



SCHOOL HANDBOOK

2023-24

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welcome to the school that unlocks



WELCOME TO SANCTA MARIA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

This Handbook is a window to our school's ethos and practices, and outlines our policies and procedures. We expect parents, students and staff to familiarise themselves with the contents at the start of the academic year and refer to it throughout the year.

1. ABOUT US

1.1 Our Group

Sancta Maria International School is part of the well-respected St. Mary's Educational Society in Hyderabad, founded by Mr. B Arogya Reddy in 1981. The Society has provided quality education to learners aged from 3 to 21 years for almost four decades through its group of institutions:

- Sancta Maria International School, Serilingampally
- St. Mary's Junior College, Basheerbagh
- St. Mary's Junior College, Jubilee Hills
- St. Mary's Degree College, Yousufguda

Sancta Maria is an approved Cambridge International School (Centre No. IN 727), offering a world-class Cambridge Pathway curriculum and qualifications from Early Years to Grade 12.

1.2 Our Philosophy

Our Vision

To unlock the potential of every learner for a better world.

Our Motto

In Omnia Excellentia

Excellence in everything

Our Values

Fairness | Integrity | Respect | Excellence | Happiness | Value Creation

Our Commitment

- We seek to understand the needs, interests and motivations of each of our learners so that we can set them up for success in their unique journeys.
- We provide a safe and stimulating environment where learning happens by design and not by chance.
- We foster a culture of growth mindset and lifelong learning where staff and students are allowed to ask questions, make mistakes and take risks.
- We respect differences and are mindful of our language while speaking about and with students.
- We care about and promote physical, emotional, social and mental wellbeing of our students and staff.
- We develop an enabling relationship with our parent community where constructive feedback is sought and used for improvement.
- We act responsibly to look after the environment.
- We build meaningful partnerships with global organisations for a lasting positive impact.

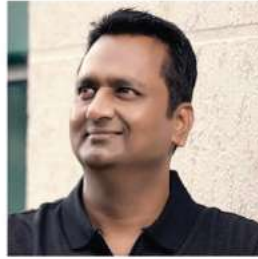
In doing so, we aim to develop competent and compassionate young people who are confident, innovative, engaged, responsible and reflective.

1.3 Our People

MANAGEMENT TEAM



B. Arogya Reddy
*President & Chairman -
Saint Mary's Educational Society*



B. Mahender Reddy
*Chief Executive Officer -
Saint Mary's Educational Society*

LEADERSHIP TEAM



Ms. Ruchira Ghosh, Principal



Mr. Commander Rakesh Babu (Retd)
Head, Administration



Ms. Rini Roy
Division Head, Early Years



Ms. Rakhi Karnik
Division Head, Primary School



Ms. Vaishali Ramoju
Division Head, Middle School

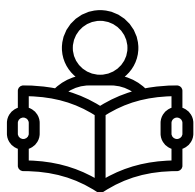


Ms. Jyoti Debnath
Division Head, High School



Mr. T. Krishnamohan
Cambridge Examinations Officer

1.4 Why Sancta Maria



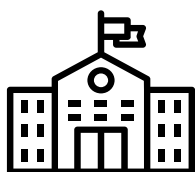
1. STUDENT-CENTRED ENVIRONMENT

We always put our learners first. We provide a caring and safe environment in which they are valued and respected, and are able to thrive and be happy.



2. MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

We are part of the 42 years old trusted St. Mary's Educational Society with rich experience and understanding of education. We have an engaged management and competent leadership team spearheading the school's future.



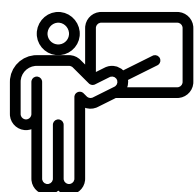
3. CAMBRIDGE PATHWAY SCHOOL

We are one of the few schools in the city using the world-class Cambridge International Curriculum from EY1 to Grade 12. We offer Cambridge Checkpoints (at the end of Grade 5 and Grade 8), IGCSEs (exams at the end of Grade 10) and AS & A Levels (exams at the end of Grades 11 & 12).



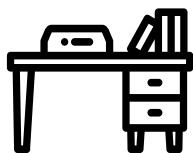
4. SEAMLESS PROGRESSION WITH FLEXIBILITY & CHOICE

Students can choose the subjects they are truly passionate about and specialise in them from Grade 9 onwards. By offering all stages of Cambridge curriculum, we provide consistency of teaching and learning approaches and a seamless progression from one stage to the other.



5. TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We believe that our teachers are our strongest asset and we are fully committed to investing in their lifelong learning. We develop a systematic annual plan for Continuous Professional Development and our teachers participate in Cambridge training events, workshops by experts in diverse areas, self-study courses, online conferences and webinars round the year.



6. INFRASTRUCTURE

Our excellent infrastructure with spacious classrooms, labs, art and dance rooms, clean and hygienic dining areas, play areas, amphitheatre and lots of natural light creates a home away from home for the students. We follow high standards of safety and security on the campus and in school transport.



7. TRANSPARENCY AND EASE OF COMMUNICATION

We look at parents as our co-partners in education and maintain transparency and ease of access. We have a dedicated Parent Relations Team and deploy convenient channels of communication including Google Classrooms, Institutional Resource Planning (IRP) besides emails and SMSes.



8. OUR PARTNERSHIPS

We provide a broad and balanced school curriculum. We are a licensed centre for Duke of Edinburgh's International Award delivered by IAYP in India. We have meaningful partnerships with organisations like Sportz Village, Unifrog, Jodogyan, Trailblazers, IC3, Turnitin and Worldview to name a few.



9. INTERNATIONAL MINDEDNESS

Along with offering international curriculum, we believe in providing practical exposure to our students and teachers to best practices around the world. We develop international school partnerships for collaborative learning, use resources such as Skype, Zoom, FlipGrid, Google Classrooms and TED Talks for wider learning opportunities.



10. SUPPORT FOR MOBILE FAMILIES

Sensitive to the challenges faced by relocating families, we extend our support by accepting admissions during the course of the year and providing extra learning support for such students.



2. LIFE AT SANCTA MARIA

2.1 Happiness and Well-being

At Sancta Maria, we give high priority to student and staff well-being and happiness. We take utmost care to ensure safety of children and do not allow any visitor without a valid pick-up card to meet or interact with any student. The school offers a pleasant infrastructure with well-appointed classrooms, play areas, library, art and music rooms, science and ICT labs as per Cambridge

standards, spacious and hygienic dining area, counselling room and infirmary. Our open air amphitheatre is a hub of vibrant activities and witness to the myriad talents demonstrated by our students. Our tree house nestled in the branches of the tamarind tree is a treat for students and visitors alike. We value the special bond between children and their families, and welcome parents and grandparents to our premises on special occasions.

2.2 School Curriculum

Our school has four Divisions:

- Early Years: EY1, EY2, EY3
- Primary School: G1-5
- Middle School: G6-8
- High School: G9-12

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum using all five stages of Cambridge International. Our whole school curriculum includes,

- a. Formal Curriculum with academic subjects, and
- b. Enrichment Curriculum with opportunities for extra-curricular and extension activities.

a. FORMAL CURRICULUM (Academic Subjects)

As a Cambridge International school, we offer the Cambridge curriculum right from EY1 and use it all the way till Grade 12. We offer Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary Checkpoints at the end of Grade 5 and Grade 8 respectively. At the end of Grade 10, students write the IGCSE examinations and at the end of Grade 11 and 12, they appear for Cambridge International AS and A Levels respectively. Offering all 5 stages of the Cambridge curriculum – Early Years, Primary, Lower Secondary, Upper Secondary and Advanced enables smooth progression for learners from one stage to the next, and provides consistency of pedagogical and assessment approaches.



Academic subjects

Early Years (EY1, EY2, EY3)

The Cambridge Early Years programme offers a holistic and play-way approach that focuses on the whole child and their development. The aim of Early Years education is to provide a strong foundation for all-around development and lifelong learning.

The programme is built on the five key principles: Experience, Active, Balance, Play and Transition.

Cambridge Early Years curriculum is designed to promote progression in learning from Early Years 1 to Early Years 3 and later into primary education. It allows the development of knowledge, understanding and skills through a spiral approach.

The curriculum provides a structure for teaching and learning in three stages: Early Years 1 (EY1), Early Years 2 (EY2) and Early Years 3 (EY3).

The content is divided into six curriculum areas:

1. Communication, language & literacy
2. Creative expression
3. Mathematics
4. Personal, social & emotional development
5. Physical development
6. Understanding the world



Primary School (Grades 1-5)

We offer the following subjects in Primary School:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
English*	English*	English*	English*	English*
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
Second language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/ French	Second language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/ French	Second language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/ French	Second language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/ French	Second language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/ French
Global Perspectives	Global Perspectives	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies
Computing & Digital Literacy	Computing & Digital Literacy	Computing & Digital Literacy	Computing & Digital Literacy	Computing & Digital Literacy
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
Performing Arts	Performing Arts	Performing Arts	Performing Arts	Performing Arts
Art & Design	Art & Design	Art & Design	Art & Design	Art & Design
			Third language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/ French/Telugu	Third language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/ French/Telugu

*English with the option of First Language English (FLE) or English as a Second Language (ESL)

- Cambridge Global Perspectives at grade 1 to 5, is a unique interdisciplinary subject that focuses on developing skills in research, analysis, collaboration, communication, reflection and critical thinking through topics that are relevant for local, national and global contexts. For Grades 3-5, Global Perspectives Challenges will be integrated within all subjects.

At this stage, we instil a love for learning and academic curiosity as students are steered on the path to becoming confident, skilled and responsible individuals. Using Cambridge Primary programme, we shape our learners' knowledge base and facilitate the

development of cognitive, social, emotional, cultural and physical skills and abilities.



Middle School (Grades 6-8)

The Middle School curriculum focuses on core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science to prepare students for secondary education. The goal at this stage is to engage students in learning while building character and confidence. The academic programme is designed to develop skills in critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and communication, problem solving, working with others and developing citizenship and leadership qualities. At this stage, students are exposed

to specialist teachers for all subjects. This ensures they not only develop their knowledge and skills but are also prepared for the rigour of the next Cambridge stage leading to IGCSEs.



We offer the following subjects in Middle School:

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
English*	English*	English*
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
Science	Science	Science
Second language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/French	Second language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/French	Second language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/French
Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies
Computing & Digital Literacy	Computing & Digital Literacy	Computing & Digital Literacy
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
Performing Arts	Performing Arts	Performing Arts
Art & Design	Art & Design	Art & Design
Third language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/French/ Telugu	Third language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/French/ Telugu	Third language with choice: Hindi/Spanish/French/ Telugu

*English with the option of First Language English (FLE) or English as a Second Language (ESL)

*Global Perspectives will be integrated within Social Studies.

High School (Grades 9-12)

The High School curriculum includes two stages of Cambridge Pathway:

For **Grades 9-10**, we use **Cambridge Upper Secondary** curriculum. The focus is on a broad and balanced study across a wide range of subjects using learner-centred and enquiry-based approaches to learning. Assessments include written, oral, coursework and practicals and students take the IGCSE exams at the end of this stage.



The following IGCSE subjects are mandatory for all students:

- English - choice between English as First Language or English as Second Language
- Second Language - choice between Hindi, French, Spanish
- Mathematics - choice between Core or Extended
- Science - Physics, Chemistry and Biology (each of the individual Science subjects are available as Core or Extended)

Students must choose a minimum of 3 subjects from the following options:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Computer Science | • Environmental Management |
| • Additional Mathematics | • Art & Design |
| • English Literature | • Physical Education |
| • Economics | • History |
| • Business Studies | • Sociology |
| • Accounting | • Enterprise |
| • Global Perspectives | • Mathematics |

The choice and combination of subjects should be based on a fair understanding of the purpose which can include personal interest, use value of subject for university admissions and higher education courses, future career planning or aspiration for Cambridge ICE Award (<https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-upper-secondary/cambridge-ice/>).

Group 1 (Languages)	Group 2 (Humanities & Social Sciences)	Group 3 (Sciences)	Group 4 (Mathematics)	Group 5 (Creative & Professional)
English as First Language (EFL)	Economics	Physics	Mathematics	Business Studies
English as Second Language (ESL)	Global Perspectives (GP)	Chemistry	Additional Mathematics	Accounting
Hindi as Second Language	History	Biology		Computer Science (CS)
French	Environmental Management (EM)	Environmental Management (EM)		Art & Design
Spanish	Literature in English			Enterprise
	Sociology			Physical Education (PE)
				Global Perspectives (GP)

A new IGCSE subject will typically be offered only if there are at least 5 students opting for it.

- Students are expected to take a minimum of 3 A level subjects alongside AS level English.
- We also offer AS level Global Perspectives & Research (only if 2 or more students opt for it) and IPQ in addition to the subjects mentioned in the bands.
- Further Mathematics will only be offered to students if they clear the baseline examination for it.
- We only offer a subject at AS and A level if a minimum of 5 students opt for it.

Band No	Subjects			
English (Mandatory)	English Language (AS) or English General Paper (AS)			
Band 1	Chemistry	Accounting	Sociology	
Band 2	Physics	Economics	Media Studies (AS Level)	
Band 3	Biology	Business	Art and Design	
Band 4	Computer Science	Psychology	Environmental Management (AS Level)	Marine Science
Band 5	Mathematics			
Band 6	Law	Further Mathematics (AS Level)		

Students can choose ONE subject from each of these bands.
It is not necessary to select a subject from every band.

For Grades 11-12, we use **Cambridge Advanced programme** with AS Level exams after Grade 11 and A Level exams after Grade 12. The only exception is AS Level English subjects for which the exams are conducted at the end of Grade 12. Cambridge International AS and A Levels are extremely good preparation for university studies. Students develop deep subject knowledge along with strong analytical skills, critical thinking and writing skills. All these are highly valued by all top universities in India and abroad.

We offer subjects in specific Groups at this stage. Students should opt for a minimum of 3 subjects up to A Levels and a subject of English at AS Level where necessary for university admissions or entrance tests. The subjects must be selected carefully if applying for Cambridge AICE diploma (<https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-advanced/cambridge-aice-diploma/>)

AS & A Level

Group (Compulsory for AICE Diploma)	Group 1 (Mathematics & Sciences)	Group 2 (Languages)	Group 3 (Arts & Humanities)	Group 4 (Interdisciplinary Subjects)
Global Perspectives & Research (GP)	Mathematics	English Language	Economics	English General Paper
	Physics	English General Paper	Accounting	IPQ
	Chemistry		Business	
	Biology		Art & Design	
	Computer Science		Psychology	
	Environmental Management		Law	
	Further Mathematics		History	
			Sociology	
	Marine Science		Media Studies	

A new AS/AL subject will typically be offered only if there are at least 3 students opting for it.

(IPQ) International Project Qualification: Read more about this on the given link:
<https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-advanced/cambridge-ipq/>

b. ENRICHMENT CURRICULUM

SPORTS

We offer a well-structured sports programme in partnership with Sportz Village, an international sports education organisation. Professionally trained coaches deliver age appropriate structured curriculum mapped to Cambridge Physical Education curriculum framework. The objective is to invoke real interest in sports through a wide variety of activities and games and specialised training in Cricket, Football, Tennis, Badminton, Volleyball and Basketball.



HOUSES

Students belong to one of the four houses - Draco, Leo, Aquila and Taurus - and they remain within their respective House during their tenure in the school. There is a friendly yet healthy competition between the Houses through a range of competitions and activities held throughout the school year. A wide variety of events such as Words Fray, Scientifique, Contentio Mathematica, Sports Tournaments, Music, Dance, Debates, etc. take place as House competitions. The points secured in these competitions contribute to the grand, fiercely fought-over House Trophy, which is presented at the end of the year.



International Award for Young People (IAYP - also known as Duke of Edinburgh's International Award globally)

We complement the rigour of our academic programme with wider learning experiences through the internationally recognised Duke of Edinburgh's International Award for young people over 13.5 years. Our school is a licensed Youth Engagement Society (YES) centre with International Award for Young People (IAYP) which offers the Award in India. The Award also provides an excellent platform to encourage students to participate in Community Service. Students have the opportunity to apply for age-appropriate level of the Award - Bronze/ Silver/ Gold - and in the process gain valuable experience in 4 specific areas: Physical Recreation; Skills; Community Service; Adventurous Journey. Gold level students have to complete a Residential Project in addition to participating in these four areas. Our teachers have been trained by IAYP as Award Leaders to support students in their pursuit of the Award.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Sancta Maria Student Council is the voice of the student community. We firmly believe that every student's opinions and ideas need to be heard, valued and responded to as they can provide fresh and different perspectives. The Student Council consists of representatives from Primary, Middle and High School divisions. The members of the Council are elected at the beginning of the academic year. The Student Council is a friendly yet professional bridge between students and teaching community, and suggests changes for the improvement of the school at large. The Council also takes on important responsibilities for key events and plays a significant role in decision making within the school.



FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

We at Sancta Maria give equal weightage to the learning within and outside the classrooms. The field trips and excursions are organised in alignment with our curriculum, which helps them relate and apply their knowledge and skills to real-life situations. Our students gain the expertise in interactive learning, social interactions, socio-economic growth while accessing different environments. The excursions are formulated around developing the qualities of self-confidence, being independent, taking initiatives and developing leadership qualities. We organized field trips during school hours and excursions during school holidays.

EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

From Indian and international festivals to World Days and thematic assemblies, our students enthusiastically participate in a range of events and celebrations spread across the year. We welcome parents and grandparents to school to join us for special events. Sleepover in School (also known as Night Out) is one of the most awaited annual events where students from Grade 4 onwards have a camp-like experience within the safety of the school. Annual Days, Sports Day, Graduation and Step Up Ceremonies are some of the other key events of the school which bring together the entire school community in a spirit of celebration and collaboration.



CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

Clubs are an integral part of our enrichment curriculum. Through club activities, students get the opportunity to participate and develop their interests and passions in a range of areas including Model United Nations, Literature Appreciation, Debating, Board Games, Community Service, Music, Dance, Theatre, Environment Conservation, etc. Most of these clubs are managed by students themselves with teachers as guides or observers. All students from Grades 1-12 are expected to participate actively in at least one club during the course of the year.

Learners of grades 11 and 12 take the initiative to form and run Societies that cater to the needs and interests of students across grades 9-12. The initiatives undertaken by these Societies empower learners, cultivate a positive school environment and contribute to the overall growth and success of the learners. These societies serve as a platform for collaboration and mentorship among the learners.

STUDENT COUNSELLING

We firmly believe that students need in-house support for their emotional, psychological and varied learning needs as well as for making critical decisions related to choice of subjects in High School, future education and careers. We have a full time Wellbeing Counsellor and Special Educator with expertise in these areas. We have a qualified College and Career Counsellor and are in the process of developing other teachers in this area so that students have access to wider resources within the school.





3. PARENT PARTNERSHIP

3.1 Communication and Engagement with Parents

Open and regular communication between the school and the parent community is key to student success and well-being. The school provides various channels for parents to connect and be our partners in ensuring a growth-oriented learning environment.

a. PARENT RELATIONS TEAM

The Parent Relations Team (PRT) ensures a seamless flow of communication between parents and school staff. Each school division has its assigned Parent Relations Officer, who serves as a responsible bridge between the parents and school staff. Parents are requested to keep their contact details up to date on school records, and promptly inform (within 5 working days of the change ideally) the respective Parent Relations Officer about any changes including telephone number, emergency contact details, residential address, email address or any other. Email communication will be sent only to email IDs that have been mentioned in the application and registration form during admission.

Following are the contact details of the respective Parent Relations Officers:

Division and Grades	Email address	Mobile number
Early Years: EY1 to EY3	earlyyears@sanctamaria.in	+91 9640028444
Primary School		
Grade 1	primary1@sanctamaria.in	+91-9640244111
Grade 2	primary2@sanctamaria.in	
Grade 3	primary3@sanctamaria.in	
Grade 4	primary4@sanctamaria.in	
Grade 5	primary5@sanctamaria.in	
Middle School: Grades 6 to 8	middleschool@sanctamaria.in	+91-9640060464
High School: Grades 9 to 12	highschool@sanctamaria.in	+91-9640283222

Please note that PRT working hours are from 8:15 am to 4:00 pm from Monday to Friday (except on public holidays).

b. Google Classroom

We use Google Classrooms as a secure place to connect and share content. It is a platform for teachers to communicate with students/parents and address their queries related to homework, assignments, activity updates etc. Google Classroom enables parents to have direct access to homework, apart from receiving important notifications and daily updates.

c. Institutional Resource Planning (IRP)

IRP is a web and mobile based application, where parents can check the progress, attendance and report cards of their child. Parents and students can see the timetable, school calendar, gallery, daily menu, etc. Students and staff can reserve books via IRP. Parents can book their time slots for Parent Teacher Meetings and can download fee receipts via their individual login.

d. Parent Orientation Sessions

Before/at the start of the new academic year, Parent Orientations Sessions are conducted to help parents gain a deeper understanding of academic and enrichment curriculum areas. In addition, Curriculum Days are held within the first term to brief parents about the plans and expectations for the new academic year. These sessions are held division wise.

e. Parent Teacher Meetings (PTM)

Regular Parent Teacher Meeting is an important channel for one-on-one communication between parents and teachers. The primary purpose of PTM is to discuss feedback on progress of the child in academic and other areas. PTMs also provide access to subject teachers if a parent wants to know better about how the child is doing in a specific subject. We expect the PTM to be a two-way communication where the parent also has the opportunity to voice feedback, expectations and provide suggestions.

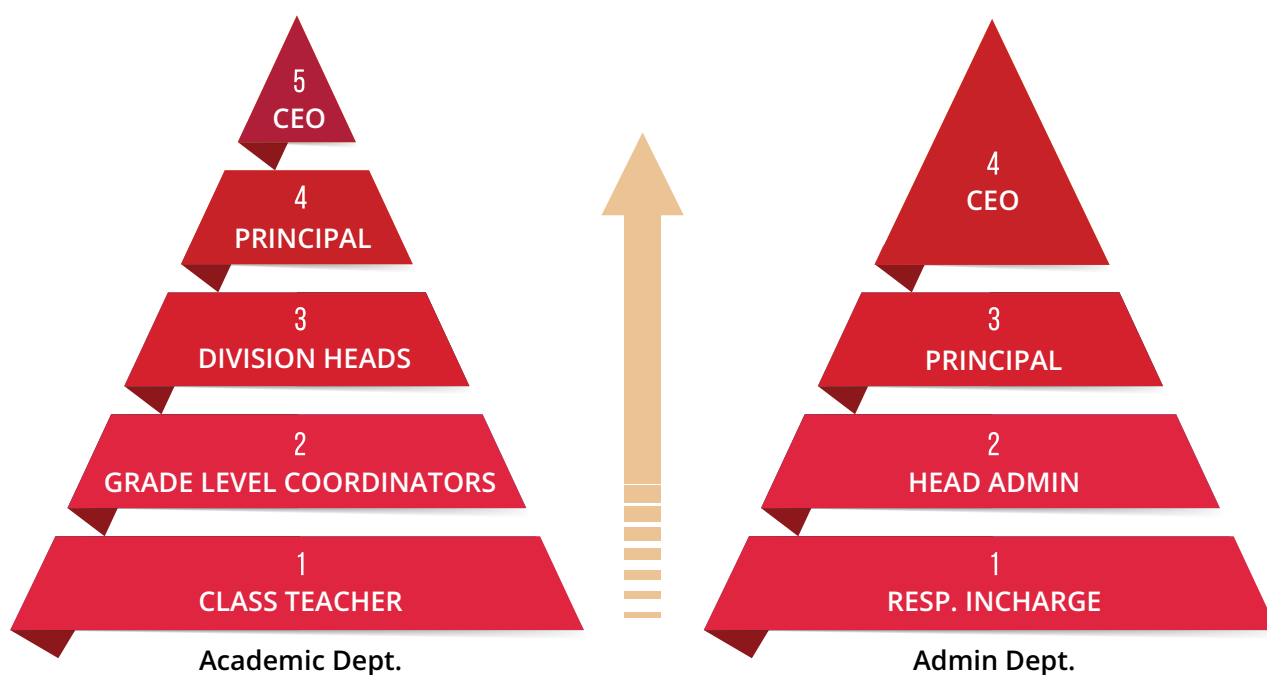


3.2 Redressal of Grievances

We consider parents co-partners in the process of delivering quality education and enriching experiences for our learners. Though issues are best resolved informally through dialogue, there can be situations where there is a need for escalation to appropriate authority.

- If the issue is related to teaching and learning or classroom management, please discuss the same with the respective teacher/Division Head in the first instance. You can request for an appointment for a meeting on a working Saturday between 8:30 am and 9:30 am by writing to the respective Parent Relations Officer.
- If the issue does not get resolved via discussion, you can send an email to the respective Parent Relations Officer for escalation to the next level.

Following is the Escalation Matrix at Sancta Maria:



We expect parents to follow these guidelines and practice during such discussions:

- Maintain an environment of respect and courtesy.
- Focus on facts and not subjective interpretation of facts or hearsay.
- Listen to each other to hear all perspectives.
- Seek to resolve issues in a calm manner without verbal or physical aggression.





HIGH SCHOOL TEAM



ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

4. POLICIES

4.1 POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS AND EXPECTATIONS

Creating a happy and respectful environment

Respect and Happiness are two of our school values. It is expected that all members of the school community, including students, staff and parents, demonstrate polite and courteous behaviour towards each other at all times. Sancta Maria encourages simple daily habits of greeting one another at the start and end of the day, offering help where possible, speaking politely with everyone, including school helpers and support staff and being respectful of the other person's ideas, cultural background and differences. Senior students should always take care of the comfort and safety of younger students in their respective buses.

Working Days and Timings

- Regular working days for students are Monday to Friday, 8:10 am - 3:10 pm. Buses will leave school at 3:20 pm.
- Students using own transport are expected to arrive at school by 8:10 am.
- Late arrival and early departure are not allowed, except in cases of emergency or circumstances beyond one's control. Picking up students during school hours for a planned travel or social event is not considered an emergency and is not permitted. If such instances are unavoidable, please refrain from sending the student and inform the school about the student's absence.

Attendance

We share the school calendar with our parents at the beginning of the year and expect parents to plan their vacations and other personal holidays accordingly. The school will not be able to accommodate requests for changes in the schedule for assessment/ submissions/ activities.

- The academic year is from June to April. For Grades 11 and 12, the new session commences in March after the board exams.
- **A minimum attendance of 85%** in the given academic year is mandatory for the student to be promoted to the next class or allowed to appear for end of term/year exams. Any exception will be subject to the discretion of the Division Head and Principal.
- In cases of planned absence, please send an email to the Parent Relations Team at least one day in advance with the subject line - **Planned Absence for** (name of the student) of (grade and section) and include the reason and duration of absence in the email body. In such cases, it will be the parents' responsibility to ensure the child is able to make up for the missed lessons.
- In cases of unplanned absence, please send an email to the Parent Relations Team on the day of absence with the subject line - **Unplanned Absence for** (name of the student) of (grade and section) and include the reason and duration of absence in the email body. Acceptable reasons for unplanned absence include personal sickness, death in the family and any legal or statutory formalities that occur without notice. We may ask for supporting documents in such cases.

Absence due to sickness and health issues

- Parents should refrain from sending the child to school in case s/he is unwell or shows symptoms of cold, cough, fever, stomach discomfort, body rashes, potential infectious disease, etc. In such cases, please inform the Parent Relations Team following the process for planned/unplanned absence.
- In case of a doctor's appointment during school hours, we request parents not to send the child to school. Medical and dental appointments must be arranged outside of school hours. If the absence is due to a medical appointment, please inform the Parent Relations team by email following the Planned Absence process.
- In case of health issues, especially infectious diseases, parents should ensure that the child has recovered fully before sending them back to school.
- For any health issue or medical emergency during school hours, the school will reach out to the parent. Kindly prioritise this and cooperate with the school to take appropriate actions.
- If a student is absent for more than three days due to poor health, parents should email scanned copy of the medical certificate to the Parent Relations Team before the student returns to school.

Code of Conduct

School life is not just a preparation for higher education and career, but also for life in general. We expect Sancta Marians to be responsible and reflective and embody the values of Fairness, Integrity, Respect, Excellence, Value creation and Happiness. This will only happen when everybody follows a shared code of conduct. We expect our learners to:

1. Be punctual for every activity and lesson.
2. Walk on the left and in a single file while going up or down the stairway. Running around in the classrooms, corridors, stairway, dining hall, library, buses, etc., can be dangerous and cause accidents for self or others.
3. While moving in the corridor during lesson changes or breaks, walk swiftly and without disturbing any other classes or activities that might be taking place in another classroom or other nearby spaces.
4. Follow the established norms for moving into the open air theatre (OAT) and dispersing back to classes or assigned venues.
5. Take personal responsibility to ensure you are settled in the OAT so that the event can begin and finish at the designated time.
6. Take care of school and class property. Any form of vandalism or destruction of property defeats the notion of collective responsibility. Destruction or disfiguration of school property (e.g. graffiti on desks/walls) will lead to disciplinary consequences.
7. Be respectful of others' belongings and do not touch them without consent.
8. Take sensible portions of food during snack and lunch to avoid wastage or overeating.
9. Leave common areas such as hand washing counters and toilets dry and clean for the others to use without inconvenience.
10. Use tissues or sanitary towels responsibly and do not litter the floor or clog the WC.
11. Only use stationery provided by the school. We prohibit use of any other stationery, particularly fancy and expensive items.
12. Hand over any snack items to the class teacher in the morning and collect the same at the time of dispersal.

13. Bring only light weight eco-friendly water bottles to school. Heavy steel or glass bottles are dangerous as well as inconvenient to carry.
14. Use polite and respectful language while speaking with and about teachers and staff in school. Use of abusive language/ disrespectful gestures/ assault is strictly prohibited.

Our approach to consequences is based on the principles of Restorative Practice which aims to address conflict, improve school climate, and build a positive school culture. While repairing harm and improving relationships will be the primary focus, there will be logical consequences of misconduct including, but not limited to the following:

- Counselling
- Written apology
- Cleaning/repairing damaged class/school property
- Exclusion from an activity to complete a time-bound task
- Community Service
- Serving/clearing duties in the dining hall
- Temporary or permanent expulsion from school or leadership roles in extreme or frequent breach of code of conduct.

Uniform and Personal Grooming

Students come to the school to learn, and they come from diverse cultures and backgrounds. Parents should exercise a combination of common sense and the norms below to manage/ monitor their child's attire and grooming.

- Sancta Maria's uniform includes T-shirt with House stripe, shorts (only for EY and Primary), trousers and black shoes. The school uniform is a symbol of oneness and belongingness along with pride in one's association with one of the four houses. Students are expected to wear the school uniform every day, except when informed to do otherwise during special events, festivals, sports tournaments or outdoor visits. If the uniform is not available for a specific reason, we expect our students to come to school in formal clothes with a pair of black shoes in the interim period. Flip-flops are not allowed, unless worn due to injury or similar reason and with approval.
- We discourage students from wearing expensive jewellery, designer and smart watches, and other expensive items. Small earrings or studs are permissible. While the school maintains a lost and found section and aims to support students in locating any items lost or misplaced on the school premises, the school cannot be held liable or responsible for the loss of any precious items.
- Hair should be clean and tidy in appearance. Colouring, highlights, bleaching, or other chemical hair treatment are not allowed due to health and safety reasons. Extreme haircut or styling is not permitted as these can become distractions and keep students away from focusing on their learning. Students with long hair must tie their hair neatly.
- Students are not allowed to wear any kind of makeup or have tattoos.
- Should the parents find head lice on their child, or if the school reports the same, we request parents to have it treated at the earliest and inform the school.
- Senior boys are expected to trim their facial hair, unless not allowed due to religion or faith.

Safety and well-being

- Students are not allowed to carry any sharp and hazardous items like knives, blades, cutters, lighters, matchboxes, etc.
- Carrying or using cigarettes, including e-cigarettes, tobacco, any type of narcotic substances or illegal drugs and alcohol is strictly banned. If a student is found carrying or using any of these substances, s/he will be suspended or permanently expelled from the school with or without warning.
- Students are neither expected nor allowed to carry cash to school. Parents should regularly check to ensure that their child is not bringing cash in the bag or dress pocket.
- Any type of pornographic material or content is included in the list of prohibited items.

Birthday Celebrations

We appreciate that students would like to share their happiness and celebrate birthdays in school. Keeping in mind our values of fairness and respect, we request parents to take care that their child distributes candies/chocolates (up to INR 30 per piece) only and to peers and teachers within their own class. Moving around the school to distribute chocolates takes away a lot of precious time and is not allowed.

Giving Gifts

We respect the emotions associated with gift-giving. However, as a policy, we do not encourage any form of gift-giving. If students wish to express their gratitude towards their peers, teachers or other staff members, they can give hand-made cards. We request parents to refrain from sending gifts with the child. Any gifts sent for staff or students will be sent back home.



4.2 Safeguarding Policy

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and we expect all our employees and volunteers and any contractors / consultants and partner agency staff in our schools to share this commitment. In line with this, we expect them to recognise where a student is at risk of, or is actually being harmed, and to do all they can to reduce further risk or harm.

Definitions

Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the processes of protecting students from harm, preventing the impairment of their health and development, ensuring that we seek to improve the general health and well-being of all students in our care and enabling every student to have the optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

Child Protection

Child Protection is the core element of safeguarding and is defined as the responsibility to protect children who are suffering or likely to suffer from harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

Our Guiding Principles

The following principles guide our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:

- We take a serious view of any form of child abuse – direct or indirect.
- We protect and respect children's rights, dignity, liberty and freedom.
- We focus on the best interests of children in all matters related to them.
- We educate and empower children about their rights, personal safety and steps they can take if there is a problem.
- We integrate child protection into all aspects of our organisational strategy, structures and work practices.

Purpose of the policy

- To guide whole school programme on awareness and sensitivity towards Child Rights and Child Protection.
- To provide clear guidance to staff and parents/carers (duty bearers) about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child protection issues.
- To ensure child protection concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child.
- To ensure a well-defined and practiced reporting mechanism for child protection violations and a time-bound redressal system.

Training and support

- All employees receive safeguarding and child protection training to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard students effectively.

- Those who have the Designated Safeguarding Lead responsibility in schools have appropriate, up to date knowledge and that they access appropriate additional and specialist training. This will be refreshed every two years.
- All employees and volunteers are subject to a full induction, which includes an overview of what to do and who to contact if concerned about a student.
- Appropriate employees are trained in safe recruitment. This safer recruitment training is renewed every five years.
- Training for new employees is completed before they can have unsupervised contact with students.
- Any student who has or is suffering from any form of harm receives support through Wellbeing Counsellor, Teachers and Leadership Team in consultation with parents/carers as appropriate.

a. Child protection

Sancta Maria is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of its learners. This policy should be understood in conjunction with the following other policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- School Rules and Positive Behaviours
- Safety and Security of Students

Legal and Policy Framework

The Constitution of India provides that the state must seek to ensure “that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.” In India the primary child protection provisions are found in the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

India has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which is a legally binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

Our Guiding Principles

The following principles guide our Child Protection Policy:

- We take a serious view of any form of child abuse – direct or indirect.
- We protect and respect children’s rights, dignity, liberty and freedom.
- We focus on the best interests of children in all matters related to them.
- We educate and empower children about their rights, personal safety and steps they can take if there is a problem.
- We integrate child protection into all aspects of our organisational strategy, structures and work practices.

These principles are also enshrined in Sancta Maria’s values of Respect, Fairness, Happiness, Integrity, Excellence and Value Creation.

Purpose of the policy

- To guide whole school programme on awareness and sensitivity towards Child Rights and Child Protection.
- To provide clear guidance to staff and parents/carers (duty bearers) about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child protection issues.
- To ensure child protection concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child.
- To ensure a well-defined and practiced reporting mechanism for child protection violations and a time-bound redressal system.

Defining child abuse

Child abuse may be defined as intentional or unintentional harm of any nature - physical, sexual, mental, emotional and psycho-social caused by rights violation, neglect and ill treatment by those with power and authority and who may or may not be responsible for providing care and management services.

Child protection violation in the context of this policy amounts to:

- Any act or behaviour that puts a child at risk of abuse.
- Any act of behaviour that could potentially increase the risk of abuse.
- A failure to act in a situation where a child is being abused.
- Failure to follow the code of conduct or any other prescribed protocol without suitable justification.

Code of conduct

Sancta Maria recognises that respect for the child should reflect both in the decisions of the organisation as well as in the conduct of its personnel including full time and part-time staff, work associates, consultants and volunteers at Sancta Maria.

Personnel should:

- Be conscious of and respect the privacy and dignity of every child.
- Be visible and not in a secluded place, while in contact with children at the workplace.
- Ensure that a culture of openness exists and facilitates children to interact and express their issues and concerns with staff in Sancta Maria.
- Respect and encourage children's voices and views.
- Protect the child by not disclosing the identity of the child outside of the team and duty bearers involved with the case.
- Educate children about their rights, issues of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Personnel should not:

- Hug or caress a child.
- Use language or expressions that are inappropriate for a child.
- Use corporal punishment or tolerate corporal punishment by the staff.
- Make any physical gesture in a manner that appears to be inappropriate or have a

sexual context or association.

- Develop any relationship with any child that is or could be assumed to be exploitative or abusive.
- Discriminate against children on any basis such as community, colour, language, disabilities or physical features.
- Humiliate or stigmatise a child
- Act in any manner that puts children at risk
- Take any photograph that would or could potentially violate the child's dignity or privacy in any way.

The following specific measures are to be put in place to prevent child abuse:

- Standardised recruitment process for all new employees which includes a thorough reference check with the place of previous employment or the academic institute attended by the candidate.
- All staff will undergo child protection awareness training and will sign an undertaking that they have read and understood the Child Protection Policy.
- Visitors to the school will be accompanied by a staff member at all times.
- We will partner with organisations/specialists for age-appropriate sessions on the personal safety of learners and to create school-wide awareness for Child Rights and Child Protection.

Child Protection and Safety Guidelines for online learning

Covid-19 situation pushed us to develop and hone our skills in a variety of digital technologies. Online lessons and proactive use of meeting and collaboration tools such as Google Meet, Google Classroom are now embedded in our curriculum planning. We firmly believe that conscious and focused use of digital technologies will enable us to make the right progress in the direction of our goal to unlock the potential of every learner at Sancta Maria. The objectives of these guidelines are to reinforce child safety measures in the virtual space as an extension of our Child Protection Policy and to model professional conduct online as role models for learners.

Guidelines for Teachers:

- Teachers will continue to follow the recommendations and guidelines as outlined in the Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy to set clear professional standards.
- They will maintain communication channels on the platforms approved by the school.
- They will ensure that their clothing, surrounding environment, language, behaviour, and body language is professional, appropriate, and culturally sensitive.
- They will avoid sharing personal details, contact information, and details of day-to-day life unless in the context of a learning session.
- They will engage with parents/carers by sharing a digital learning plan and schedule to inform them of times of interaction.
- They will ensure that the content they create, use, or share is age-appropriate and culturally sensitive.
- They will not schedule sessions beyond school hours unless otherwise not possible, and only do so after the approval of the Division Head. They will inform learner(s) and parent(s) about any upcoming changes of the session well in advance.

- They will not share student work/ data/ opinions or images/ videos from online learning sessions without taking consent from the learner(s) involved.

Personnel should:

- Not share their login credential with anyone.
- Use their own name and an appropriate profile picture on the approved platform they're interacting with other learners and teachers.
- Ensure that their attire, surrounding environment, language, behaviour, and body language are appropriate for the lessons.
- Not share personal information about themselves or anyone else on any platforms approved by the school.
- Not share images, videos or audio clips with personal or inappropriate content of themselves or anyone else.
- Inform their parents/ carers about all online sessions and interactions.

Reporting and Documenting Safeguarding Concerns

Where a child makes any disclosure, or where our staff have concerns for any reason, a full written/typed account of the concern is passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then consider and where necessary, consult on the information available and report to the SLT (School Leadership Team). While the matter is under investigation, the individual who is suspected of having committed a child protection violation will be removed from direct contact with children.

b. Anti-Bullying Policy

A. Introduction

At Sancta Maria International School, we believe every student wants to do well at school and in life, and wants to behave well generally. We also strongly believe that individuals can thrive and achieve their potential in an environment which is safe, secure and enriching. To that effect, we are firmly committed to zero tolerance for bullying. This policy articulates our approach and actions to ensure every child and adult involved with the school is safe from any overt or covert bullying, manipulation or subjugation.

B. How we understand Bullying

We understand 'bullying' as a behaviour by an individual or a group that is usually repeated over a period of time and is intended to hurt someone physically or emotionally. The repetition of the act, deliberate intention to hurt and imbalance of power in the relationship differentiate bullying from teasing.

Bullying behaviour can occur in different ways:

Physical: This involves hurting an individual's body or possessions. Examples of physical

bullying are biting, hitting, kicking, making mean or rude hand gestures, pinching, poking, pushing, spitting, taking or breaking someone's things, tripping, etc.

Verbal: This involves saying or writing mean things about an individual or a group. Examples of verbal bullying are belittling, name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, taunting, teasing, threats, etc.

Social and Emotional bullying: This involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Examples of social and emotional bullying are: hiding books, humiliation, intimidating, leaving someone out on purpose, manipulation and coercion, ridicule, telling others not to be friends with someone, threatening gestures, tormenting, spreading rumours about someone, embarrassing someone in public, etc.

E-safety: The growth in electronic media in everyday life and an ever-developing variety of devices create additional risks for children. Risks and dangers of being online include:

- Inappropriate content.
- Ignoring age restrictions and communicating with unknown adults or other children (which make children vulnerable to bullying and grooming).
- Grooming and sexual abuse.
- Sharing personal information.
- Gambling or running up debts.
- Cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying is an increasingly common form of bullying behaviour and is most often related to social networks and mobile phones.

We believe the best way to protect our students is to teach awareness and understanding of risk, particularly through personal, social and health education, sex and relationship education or wellness programs. Each school's curriculum includes appropriate and frequent opportunities to teach children how to recognise when they and others are at risk and equips them with the skills, strategies, and language they need to take appropriate action.

C. Our strategies for preventing bullying

Whole-school awareness and campaign

- Orientation sessions for the entire school and new students and staff members every Academic year
- Visible reminders of key messages in the school premises and school buses
- Recognition of positive behaviours linking them with school values
- Active involvement of Student Council in preventing and reporting bullying
- Establish 'Class Buddy' and 'Council Mentor' system for students
- Observing International Anti-Bullying Week with planned activities

Formation of School Safety Club SMISCUBS

At Sancta Maria, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our students so that they are safe, happy and learning. Only then we can achieve our vision of unlocking every learner's potential for a better world. One of our recent initiatives in this direction is the Sancta Maria Safety Club (SMISCUBS), established by and for the Middle School. Physical safety, cyber safety, and emotional safety are the three groups that SMISCUBS initially focused on. Each group had a teacher in charge, and there were weekly meetings for each group to discuss the plan of action for awareness, next steps and few other activities.

SMISCUBS responsibilities:

- Monitor Concerns Log to check for any pending complaint or suspected case of bullying that should be brought to the attention of SMISCUBS.
- Meet at agreed intervals to discuss any specific cases/issues and review this policy annually.
- Organise awareness sessions for all school staff, students and parents.
- Intervene to resolve a situation after other responses (explained in next section) have failed.

Code of conduct for SMISCUBS members:

- SMISCUBS members will participate in whole-school efforts to raise awareness and create a safe environment for the school community, especially students.
- Maintain confidentiality of the issues and people involved in them.
- Behave and act in meetings in alignment with the school values of fairness, integrity, respect, excellence, happiness and value creation.
- Keep their personal biases aside while dealing with issues

Responding to bullying incidents by students

- While we hope the positive behaviour policy and preventive measures will discourage bullying intentions and practices, we are committed to taking corrective measures when instances of bullying are reported or found out.
- The following table delineates our response actions towards the perpetrator when a bullying behaviour takes place in school premises:

	Early Years & Primary School	Middle School	High School
Level 1	First verbal warning by Class Teacher Second verbal warning by GLC	First verbal warning by Class/ Subject Teacher Second verbal warning by GLC	First verbal warning by Class/ Subject Teacher Second verbal warning by GLC
Level 2	Time-out/ class specific consequence	Privilege(s) taken away *	Privilege(s) taken away *

Level 3	Intervention by Student Mentors	Intervention by Student Mentors	Intervention by Student Mentors
Level 4	Meeting with Division Head and note sent to parent to which the parent should respond within 2 working days.	Meeting with Division Head and note sent to parent to which the parent should respond within 2 working days.	Meeting with Division Head and note sent to parent to which the parent should respond within 2 working days.
Level 5	Visit Principal's Office	Visit Principal's Office	Visit Principal's Office
Level 6	Principal and Division Head meet the parents	Principal and Division Head meet the parents	Principal and Division Head meet the parents
Level 7	Issue referred to SMISCUBS	Issue referred to SMISCUBS	Issue referred to SMISCUBS
Level 8	Temporary or permanent detention in very serious cases	Temporary or permanent detention in very serious cases	Temporary or permanent detention in very serious cases

- ****Privilege is any activity or special status a student is entitled to. Privileges may include but are not limited to the following: PE lesson/Club activity/Art/Library/Music lesson/Night Out / Sleepover in School/Field Trip/Competitions/House Meet/Class or School Leadership role.***
- ***At Levels 4-7, parents will receive written communication from school and will be kept in the loop about any follow-up actions. Each incident from Level 1 onwards will be recorded in the School Concerns Log which will be a confidential record of all reported bullying behaviours.***
- ***The student who has been bullied will be given adequate counselling support and the matter will be dealt with sensitivity and confidentiality***

The following table delineates our response actions when a bullying behaviour takes place on school bus:

Applies to all students from Grade 1 onwards	
Level 1	Bus Monitor (student) will remind the perpetrator about the school's anti bullying policy and likely consequences if the behaviour doesn't stop.
	ASA will give a verbal warning and may ask the student to sit in the front section of the bus.
	If the student apologises and does not repeat the behaviour, no further action will be required.
Level 2	Bus Monitor (student) will bring the issue to the attention of any SMISCUBS student member who will inform the relevant Class Teacher. The Class Teacher will issue a verbal warning and may refer the student to the School Counsellor.
	ASA will make a note of the bullying behaviour in the bus register and will report to Admin in charge on the same day. She will ask the student to sit in the front section of the bus.
Level 3	Privilege(s) taken away and intervention by Student Mentor.
	Note will be sent to the parent to which the parent should respond within 2 working days.
Level 4	Meeting with Division Head.
Level 5	Principal, Head of Admin and Division Head meet the parents.
Level 6	Temporary or permanent exclusion from school transport or detention from school in very serious cases.

Parents' role in preventing bullying

We strongly believe that parents/carers can play a significant role in preventing bullying behaviours by taking active interest in the child's social and online life and working constructively with the school. We encourage parents/carers to inform the school immediately if they suspect any case of bullying and cooperate while necessary follow-up steps are taken by the school. We request parents/carers to refrain from approaching another student to discuss the matter or to "tell them off". This will not be appropriate in any circumstance.

D. Unacceptable behaviours

From teachers and other school staff

While most teachers deliver their role with dedication and care for students, and many go beyond the call of duty to support learners; any form of verbal, written or emotional bullying by a teacher or any other member of school staff is not acceptable and will be dealt with seriously. In such situations, the affected student can approach the class teacher/Division

Head/any member of ABS. If the situation is not resolved through discussion and counselling, the parent of the affected child can write to the school or request for a meeting with the respective Division Head or the Principal.

From parents/visitors to school

As a school that believes in values of respect, fairness and happiness, we expect our staff to behave professionally and respectfully to resolve any difficult situations. Similarly, we expect parents and visitors to behave professionally and respectfully towards our staff. We are committed to creating a safe and secure environment for our students and staff, and any form of aggressive, abusive or threatening behaviour – verbal, written or physical – towards school staff is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. If such incidents occur, the school management and leadership team reserves the right to take appropriate measures including, in extreme cases, banning the parent/visitor from entering school premises.

c. Safety and Security of Students

The school lays paramount importance on its safety & security measures, some of them have been enlisted below:

Secure campus

- The campus is enclosed with a boundary wall mounted with an electric fence. Only single point for entry/exit to the campus is permitted.
- Visitors are given a Temporary Visitors Card with blue lanyard after making an entry in the register at the Main Gate. The card is to be worn while in the school and returned while leaving the school. Similarly regular vendors are given a Temporary Vendors Card with Red lanyard after making entry in the register at the main gate which is worn by the vendors at all times when inside the school premises.
- Visitors are not provided access to academic areas of premises during school hours unless escorted by authorised staff.
- Cars and other vehicles are not permitted to enter the school considering the safety of the children. Parking slots have been marked at the entrance to facilitate easy parking and retrieval.
- Parents are encouraged to hand their children over to the housekeeping staff at the security gate. In case the parent desires to enter the school campus, parents will be given a Parent Card with Yellow lanyard which they will be required to wear for easy identification by the school staff.
- Parents are advised not to enter the academic block to meet their children or teachers during school hours. They may contact the Parent Relations Officer who will help them in all matters. Security personnel have been directed to guide the parent/guest to the reception.
- All entry and exit gates are manned by school security personnel. Entry to premises is permitted only after checking for authorised access. Parents/authorised persons who come to pick their children up are requested to show the Pick-up Card at the security/ authorised personnel.

- School staff and support staff IDs are mandatory. Each employee undergoes Police verification along with reference checks.
- The school building is equipped with fire alarms and 160+ CCTVs to enhance safety and security of the students.
- Periodic sensitisation and awareness session is organised for support staff handling special needs children.
- Lift is available for parents, staff and differently-abled students and those approved to use the lift due to exceptional circumstances.
- The school has a vigilant housekeeping staff on duty near washrooms, play areas and other areas accessed by students. Only female staff are assigned as toilet attendants and for cleaning duties.
- All classrooms are with an unobstructed window view with roller blinds for protection from sunlight which can be rolled up/ down as required. Classroom doors are not locked under any circumstances.
- Student access to premises is restricted to safe areas. The out of bounds areas are clearly identified and marked.
- The school retains and exercises its right to check the bags of the students at any given time without any prior intimation. The check is conducted to ensure the safety and discipline of the school's students & policies.
- Any items ranging from sharp/harmful objects, substance of abuse, electronics such as cell-phone, Kindle & others, excess food items, unauthorised material, etc. if found in any student's bag, will be confiscated immediately and will be followed by suitable disciplinary action.
- The School has a valid FSSAI Food License certificate issued by the Govt of Telangana for operating the Canteen.

Secure transport

- GPS devices to track the movement of the buses, seat belts and remotely operated doors are among the numerous safety measures onboard buses.
- All buses are equipped with First aid box, Fire extinguisher and Speed governors.
- Occupancy of the buses is maintained only as per bus capacity.
- The school hires only licensed, verified and experienced bus drivers.
- All drivers are trained for road discipline, driving etiquettes and vehicle maintenance under Bharat Benz and TATA Motors.
- Drivers attend mandatory training at Traffic Training Institute, Cyberabad / Traffic Police Station, Madhapur.
- The school has a very clear communication process for any change in pickup or transportation of the child.
- Female attendants - Assistant Student Affairs (ASA) – are assigned to each school bus to ensure safety of students during transit. The ASAs ensure safe handover of students travelling by bus to parent / authorised person.
- After school dispersal of students is handled by authorised staff only.
- Designated and safe area for pick up and drop for students travelling by own transport
- Pick Up / Drop Off cards are assigned to each student. These cards are checked and verified at pickup stops and dispersal venues as well as at the school security gate for students travelling by own transport.
- It is mandatory for parents to submit a written and signed consent document to allow their child to travel unescorted.

Fire safety / health & sanitation

- The school buildings are compliant with fire safety norms. Fire extinguishers are easily visible at designated spots around the campus.
- The school has a well-stocked infirmary on campus with 2 x trained Nurses. The staff too is trained to handle medical emergencies. For medical emergencies during school hours, if the school reaches out to parents to collect their child, parents are requested to give utmost priority and make necessary arrangements to collect the child from school. In case the parent is unable to come to the school immediately, kindly inform us, so the school can make the necessary arrangements.
- The school has all Hygiene and Sanitation and Building safety certificates from appropriate authorities.



4.3 Teaching and Learning Policy

A. Our guiding principles

The following seven principles guide our Teaching and Learning Policy:

- All learners are provided excellent teaching and learning opportunities in line with Cambridge approach and standards that enable them to unlock their potential.
- Choosing a flexible world-class curriculum ensures that there are choices for students while they gain mastery over core subjects and the subjects they choose at later stages of school.
- Creating conducive learning environments is as important as the pedagogical approach itself, both online and offline.
- Teachers and students bring their unique abilities and cultural and social contexts to the classroom, which need to be acknowledged and harnessed.
- The school community actively seeks to remove barriers to learning and participation so that students with special education needs and learning difficulties have an equal opportunity to maximise their potential.
- Teaching practices must consider that not all learners learn at the same pace and in the same way and therefore, differentiated learning should be an integral part of all planning and delivery.
- Teachers who are highly motivated and engaged in their ongoing professional development are key to improving teaching and learning outcomes.

B. Planning

At Sancta Maria, we follow the three stages of planning as recommended by Cambridge:

- Long-term planning is done for the complete academic year looking at the scheme of work and allocating units to the three terms depending on the subject. We also call it the Timeline.
- Medium-term planning is the term-wise sequence of teaching activities considering students' prior knowledge and skills. Learning objectives, success criteria and teaching resources are broadly identified at this stage.
- Short-term planning includes creating detailed lesson plans for each individual lesson to deliver the learning objectives for an agreed period of time, usually for a fortnight.

Our Planning Process

Our planning process for the upcoming academic year begins towards the end of the current year. It begins with the reflection and review of the entire year in order to identify what needs to be retained and what needs to be improved upon/ changed/ added.

As part of long-term planning, the leadership team within each division creates a broad structure for allocating teachers and developing appropriate timetables for the entire division. Subject teams get together to review and plan the syllabuses, resources and teaching and learning practices. The discussions take place within the division but they involve teachers from the lower and upper division to ensure proper progression between stages/divisions.

Decisions related to homework schedule and assessments are made as part of long-term planning and are reviewed at the end of each term.

C. Pedagogies

The most effective teaching practices and learning environments challenge learners' thinking beyond what they could achieve independently. At Sancta Maria, we want our teachers to be more concerned about students 'learning well' rather than 'looking good' (learning orientation rather than performance orientation) and we use pedagogical approaches and teaching strategies that enable us to develop learners who are confident, innovative, engaged, responsible and reflective.

Beginning with Key Concepts

We believe in making the Key Concepts in the curriculum explicit to our students, except the younger ones who may find it challenging to grasp the sophisticated understanding of these concepts.

In doing so, we help our students make links between the different topics they are learning and also connect factual knowledge to specific context. Key Concepts include both the big ideas as well as the smaller building blocks and are repeated at different points during the syllabus. We see the teacher's role particularly important in directing the knowledge and the learning of the class.

Using Active Learning

Active Learning practices are at the core of teaching and learning at Sancta Maria and it is expected that all teachers, without any exception, understand and implement active learning techniques in their day to day lesson delivery. This is a shift from transmission of knowledge by the teacher to giving ownership of learning to the students to achieve deeper levels of understanding.

Active learning is often misunderstood as activity-based learning. However, carefully planned direct instruction, involving whole-class interaction with follow-up, is also an effective teaching methodology associated with Active Learning (from Cambridge guide on Active Learning). Active Learning techniques in our school include questioning, modelling, projects, think-pair-share, group discussions, gallery walks, silent debates, reflection journals and more.

Assessment for Learning for feedback and progression

At Sancta Maria, we follow Cambridge guidance that states Assessment for Learning (AfL) or formative assessment is an approach, integrated into teaching and learning, which creates feedback for students and teachers in order to improve learning and guide their next steps. Therefore, strategies used for formative assessment are primarily meant to generate feedback which can progress learning. Our AfL techniques include self and peer assessment, worksheets, quizzes, open-ended questions, entry and exit passes, presentations, projects, etc. We analyse data from AfL in order to identify student needs and provide feedback to students and parents. Our Assessment Policy also covers Assessment for Learning.

Metacognitive strategies

Metacognition means students monitoring and purposefully directing their learning. We believe that students can self-regulate their learning process by actively using planning, monitoring and evaluation techniques during learning. Self-regulation is the extent to which

learners are aware of their strengths and areas of improvement and the strategies they use to learn, for example mnemonics for memorisation, reciprocal teaching, self explanation, distributed practice, etc.

The teacher's role is to create a supportive environment in the classroom that allows for metacognitive talk by the students. They do so by modelling metacognitive practices, verbalising their own thinking and providing scaffolded tasks such as worked out examples. Understanding and implementing metacognitive practices is a vital part of teachers' professional development plan at Sancta Maria.

Reflective Practice

Reflection is embedded into teaching and learning practices at Sancta Maria. Teachers are encouraged and guided to regularly challenge assumptions of their teaching practices in class and critically evaluate 'what went well' and 'even better if'. This can happen during class as the lesson is progressing or after the lesson gets over. We believe that by using reflective practices and discussing their reflection with colleagues, our teachers can become aware of their own strengths and weaknesses, and also respond better to students' needs and preferences.

Reflective practices and tools used in Sancta Maria include self-questioning, discussing with colleagues and students, reflection journals, lesson observations, etc.

D. Learning Environment

Sancta Maria has appropriate facilities, qualified educators, well-managed classrooms, learning resources and well articulated policies to foster both formal and informal learning. The learning environment has both direct and indirect impact on learning and behaviour. We aim to provide a positive learning environment where learners feel involved, engaged and responsible for their learning while being confident and comfortable enough to fully participate in group and individual activities.

Physical School Environment

The school infrastructure which includes spacious, well-lit and centrally air conditioned classrooms, fit for purpose laboratories, well-stocked library, play areas, amphitheatre, dining spaces and activity rooms has been designed to:

- Contribute positively to the learning, well-being, attitudes, behaviour and motivation of our students.
- Provide a safe, caring and stimulating learning environment.
- Provide a safe, supportive and motivating place of work for all our staff.
- Reflect our values of respect, happiness, value creation and excellence.

Classroom Environment

All teachers take responsibility to ensure that their classroom is a stimulating and well-resourced place in which learning can happen with a view to:

- Engage the students and promote interest and motivation.
- Support learning in the topics being studied.
- Establish a cooperative and collaborative working environment.

- Show appreciation for the work and effort of all students.
- Recognise excellent work and help to promote high standards. Respect others' physical spaces and emotional well-being.
- Celebrate success.

Seating arrangements are decided by the teacher and are flexible depending on the lesson requirements. Display boards are regularly changed to represent what students are learning. Students participate in creating class rules and are expected to follow them once they are agreed. Teachers incorporate technology appropriately in their lessons to enhance teaching and make learning more effective. Classroom libraries are set up in the Early Years and Primary divisions as part of the school's reading programme.

Social Environment

At Sancta Maria, we ensure each student has the opportunity for meaningful involvement in events like class presentations, assemblies, Sports Day, Annual Day, inter-house and inter-school competitions during the year. These events help in developing language skills, self-confidence, imagination, creativity and managing emotions. We welcome parents as guest speakers and also invite external professionals to interact with students on relevant themes.

Relationships among and between various stakeholders are effectively handled thereby creating a healthy environment. We use online platforms like Google Classrooms and IRP to share information with students, teachers and parents for regular updates. Parents are encouraged to engage with feedback given by teachers from time to time and help the learners at home or encourage them to discuss with the teacher.

E. Inclusion

Inclusion is an on-going process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. Inclusion is about responding positively to each individual's unique needs. With appropriate skills, training, strategies and support, the majority of students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) can be successfully included in mainstream education.

Please read our Inclusion Policy for more details about our practices and processes.

F. Monitoring and Evaluation

Through this Policy, we set out to answer the following key questions:

1. Why do we monitor?
2. What do we monitor?
3. How do we monitor?
4. What do we do with the monitoring data and information?

Why we monitor

We want to be sure that teaching and learning practices in our school are consistently high quality and meet expected standards. As a Cambridge school, we engage in a formal school self-evaluation process every 2-3 years, and effective monitoring practices help us establish accountability and check where we are along our improvement plan to fulfil our commitments to our stakeholders. Monitoring is also useful for identifying successful learning and teaching

strategies and sharing good practices as well as identifying needs for CPD.

The following table delineates what we monitor and how.

What we monitor	How we monitor
Curriculum Planning	School leadership team participates in planning and review meetings. Grade Level Co-ordinators (GLCs) and Division Heads (DHs) periodically monitor delivery of medium-term and short-term plans.
Lesson delivery including pedagogical approaches	Through lesson plans, lesson observations, learning walks, feedback from students and parents, students' progress and performance, student and teacher reflection.
Non-negotiable tasks	Teachers are expected to carry out certain non-negotiable tasks including submission of lesson plans, student progress records, daily logs, etc. These are monitored by the GLCs through monthly checklists.
Progress of students with special education needs and disabilities	Plans agreed between teachers and the Special Educator and school Wellbeing Counsellor are monitored by GLCs and DHs. Termly progress meetings involve Principal, DH, Class Teacher, Counsellor/Special Educator and Parents.
Infrastructural support and class environment	GLCs regularly take feedback from teachers regarding infrastructural support and resources required to facilitate teaching and learning. They may also observe classes in order to identify such needs.
Classwork and Homework tasks	Through sampling and checking for quality of student's work and teacher's corrections including quality of feedback.
Whole-school performance	Using data including academic performance results, formative assessment records, attendance and retention of students and teachers; feedback from stakeholders and visitors; self-evaluation surveys; social media perception reports and admissions data.

Evaluation

Data generated as a result of the monitoring activities are evaluated in order to inform future planning and review of policies and practices for the whole school and individual divisions. This also feeds into the school self-evaluation programme and annual CPD plan, and serves as evidence based feedback for the school senior management.

G. Teacher Development:

Teacher development is central to school effectiveness and school improvement. It is key to student achievement and learning. Sancta Maria is committed to investing in teachers' Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and this commitment is also reflected in the career progression policy for the school staff.

The different types of CPD available to teachers include but are not limited to:

- Cambridge subject-specific and enrichment training – face to face and online.
- Cambridge PDQs - Certificate and Diploma in Teaching and Learning.
- Short courses, workshops and longer self-study courses by other external providers.
- Conferences, seminars, webinars and similar events to enhance professional knowledge and skills.
- Peer observation, mentoring and coaching opportunities within the school.
- Study Circles within and across the divisions.
- Cambridge School Community meets and professional learning groups.
- Peer learning with other institutions within the Group.
- School partnerships and exchange programmes.

Teachers are expected to take responsibility for their own professional development. They identify their CPD needs as part of goal-setting in consultation with their Division Head at the beginning of the year. The Division Head could also suggest what CPD might be useful or necessary for the teacher and what opportunities might be available.

CPD plans are agreed annually for the whole school and for each division, and reviewed at the end of each term. Sancta Maria has a well-articulated CPD Policy which lays out the details of funding and other forms of support. School maintains the records of Professional Development activity undertaken by teachers on a regular basis. Updates on CPD are shared during Parent Forums so that parents feel confident that their children are in good hands at all times.

H. Community Engagement

Relationships between the school and the wider community, especially between school and families have a huge impact on students' well-being. We encourage and welcome the active participation of our stakeholders as partners in learning.

- Involving Families: Parents / Grandparents / Carers are invited to various school events like Parent Forums, Orientation Day, Curriculum Day, PTMs, Grandparents' Day. We also welcome parents as speakers and facilitators for enrichment sessions for students and teachers.
- Subject Experts: People from other organisations who are experts in their subject areas are invited to share their knowledge with our teachers and learners. They guide students in their respective fields of study.
- Student Internships: We provide internship opportunities for our students and will be offering a more extensive range of options in this area in the coming years.
- Alumni Engagement: We have a dedicated portal 'Marian Connect' to engage with Sancta Maria alumni. Our ex-students visit school to share their experiences and mentor students in their areas of expertise.

4.4 Inclusion Policy

We treat everyone with care and respect, looking after one another, embracing similarities and differences and promoting the wellbeing of each other.

A good atmosphere is safe, open, caring, collaborative and **inclusive**. It **removes barriers** to enable all students to confidently engage in the learning process. A good atmosphere nurtures the **wellbeing** of its learning community, supporting each member to understand and action the values of the school through positive relationships.

Together, we are committed to creating and nurturing a safe, welcoming, inclusive, equitable and diverse learning community, representative of and responsive to different cultures and groups and where each of us has the chance to thrive, contribute and be appreciated for our strengths.

Our Guiding Principles

- We put learners and their learning first.
- All students make progress by the identification and removal of barriers to learning.
- We create and nurture an atmosphere that is safe, open, caring, collaborative and inclusive.
- All students are treated fairly and with respect at all times, with consideration to their individual circumstances and needs.
- All students have the chance to achieve their potential, and are able to access and experience amazing learning.
- Students and their families should be free from prejudice, harassment and bullying.

Counselling Services at Sancta Maria

Currently, Sancta Maria accommodates students with mild to moderate disabilities. Students with mild to moderate disabilities may have special needs including but not limited to Learning Disabilities (LD), Emotional or Behavioural Disorders (EBD), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Although such students are like any of their typical peers or classmates, they will have unique learning and/or behavioural differences. Because of this uniqueness, these students might need some adaptation or modification to the curriculum, teaching materials and/or unique management strategies to achieve full potential while performing their academic tasks.

At Sancta Maria, when a teacher identifies a student to be having issues adjusting to the regular classroom expectations, they plan for and provide differentiated instruction to accommodate the child's learning needs. When these efforts by the teachers are not bringing the desired results, the school's Special Educator and Wellbeing Counsellor are consulted. Interventions are suggested by them depending on the nature of the problem. They are implemented either in the regular classroom setup, the counselling room and/or in the resource room. The process is detailed as follows:

- When a student does not respond to the interventions in the regular classroom, the concerned teacher completes the referral form stating the problem and the interventions tried.
- The Special Educator and/or Wellbeing Counsellor observe the student in their classroom and talk to the concerned teachers and the GLC.
- They conduct informal assessment to determine the nature and source of the difficulty the student is facing, which restricts their learning.
- Where required, they recommend external professional assessments. Parents/Carers are expected to cooperate with the school as these assessment reports help to plan effective personalised interventions.
- At every stage of intervention the school will work closely with the parents/carers in the best interest of the child.

Accommodations and Access Arrangements

Assessment report could recommend accommodation(s) for the student to perform to their full potential in the academic tasks and exam. These accommodations can be in the regular classroom, in the resource room and/or in the examination hall. Examples of such accommodations are providing reading materials with larger fonts, fewer items per page, sitting in a particular place, taking more time to complete a task, taking frequent breaks, using timers to complete tasks, giving tests in smaller groups, using noise cancelling headphones, etc. Accommodations are provided to the student as recommended in the report. If a student has been recommended for accommodations during his/her examinations, reports of the diagnostic assessment mentioning the same have to be submitted in the time frames suggested by Cambridge International. Such accommodations are called Access Arrangements. Access arrangements are pre-exam arrangements made on behalf of a candidate with particular needs. For example, the use of a scribe, modified papers or extra time. For this purpose, the parents will coordinate with the Exams Officer of the school to make sure that all the relevant documents have been submitted to the school in time.

Teachers' Professional Development in inclusion

Sancta Maria International School provides professional development workshops, activities and programmes to keep the teachers and staff well informed and trained on the needs of our students so that they can ensure that every student is an engaged learner and that they all have equal access to learning, irrespective of their individual differences.

Sancta Maria believes in providing a safe and inclusive education for all its students, whether in the classroom, out in the playground, in the dining room, or in the school buses. This inclusion policy will guide the school and the parents to successfully achieve it.

4.5 Homework Policy

At Sancta Maria International School, we believe homework can support student achievement by extending the time available for students to consolidate skills and concepts learned at school, exploration of new ideas and for the teacher to monitor student progress. Homework can be effective in supporting learning if it is age and level appropriate, consistent and supervised by an adult (parent/teacher). At the same time, we acknowledge that traditional homework practices that worked for twentieth-century learners and families may not be entirely fit for purpose for the twenty-first century world with changing dynamics within families and between schools and parent communities.

This policy aligns with our school values of Fairness, Integrity, Respect, Excellence, Value Creation and Happiness; and Cambridge learner attributes of being Confident, Innovative, Engaged, Responsible and Reflective.

A. Our guiding principles

The following principles guide our Homework Policy:

- All homework is related to the curriculum and is monitored by the teacher.
- Homework tasks are varied and differentiated where appropriate, to meet individual learning needs.
- The amount of homework per evening does not generally exceed more than 10 minutes per grade year (e.g. for Grade 5, the total homework is for approx. 50 mins).
- Teachers give 'comments only' feedback on homework.
- Self-study is individual responsibility and is not considered a homework task.
- Homework tasks do not require an unreasonable level of parental assistance or resources that are not readily available to the student.
- Homework does not take away time meant for family, recreation, and other physical, social and cultural activities.
- Homework is a positive experience and leads to an increase in students' confidence and self-esteem.

B. Purpose of homework

- Pre-learning: To assist students in preparing for upcoming classroom learning such as formulating ideas, collecting relevant materials or completing surveys or questionnaires.
- Diagnosis: To help the teacher understand the current level of learning of the student and establishes the baseline to decide next steps.
- Checking for Understanding: To serve as a formative tool to understand students' learning on an ongoing basis.
- Practice: To enable consolidation/revision/application of classroom learning.
- Processing: To develop the student as an independent learner through extension activities such as investigating, researching, writing, designing and creating

C. Types of Homework at Sancta Maria

By type of task:

- i. Preparatory tasks: E.g. Survey, I can statements, Pre-test
- ii. Practice tasks: E.g. Question-Answers, Problem-solving, Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking tasks, Rote learning tasks, Making notes, Online test
- iii. Application tasks: E.g. Projects, Research, Creative writing
- iv. Extension tasks: E.g. Book reviews, Science investigations, Research, Field visits

By construct:

- i. Teacher-led: Homework designed by the teacher and usually common for the whole class.
- ii. Differentiated: Varied homework tasks to differentiate for difficulty level/scaffolding/ learning preference or interest
- iii. Personalised: Student-led homework task

D. Amount of Homework

Division	Maximum expected time per evening
Early Years	Up to 15 minutes for all Early Years
Primary	Grades 1-5: Up to 45 minutes
Middle School	Grade 6: Up to 60 minutes
	Grades 7 & 8: Up to 80 minutes
High School	Up to 120 minutes for all Grades

E. Roles & Responsibilities

Students

- Students should take full responsibility to note down the homework tasks with the due dates and/or carry the materials (e.g., worksheet, notebook, etc.) necessary for completing the homework.
- Students should clarify the expectations of the homework if they are unclear or unsure.
- Students should do their best to attempt the homework task even if they cannot complete it. They should discuss with the teacher promptly in case of any difficulty.
- Pay attention to the feedback and corrections provided by the teacher and reattempt homework if required.
- When absent, students should take the initiative to find out about the classwork and homework and complete the tasks as soon as possible upon returning. Being absent should not be an excuse for not doing homework, unless in exceptional circumstances which should be discussed with the teacher.

Teachers

- Teachers should plan homework tasks as part of lesson planning.
- Teachers should plan the homework with appropriate due dates and ensuring grade-level time expectations for completion of tasks.
- Teachers should devise varied and differentiated homework tasks keeping in mind the levels of readiness, interest and learning needs of the students.
- Teachers should explain the homework task in class and clarify the purpose of the assignment.
- Teachers should use peer and self-assessment techniques, when appropriate, for evaluation of homework tasks.
- Teachers should provide timely and practical feedback on homework.
- Teachers should maintain and update appropriate records for homework submissions.
- Teachers should follow the established school practice to escalate any issues related to late or non-submission of homework.

Recommendations for Parents

- Parents are encouraged to ask their child about the homework assignment and what the child is learning in school.
- Parents should be observers and not enforcers or doers of the homework tasks.
- Parents may help the child to organise a home study schedule with appropriate space and resources required to complete the homework.
- Parents do not have to take the responsibility to 'teach' a new concept or skill the child is unfamiliar with.
- Parents may assist the child's work by proofreading, pointing out errors, giving practice quizzes and brainstorming ideas for extension activities.
- Parents should certainly pay attention to any specific issues related to homework tasks raised by the school and cooperate in supporting the child to overcome the barriers.

"May their bags be lighter and their learning joyful."
(From Rethinking Homework by Cathy Vatterot)

4.6 Assessment Policy

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning at Sancta Maria. Well-planned and well-implemented assessment practices help teachers and students understand where the students are, where they have to go and how to get there. Using different types of evaluation helps in gathering useful information about student understanding and progress which can be shared with their families to reflect on learning and to set future goals.

A. Our guiding principles

- Assessment should be valid (assess what is taught), reliable and have consistent processes for setting, marking, grading and moderation of assignments/coursework.
- A range of assessment tasks should be included which can allow the students to demonstrate their competence in knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills.
- Assessment tasks should be accessible and should not exclude or disadvantage any specific categories of students.
- A balance of formative and summative assessments should be used.
- The assessment has to be an ongoing process with the key focus on improving student learning.
- Scheduling and amount of assessed work should not overload students or teachers.
- Constructive, specific and timely feedback should be provided to the students to enable them to understand the gaps in their learning and make necessary improvements.

B. Purpose of Assessment

The primary purpose of all assessments is to prove (attainment) and improve student learning by:

- Providing assessment outcomes that can be used to identify individual student's strengths and weaknesses to plan next steps in the student's learning and the necessary support thereof.
- Enabling the school and individual teachers to evaluate how effective their teaching is.
- Providing evidence that can be effectively reported and understood by the whole school community, including parents.
- Providing opportunities to support and celebrate learning.

Assessment allows students to demonstrate the range of their knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills. It also helps them analyse their learning and understand what needs to be improved. Assessment is followed by reflection on the part of the student and teacher to facilitate further progress best. It takes into account a variety of learning styles and abilities, including different cultural settings.

C. Types of Assessment at Sancta Maria

Assessment For Learning

At Sancta Maria, we follow Cambridge guidance that states Assessment for learning (AFL) is an approach, integrated into teaching and learning, which creates feedback for students

and teachers in order to improve learning and guide their next steps. Therefore, strategies used for AFL for formative assessment are primarily meant to generate feedback which can progress learning.

- It is seen as a positive method of encouraging students to learn and understand and is used to identify gaps and misconceptions.
- It enables teachers to identify when students are struggling, when they have consolidated learning and when they are ready to progress for the teacher to provide appropriate support or extension as necessary.
- Learning objectives and success criteria are made explicit and shared with students.
- Assignments, homework and class tasks are marked promptly and constructive feedback is given within one week of being submitted. Written feedback on homework and other written assignments is not restricted to a mark and/or a one-word comment.
- 'Comments only' marking is used predominantly for correcting written homework. It identifies what the student has done well in respect of meeting the learning objective and areas for improvement are clearly explained.
- Feedback from formative assessments is recorded and shared in the Progress Report.

Teachers go through training in AFL and are encouraged to use a variety of AFL techniques as an integral part of lessons throughout the year. These include but are not limited to:

- Self and peer assessment
- Worksheets
- Quiz
- Role play
- Presentation
- Jigsaw puzzle
- Think-pair-share
- Open ended questions
- Reflection
- Project work
- Entry and exit tickets

Assessment of Learning

Assessment of Learning or summative assessment clearly identifies the standard for learner attainment and is used mainly to measure performance at the end of a period of learning. At Sancta Maria we use the following summative assessments:

Internal assessments

- i) End Of Unit (EOU) - can be in the form of written test, project , worksheet, etc.
- ii) End Of Term (EOT) - e.g. Progression Test

In case, a learner misses out on any internal assessments due to absence other than medical reasons, zero marks will be awarded for the same. Valid medical certificates need to be provided to consider the absence.

External assessments

- i. Cambridge Primary Checkpoint (at the end of Grade 5)
- ii. Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint (at the end of Grade 8)
- iii. Cambridge IGCSE at the end of Grade 10
- iv. Cambridge International AS & A Level (at the end of Grade 11 & 12 respectively)

D. Recording and Reporting

Early Years

Recording

Teachers keep records in different forms:

- Students' work
- Teacher's anecdotal notes
- Students' books and worksheets
- Photographs and short videos
- Students' confidential reports

Reporting

- Progress Report: Parents receive written reports for the academic year. The reports are based on the teachers' ongoing observations on the skills and abilities of the students in all areas of teaching and learning. Observations are made on the ways in which students engage with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.
- Parent-Teacher Meetings: Regular PTMs are scheduled to report the progress of individual students.

Primary School & Middle School

Recording

Teachers keep records of:

- Continuous formative assessment including worksheets, notebooks, workbooks, end of unit tests, etc
- Summative assessments including end of unit tests, Progression Tests and Checkpoints
- Students' Confidential Reports

Reporting

- Report Card at the end of term detailing performance in the academic subjects.
- Progression Reports for English, Mathematics and Science
- Primary / Lower Secondary Checkpoint Report

Feedback on formative assessments is provided orally and in written form through teachers' datasheet, comments, etc. and is substantiated by evidence in the form of photographs, videos etc. Unit end assessments are graded/reviewed by the teachers and detailed progressive feedback is shared with the learners during the classroom sessions as well as the parents during the PTM.

High School

Recording

Subject teachers maintain records of:

- Continuous monthly assessments, worksheets, notebooks, worksheets, quiz, presentations, project work, assignments.

- Grade calculation sheet for all summative assessments

Reporting

Reports from Cambridge for IGCSE, AS & A Level include:

- Statement of results
- General Certificate of Education
- Migration certificate
- ICE Award certificate (if applicable)

The grades calculated for report cards are used in tandem with our Predicted Grade Policy for IGCSE, AS & A levels. Predicted grades will not be given in the absence of any of the assessments mentioned.

High School	
End Of Unit Assessments	30%
Assignments	20%
Term End Assessments	40%
Overall Performance	10%

E. Roles & Responsibilities

Assessments are an integral part of student learning and are held periodically. If a student misses any assessment, it will not be rescheduled or accounted for in the overall grades. Only in the case of health-related absence supported by appropriate medical records/doctor's prescription, average of other assessments will be considered for reporting.

Students are expected to:

- Understand the purpose of the assessment in terms of knowledge and skills that are being assessed and the marking/grading system.
- Be present during the course of the academic year (except when unwell or attending to an emergency) as a range of assessments are embedded in the curriculum throughout the year as a tool for reflection and progress.
- Take responsibility for preparing well for scheduled assessments and pay careful attention and respond to the given instructions before, during and post assessments.
- Use assessment feedback constructively to reflect on the areas of strength and improvement and proactively seek teacher's guidance for the roadmap ahead.
- Develop skills for self-assessment using the provided marking scheme.
- Understand that every assessment will not have numerical marks or grades. Some assessments are done using 'comments only' strategy.
- Meet deadlines for formative assessment and coursework tasks.
- Be fully aware of exam rules and regulations and not request for additional time for a written test, unless approved by the concerned teacher.
- Value and enjoy the process of learning as much as the outcome during the assessment, feedback session and during reflection time.
- Communicate clearly and discuss the outcomes of assessments.

Teachers are expected to:

- Recognise the in-depth impact assessment has on student motivation and self-esteem, both of which are critical for learning.
- Understand the difference and balance between formative and summative assessments, and implement a variety of assessment strategies considering the purpose, learning objectives and readiness and abilities of learners.
- Plan schedule and frequency of assessments at the beginning of the academic term.
- Understand that formative assessment is a diagnostic tool to be used for identifying student's strengths and areas of improvement and to provide constructive feedback to improve learning.
- Provide timely feedback to the learners along with a clear roadmap for future learning. Build a trusting relationship with the learners and encourage them to ask for feedback.
- Follow Cambridge approach to develop Marking Scheme and Answer Key for summative assessments.
- Maintain and record the performance of each student to map and track learning progression.
- Agree with the respective Division Head and/or Grade Level Coordinator the guiding principles for marking/grading and feedback to ensure uniformity across a Grade level.
- Reflect on learners' performance and modify the planning and delivery of the subject as required. This is especially applicable for formative assessment.
- Communicate explicitly and in a timely manner to the students and parents the objectives, schedule and types of assessments that will be conducted.
- Collaborate with co-teachers to share and implement best practices in assessment.
- Review the assessment strategies regularly to check 'what went right' and 'even better if'.

We recommend that Parents/Carers:

- Understand the school assessment policy in the interest of the learner's progress.
- Create a conducive environment at home and provide the required physical, emotional and mental support to enable the learner to prepare well for assessment.
- Understand the purpose of each assessment and that each assessment may not result in numerical marks or grades.
- Appreciate learner's efforts and progress along with specific achievements.
- Attend Parent-Teacher Meetings regularly and engage in constructive dialogues with the teachers in order to support the learner. Share necessary information about the learner that can help teachers understand the learners better.
- Avoid subjecting the learner to undue stress particularly during summative assessments.
- Get involved, whenever possible, in supporting the child with their learning and progression.
- Recognise that giving and receiving feedback, taking time to self-assess, and developing learner autonomy are essential elements of effective learning.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the Teaching & Learning Policy, Homework Policy.

4.7 Fee Policy

1. School Fee can be paid all at once or in the following term-wise instalments:
 - First Term Fee payable by 10 May
 - Second Term Fee payable by 10 September
 - Third Term Fee payable by 10 January
2. Tuition Fee is charged for all expenses related to learning and teaching. It includes textbooks, notebooks, stationery and school activities.
3. Tuition Fee does not include school uniform, educational trips and excursions outside Hyderabad, sports uniform, annual day costumes, any external paid activities and programmes such as Model United Nations, Olympiads, Sports Tournaments, Saturday Academy, IAYP, etc.
4. Lunch & Snacks Fee is charged separately. It is not included in Tuition Fee but is part of the overall fee structure and cannot be opted out.
5. Transport Fee is not included in the overall fee structure and has to be paid separately.
6. Tuition Fee does not include Cambridge Examination Fee, which is charged separately by the Board. For more details about this, please contact the respective Parent Relations Officer.
7. The following fee will be applicable for admissions once the academic year commences:
Term 1: Full Term 1 Fee will be charged.
Term 2: Full Term 2 Fee will be charged along with the mid-term Onboarding Fee (25% of Term 1 Tuition Fee).
Term 3 - Full Term 3 Fee will be charged along with the mid-term Onboarding Fee (25% of Term 1 Tuition Fee).
8. Fee, once paid, is neither refundable nor adjustable (including for siblings) under any circumstances.
9. In case of withdrawal of the student in the middle of the academic year, parents/carers must inform the School at least a month before the due date for the Term Fee payment, in the absence of which, parents/carers will be liable to pay the entire term's fee.
10. In case of withdrawal of the child at the end of the academic year, parents/carers must inform the school latest by the 01 April, failing which, the Term 1 Fee for the new academic year will be payable.
11. Caution Deposit amount will be refunded after deducting dues, if any. Caution Deposit does not carry any interest.
12. Day care facility, when available, is charged separately and is independent of School fees.

13. Yearly increase of up to 10% on the entire fee should be expected. This will be over and above the fee increase for specific grade/ stage progression (e.g. EY3 going to G1).
14. Sibling Discount: There is a waiver of the Admission Fee (INR 100,000) and Caution Deposit (INR 15,000) for admitting siblings of an existing student. The Management reserves the right to change the fee discount policy as it deems fit.
15. Mode of payment: The primary mode of fee payment is via the online payment link provided by the School through SMS/Email or IRP (School MIS system). The School also accepts Cheque/Demand Drafts drawn in favour of 'Sancta Maria International School'. Payment through Credit/Debit Card will attract charges as applicable.
16. Late fee payment: Parents/Carers are requested to pay the applicable fee before the due date and during school office working hours. It is inefficient and embarrassing on both sides if the School has to follow up with a parent/carer for fee payment. The following measures will be implemented when the fee is delayed or pending:
 - Late fee will be charged INR 200 per day for all days following the due date, i.e. from 11 May for Term 1, 11 September for Term 2 and 11 January for Term 3. This will include weekends and holidays.
 - The School will accept payment with a late fee of INR 200 per day for up to 10 working days following the due date.
 - If the fee is pending beyond a period of 10 days after the due date and despite reminders, the School reserves the right to take actions ranging from a written warning to stopping access to premises and services, which the School is obliged to pay for to its employees, consultants and contractors.
 - In case of serious and repetitive default, the School reserves the right to refuse promotion, transfer certificate or permission to write the summative exams. In such cases, if the parents/carers wish to 're-admit' the child, they will be expected to pay the pending dues and new admission fee applicable in that year.
17. No Service Tax/GST is currently applicable and hence is not included in the fee. However, if the government imposes Service Tax/GST/Any other tax in future, the same shall be charged to the parents.
18. The Management reserves the right to alter or modify the Fee Structure as it deems appropriate.

4.8 Transport Policy

Using School Transport

- The school provides transport facility on designated routes to pick/drop students who have opted for the same. The school bus facility once opted for has to be continued throughout the term.
- Parents of students utilising school bus facilities wanting to drop/pick up their ward on any particular day are requested to intimate their request to the school by email from the registered email ID to the respective Parent Relations Officer before 12:00 pm on the effective day to enable the school to make necessary arrangements.
- Requests received after 12:00 pm may not be considered to avoid last-minute rush/ confusion/delay to scheduled school bus departures.
- The bus facility, in special cases, can be discontinued or changed after informing the Parent Relations Office 1 month prior to beginning of the new term.
- Parents of students using school transport are given a Pick-Up/Drop ID card with names and photographs of the persons who will be authorised to pick up and drop the child from the designated pick-up/drop-off point.
- We strive to ensure that a child spends minimum time possible in the bus. It is not possible to do door pick up and drop, although we do make sure to pick each child from the point closest to his/her residence.
- The list of stops is prepared keeping in mind the convenience and safety of all students travelling on the bus and as necessary, is subject to change.
- There could be changes in buses, routes, stops and timings during the academic year as a result of additional children opting for or out of the transport facility.
- On commencement of the academic session, request for change of bus/ stops /routes and timings due to shifting of place of residence of parents will only be done after a week of the request being made to the transport department. The same will only be considered if there is already a bus running on the new/changed residence route and on availability of seats in the bus.
- If the change in bus and route is considered feasible and implemented by the school subject to the above conditions, the new transport slab rates as applicable, depending on the distance, will come into effect immediately.
- Parents are discouraged from making frequent requests for changes in the bus route or bus stops.
- Drivers have been directed not to deviate from the existing schedule without proper authorisation from the school.
- Drivers are authorised to stop buses at the designated stops only.
- All buses have an Assistant - Student Affairs (ASA) who will escort the children and ensure their safety while in transit. Parents can contact them directly on their designated mobile number for any routine transport related issues.
- Only authorised persons are requested to escort the child to-and-from the closest designated pick-up/drop-off point.
- Authorised persons are requested to be punctual and reach the designated bus stops at least 5 minutes prior to the arrival time of the bus. Delay on their part might cause delay in the entire bus route.
- The bus drivers are instructed not to wait for more than 2 minutes from the designated pick up/ drop time at the stop point for any child who has not reached the pickup point on time. We request parents to drop their child to school if they miss the school bus.

- The authorised persons must carry the Pick-up Card and show it to the ASA at the pick-up point during the pick-up time. Soft copies of the Pick-up Cards on mobile phones will not be accepted as this could cause a security breach.
- The ASAs will hand the children over only to the authorised person included in the Pick-up Card. Requests for handing over the student to any other person (not listed in the Pick-up Card) will not be entertained even if they carry the pick-up card. In such cases, the child will be taken back to school and the parents will then have to arrange to pick-up the child from the school.
- Parents who feel that their child/children can proceed to their residences on their own from the point of drop/school, are requested to forward a letter (Parent Consent Form) to the Parent Relations Office.
- Parents are required to contact the respective Parent Relations Officer for a new card in case of a missing card or should an authorised person/s on the card is to be changed.
- Keeping in mind the safety and security of children travelling in the bus, parents are requested NOT to enter the bus and will be denied the same. In case of concerns regarding school transport, you are requested to contact the respective Parent Relations Officer (email IDs mentioned in the Contact Information section), who will inform the Principal and the Admin Head for necessary action.
- In case a student who is availing the school transport is required to travel by any other means of transport due to any exigency, the same must be communicated to the Parents Relations Office in writing before 12:00 pm for that day.
- GPS devices to track the movement of the buses, seat belts and remotely operated doors are among the numerous safety measures on-board our buses.
- Students are discouraged from eating snacks and drinks in the school bus in order to ensure hygiene inside the bus.
- Unruly behaviour is strictly prohibited on the school bus. Students are expected to follow instructions from the ASAs. Any form of indiscipline on the school bus can lead to withdrawal of the facility.
- Parents may directly contact the Transport Manager on mobile number 9640200010 in case of exigencies related to transport.

Using Own Transport

- Parents of students using own conveyance are given a Pick-Up/Drop ID card with names and photographs of the persons who will be authorised to pick up and drop the child from school. This is always to be carried in original by the authorised person coming to drop/ collect the child.
- Only authorised drivers/helpers with their photos on the Pick-up Card, will be allowed inside the campus to collect the child.
- The authorised persons are requested to produce the Pick-up Cards at the dispersal venues as well as at the school security gate during the dispersal.
- Soft copies of the Pick-up Cards on mobile phones will not be accepted as this could cause a security breach.
- The child will not be handed over to anybody other than the persons indicated on the card even if they are carrying the card.
- Parents who feel that their child/children can proceed to their residences on their own from the point of drop/school, are requested to forward a letter (Consent Form) to the Parent Relations Team. A Walkers Pass will be issued to the child by the School.

- Please contact the respective Parent Relations Officer for a new card in case of a missing card or should an authorised person/s on the card is to be changed.
- Students travelling by own transport should arrive at least 10 minutes before the morning bell.
- Early leaving, for whatsoever reason will not be permitted. For any engagements/ appointments/emergencies we recommend not sending your child to school on that day(s) for avoiding any inconvenience.



4.9 Laptop Policy

Objective:

The objective of laptop policy is to establish the guidelines and expectations for how the laptops will be used by the learners in the school premises. The policy aims to ensure that laptops are used in a safe and responsible manner, and that they are used to enhance the learning and academic performance. By establishing rules and guidelines, the school can minimise distractions and disruptions in the classroom, and promote a more focused and productive learning environment.

Guidelines:

The learners who bring their laptop to school are expected to follow the guidelines mentioned below:

- Learners are allowed to bring the laptop with prior permission of their subject teacher and inform by sending an email to the Division Head about the purpose of carrying the laptop.
- Laptops are allowed for the GP team project/ subject specific presentation if the subject teacher has sent an email with the list of students and for the number of days it is required. Internet access will be provided to the list of students mentioned by the subject teacher. Students will use the laptop only in the presence of the subject teacher.
- Learners who are in charge of their respective Societies are allowed to bring their laptops to school as per the schedule. Internet access will be given to them only with prior approval from the Division Head.
- Instructions will be given to the students to connect their laptops to the school's network, including any security protocols or restrictions that must be followed.
- Learners must connect their laptops to the school's network using a provided login.
- If a learner decides to bring their laptop with them, it is entirely up to them to care for their device, and the school will not be held responsible for any damage or misplacement of the same.
- Learners should follow the instructions given by the respective teachers for securing their laptops, including password protection, anti-virus software and data backup procedures.
- Learners must act according to the school values at all times and not misuse this privilege. Learners must conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner when using their laptops. Cyberbullying, harassment, or other inappropriate online conduct will not be tolerated.
- No learner should be found using their laptops at any time other than during guided task lessons, unless otherwise instructed or permitted by a teacher.
- Violations of the laptop policy may result in disciplinary action, including revocation of network access or laptop privileges.

By following these guidelines, the school can ensure that learners are using their laptops safely, responsibly and effectively in the school environment.

Mobile Phone Policy:

We acknowledge that mobile phones are part of everyday life for people today and that they can play a role in helping learners feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that mobile phones can be a distraction and/or a cause of concern in school.

Guidelines:

The learners who bring their mobile phones to school are expected to follow the guidelines mentioned below:

- Students are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on school trips.
- If absolutely necessary for a student to bring a mobile phone to school, the parent must take prior approval from the GLC or Division Head via email. The phone must be switched off and handed into the office first thing in the morning and collected by the student at the end of the day. The student is not allowed to use the mobile phone inside the school campus. If absolutely necessary, it has to be done only in the presence of a teacher.
- If a student using the school bus has to carry a mobile phone under special circumstances, the phone must be handed over to the bus ASA while boarding the bus and collected back while alighting at the drop-off point.
- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned only to the parent/carer.
- Teachers are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during lesson time. Any emergency contact should be made via the Parents Relations Team.
- Teachers should ideally not carry their mobile phone to class. Or it should strictly be silent or switched off and out of sight during lesson time.
- Parents/carers should keep their mobile phone on silent mode and refrain from making calls while in school premises.

4.10 Admissions & Withdrawals

Admissions

Following is the admission process to be followed:

- Contact the Parent Relations Officer [+91 964 027 8680 or +91 964 021 1777]
- Our Parent Relations Officer will be happy to clarify your queries and will take you on a tour of our campus
- Contact the Parent Relations Officer to fix a date and time to discuss next steps.

The table below provides a quick glance of entry age for the Early Years:

ENTERING GRADE	AGE as on 01 JUNE
EY1	2 years 6 months
EY2	3 years 6 months
EY3	4 years 6 months
Grade 1	5 years 6 months
Grade 2	6 years 6 months

The grade placement of applicants is made on the basis of date of birth guidelines, educational background and aptitude. However, the school reserves the right to place each student in the grade deemed most appropriate for that child.

Withdrawal

- Parents wishing to withdraw their child/children from school must write to the Parent Relations Officer for issuance of the School Transfer Certificate and refund of the caution deposit thirty working days in advance. Please note that the caution deposit amount will be refunded without any interest.
- In case of withdrawal of the student in the middle of the academic year, parents must inform the school at least a month before the due date for the Term Fee payment, in the absence of which, parents will be liable to pay the entire term's fee.
- In case of withdrawal of the child at the end of the academic session, parents must inform the school latest by 01 April, failing which, the first term fee for the new academic year will be payable.
- The School Transfer Certificate will only be issued after all dues for the academic year have been cleared and the sanction from Section Head has been received post the exit interview procedure.

5. OUR ALUMNI



SANCTA MARIANS ARE GOING PLACES!

CLASS OF 2022

Sachet
Kelly School of Business,
Indiana University, Bloomington, USA

Shankhin Pathri
Miracosta College
California, USA

Saipraneet Darla
Loughborough University,
Leicester, UK

Stavan Pareek
University of Southampton
England, UK

Eshan Shaakir
Manchester University, UK

B. Vaishnavi
University of Bloomington,
Indiana University
Indiana, USA

Venkatram Vadiamani
Queen's University Belfast, Ireland, UK

Nandini Haria
RIT, Rochester, New York, USA

Ria Agrawal
University of Birmingham
Birmingham, England
UK

Vatsav Reddy
University of Edinburgh
Scotland, UK

Shreyas Bathi
Fairleigh Dickinson University
New Jersey, USA

Mihir Raju
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, USA

Samith Varma
Colorado State University
Colorado, USA

Vashisht Sai
University of Edinburgh
Scotland, UK

Aditya Ramgopal
NTU, Singapore



SANCTA MARIANS ARE GOING PLACES!

CLASS OF 2022

Lakshmi Vallabha Bidurukontam
Mahindra University

Alekhy Chaganti
Symbiosis International University

Saurav Mandal
AIIMS Bhubaneswar

Ashika Venigandla
Kasturba Medical College

Tenidhar
NMIMS

Varun Singh
VIT University

Sreekar Pullabhatla
BITS-PILANI

Niharika Gupta
Plaksha University

Bhavika Agarwal
Woxsen University

Akanksh Nair
Manipal University

Krishna Rajiv
ISDI

Vedith Raavi
Woxsen University

Pradyumna Jonnalagadda
Keshav Memorial Institute of
Technology

Pranathi Vora
BITS

Gaurika Mohan
Delhi University

Sharon
ISDI, Mumbai

Renesh
Woxsen University

CONFESSIONS of AN EDUCATOR

*I learn from you
To follow
One's passion more than traditional path
Keep alive self expression
Be it through music or poetry , fashion or art*

*I learn from you
To be authentic
Open minded and inclusive
Embracing individuality
While respecting others' perspectives*

*I learn from you
To adapt quickly
To changes and new situations
Challenge status quo
And seek out better solutions*

*I learn from you
To rise
From adversity and strife
Care for self and others
Have a purpose in life*

*I learn from you
To give attention
and genuinely get involved
Social justice, mental health, climate change
Are real issues, not empty talk*

*I learn from you
To build community
Reach out, make connections
Value memories more than materials
People more than possessions*

*I learn from you
To listen
Less to my fears and more to my dreams
To never stop trying
As hard as failing seems!*

Poem crafted by Ruchira Ghosh, Principal | Illustration by Sanjana Thatikonda, Grade 9

