



# ST. MARY'S SECONDARY SCHOOL

Holy Faith Convent, Glasnevin, Dublin 11



12<sup>th</sup> April 2019

## RE: Transition Year Attendance

Dear Parents/Guardians,

It has come to our attention over the past few weeks that attendance levels have dropped significantly in the year group. We are aware of all school related activities and these are marked as such in VSWare as you will see if you log in to your account. It is a more casual absenteeism we are referring to and a tendency to get signed out on for instance Friday when we schedule Leisure Studies and pay teachers to deliver programmes to our Transition Year students. While we fully understand that some of the 'Leave At' notes are genuine and the appointments unavoidable, the inordinate number signing out would suggest that this is not true of all cases. When large numbers of students are signed out early the remaining classes are sometimes too small for effective teaching and learning to occur. We expect full attendance unless a child is sick or attending a medical appointment that cannot be scheduled at any other time.

Transition Year is a wonderful opportunity for our students to engage in diverse and varied learning experiences both inside school and through the many trips and activities that are scheduled for them over the course of the year. However, commitment to school attendance is still vitally important and should not suffer because of the nature of the programme.

When students return to school after the Easter break we will be monitoring attendance very carefully. We will be expecting a 90% attendance rate during these weeks in order for students to graduate on 22<sup>nd</sup> May. We fully appreciate that medical appointments might already have been made and once the certificate of attendance is produced these will not be counted as casual absences, and the same applies to any certified illness.

We want to eliminate this slippage and get our students back into a good pattern of attendance before the beginning of 5<sup>th</sup> year when they will be expected to engage fully with the Leaving Certificate programme which requires full attendance.

We would ask you to encourage your daughter to attend regularly and punctually over the weeks leading up to the graduation and to impress on her the importance of this in relation to graduation.

Many thanks for your continued support and cooperation which we truly appreciate.

Yours faithfully,

Bernadette Bourke  
Principal