

# St Mary's Catholic School



**Parent and Carer Information Session**

**Monday December 1<sup>st</sup> 2025**

# Parental Safeguarding Session

Explore some key safeguarding updates around:

Attendance

Effective Communication Between Home and School

Pastoral Care in a Catholic Context

# Attendance

Daily contact helps us notice changes and concerns

Absence can hide worries, anxiety, or risk

Children who are “invisible” are more vulnerable



# Attendance

Small drops in attendance = big gaps in learning

90% attendance = ~1 day off every two weeks

Greater risk of underachievement and disengagement

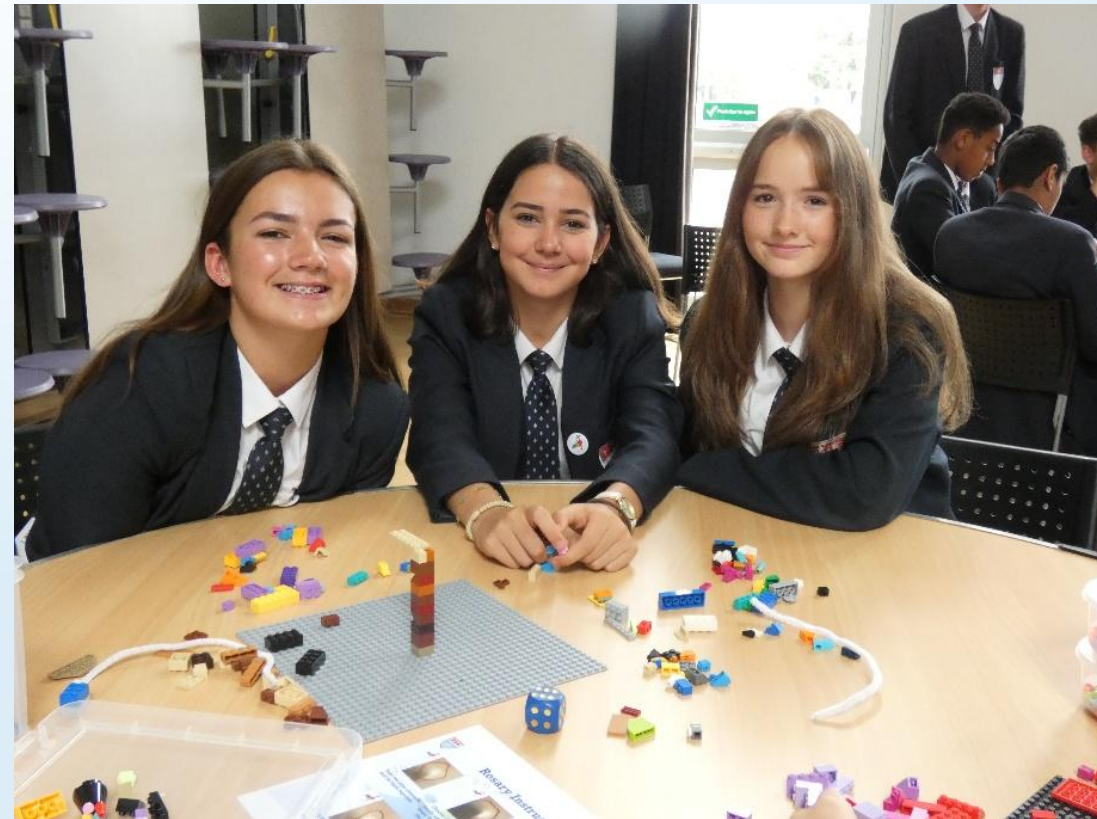


# Attendance

**Aim:** 96%+ attendance across the year

Below 95% – risk of falling behind

Below 90% – classed as “persistent absence”



# Attendance

National picture: higher attendance = higher grades

In 2019, 83.7% of pupils with no missed sessions at KS4 achieved grades 9–4 in English & maths, compared with 35.6% of pupils who were persistently absent  
Children's Commissioner (2023): 78% of pupils who were rarely absent in Years 10–11 passed 5 GCSEs incl. English & maths.

Only 36% of those persistently absent, and 5% of those severely absent, reached the same standard.

DfE analysis (2025): pupils with 95–100% attendance were about 1.9 times more likely to achieve Grade 5 in English & maths than those at 90–95% – missing around 10 days in Year 11 can halve the chance of a Grade 5

# Attendance

Illness and ongoing medical needs

Anxiety, low mood or school avoidance

Bullying, friendship issues or feeling they “don’t fit”

Family pressures: caring roles, transport, routines



# Attendance

Anxiety can lead to “just one more day off”

Staying at home can make anxiety worse over time

Early conversation with school is essential



# Attendance

Daily registration and follow-up on absence

Tutor, Head of Year and Attendance Officer.

Early Help, mental health support where appropriate

Clear behaviour policies



# Attendance

Establish consistent routines: sleep, mornings, homework.

Arrange appointments outside school hours where possible.

Talk positively about school and learning.

Contact us early if there is a problem.



# Attendance

We will contact you when patterns emerge.

Collaborative approach: not blame, but problem-solving.

Attendance plans and reasonable adjustments.

Involving external agencies where necessary.



# Attendance

Year 10 student with anxiety about one subject

Occasional days off → persistent absence

Joint plan: routines, support in lessons, regular check-ins

Attendance improved, confidence and grades recovered



# Attendance

Consistent bedtimes and wake-up times.

Mornings planned the night before.

Clear expectations: “School is non-negotiable”.

Praise and notice good habits.



# Attendance

Genuine illness vs “can’t face it today”.

If they’re well enough to be up and on devices, they’re often well enough for school.



Bring them in before/after appointments.

Let us know about ongoing medical issues

# Attendance

Stay calm and firm: empathise and keep expectations.

Break the morning into small steps.

Avoid long negotiations in bed / on the sofa.

Contact school early for support.



# Attendance

Teenagers still need 8–10 hours of sleep.

Set a “digital sunset” and keep phones out of bedrooms if possible.

Limit midweek late nights and shifts.

Balance independence with health and learning



# Attendance

Tell us early about worries, changes at home, or barriers.

Use the right point of contact (Tutor, Head of Year, Attendance Officer).

Be honest about patterns – we are on the same side.

Agree a simple, shared plan and review it



# Communication Between Home and School

Helps us spot issues early – academic, social, emotional.

Ensures consistent messages between home and school.

Builds trust so difficult conversations are easier.

Research: parental engagement linked to better attainment.



# Communication Between Home and School

Two-way: not just school sending information.

Focused on the child's learning and wellbeing.

Timely: getting in touch early, not at crisis point.

Respectful and solution-focused – even when you're worried or upset.



# Communication Between Home and School

DfE and others: parental involvement consistently linked to higher attainment.

Some studies suggest parental engagement at home can matter more than school quality alone.

Effective parental engagement  $\approx$  +3–4 months' progress across a year

Digital tools (texts, apps) can nudge attendance and achievement

# Communication Between Home and School

Arbor: our main platform for messages, attendance, behaviour and reports.

Email and phone for more detailed or urgent issues.

In-person meetings for complex or sensitive matters.

Website / letters for key updates and documents.



# Communication Between Home and School

Check Arbor regularly

Keep your contact details and preferences up to date

Use Arbor to:

Read messages and announcements

View attendance and punctuality

Check key data

Use Arbor messages for short, non-urgent queries



# Communication Between Home and School

Contact early if you're worried – attendance, progress, friendships, wellbeing.

Use the right person: tutor, Head of Year, subject teacher, attendance team.

Give key information: who, what, when, how it's affecting your child.

Suggest what you're hoping for: 'Could we...?'

# Communication Between Home and School

Communication is part of safeguarding and learning, not just admin.

Evidence shows parental engagement boosts attainment.



Arbor is our main tool – please keep details up to date and check it regularly.

We are here to work with you – please contact us early

# Pastoral Care in a Catholic Context

Every person made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27)

Jesus: “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10)

New commandment: “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:34)

Pastoral care = putting this love into action



# Pastoral Care in a Catholic Context

Care for spiritual, emotional, social and academic needs.

Schools must “care for the pastoral and special needs” of pupils.

Recognising the dignity of each person and their gifts.

Creating a community where everyone can belong and flourish

# Pastoral Care in a Catholic Context

“The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11).

Leaving the ninety-nine to seek the one who is lost (Luke 15:4–5).

Seeing the individual behind the data.

Especially attentive to the most vulnerable.



# Pastoral Care in a Catholic Context

Safeguarding and wellbeing at the heart of our mission.

Tutor and Year teams, chaplaincy, counselling, SEND and inclusion.

Liturgical life: prayer, retreats, services, opportunities to encounter Christ.

Attendance and communication as acts of care, not just admin



# Pastoral Care in a Catholic Context

Prodigal Son: a Father who runs to meet his child (Luke 15:20).

We challenge behaviour while respecting the person.

Restorative approaches: listening, repairing, moving forward.

Supporting change, not labelling young people.



# Pastoral Care in a Catholic Context

“Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” (Colossians 3:12).

Daily opportunities to practise these virtues in school life.

Service, charity, leadership and mentoring.

Modelling Gospel values as adults.



# Pastoral Care in a Catholic Context

“If one member suffers, all suffer together” (1 Corinthians 12:26).

Each young person is precious to God and to us.

School, home and parish walking together.

Thank you for sharing this mission.



Thank you so much for attending this 'Parental Safeguarding Briefing'. We really hope that the information shared has been helpful and informative.

If you do have any questions, please feel free to contact school anytime or pose a question in the chat facility. Please ensure questions do not mention any students or staff by name.

If you are ever worried about your child, please contact school. We are here to help. Thank you for your continued support.