progress. These meetings take place from 4.15-6.45pm on date published in school calendar. Parents who cannot attend the meeting on the scheduled date are asked to inform the school office or Year Head in advance.

## PARENT VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION

The Parent Contribution/Administration for 2017/18 is €150. Two Students is €225 and €275 for three or more students.

This contribution is paid on the first day of new school year or directly to the main office either in full or part payments. Receipts are issued for payment.

The Parent Voluntary Contribution helps to offset some costs, for example:

- Materials for Science, Home Economics, Art and all other subjects (Approximately €26,000).
- Maintenance of 160 computers, ink, soft-ware licenses, upgrades, student data base. (Approximately €30,000).
- Photocopies / paper / booklets / printing exams/pre exam test papers. (Approximately €30,000).
- Psychometric tests /Special Educational Needs resources / Student Personal Insurance. (Approximately €12,000).
- Postage to parents / texts / phones (Approximately €10,000)
- Guest speakers, activities, School Awards, Young Scientist, Retreats, Leaders training etc. (Approximately €15,000).
- Basketball / Camogie / Ladies Football / Athletics / Rugby etc. (Approximately €15,000).

## NEWSLETTER

A school newsletter will issue bi-annually with up-to-date information regarding on-going activities and events within the school.

## PARKING

The Board of Management requests that all parents exercise due care and attention to traffic systems in St. Mary's. Please drop and collect students outside the school or in the semi-circle area only. Please observe all local road markings and please do not park in restricted areas identified by traffic cones and yellow lines. Parents are not permitted to park in the staff car park before school, during school or after the school day. Vehicles driven by 2<sup>nd</sup> level students may **not** be parked on the school grounds.

# What to do if...

I AM ABSENT	Parent/Guardian should ring the school office before 10am on the day you are out. Then give a note signed by parents to the Principal in school journal on the first morning you are back.
I AM LATE	Sign in at the main office and give the note to your teacher.
I NEED TO LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY	Give a note to the Principal signed by parent/guardian then sign the book in the school office at time of departure
I CANNOT FIND THE CORRECT ROOM FOR CLASS	Ask any teacher you see on the corridor
I HAVE NOT GOT MY COMPLETE UNIFORM	Please present note to the Principal in the morning before first bell to explain incorrect uniform.
I NEED TO GO TO THE TOILET URGENTLY	Ask your subject teacher but realise it needs to be an emergency for you to be allowed to leave class.
I AM HAVING DIFFICULTIES WITH A SUBJECT	Tell your subject teacher and talk to your Year Head
I CANNOT SEE THE BOARD WELL IN CLASS	Tell your teacher and ask to sit in the front of the class
SOMEONE BULLIES ME/ I SEE ANOTHER STUDENT BEING BULLIED	Report to any staff member

THE FIRE ALARM RINGS	Follow the teacher's instructions. Do not panic
I FEEL ILL/HAVE AN ACCIDENT	Tell your subject teacher and report to Year Head
I LOSE SOMETHING/FIND SOMETHING	Report it to a caretaker, class teacher or your Year Head
I AM WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING IN SCHOOL	Speak to your parents, Year Head or Guidance Counsellor
I LOSE MY LOCKER KEY	Speak to Year Head
I CAN'T DO P.E. BECAUSE OF AN ILLNESS	Bring in a note from parent/guardian and give it to the P.E. Teacher
I HAVE FORGOTTEN MY LUNCH	Speak to your Class Teacher/Year Head
I CAN'T TURN UP FOR SPORTS EVENT OR SCHOOL ACTIVITY	Inform teacher in charge or ring school office with an explanation
THERE IS MONEY MISSING FROM MY BAG	Inform the Year Head
SOMETHING BAD HAPPENED AT HOME	Speak to your Year Head or Guidance Counsellor
SOMETHING BAD HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL	Speak to your Class Teacher or Year Head

# POLICIES

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CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

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ANTI-BULLYING

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CODE OF BEHAVIOUR & SANCTIONS

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# Child Protection Policy St Mary's Secondary School Mallow.

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The Board of Management recognises the child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, practices and activities. Accordingly, in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skill's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, the board of Management of St Mary's Secondary School has agreed the following child protection policy.

1. The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools as part of this overall child protection policy.
2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Yvonne Bane Principal
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is : Sinead Luttrell Deputy Principal
4. In its policies, practices and activities, St Mary's Secondary school will adhere to the following principles of the best practice in the child protection policy.
  - Recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
  - Fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
  - Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
  - Develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
  - Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

5. Policies on practices and activities that are particularly relevant to child protection in St Mary's are The Code of Behaviour, Anti Bullying Policy, Pupil Attendance Strategy and other relevant school policies.

The Board has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above listed items.

6. This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parent's Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
7. This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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A copy of the school rules anti-bullying policy is available on the schools website.

[www.stmarysmallow.com](http://www.stmarysmallow.com)

This policy has been ratified by Board of Management January 12<sup>th</sup> 2015

## ANTI – BULLYING CHARTER

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### **Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in ST. MARY'S SECONDARY SCHOOL**

As students of St.Mary's we have all agreed that we will not

- Physically or emotionally hurt another person
- Threaten or intimidate another person
- Deliberately exclude or isolate another person
- Engage in cyberbullying

### WE WILL REPORT BULLYING IN THIS SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Agreement

BULLYING IS UNACCEPTABLE  
AND WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN  
St. Mary's Secondary School

- A record of incidents will be kept
- Procedures as described in our Anti-Bullying Policy will be followed
- Everyone involved in bullying will receive help
- Students who persistently bully may be suspended

I will not:

- Hurt another person physically or emotionally
- Threaten or intimidate
- Deliberately exclude or isolate
- Engage in cyberbullying

Signed: Student \_\_\_\_\_

Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Principal \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Code of Behaviour

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Good discipline in school helps create an atmosphere where each student feels secure and is taught responsibility for her actions. To help the school run safely, justly and comfortably for all of us, rules are necessary. They are seen positively as an essential means of promoting self- respect, respect for others and respect for the environment.

1. All pupils shall be attendance at **8.45am** each morning and at **1.45pm** each afternoon. Students arriving late for school must present a note detailing reason for late arrival signed by parent/guardian and sign in at the School Office. Failure to do so will result in student being marked absent and in sanctions being applied.
2. Classes shall commence at **8.50am** and at **1.50pm** and all students shall attend punctually. Classes finish at **3.50pm** on Monday and Tuesday and at **3.10pm** on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
3. Pupils shall show courtesy and respect to all members of the staff and to one another. They shall obey the instructions of the class teacher. Any insolence, disruption of class, defiance by individuals or classes shall be regarded as a serious offence and is punishable.

## 4. UNIFORM

- a. Jumper with School Crest, navy for Seniors, sky-force blue for Juniors
- b. Blue shirt or short sleeved crested Blue Polo shirt
- c. Knee length check skirt
- d. Black tights
- e. **Black Shoes only** (trainers/boots are not acceptable)
- f. School Track Suit with Crest.

Pupils shall at all times wear the school uniform and be clean, tidy and respectable in dress and appearance. Only very discreet makeup is allowed

**Failure to wear the school uniform (except for medical reasons – Doctor’s Cert. required) will result in the student being refused admission to class. Non uniform clothing may be confiscated. Earrings and studs to be worn on earlobes only.**

5. a. All clothing, books and equipment must be marked with pupil’s name.  
b. A locker must be taken by each student for the safe-keeping of her property.  
c. Students are responsible for their own property and the School Management cannot take responsibility for its loss. Students are advised to keep their lockers locked at all times.

## 6. PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL ABOUT REASONS FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Parents are requested to ring the school before 10.00 am to report and explain absence. A written note in the student’s journal explaining absence is presented to the Principal by the student on the morning of return to school. This note is kept on file. The signed stub is presented to each teacher at the start of each class.

## 7. LEAVING THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

- ❖ In the interests of safety students may not leave the school premises without the permission of the school authorities.
- ❖ TY, 5th year and Leaving Cert students may leave the school premises at lunchtime and are expected to return for afternoon classes by 1.45pm.
- ❖ All other students must remain on school premises at all times, unless they are going home for lunch. In this situation a special permission slip must be signed by the parent /guardian at the beginning of the school year.
- ❖ In the event of accident /illness, the parent/guardian will be informed by the school authorities, so that arrangements can be made to collect the student.
- ❖ We recommend that medical/dental appointments be made outside of school hours. If the student has to leave the school for an appointment parent/guardian must sign a note in student diary giving permission to daughter. This note must be signed by the school authorities and the student then signs out.
- ❖ If a student gets sick in school the following procedure is to be followed:
  - Inform class teacher
  - Get permission to go to office
  - Ask secretary to ring home
  - Sign out in the office
  - Parents/guardians must call into the office to collect the student

**A STUDENT MAY NEVER LEAVE THE SCHOOL GROUNDS WITHOUT THE EXPRESS PERMISSION OF THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES. STUDENTS WHO DO NOT FOLLOW THESE PROCEDURES MAY BE SUSPENDED**

8. Pupils are to leave the Sports' Complex Dressing Rooms, sewing room, cookery room, music room, science laboratory and any general-purpose area in perfect order after class.
9. All pupils shall participate in P.E. Class unless exemption has been granted at the written request of parents.
10. Pupils are forbidden to smoke on the school premises or on school outings. Substance abuse in any form or promotion of same is strictly forbidden. Consumption of energy drinks is also forbidden.(See Policy)
11. Any pupil who interferes with or damages school property or property belonging to anyone else will have to compensate for any damage caused.
12. Students remaining on in school waiting for buses, lifts or studying are to wait in the Canteen.
13. Eating during class or chewing gum on the premises at any time is not allowed.
14. Any action by a student, whether inside or outside the school, which is damaging to the school or brings the school into disrepute is a breach of school rules.

15. Use of MP3 players, ipods and mobile phones is strictly forbidden. If confiscated they may be collected only by parents/carers.

Further to the above rules any other breaches of discipline will be dealt with at the discretion of the Principal.

## Sanctions

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A refusal to co-operate with sanctions under the School Code of Behaviour is deemed a breach of the School's Code.

For Students who have been sanctioned under the School's Code of Behaviour up to and including suspensions, the privilege of attendance on school excursions will be reviewed.

### **ON BREACH OF SCHOOL RULES:**

1. Teachers may issue student with a verbal reprimand and make a note in the Teacher's Journal of the offence.
2. On a further breach of school rules the student will receive a note on a designated page in their homework journal for parents to sign.

### **3. Lunchtime detention (1.15-1.45pm) one day a week**

When a more serious sanction is required for breach of school rules teachers will place the student on lunchtime detention. Used for minor breaches of discipline e.g. uniform, homework, disruption of class. Students are referred for this sanction by subject teachers – work given by subject teacher relating to misdemeanour or by teacher in charge of detention

The lunchtime detention book will be reviewed by the Post holder responsible for detention and Year Head informed where students have received 3 entries.

### **4. Alert Letter**

After incurring 3 lunchtime detentions, a notification alert letter is issued to the parents by the Post holder responsible for detention

### **5. After School Detention**

In what is considered to be a very serious or repeated breach of the Code of Behaviour students can be put on After-School Detention. After school detention is organised one day a week.

A student is informed that she will be on detention for 1 hour on a given day. A letter is sent home to communicate the sanction to parents in advance of the detention

This letter is available from the school office and is cosigned by the teacher issuing detention and the Post holder whose duty involves coordinating detention.

### **6. Discipline File**

Teachers should record a detailed account of serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour in the Discipline File as well as informing the Year Head. The Year Head cosigns and dates the entry into Discipline File.

## **7. Report Card**

If the student is recorded in the Discipline File on a second occasion, the Year Head puts the student on Report Card and the Deputy Principal is informed. The Deputy Principal will issue a standard letter to parents informing them that their daughter is on report. Students must collect and return report card on a daily basis to the school administration office. If a student fails to satisfactorily complete the Report Card, or if there is a further incident of indiscipline, the student will be issued with a second (red) report card and Parents are called into the school to meet with the Deputy Principal and the Year Head. It is a consultation between parents, Deputy Principal and other relevant staff to see if by their combined efforts the student can be persuaded to improve her behaviour.

A student who fails to satisfactorily complete the 2nd red report card will be called to attend a meeting with her parents and the school Principal which may result in suspension.

Please note: Policies and Procedures for suspension and expulsion are unchanged and outlined clearly in the School's Code of Behaviour in line with the NEWB Guidelines (2008)

## **8. Suspension**

Serious or continual breaches of the school's code of behaviour may result in a student being suspended by the School Principal.

Suspension may also be applied for a single serious breach of school discipline

Following suspension the student will present to the Deputy Principal on the morning of their return to school. Supports will be offered to assist the student on improving adherence to the school's Code of Behaviour.

## **9. Expulsion**

The Board of Management in St. Mary's Secondary School will only resort to expulsion (permanent exclusion) in the most serious cases of indiscipline and usually after every effort at rehabilitation has failed and every other sanction has been exhausted. If a pupil is causing severe disruption, the school may have to exclude such a pupil in order to allow the education of the other pupils in the school to proceed. The rights of the other pupils must also be taken into account. The pupil and her parents will be advised of the nature of the complaint and be given every opportunity to respond. Parents will also be informed of their right of appeal to the next level of authority. An appeal may be made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Science in certain very serious matters such as permanent exclusion and cumulative suspensions of more than 20 school days.

This policy applies to students of the school at the following times:

- during school time, including before and after class and at break-times
- while representing the school
- while travelling to or from school
- while using school transport
- while on school trips, tours or exchanges
- while supporting school teams or activities.



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Skills

Learning

Leadership

Respect