



Parent/Carer Handbook

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Contents

Welcome to St. Martin's	3
Vision and Ethos.....	4
Traditional Values	4
Learning for the Future	4
Outstanding Personal Achievement	4
Administrative Information	5
GroupCall	5
Lockers	5
ParentPay.....	5
Cashless Catering	5
Arrangements in case of Severe Weather	6
Lost Property.....	6
The School Day.....	6
Breaktime Arrangements.....	7
Lunchtime Arrangements	7
Term Dates for September 2023 - July 2024	8
Uniform and Equipment	8
School Uniform	8
Compulsory items for all students:.....	9
Optional items:	9
Jewellery, hair and makeup:	9
PE Kit	9
Compulsory items for all students:.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Optional items:	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Other Specialist and Essential Equipment for All Students	9
Practical Work:.....	10
Attendance.....	10
Family Holiday Arrangements.....	10
Curriculum.....	11
Clubs and Extra-Curricular Activities.....	11
Homework Policy	11
Mobile Phones	12
Medical Room	12
Bicycles.....	13
Riding Bicycles to School.....	13
Parent/Carer Cars on School Premises	13

Welcome to St. Martin's

My name is Ian Smyrk and I am delighted to introduce you to St. Martin's School.

It is a very special school that must be seen to be fully appreciated. The individual development of our students is a personal journey where they have every possible chance to succeed and flourish. Our ethos of Be The Best You Can Be is built upon three distinct strands, which are woven into every aspect of life at St. Martin's: Traditional Values, Learning For The Future and Outstanding Personal Achievement.

Opportunities to learn and enjoy beyond the classroom are endless through a huge variety of extra-curricular clubs, educational trips and many varied student leadership opportunities. It is important that St. Martin's is at the centre of the community, and, working closely with parents, we ensure that our students are proud to come to St. Martin's, and make excellent progress.

I have a firm belief that all of our students can be amazing, and have potential that they may not yet realise. It has never been more important that they not only succeed in formal qualifications, but also develop the personal skills and attributes needed in the 21st century. Through an outstanding learning experience and the relationships forged with their peers and our excellent staff, our students become confident, responsible, extremely well-rounded young people, who can choose their own future and are ready to make a positive difference in the world.

Ian Smyrk, Headteacher

Vision and Ethos

Our Mission Statement is to inspire and empower all of our students to realise their full potential and to Be The Best They Can Be.

Traditional Values

Our school ethos is based on traditional values, including students' personal development and wellbeing, as well as outstanding academic achievement.

We also place equal importance on exemplary behaviour, smart appearance, good manners as well as encouraging all of our students to make a positive contribution to their school and local community.

Learning for the Future

Gaining excellent examination results are not enough on their own to help our students face everyday life situations in the 21st century. Throughout their time in school, our students develop the skills and attributes that are key to empowering them to be successful individuals. Students will then go on to flourish in every aspect of their lives and leave as responsible, well-rounded young people, who are able to choose their own future, well-equipped and ready to make a difference in the world.

Outstanding Personal Achievement

This is the ultimate goal of our student personal journey regardless of starting point or ability. We continually encourage and challenge in all aspects of school life to enable our students to achieve as highly as possible. The nature of their achievement will be very different for every student, and will encompass a whole raft of subjects, activities and personal preferences at all levels of ability.

The individual development of our students is woven into every aspect of life at St. Martin's.

Be Kind. Be Safe. Be Responsible.

It is a personal journey that is the never-ending ambition to.... Be The Best You Can Be.

Administrative Information

Address: St. Martin's School,
Hanging Hill Lane,
Hutton,
Brentwood,
Essex,
CM13 2HG.

Telephone Number: 01277 238300

Website: <https://www.st-martins.essex.sch.uk/>

Email Address: enquiries@st-martins.essex.sch.uk

Twitter: <https://twitter.com#!/StMartinsSch>

GroupCall

We use software called GroupCall to either text or email parents/carers, as appropriate. We only use the text facility to contact parents/carers about urgent matters. Where parents/carers do not have access to email at home or work, we are able to send a printed copy home via the student's register. Communication is vitally important, of course, and we, therefore, need parents/carers to notify us of any changes of personal information at the earliest possible opportunity. For further information please make reference to St Martin's Communications Policy.

Lockers

Lockers are available in most subject areas for students to use during the day. Students can purchase their own padlock or purchase a padlock from the School Finance Office for £5.00. All lockers must be cleared at the end of each school day.

ParentPay

Parents/carers are offered the option to pay for many trips, events etc. online. ParentPay is a secure and easy way to pay for trips at any time of the day, and avoids worrying if money sent with their child has reached school safely. Details are included below (see Cashless Catering). If parents/carers have any queries regarding ParentPay, they should contact the Finance Department.

Cashless Catering

At St. Martin's, we use a Cashless Catering system for all payments in the school canteen. This means that no cash is accepted in the canteen for the purchase of food and drink. Parents/carers must deposit money into an account for each student, using a website called ParentPay. Once a student has money deposited in their account, they can purchase items in the canteen. This means that they do not need to carry cash.

The system works by recognising each child's finger print. As the system uses biometric data, we require parental/carer consent to collect and use such data. Therefore, it is vital that, if parents/carers intend their child to use the cashless system, they complete the relevant section of the consent form, which is included in Admissions Form (on page 3).

Students, whose parents/carers have given consent for the use of biometric data, will have their fingerprint logged to allow them to use the system. ParentPay login details will be sent to all parents/carers via post during the summer holidays. It is essential that parents/carers use this information to either set up their ParentPay account, or, if they already have a ParentPay account, to link their child to the existing account.

If parents/carers do not wish to give their consent for the use of their child's biometric data, an alternative (but less secure) method of student identification will be provided, where children provide their initials to the relevant staff. In addition, parents/carers, who do not wish to deposit money online, will be able to use the PayPoint system to deposit cash into their ParentPay account at their local shop. For more details on either of these options, parents/carers should contact the School Finance Office. Please note that ParentPay is our preferred method of payment for all events, activities, trips and catering.

Arrangements in case of Severe Weather

In matters related to adverse weather conditions, we will keep the school open whenever possible, provided the safety of students and staff can be maintained. We will of course plan to prevent closures where we can.

The communication method to advise of school closure will be made via Group call and notices on school website <https://www.st-martins.essex.sch.uk>

Lost Property

Since the school cannot accept responsibility for lost property, parents/carers are asked to ensure that all clothing is clearly and indelibly marked with the student's name. Should a child mislay property, they should report it immediately to their relevant Deputy Head of Year.

The School Day

	Year 7 and 8	Years 9-13
Start of School	08:25	
Tutorial Period	08:30	
Movement	08:50	
Period 1	08:55	
Movement	09:55	
Period 2	10.00	
Morning Break	10:55	11:00

Period 3	11:20	11:25
Movement	12:25	
Period 4	12:30	
Lunch Break	13:25	13:30
Period 5	14:10	14:15
End of School	15:10	15:15

The timetable is worked on a two-week system, beginning the academic year with **Week A**. When the end of term finishes on a Week A, the start of the new term will commence with Week B, and vice versa.

Students are provided with a map of the school at the beginning of each term in order for them to learn the room numbers in each building. The full name of the teaching staff cannot be printed on the timetable, but their teacher initials are.

Sc = Science	Ar = Art
Dt = Design Technology	Hi = History
Ma = Maths	Pe = PE
Fr = French	Rd = Reading
Gg = Geography	Dr = Drama
Cv = Civics	Ty = Technology
Pr = PRE	Mu = Music
De = German	

Breaktime Arrangements

Food and drink may be purchased from:

- South Hall;
- Key Stage 4 Refectory;
- Food Cube;
- Outback food outlet.

Lunchtime Arrangements

South Hall:	This hall is for students wishing to purchase cooked meals and for Years 7 – 9, who have packed lunches.
North Hall:	This hall is used by students in Years 10 - 11. This area will be unavailable during examination periods.
Key Stage 4 Refectory:	Hot food, sandwiches and refreshments are

	available.
Food Cube and Outback:	Light snacks and drinks are on sale at the Food Cube on the patio area near the swimming pool.


Term Dates for September 2023 - July 2024

St Martin's School term and holiday dates for the academic Year 2023-2024

September 2023							October 2023							November 2023							December 2023						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3						1					1	2	3			1	2	3			
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31
30	31						30	31																			

January 2024							February 2024							March 2024							April 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					26	27	28	29				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

May 2024							June 2024							July 2024							August 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7					1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31				26	27	28	29	30	31		

	School days		School holidays		Bank holidays
	Non pupil days		Adjusted time (early finish for pupils: 1.30pm)		Adjusted time (late start for pupils: 11.00am)
	Weekends				

Autumn Term:	Monday 4 September 2023 – Friday 22 December 2023 <i>Half Term 23 October – 27 October</i>	75 days
Spring Term:	Monday 8 January 2024 – Thursday 28 March 2024 <i>Half Term 19 February - 23 February</i>	54 days
Summer Term:	Monday 15 April 2024 – Tuesday 23 July 2024 <i>Half Term 27 May – 31 May, and May Bank Holiday - 6 May</i>	66 days
		195 days

Uniform and Equipment

School Uniform

Full uniform is compulsory and must always be worn by all students when on the school site, and when travelling to and from school, as ambassadors of St. Martin's.

Parents/carers are able to purchase school uniform from two providers: SmartyPants <https://www.smartypantsschoolwear.com/st-martins.html> and The School Uniform Specialist www.theschooluniformspecialist.com.

In order to make purchases, they will need to enter the login code **stm506** at the top right-hand corner of the screen.

All items of clothing must be marked clearly and indelibly with the student's name.

Compulsory items for all students:

- Black blazer with school badge;
- White shirt with school tie (tie is to end at the waist) **or** pink and white checked blouse with long or short sleeves;
- Mid-grey trousers, shoe length (available from the School Uniform Specialists) and worn with plain black socks; **OR**
- Grey school skirt that sits on the knee (available from the School Uniform Specialists) and worn with plain white ankle socks **OR** black seamless opaque tights. Skirts **must not** be rolled.
- Traditional plain black, flat, polishable school shoes. Trainers and canvas shoes are not acceptable.
- Trainer socks are not permitted.

Optional items:

- Regulation black V-neck pullover with logo and long sleeves for all Year Groups (optional, and available from School Uniform Specialists);
- Coats must be plain and not display fashion logos. Leather and denim jackets are not acceptable.
- Plain hooded jackets are permitted and may be worn as a coat, but must not be worn under blazers.

Jewellery, hair and makeup:

- Students may wear a wristwatch;
- Students with pierced ears can wear one small discreet stud in each lower ear lobe;
- Extreme haircuts are not permitted, as judged by the Headteacher;
- Discreet make-up may be worn;
- Nail varnish (except for clear nail varnish) and other noticeable appearance altering treatments, for example, eyebrow treatments and fake lashes, must not be worn. Nail extensions are not permitted.

PE Kit

Compulsory items for all students:

- Polo shirt (red and black with school logo)(available from School Uniform Specialists);
 - Plain black shorts or skort (no logos and no cycling shorts);
 - Knee-length, red rugby socks (for outdoor activities);
 - White sports-style socks longer than the ankle (for indoor activities);
 - Trainers (for indoor activities);
 - Football boots/stud/blade footwear (for activities on the field)
- One-piece plain, dark swimming costume / swim shorts.

Optional items:

- Red or black fleece top (with school logo) (available from School Uniform Specialists);

- Red or black base layers to wear under polo shirt/shorts, especially when activity is outside and the temperature is low;
- Rugby top (with school logo) (available from School Uniform Specialists) (available from School Uniform Specialists);
- Shin pads;
- Gum shield.

Other Specialist and Essential Equipment for All Students

Practical Work:

- Aprons – one white apron for hard technology plus one butcher's, striped apron for Food Technology;
- An old shirt for use in Art lessons;
- School bag and kit bag of reasonable size;
- Pen, pencil, rubber, 30cm ruler;
- Geometry set (to include a protractor and a pair of compasses);
- Scientific calculator;
- A set of felt-tipped pens or coloured pencils;
- It is also useful to have a clear pencil case.

Attendance

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD ATTENDANCE AND HOW PARENTS/CARERS CAN HELP US TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

If a child is absent through ill-health or for any other reason, we ask parents/carers to let us know by 09.00 on each day of absence, via the relevant Deputy Head of Year.

Parents/carers will be required to leave a message explaining why their child is not in school. When the student returns to school, parents/carers are required to send a letter to the Form Tutor confirming the reason for the absence and the number of days absent.

Checks are made of registers each morning, and, if the student appears to be absent, we will initiate the automatic ringing system, which will telephone the parent/carer to advise that their child is absent. If there is no response, the machine will telephone other available contact numbers. This process will be repeated every hour until there is a response or until 19.00 that evening. It is, therefore, imperative that the contact numbers included on the Admission Form are current and correct. Any changes must be advised to the relevant Deputy Head of Year.

Family Holiday Arrangements

Students' absence from school for family holidays can adversely affect their progress and examination performance.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to help every student to achieve and to be the best they can be. We have constructed a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all students the knowledge and cultural capital that they need to succeed in life.

We provide a curriculum that is coherently planned and sequenced towards acquiring sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment. All students study the full curriculum during Key Stage 3, and choose their options midway through Year 9 for Key Stage 4. Students are placed on two separate pathways (the full EBacc pathway or the traditional pathway).

In Key Stage 4, students study English Language, English Literature, maths, science and PE core. Students select a further four GCSE options. Some option choices are directed by us and some option choices are free for students to choose from a wide range of subjects. In Key Stage 5, students have the option of studying either three or four A levels and/or a variety of BTEC qualifications.

The vast majority of students, at every Key Stage, achieve outstandingly well and are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training. The students gain extensive qualifications that allow them to go on to destinations that meet their interests, passions and aspirations.

Clubs and Extra-Curricular Activities

We have a large number of clubs and activities, which run at lunchtime and after school, and we actively encourage students to get involved in anything that interests them. In addition, we run an extensive number and variety of school trips, all of which enhance the holistic experience and learning of our students.

Homework Policy

Homework can make an important contribution to the learning process and development of self-directed learning. This is clearly understood by the vast majority of our parents/carers. It is our policy to set homework on a regular basis to build on what is being taught in lessons.

Homework may take the form of a variety of tasks, and will serve a range of purposes. These include:

- To consolidate and complete work begun with the Class Teacher, thereby strengthening the learning process;
- To prepare forthcoming work;
- To encourage independent learning;
- To extend the range of available resources, for example, ICT books and information at home, libraries, asking other people;
- To prepare and complete project work and examination coursework;
- To undertake other types of research. For example, to find out about the life and work of a pioneer in a particular field of study.

Parents/carers should refer to the excerpt below, taken from a letter that parents/carers received last year.

Re: Homework

The below statement relates to the Key Stage 3 homework timetable and states:

The homework timetable is designed to ensure that students are not inundated with work to complete on a particular night. All homework should be completed in the back of exercise books, with dates and titles underlined. The Key Stage 3 homework timetable is created so that homework is distributed as evenly as possible throughout the week. A copy of the Key Stage 3 homework timetable can be found on the school website. All students in Key Stage 3 will be issued with an individual timetable and homework diary. There will be occasions when homework is due, but may not be set. On these occasions, students can take the opportunity to revise or read around the subject.

The internet is a fantastic resource for everybody and the BBC Bitesize website can also be used. A snapshot of the website is attached.

To access the BBC Bitesize website:

- Search BBC Bitesize;
- Click on secondary;
- Click on England Key Stage 3, which will lead you to the subject menu.

During Key Stage 4, due to the structure of varied deadlines, greater independence and flexibility is required with examination study. Students will not be required to follow a prescriptive timetable. However, we expect students to adhere to Department for Education guidelines, which state that students should complete between one and a half and two hours of homework per night or around ten hours per week.

Proportionally, as a guide, we expect around 20% of this time to be spent separately on English, maths and science, and around 10% per option subject.

It will be at staff discretion whether the homework is set as one longer task or several shorter tasks to accumulate the required hours of expected home study. We expect staff to allow a 48-hour turnaround as a minimum from setting work to the completion deadline.

Mobile Phones

Students are permitted to bring mobile phones to school as they can be extremely useful in terms of their safety on the journey to and from school. However, phones must be switched off upon arrival at school, and should only be turned on again at the end of the school day when students have left the school site. There will be occasions when teachers give permission for phones to be used in the classroom to enhance and support learning. Mobile phones and audio equipment are brought in entirely at students' own risk.

Medical Room

A medical room is available in the North Building for students, who feel ill, but it is our policy to contact parents/carers so that arrangements can be made for students to go home as soon as possible. Students are not sent home unless parents/carers have been informed.

Students must not call home prior to going to the Medical Room as this can lead to confusion. Students are required to have a note from the teacher to attend the Medical Room during lesson time.

If a child is required to take medicine during school hours, a separate request form to administer the medication must be completed by parents/carers; this form can be obtained from the Main Reception or from the Medical Room. It is not our policy for children to carry medicine on their person. All medication must be handed in by the parent/carer, who is responsible for keeping all medication up-to-date and disposing of out-of-date items.

Bicycles

Students may cycle to school. Bicycles should be placed in the racks provided, and securely padlocked. Bicycles must not be ridden in the school grounds. We cannot accept responsibility for damage, loss or theft of bikes whilst they are on our premises.

Riding Bicycles to School

Most of our students, who ride to school, do so very safely and sensibly. The following should be adhered to:

- Cyclists should enter and exit the school via the North drive or by the footpath on the South site;
- Cyclists must walk their bikes when on the school premises;
- Cyclists must not use the school field to enter and exit the school premises.

Parent/Carer Cars on School Premises

We have a one-way system operating in the car park in order to make it safer for students. Therefore, it is important that all parents/carers follow this system when dropping off students, especially at times when the coach park is in use by coaches, and when collecting students between 15.15 and 15.35. This system applies to all parents'/carers' cars, but excludes coaches and taxis. Parents/carers should not normally use the North drive for entering and exiting the school site.

Some parents/carers, understandably, find it frustrating that it takes so long to use the one-way system, but we must always put students' safety first. The cooperation of parents/carers on this important matter is much appreciated.