



مدرسة القديسة مريم الكاثوليكية الثانوية - دبي  
St. Mary's Catholic High School - Dubai  
محيصنة (فرع) Muhaisnah (Branch)

Muhaisnah 4  
P.O. Box: 52232, Dubai, UAE

*"Cradle of Quality Integral Education"*

Web site: [www.stmarysmuhaisnah.com](http://www.stmarysmuhaisnah.com)

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the new school year for 2015-16! We hope you have all had a restful and enjoyable summer holiday. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to our new families who will be joining St. Mary's Catholic High School Muhaisnah (SMM). We are all looking forward to welcoming you to SMM and meeting you and your children. Our staff have been busy these past few months preparing the school and the classrooms, to welcome our students on 30<sup>th</sup> August.

I am delighted to write a few words of introduction to our school.

I have lived and worked in the UAE since 1998 and have a great understanding and appreciation of the culture and educational direction of the country. It is with great joy that I have joined SMM and I hope you will join me in my vision of developing SMM into a great school providing a UK Curriculum with a strong religious and holistic foundation.

The Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres (SPC) Philippine Province are a key part of the school's leadership team; Sr. Tess Bayona (Sr. Vice Principal); Sr. Terry Capurihan (Vice Principal); Sr. Rosalie Badelic (Finance & Admin) and Sr. Alma Esmero (Pastoral Care and Development). The Philippine Province of the SPC's have more than 500 Sisters supporting 44 schools and universities, 13 hospitals and 7 pastoral centres in the Philippines. Of the 44 schools, some are in foreign countries.

St. Mary's Muhaisnah (SMM), is a school with a diverse pupil population from different parts of the UAE community. We have approximately 800 students from many countries including the following: Bangladesh, Canada, Egypt, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Phillipines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syria, Ukraine, USA and Zambia.

Pupils, family and staff engagement is extremely important to us and we will endeavour to provide all our young people with memorable experiences that will truly enrich their lives. We strive to involve the whole school community in making SMM a safe, happy, forward-thinking and truly outstanding place for our pupils to learn. Our talented, multi-disciplinary staff team have high expectations of our pupils and we strive to provide the kind of education which families want for their children.

**Contact details of school:**

Phone number: 04 2614014

Email: info-smm@smgeducation.org

Website: [www.stmarysmuhaisnah.com](http://www.stmarysmuhaisnah.com)

**Just a few reminders for the beginning of the year:-**

**Term dates:**

Start of academic year	30 August 2015
Start of winter break	20 December 2015
Resume classes	3 January 2016
Start of spring break	27 March 2016
Resume classes	10 April 2016
End of academic year	23 June 2016

**Timings of school day**

**Sunday - Wednesday**

Class	Start	Finish
FS1	7:30	12:00
FS2	7:30	12:00
Yr. 1-6	7:30	14:00

**Thursday**

Class	Start	Finish
FS1	7:30	11:00
FS2	7:30	11:00
Yr. 1-6	7:30	12:35

**PE Days**

Class	Day
FS1	Thursday
FS2	Wednesday
Yr 1	Monday
Yr 2	Sunday
Yr 3	Tuesday
Yr 4	Wednesday
Yr 5	Thursday
Yr 6	Thursday

## Homework

Homework is set and is recorded by pupils in their Homework Diary.

Year Group	Mathematics	Other subjects	English Reading	Arabic	Arabic Reading	Islamic Studies
	Weekly Homework Minimum use per week	Daily Homework				
FS2	2 x 20 minutes Maths		10 minutes	5 minutes	10 minutes	
Year 1	2 x 20 minutes Maths	10 minutes	10 minutes	5 minutes	10 minutes	
Year 2	2 x 20 minutes Maths	10 minutes	10 minutes	5 minutes	10 minutes	
Years 3 and 4	2 x 20 minutes Maths	20 minutes	15 minutes	20 minutes	15 minutes	30 minutes every alternate week
Years 5 and 6	2 x 25 minutes Maths	25 minutes	15 minutes	25 minutes	15 minutes	
Islamic homework is given every two weeks, to be learned by the following week.						

### HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD

- Provide a quiet place to work where they will not be interrupted (No T.V.)
- Make homework a daily routine, at the same time each day
- Encourage her/him to complete all tasks thoroughly and neatly
- Ensure she/he completes the homework themselves. It may be necessary to sit with younger pupils while they complete homework, however, they should still complete the work by themselves
- Remind her/him to check her work for errors
- Provide safe internet access
- Please sign the diary each day to indicate you have checked your daughter/son has completed all her assignments
- Encourage your daughter/son to organise her/his books and bags by herself/himself, ready for school the next day

If you have any concerns regarding homework, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

### **Active learn**

SMM has a strong philosophy of using ICT in the school. All of the core subjects (English, Science and Maths) will be taught using a platform called Active Learn. This software exactly follows the UK curriculum. There will be textbooks for Science and Maths. All the materials for English will be accessed online through the Active Learn website. Each child will be given a login and password so that you can access the materials on the website with your child at home. Therefore it is essential that your child has access to the internet for their studying at home.

## **First Day of School**

On Sunday and Monday, our teachers will be in the playground at 7.30 to meet their new class of students and escort the students to their new classroom. From Tuesday, the students will make their own way to their classes when the bell sounds at 7:30.

As you are all aware it is extremely hot and humid at this time of the year. Therefore it is important for the children to bring a hat, water bottle and sunscreen to school to help protect them from the sun and the heat during this time.

## **Communication**

Communication is fundamental in developing positive home and school links. We endeavour to keep our community as up to date and informed about what is happening in the wider school community and at grade level as best we can. **It is essential parents update their contact details regularly so that the school can contact you.**

Whilst we have many forms of electronic communication through our school website, email, class blogs etc. we also encourage you to meet face to face with your child's teachers if you have any concerns or information you would like to share. Please visit the admin area to schedule an appointment. It is advisable to set up a time to meet with your child's teacher/s to ensure you have adequate time to discuss concerns. The beginning of the school day is a busy time for teachers as they are setting up the learning environment and preparing for the class, so please keep this in mind when scheduling appointments. **PLEASE DO NOT ENTER CLASSROOMS WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT. IT IS AGAINST SCHOOL POLICY.**

## **Canteen details**

There will be a canteen at the school serving healthy and affordable food. Children can bring money to school to buy food at the canteen during the first break.

## **Healthy eating policy and lunch boxes**

SMM has a policy of wellbeing. This includes making sure the children eat healthily. If they are bringing lunch boxes we ask the lunchboxes **not to contain:**

nuts (as some children may be allergic to nuts),  
fizzy drinks  
chocolate

If you are providing your child with a lunch box, please ensure it contains a variety of foods including some fruit and a water bottle. It is a good idea to add an ice block to keep the food cool and fresh.

## **School Times**

We would like to remind parents that school commences at 7:30. There is supervision on the **playground** from 7:10-7:30. Students are dismissed at 14:00. Please note that there is no supervision on the playground before 7:10 or after school and we strongly encourage children to go straight home unless they are in a supervised after-school activity. We will be trying to ensure that all students who are travelling home by car are at the gate on time to be collected by their parents. **All children travelling by car will be kept in the EYFS area. When you arrive at the school drive to the rear of the school, park your car and then collect your child from this area.**

## **Mobile phones**

SMM has a policy of students having no mobile phones. In the event of a member of staff seeing a child with a mobile device, it will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day.

**Chewing gum**

SMM has a policy of no chewing gum on the school site. Please advise your child accordingly.

**Parents Association**

The philosophy of SMM is to involve parents as much as possible. Parents will be invited to help out with school visits, reading with the children and so forth. We are also keen to form a parents/teachers association (PTA). Ms Mari Ella will be sending out a letter soon to ask parents who are interested in representing the year group in which their children are registered. We would hope to have one parent representative from FS1 – Yr 6, making a total of 8 reps.

**Comment/suggestion Box**

We will have a comment/suggestion box in reception where you will be able to post any suggestions or comments about the school.

**Recycling**

EYFS is always looking for materials to use in the classroom. It would be wonderful if you could send in the following materials when you have finished with them. There will be collection bins throughout the school. The following items would be useful:

- Empty toilet/paper towel rolls
- Cereal boxes
- Sweet wrappers
- Old greeting cards
- Wrapping paper
- Different sized and shaped boxes

**Paperless school**

As part of our philosophy to be green, newsletters will be posted on the website and not printed. Please ensure you log onto the website to keep yourself up to date.

I look forward to meeting you all soon

Derrick Duggan, BSc (Hons), MA.  
Principal