

SAINT MARTIN'S  
*Catholic Academy*

NEW STARTER  
*Guide for Parents*

VERITAS



**An introduction to  
Saint Martin's Catholic Academy**

*Saint Martin's,*  
Learning the **BEST** that has been  
**THOUGHT & SAID,**  
*knowing that we are loved by* **GOD**  
& **LIVING A LIFE OF** *Virtue*

Our mission is with passion and expertise, to teach children about the most important, fascinating or inspiring concepts that are known; enabling pupils to become superb mathematicians, well-read English scholars, philosophers, Historians, musically creative or learned in which ever area we teach.

More important is knowing that God loves us and our task is also to make that love known to each pupil in our care. At the heart of Catholic Education is the belief that every child is created by God for some special purpose. Our task as educators is to enable pupils to grow and develop their talents, to thrive in this life that God has given them. This is not always easy and requires us to love, forgive, to set uncompromising standards, to be tenacious and go the extra mile for each child in our care.

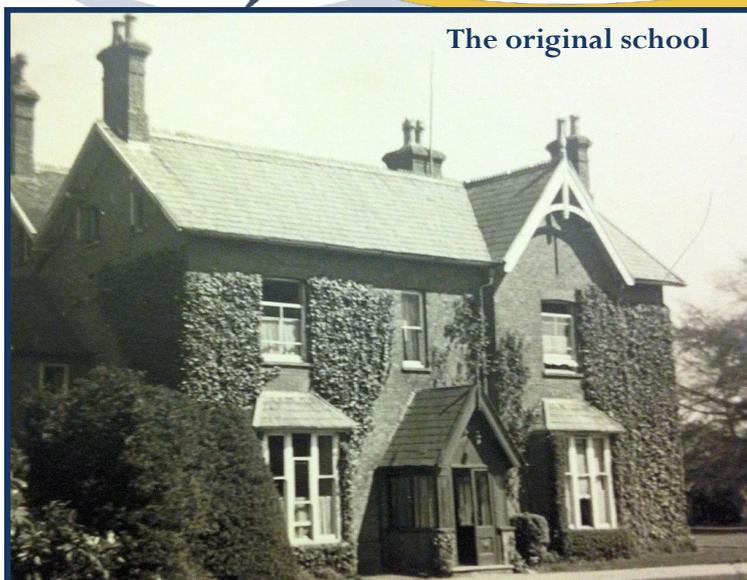
We are immeasurably grateful to all of our community who subscribe to our mission and vision to provide a Christian education for our young people. We have created this booklet for parents/carers so that you are given all the information you need to fully support your child in their transition to secondary school life. We have attempted to cover all the queries that have been raised by previous cohorts but please speak to a member of staff if you have any questions.

Our ethos is inspired by our origins, our school was originally founded in the 1940s by the Dominican Sisters of St Catherine of Siena based in King William's Town, South Africa. This history of providing a traditional high quality education, founded on Christian beliefs and values still runs deep within Saint Martin's life and ethos. We try, over the five years your child will be with us, to instil virtues so that pupils are enabled to become the best version of themselves.

We set and maintain exceptionally high standards for pupil effort and behaviour. All students are expected to be well behaved, polite, charming and kind at all times. No excuses. The senior leadership team will support staff in maintaining these standards and expect to be called upon if needed.

Allied to our Christian ethos is a belief in social justice and that every pupil, from whatever background or ability, is entitled to a high quality education. We believe that every pupil, when taught expertly, can achieve. This is achieved through calling upon the best research as to what makes for effective learning and expressed in a strong emphasis on the teacher as the expert and a knowledge rich curriculum.

We have developed a Knowledge rich curriculum, designed to develop memory and a student's ability to recall information. Intelligence is malleable, in other words, pupils who put in more effort, who practise, who learn and memorise more ideas and knowledge, become more intelligent than those who do not. Individual facts are of little use; however, if you acquire more factual knowledge, you are able to build a mosaic of information that is a prerequisite for deep understanding. In essence, the more you know, the more you are able to learn and understand. Knowledge is like Velcro, the more you have, the more that sticks.

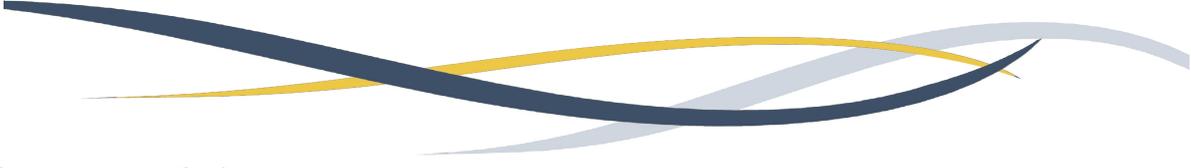




## Catholic Life

Every day at Saint Martin's we strive 'to draw out the best' in the young people we teach. Not only in our lessons by 'teaching them the best that has been thought and said' but in our tutor groups, on trips and even in the corridors.

At Saint Martin's this is fundamentally underpinned by Gospel values. We have special occasions when small groups, classes, Year Groups or the whole school gather together for religious celebrations. These celebrations may be led by a Priest, visitor, or a member of staff. We want everyone to feel welcome and a part of every celebration.



## Acts of Worship

We have an Act of Worship everyday, either in House Groups or in Assembly. The theme for Act of Worship is taken from the themes for the week and follow the Church Year. Students are encouraged to take part in leading the Acts of Worship. Prayers we use include our School Prayer, the Our Father and a prayer asking Mary as the mother of Jesus to help us become closer to God – we call this prayer The Hail Mary.



## Mass

We have whole school masses, several a Year. This is a very special and prayerful occasion when Jesus Christ is present to us in the Eucharist, and the body and blood of Christ that the Priest has blessed. Catholics who have received the Sacrament of Reconciliation (First Holy Communion) may take Communion. Those who are not receiving Communion should place their right hand on their left shoulder, bow their head and the minister will give a blessing.

All students participate in Acts of worship and liturgies. There will be lots of opportunities to be involved and create these liturgies which are student led. During the school year we also raise money and have charity events for CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development) and local charities including the Foodbank.



# Supporting your child in Year 7

Year 7 offers exciting opportunities for students to explore new subjects, join extra-curricular activities like sports and clubs, and make new friends. Before starting, it's important to discuss embracing school life and maximizing available opportunities. After joining, support your child by initially assisting with packing their school bag each evening and establishing good routines. Encourage them to take responsibility gradually, such as packing their own bag the night before with your oversight.

## Equipment list

All pupils are expected to be organised with the appropriate equipment and books for each day. All pupils should have the following:

- All the books you need for the day (*Exercise books, Knowledge Books, Text books etc*)
- Reading book (*This can be obtained from the library or pupils can bring their own book in*).
- Prep book (*will be given at school*)
- Planner (*You will be able to purchase this through Arbor\**)
- Pencil case, Black Pen + spare pens, Green Pen, Highlighter, Black Dry Board Marker, Pencil/ Rubber/ Sharpener/30cm ruler
- Art Kit (*The Art Dept will give pupils details*)
- Protractor/ Compass
- Scientific calculator
- PE Kit on PE days.
- Ingredients for Food Lessons on Food lesson days.
- Drink and Snack/Lunch (*For info—Saint Martin's is a nut free school & fizzy drinks are not allowed in school*)

**If needed, much of this stationary can be purchased from the library.**

*\*For any families who are eligible for Pupil Premium or who are having financial difficulties, please contact the school and we will support you in this purchase).*

Keep a copy of your child's timetable somewhere visible to help plan what's needed each day. Establish a weekly routine, check their planner together, and set times for homework, offering help when needed. Ensure they have a quiet, distraction-free space to study and a place at home to store school materials. Lay out their uniform the night before to keep mornings calm. Remind them that smart appearance matters—uniform rules help prepare them for professional life, so encourage pride in how they present themselves.



# Saint Theresa's Learning Support and SEND Department

During their time at Saint Martin's, your child will be introduced to St Theresa's, our welcoming Learning Support and SEND department. While not all students will require additional support, we are here to assist with a wide range of needs — from emotional wellbeing and academic challenges to specific areas such as literacy, numeracy, or social communication.

Some pupils may already know they would benefit from extra support, and we are ready to work with them through our experienced and compassionate team of staff.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the support available, please feel free to get in touch.

**Mrs Gillum SENDCO**



## Safeguarding

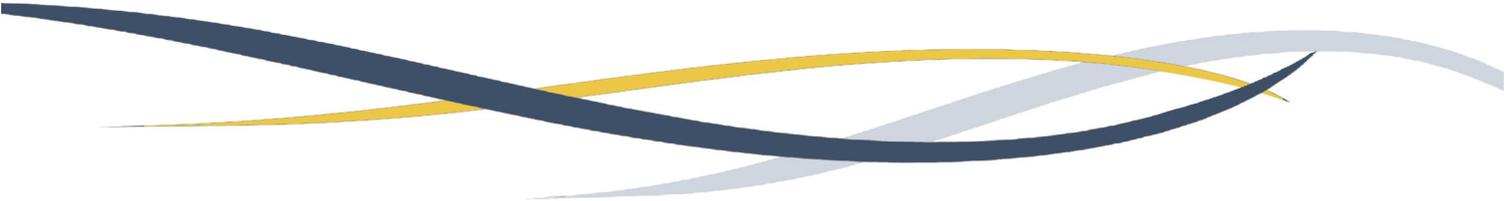
Saint Martin's is a safeguarding community where everyone is responsible for keeping children safe. We work openly and respectfully with parents to promote child welfare and offer family support when needed.

Our Designated Safeguarding Team includes Mrs Abela, Mr Del Busso, Mrs Hunt, Mrs Thompson and Mrs Chapman. The Safeguarding Governor is Leo Burton. Relevant policies are available on our website or at the school office.

We prioritise every child's safety, regardless of background. All staff are responsible for acting on concerns. The school supports any pupil or staff involved in safeguarding matters.

Parents are usually contacted regarding concerns unless doing so would place the child at greater risk. Referrals to Children's Services may be made if necessary, even without parental agreement.

To ensure safety, parents must provide accurate, up-to-date contact, medical, and emergency information. The school will only share pupil information with those who have legal responsibility or written consent. If you have any safeguarding concerns please contact Mrs Abela or a member of the Pastoral Team.



## Attendance Matters

Good attendance is directly linked to better GCSE outcomes, while poor attendance significantly reduces a child's chances of success. Students must attend school regularly to benefit fully from their education—missing lessons can lead to falling behind and lower achievement.

At Saint Martin's, we expect all students to aim for 100% attendance. We monitor attendance closely and will work with parents to address any concerns, offering support where needed.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school on time each day. To help maintain high attendance, please avoid taking holidays during term time, make medical appointments outside school hours, and only keep your child at home if they are genuinely unwell.

Together, we can give your child the best chance of academic and personal success.



## Pastoral Care at Saint Martin's

Pastoral care is a vital part of every student's experience at Saint Martin's. It supports personal and social development, nurtures a positive attitude towards learning, school, and others, and helps each pupil build self-confidence. We believe that a child who feels safe, supported, and valued is better equipped to succeed academically and thrive personally.

At the heart of this support is the form tutor, who holds primary responsibility for the day-to-day wellbeing of students in their form group. They are your first point of contact for any general concerns about your child. If your query relates to a specific subject or department, the form tutor can guide you to the appropriate member of staff.

Our pastoral care approach ensures that every student is seen, heard, and supported as a valued member of the school community.

# School Systems and Communications

In order to communicate with parents effectively for all manner of things from trips to school reports we, as a school, subscribe to a number of online portals. To receive the most up to date information from the school please ensure you have access to the following services, and activate your accounts. If you have any issues accessing your accounts please contact the school office after the Summer break on 01455 212386.

**Our phone lines are open 8.30am—4pm Monday—Friday, term time only.**



Saint Martin's use **Arbor** as a database for all personal student information such as emergency contact details, medical needs and parental consent. You are able to access and update some of this data for your child via the **Arbor Parent App**. The App also allows you to view your child's timetable and see any Merit and Demerit marks that they have been awarded. You can download the **Arbor Parent App** from their website and log in using your email address supplied to the school during the application process.

Arbor is used to send communications to parents via email, including letters, weekly parent bulletin & general school information as well as to issue parent consent for student attendance at clubs and events. All payments should be made through Arbor for school trips, the school shop and meal top ups.



Satchel One & Sparx are used to set homework, parents are able to have a log in to these accounts to monitor and assist students.



We use **Go 4 Schools** to track student academic progress throughout their time here at Saint Martins. This progress is communicated to parents in a termly school report. Each parent will be given details of how to create a Go4Schools account enabling them to view their child's progress via their school report. The reports can be downloaded and saved or printed for use in the future. The school do not send home paper copies of the school report. Parent's will be notified when a new report has been uploaded and is available to view. Your account will be accessible via the **Go 4 Schools website** and not the mobile app, further details will be sent home in the Autumn term.

**[www.saint-martins.net](http://www.saint-martins.net)**

Check our school website regularly for updates, including lunch menus and event details.

# Uniform Expectations

We expect all our pupils to take pride in their uniform, dress to impress. Hole in the Wall are stockists of our uniform. Other suppliers are available to purchase uniform items from, however all items worn must adhere to our strict uniform policy.

We have the **highest expectations** regarding **school uniform**, **behaviour** and **work ethic and there will be zero tolerance of any non compliance**. Where there is pride in appearance and good behaviour, by implication, there is a **positive attitude** to learning. If a student chooses not to adhere to our School Uniform Policy then sanctions will apply. Which can include after school detentions and inclusions.

May we remind all parents and students of the following:

- Shirts must be tucked in at all times and ALL buttons fully fastened.
- Ties done up properly.
- **Skirts must be knee length**
- Trousers cannot be skinny fit.
- Blazers always worn, unless permission is given to remove it.
- Jewellery of any description may not be worn in school, including earrings. This rule applies to girls and boys. Watches may be worn.
- Extremes of hairstyle, including unnatural colours or shaved sides, are not permitted. The Principal will be the final arbiter of what counts as 'extreme'.
- Make-up (including thick eye brows) or nail varnish must not be worn in the Academy. If make-up or nail varnish is used, students will be asked to remove it. False, acrylic, or gel nails are not allowed for health and safety reasons.

## SHOES

**PLAIN BLACK LEATHER, ACADEMY TYPE.  
MUST BE POLISHABLE.**

We expect all pupils to wear school shoes in line with our uniform guidelines.

The guidelines on shoes is being strictly enforced. Please see the examples shown if you are unsure about acceptable shoe styles.

If you have any queries about the Academy Uniform Policy please see the school website for clarification, or contact the school office.



Plain black shoes that can be polished.



No trainer style, canvas, elaborate decoration, Velcro or high heels.



# Uniform Expectations - PE Kit

## GIRLS



### Mandatory

- \*Black with white piping SM skirt/shorts
  - \*Royal blue (with black and white piping)
    - SM polo shirt
    - Royal blue SM hoodie
    - Plain royal blue socks
    - Trainers
    - Football boots
- Pack of hair bobbles (to be kept in PE Bag)

### Optional

- SM leggings
- Shin pads

## BOYS



### Mandatory

- \*Black with white piping SM shorts
- \*Royal blue (with black and white piping)
  - SM polo shirt
  - Royal blue SM hoodie
  - Plain royal blue football socks
  - Trainers
  - Football boots

### Optional

- Black SM tracksuit bottoms
- Shin pads

**All PE kit MUST have initials on, this MUST be done at Hole in the Wall, which can take up to a week at busy times.**

*\*New kit is mandatory for Year 7 intake 2025 and expected when replacing kit in other year groups.*



## Mobile Phone Policy

Research shows that smartphones and social media can negatively impact young people's mental health. Our mobile phone policy is designed to protect students' wellbeing. We recommend a basic 'dumb phone' without internet or social media access.

At Saint Martin's, mobile phones must be switched off and stored in lockers from arrival until the end of the school day. Exceptions are rare and only for specific lessons. Phones used outside of these rules will be confiscated for at least 24 hours and collected by a parent/carer. If a student forgets their locker key, phones can be left at reception.



## Social Media Use

Experts such as psychologist Jonathan Haidt have highlighted the serious mental health risks linked to social media use. Most incidents of bullying, abuse, and exploitation happen through these platforms. We strongly advise parents to limit or monitor social media use.

Even well-meaning children can access harmful content online. We provide E-Safety education, but ask parents to regularly check internet use and encourage safe habits. Cyberbullying is taken seriously, and the school will act on any reports, regardless of where the incident occurs.

If you have concerns, please contact a member of staff.



## Behaviour Expectations

At Saint Martin's, we believe that children thrive when there are high expectations of their behaviour, and when there is recognition of excellent effort. Every child has the *right* to be educated in an environment that is safe, respectful and conducive to learning, and a *responsibility* to try their best in order to fulfil their potential. Even if a child has particular conditions which may affect their behaviour, our job is to prepare children for the outside world where employers or wider society in general won't make allowances. Children need to work harder to develop the skills to compensate.

All pupils are expected to:

**Be Kind, Be Well Mannered and Hard Work**



## Sanctions, Merits and Demerits

At Saint Martin's, we are proud of our students' excellent behaviour and manners. Alongside academic achievement, we focus on developing self-discipline and respect. Our clear system of sanctions helps uphold these high standards. We ask for full parental support in ensuring students follow all school rules. Sanctions, such as after-school detentions, are non-negotiable and the responsibility of the student. While we may reschedule detentions if needed, they remain a core part of our behaviour policy, supported by law (Education Act 1997).



## Merits

To recognise effort and positive attitude, students earn Merits—for strong work or representing the school well. Each week, Form Tutors share a 'Wall of Fame', with top performers receiving letters or small rewards. While we celebrate these achievements, our main aim is to encourage intrinsic motivation for learning and growth.



## Demerits

Demerits are issued when a student falls short in effort, organisation, or behaviour. Minor issues may earn one Demerit; repeated or serious incidents result in more and may lead to detentions. Accumulating five or more Demerits in a week also leads to sanctions, scaled by the number received. This consistent system helps maintain a safe and focused learning environment for all.

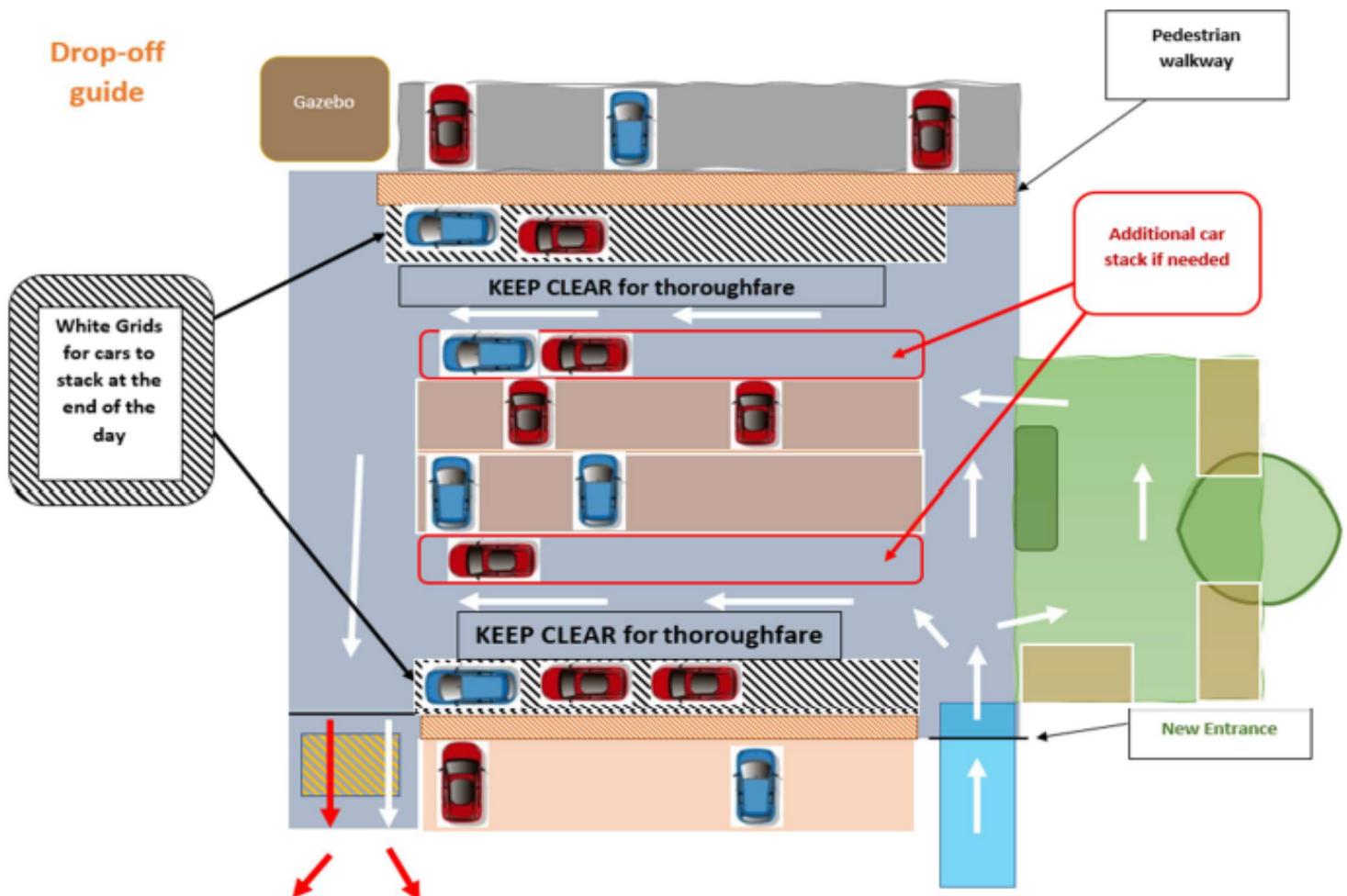
Parents can monitor Merits and Demerits via the Arbor app—login details will be provided early in the year.

# Parking, Transport & Security

Being such a rural school, many parents/carers need to pick up their sons or daughters by car. The logistics of getting so many cars on and off site within 20 minutes or so is a challenge. Although we have significantly expanded the parking facilities, we are still tight on space. We rely on the patience and politeness of drivers, so your co-operation is greatly appreciated. For drivers who park in the surrounding roads, please be aware of local residents who need constant access to Convent Drive and the other side roads.

The gates will close automatically at 9.00am each morning and re-open at 3.15pm (2.15pm on Mondays) ready for you to collect your child. If for any reason you do need to visit the school during the day, you can use the intercom which connects you with the School Office staff who can then let you in. **We would appreciate your co-operation with not trying to gain access to the car park before 3.15pm when collecting your child, to maintain security and ensure the safety of our students.**

If you are collecting your child during the school day, for any reason, you can park in the bus loop and gain entry to the site / reception via the pedestrian gates.





## Parking, Transport & Security

Many of our students live in Stoke Golding and the surrounding villages and therefore walk to school. If this is the case for your child please ensure that they do not enter the school via the carpark but instead use the pedestrian entrance on Convent Drive.

For the safety of our students and staff, if your child arrives at school by car, please ensure they **DO NOT** walk across the staff carpark to enter the school building. It is expected that when they exit the car they walk straight towards the pedestrian path that leads toward the Saint Hubert mobiles, from there they make their way towards the main building. Students arriving by bus will be dropped off in the bus loop outside the school ground and will walk through the tennis courts and head towards the Saint Louis entrance.

If you need to collect your child during the school day for any reason please make your way to the school office to sign them out. This is so that registers are accurate and in the event of the fire alarm sounding we know that your child is no longer in the building. Students will not be permitted to leave the school building without a parent or carer collecting them from the front office.

***Beaver bus transport is not provided through the school. Although we do have contact with Beaver bus on occasion, if you have an issue or concern you should raise this directly with Beaver bus and not through the school office. Thank you***



## Parental Contact

Parents / Carers are welcome to contact the school at any time. In the first instance you should speak to your child's Form Tutor if you have any questions or concerns. **Please be considerate of the fact that, in most cases, our Form Tutors are members of teaching staff and will be in lessons for most of the school day as well as having break or lunchtime duty, or be responsible for bus duty after school.** Therefore we kindly ask that you give at least 48 hours for staff to return your call. If the matter requires an urgent response please inform our office staff who will be happy to ensure that your enquiry is dealt with at the earliest opportunity.

**Saint Martin's Catholic Academy is committed to providing a working and learning environment that is free from abuse.**

**Please respect all of our staff members.**

**Verbal abuse of staff by parents or visitors will not be tolerated and action will be taken if this occurs.**

**For the protection of our staff, phone calls may be recorded.**



# Notes

