

Dear parents/guardians

At St Mary's, we are committed to developing the holistic educational experience and wellbeing of every pupil. Regular school attendance and punctuality is essential to making positive progress in these areas. Please take a few moments to read the following information about regular school attendance. Remember, *every day counts!*

### **Why is regular attendance at school so important?**

- Schools provide a space for children to develop their social skills and friendships, as well as improving their self-confidence. The longer a child is absent from school, the more likely it is for him/her to feel lonely and to be anxious about going to school.
- Children who have a good attendance record can make very positive gains in their academic learning and have a greater chance of performing well in tests.
- A wide range of non-curricular activities are available in schools, from sport to music to art, and much, much more. Children who attend school regularly are more likely to avail of these activities and bond with like-minded peers. These types of activities tend to take place during lunchtime or after school.
- Regular school attendance fosters the development of a variety of life skills, including positive behavioural patterns, empathy, confidence and resilience, as well as a sense of commitment and responsibility.

### **What can parents/guardians do to encourage school attendance?**

- Speak to children about the value of learning, and about how future goals and aspirations are achievable by attending school on a regular basis.
- Encourage children to come to school regularly and to arrive on time. This will help establish a good habit that will hopefully continue throughout their lives.
- Establish an open line of communication with the school and the class teacher when children are displaying a reluctance to attend school.
- Take an interest in the school work of the children. This will help them to value school more.
- Try to arrange medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- Avoid family holidays during school time to ensure continuity of learning.

Staying calm and being organised in the morning will help you and your child feel positive about the day ahead. It will also help you to reduce any stress or anxiety, which is good for everyone's wellbeing. One of the best ways to stay calm is to have a ***'Get Ready for School Routine'***. A routine will help your child to know what's happening and to remember what they need to do.

We completely understand that every household is different and that individual circumstances vary. We are also very mindful of the fact that situations can occur in homes that are totally beyond the control of parents/guardians and that attendance can be affected accordingly. The ***'Get Ready for School Routine'*** that we have outlined below is merely a general guide that you may wish to consult in preparing your child(ren) for the school day.

## **"Get Ready for School Routine"**

### **After school every day:**

- Make sure that the homework is done as early as possible
- Keep the school uniform/tracksuit for school wear only

### **The night before school:**

- Try and have ready the...
  - \* school bag
  - \* lunch
  - \* uniform
- Get your child to bed at a reasonable hour
- Set the morning alarm on your mobile phone or the alarm clock

### **Before school every day:**

- Aim to get up on time in the morning so that you will not be rushing
- Don't allow your child to watch television in the morning
- Get your child to eat some breakfast every morning
- Talk positively about school
- If possible, don't allow your child to go to the shop in the morning as this could delay them and they could be late for school
- Make sure that your child clearly understands the after-school arrangements
- You know your child best - only keep your child at home if he/she is really sick

In conclusion, the staff at St Mary's look forward to seeing and working with your child(ren) over the coming days, weeks and months during the 2025/26 academic year.