



July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we approach our annual summer holidays, it is timely to write with some general reminders about Directors' expectations regarding uniform and personal appearance. For example, there are sometimes problems when students return after a break from school and holiday hairstyles have not fully washed/grown out. In order to ensure that we make a positive, focused start to the new academic year, it is important that we are not distracted by any 'misunderstandings' regarding uniform or appearance. **In the final analysis, decisions regarding whether a student's appearance complies with Directors' requirements, are a matter of judgement for heads of year and senior staff.**

The starting point in terms of **uniform requirements for students in Years 7 – 11** is the detailed information included in the student planner. It may, however be helpful to elaborate on a few points:

- **Skirts** - The planner details that 'Extreme skirt lengths are not allowed' and that skirts should be 'mid grey' & of a 'smart plain' style. In other words skirts that are too long or too short are not allowed. The acceptable length ranges from **just above the knee** to just below the knee. Furthermore, in the interests of health & safety, skirts should be **neither too tight** or too loose fitting. **Skirts made of 'jersey' material are not allowed.** Jumpers must not be tucked into skirts.
- **Trousers** – In addition to the guidance in the planner, tight or tapered fashion trousers or especially loose fitting or flared trousers are not allowed. To be clear, **trousers should not be black or of a 'skinny' or a cropped/short** design. In addition pockets on the thighs or the lower part of the trouser leg are not allowed. **Trousers made of 'jersey' material are not allowed.** Jumpers must not be tucked into trousers. **Belts** – must be a black or grey colour with a modest buckle.
- **Hair styles** - Our policy details that 'extreme hair styles' are not allowed. As a general guide, examples of "extreme" hair styles might include hair that is dyed an artificial colour; any 'two-tone' colouring/bleaching for example the effect resulting from hair being 'dip dyed'; excessive use of a hair product to encourage hair to stand up; hair that is cut very short or shaved at the sides but longer on the top/in the middle and hair that is combed into any sort of Mohican style; hair that has any sort of pattern or **'parting' shaved** into it. Hair should be an even length all over. For Health and Safety reasons hair that covers the face in particular the eyes is not allowed. **In addition, hair accessories and adornments are not allowed.** Scrunchies in school colours are acceptable but must only be worn in hair.
- **Jewellery** – School uniform policy is clear that **only** a wrist watch and a discreet crucifix are allowed.
- **Make up – Make up and fake tan are not allowed at St Mary's College.** This includes any form of false or insert eyelashes.
- **Nails** – In addition to coloured nail varnish not being allowed, false nails or any other nail enhancement are not acceptable.
- **Shoes** – Sensible, full, black low-heeled shoes (and **not anything in a 'boot' style**) should be worn for school. Sandals, plimsolls and high heels constitute a health and safety risk and are therefore not allowed. In addition, shoes should be plain in style and without any metallic decoration or **a different coloured sole** or stitching etc. No brand name labels should be on shoes e.g. Kicker.
- **Socks** – must be white, black or grey in colour and an appropriate length i.e. not ankle socks or socks that are so short that they reveal the ankle or lower leg.
- **Mobile phones* etc** – Please refer to the detailed policy information in planners but, in short, mobile electronic communication devices are not allowed to be seen or used in school. **Phones must be turned off and in the pupils' bags. *This also includes any electronic communication devices such as iwatches, ipads, tablets, fitbits or any device that connects to the internet.**
- **Bags** – **School** bags should be plain, practical and suitable for carrying text books/exercise books of A4 size & basic equipment for the curriculum. **Fashion bags or handbags are not allowed.** Rucksack style bags are encouraged.

Failure to conform to the above school rules can result in pupils being withdrawn from normal lessons until the matter can be resolved. Lesson attendance is clearly essential if students are to make expected progress. I am sure that we would all like to avoid unnecessary confrontation and focus on learning in order to build upon the high levels of attainment already achieved by our students. Indeed, feedback from parents suggests that our relentless and consistent focus on discipline, including enforcing Directors' requirements in relation to uniform, appearance and the use of mobile phones, is a key factor in ensuring high quality learning and ultimately examination results. If you have any enquiries regarding these matters, please do not hesitate to contact your son's/daughter's Head of Year or Miss Booth (Vice Principal).

Yours sincerely,

Mr D. Perry – **Head of School**

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