

Guidebook

for parents of new pupils



A guide for parents of pupils new to St George

Welcome to the St George family! We are delighted that your child has joined us here and look forward to getting to know you better. We are incredibly proud of our college and its success, which truly reflects the way our students, parents, staff and governors work together as a team.

St George is a Catholic college with a strong tradition of academic and sporting achievement. Knowing our students personally and guiding them each to reach their full potential is key to our and their success. Whether your child is joining us at the start of Year 7 or later in school life, comes from a local primary school or has moved from overseas, we hope that this guide will help you to understand more about St George. If you require any further information, please visit our website at www.stgcc.co.uk or contact the college, tel: 02380 322603/ email: info@stgcc.co.uk

What type of school is St George?

St George is a Catholic college for girls and boys aged 11 to 16. We do not expect everyone to be a practising Catholic or Christian but we do expect that the Catholic ethos of the school is respected and supported. We are a family; an inclusive school united by our core values of Achievement, Spirituality, Respect, Independence, Relationships and Enjoyment.

We have daily prayers in tutor time, pray the Angelus in class three times a week and have weekly assemblies, which include time for prayer and reflection. Your child will attend Mass (approximately once a term) and will be expected to take part in charity fundraising activities.

How does my child move up through the school years?

Pupils move up a year every September. There is no ability test for them to pass. Pupils do not repeat years:

- Year 7 – 11-12 years-old
- Year 8 – 12-13 years-old
- Year 9 – 13-14 years-old
- Year 10 – 14-15 years-old
- Year 11 – 15-16 years-old

How is the school day structured?

School starts at 8.40am and finishes at 3pm. The college canteen serves breakfast from 8am until 8.30am. Students are not permitted on site before 8am and after 4pm (unless at an advertised event, for example sports fixture or Open Evening). Detentions are given for persistent lateness. There are five hour-long lessons during the day, with a morning break of 20 minutes and lunch of 35 minutes. Morning registration is from 8.40am until 9am and is spent in tutor groups or in assembly.

When is my child expected to be in school?

Your child is expected in college every day, arriving by 8.40am. Appointments should be made out of school time. If your child must leave for an appointment, you need to write and sign a note in their planner and collect them from school at reception.

If your child is absent, you should call the school on **02380 670102** in the morning and leave details of your child's name, tutor group and reason for absence. You should call each day your child is away. You may be required to provide supporting evidence for your child's absence if they miss two or more consecutive days of school or if their attendance falls below 90%.

How will my child get to school?

We operate a number of dedicated private buses and minibuses, places on which are available for a fee.

Priority is given to younger students and on distance. Many of our students use public buses, connecting to the Bluestar No.2, which stops two minutes' walk from the college.

Students from the Whiteley and Fareham area can use the school buses or travel to Eastleigh Parkway station then change trains to Swaythling station (5 mins walk from college). Students in Chandlers Ford can travel direct to and from Swaythling station daily. A direct service is also available from Winchester to Swaythling. More details are available on our website under the Parents Area/Transport: www.stgcc.co.uk

If they are able to, many of our children walk or cycle to school. Students who cycle are expected to have lights on their bike and wear appropriate safety gear, including a helmet. There are bike sheds on site. Please note that parents are not able to drive on to the site to drop off or collect students at the beginning or end of the school day. Please be mindful of our neighbours and respect local residents by not parking in, or in front of, driveways.

What subjects will my child learn?

In Years 7 and 8, your child will study: English (language and literature); maths, science, religious education (RE), history, geography, French or Spanish, drama, music, dance, information technology/computing, art, design and technology (D&T) and physical education (PE).

In Year 8, your child will choose subjects that they want to study for GCSE from Year 9 in addition to English language, English literature, maths, science and RE, which are compulsory (GCSE exams are national public exams sat in May and June of Year 11). They may be offered the option of BTEC qualifications, which are national, work-related qualifications also completed in Year 11. Both GCSE and BTEC qualifications are used for college applications and jobs. Students fluent in a second language may be offered the chance to sit a GCSE in that subject. All students leave with at least nine qualifications.

Who will teach my child?

Your child will probably have a different teacher for each subject and these may change from year to year.

Your child will have their lessons in different classrooms. A map of the college is in their planner.

In Years 7 and 8, your child will be set in English and maths based on their ability in each subject. This will also influence which class group they are in for other subjects including science, RE, French or Spanish, geography and history. Practical subjects such as PE and art are taught in mixed ability groups.

In Years 9, 10, and 11, their classes will be set according to ability in the core subjects of English, maths and science but will probably be of mixed ability in RE and the option subjects.

Who will look after my child when they are in school?

Every member of staff has responsibility for safeguarding our students. Your child will have a tutor with whom they will meet every morning. The tutor is responsible for their pastoral care – this means their personal, social and academic needs – during their time at St George. They will see your child every morning in registration and for PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) lessons. Your child will also have a progress leader who oversees the pastoral care of their year group.

Additional support is available for those who may need it. This is usually run through our support centre Trinity.

If you are concerned about your child, you should contact their tutor, their progress leader or our Designated Safeguarding Lead Miss Marie Cordeiro on **02380 322603**. You can email the school at info@stgcc.co.uk and your email will be forwarded if requested.

How will I know how my child is progressing in school?

Your child will be given a planner, which holds lots of important information. They are expected to record their timetable, attainment targets, grades and homework in the planner, as well as keep a brief note of their topic of study in each lesson. You should check and sign the planner weekly. Students whose planners are not signed weekly will be given a break-time detention.

At the end of each term, you are invited in to school with your child to meet with their tutor and receive an update of their progress, attendance and behaviour. These Mentoring Days are on the college calendar on our website, and you will receive a letter notifying you of your appointment time shortly before the day.

Each year group also has one parents' evening per year, which is an opportunity for you to meet with their class teachers and discuss their progress in particular subjects. These are also advertised on the college website and you will be notified by letter or email.

Will my child have homework?

In Years 7 and 8, your child will receive homework in all subjects except music, dance, drama and IT/computing. This will be set at least twice per half-term and up to once a week, depending on the subject.

In Years 9, 10 and 11, your child will receive homework in all the subjects they study. Tasks and frequency will vary according to subject, class and year group.

Your child is expected to record their homework in their planner. Detentions of up to an hour after school will be set if homework is not handed in. You can support your child by providing them with a quiet place to work or by encouraging them to attend Study Club in the school library (Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3pm to 4pm. The library is also open at break and lunchtimes every day, and before school from 8.20am to 8.40am Monday to Thursday).

What clubs and activities are available out of lessons?

We offer a wide range of clubs and activities in sport, art, dance, drama, music, science and IT. Your child will also have opportunities to join our Student Council and get involved in supporting various charitable causes. The music department can arrange peripatetic music lessons, for which there is a charge. If your child catches a school bus, you will need to arrange alternative transport home for them from after-school clubs or activities. Please be aware that sports fixtures can change or be cancelled at the last minute.

What if my child is ill in school?

We have a School Nurse, designated first aiders and a first aid room. Your child will be assessed and if necessary, you will be contacted and asked to collect them. In the event of an emergency, an ambulance will be called and you will be contacted.

Your child should not carry medication on them in school. If they require medication during the school day, this should be handed in at the first aid room and your child should make arrangements to consume it there at the appropriate time. The exceptions are asthma inhalers and epi-pens.

It is important that you keep the college updated of any changes to your child's medical needs and your emergency contact details.

Can my child use their mobile phone in school?

The college policy is that mobile phones are not to be used on site from arrival at the school gate in the morning until 4pm. If your child does not adhere to this rule, their phone will be confiscated and given back to them at the end of the day. Should this happen more than once, you will be contacted to come into school and collect the phone for your child.

If you need to urgently contact your child during the school day, please telephone reception and a message will be passed to them.

What equipment will my child need for school?

Your child is expected to have with them every day: a blue or black pen; a green pen; a pencil; a ruler; an eraser; their planner. Liquid paper such as Tipp-ex is not permitted in school.

Parents are not expected to buy any school books or text books. Your child will be given an exercise book and/or folder for each subject, which they are expected to keep clean, dry and neatly presented.

In Years 9, 10 and 11, your child will be advised about which revision guides you can purchase to support their preparation for GCSE exams.

Students are encouraged to have with them at all times a reading book, either from home or borrowed from the school library.

Where can I get a copy of the college policies?

Copies of college policies are on our website www.stgcc.co.uk in the section called Our School.

Where can I get more information?

Our website www.stgcc.co.uk has areas specific to Parents and Students, with lots of general information and a translation option, which you may find useful. It is regularly updated with news and includes the college calendar, including sports fixtures. You may also like to follow us on Twitter - @stgeorgecc - or Facebook - @stgeorgeccollege

For queries specific to your child's well-being or progress in school, you should contact their tutor or progress leader. The main school telephone number is **02380 322603**.

Key terms

Absence line	If your child is going to miss a school day, you must inform the Attendance Officer why. You should phone the absence line on the morning of each day that your child is away from school. There is an answer machine for messages to be left out of school hours. The number to call is 02380 670102.
ASPIRE	Our college values are Achievement, Spirituality, ResPect, Independence, Relationships and Enjoyment. They are at the core of all we do in our college.
Assembly	Each year group will have an assembly one morning a week (for example, Year 11 on Tuesdays). Students gather together in the main hall for worship, reflection and important messages. Assemblies are usually led by the progress leader and chaplain.
Astro / all-weather pitch	The college's all-weather pitch (also known as the astro), is used in PE lessons, and at break and lunch times by Years 8 to 11. Students must have appropriate footwear to use on the pitch, which means football boots with plastic, not metal, studs.
Attainment 8	This is a measure of your child's average grade across eight subjects, including English and maths, at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11).
Attitude Grades	Attitude Grades - Every term, your child is given a score out of 5 for their behaviour, classwork and homework by all of their subject teachers. Their tutor will also give them a score for PSHE, contribution, behaviour, punctuality and equipment. These are called Attitude Grades. These scores are added up to give a total: the maximum total is 500 points. You will meet with your child's tutor on Mentoring Day at the end of each term and discuss their attitude grades along with their current attainment levels in all subjects. The criteria for the Attitude Grades are printed at the end of this booklet.
Break	This is from 11am to 11.20am each school day. Pupils may purchase food and drink from the college canteens, and play and socialise with their friends. Year 7 have their own designated canteen and area of the playground.
BTEC	BTEC stands for the Business and Technology Education Council. They are nationally-recognised, specialist, work-related qualifications. In college, students take Level 1/Level 2 qualifications, which are the equivalent of GCSE.
Careers appointment	This is an individual appointment for your child with one of our careers advisors about their plans for the future, college applications and qualifications.
Chaplaincy	The Chaplaincy team, led by the College Chaplain Mr Walford, supports with the spiritual life of the school.
Curriculum	This is a group of subjects that pupils study during their time at school.
Detention	A detention can be at break, lunch or after school and is a time for students to reflect on their behaviour. Detentions are recorded in your child's planner.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	The Designated Safeguarding Lead in college is Miss Marie Cordeiro: 02380 322603 / mcordeiro@stgcc.co.uk Every member of staff has responsibility for the safety and welfare of our students.
Designated Teacher	The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is Miss Marie Cordeiro: 02380 322603 / mcordeiro@stgcc.co.uk
Early closure	This is when the school closes earlier than the usual time of 3pm, typically at 12.20pm. Early closure is usually on the last day of the Autumn Term, the last day of the Summer Term, and before our Leavers' Mass in the Spring Term. Details are on the college calendar on our website, and are advertised in the college newsletter.

Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)	We have a qualified Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) in college, who is specially trained to support students who are experiencing temporary or longer term additional emotional needs. Our ELSA is Sharon Sansom: 02380 322603 ssansom@stgcc.co.uk
Exams	Students sit national GCSE and BTEC exams in Year 11. In some subjects, they may occasionally sit a national exam in Year 10. Mock exams are held in the summer of Year 10 and in the Autumn term of Year 11. Information about exams and mock exams is available on our website under the Teaching & Learning pages of www.stgcc.co.uk . Alternatively, you can contact our Examinations Officer Mr Sam Guyer: 02380 322693/ sguyer@stgcc.co.uk .
Exercise book	This is the book in which your child will make notes and complete work in lessons.
Extra-curricular activities	These are clubs and activities for pupils that take place at break, lunch or after school. They are free.
Fixtures	Sports fixtures with other schools are usually held after 3pm. If your child is part of a sports team, you will be sent a letter at the beginning of the term notifying you of fixtures. These events often change or are cancelled last minute (e.g. due to weather conditions). You will be notified by text message if there is a change to a fixture but this may be at short notice.
Free school meals	If your family has a low income or receives certain benefits, your child may be able to get lunch at school for free. Please contact the college for more information.
GCSE	These are national, public exams that all students must sit in the May and June of Year 11. GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. They are graded from U (ungraded) as the lowest mark then 1 (low) to 9 (very high). Most colleges and employers require students to have at least a 4 in English language and maths.
Half-term	The school year is divided into six half-terms. At the end of each half-term there is a holiday – one week in October and February, two weeks at Christmas and Easter, and six weeks in the summer.
House	Your child will belong to a tutor group, which are part of a House. The Houses are named after saints. They form the name of your child's tutor group – for example 7 John-Paul.
House points	These are awarded to students for various reasons, including quality classwork, homework or behaviour; effort; attitude; helpfulness and more. A record of house points is kept by your child's tutor.
INSET	This is a staff training day. School is closed to pupils. Details are on the college calendar on the website, and in the college newsletter.
Intervention	This is additional support to help your child with their progress in a subject. Intervention sessions are held during registration time, lunch or after school.
Key stage	Key Stage 3 refers to Years 7 to 9 and Key Stage 4 is Years 10 and 11.
LSA - learning support assistant (may also be referred to as a	This is a member of staff who supports the class teacher in lessons, often working with individual students.

TA or teaching assistant)	
Library	The college library is open daily at break and lunch times, before school Mondays to Thursdays and after school Mondays to Thursdays from 3pm to 4pm. Pupils may borrow books for up to two weeks at a time. The library is well stocked with fiction and non-fiction books, magazines and revision guides. There are 4 computers to help students with their homework.
Literacy	In addition to literacy in lessons across the curriculum, our students are expected to read for at least 60 minutes a week. These reading minutes are recorded in their planners. Students are encouraged to carry a reading book with them at all times. Additional literacy activities such as spelling tests and word games are carried out in registration time. Literacy is also celebrated with events such as World Book Day.
Locker	Year 7 students may apply for a locker for their first year in college. A deposit of £10 must be paid to secure the locker. The money is returned at the end of the year if the key is returned. Students must sign a locker-user agreement in their planner.
LWL (Life Without Levels)	Life Without Levels refers to the grades given in Year 7 and Year 8. These are based on age-related targets in each subject. There are four bands: Extending, Applying, Developing and Foundation. More information is available on the college website in the Parents Area/ Curriculum: www.stgcc.co.uk
Lunch	This is from 1.20pm to 1.55pm each day. Pupils may purchase food and drink from the college canteens, and play and socialise with their friends. Year 7 have their own designated canteen and area of the playground.
Mass	Mass is the central act of worship in the life of a Catholic. Going to Mass is about spending time with God, but also receiving His graces. Mass is celebrated in college at least once a term – at the start of the school year, at Christmas, at Easter and towards the end of the school year.
Mentoring day	Towards the end of each term, you will be invited into school for a 10-minute appointment with your child and their tutor. You will be provided with a report, which sets out your child's progress in all their subjects as well as their attendance and effort in behaviour, classwork and homework. Effort is graded from 1 to 5, with 1 being unsatisfactory and 5 outstanding. Students are expected to attend the appointment. There are no classes on this day and your child is only expected in school for the time of their mentoring appointment. They must attend in school uniform.
Newsletter	This is produced once a term with information about what has been happening in school and forthcoming events. Copies are also saved in the News & Events section of our website: www.stgcc.co.uk
Non-school uniform day	On such a day, pupils do not wear uniform. We usually ask for a donation of £1, which is given to a charity. Pupils should wear modest clothing that is suitable for school. We often encourage a theme such as wearing blue items for Anti-Bullying Day in November.
Options	In Year 8, your child will choose subjects that they want to study for GCSE from Year 9 in addition to English language, English literature, maths, science and RE, which are compulsory (GCSE exams are national public exams sat in May and June of Year 11). They may be offered the option of BTEC qualifications, which are national, work-related qualifications also completed in Year 11.

	At the end of Year 9 they will review their choices
Parents evening	There is one parents' evening each year for your child. You can make a five-minute appointment with each teacher to discuss your child's progress in the subject. Details are in the college newsletter and in the calendar on the website.
Phone number	The college telephone number is 02380 322603. This is the number to call for enquiries, to report a concern, and if you need to get an urgent message to your child. Pupils are not allowed to use their mobile phones in college between arriving at the school gates and 4pm.
Planner	Your child will be given a planner at the start of each school year (in September). It is like a diary. It includes useful information about the college, as well as agreements that you and your child must sign for use of IT facilities in college, lockers, buses and photographs. Your child's timetable is written into the planner and they will also record their homework, targets and any detentions in it. The planner is a way of writing messages to your child's tutor. You should check and sign your child's planner weekly.
Playground	This is the outdoor space for students to use at break and lunch. There are benches and facilities including basketball hoops. Years 8 and 11 may use the field and all-weather pitch. Year 7 have their own designated space in the playground.
Prefect	This is an older student, usually in Year 11, who has extra responsibility and acts as a role model for other pupils. The prefect team is led by the Head Boy and Head Girl, who are elected by staff and students in Year 10 to serve throughout Year 11.
Progress leader	This is the person responsible for the tutors and a year group.
Progress 8	This is a measure of how much progress your child makes between the end of their time at primary school (aged 11) and the end of their time at secondary school (aged 15/16). It is based on their performance in English and maths at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) and then their performance in eight subjects, including English and maths, at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11).
PSHE	Personal, Social, Health and Economic lessons are held for one hour weekly in tutor groups. Through PSHE, students develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that they need to manage their lives now and in the future. Most PSHE lessons are led by your child's tutor, however some will be led by specialist agencies or by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
Registration	Registration is from 8.40am to 9am on Mondays and Wednesdays to Fridays, and from 8.40am to 9.10am on Tuesdays. Students meet in tutor groups. Assemblies are held one day a week for each year group. Afternoon registration is from 1.55pm to 2pm with the teacher of P5 (the lesson held between 2pm and 3pm).
Replies	Letters sent home will often have a reply slip that you need to sign. It should be written on to the reply slip who to return it to – this may be the tutor, admin office, progress leader or a class teacher. Your child should return reply slips promptly.
Report	Three times a year, at Mentoring Day, you will receive a paper report with details of your child's academic progress, their behaviour and their attendance.
Report (monitoring)	If we have concerns about your child, they will be placed on a paper monitoring report. They will have targets to complete. Reports are usually set by the tutor or progress leader, but if your child's behaviour or attitude is persistently poor, they may go on report to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Reports usually last one or two weeks. You will be expected to check and sign it each day. Your child's teachers and tutor will also be signing it daily.

Revision	This is time spent going over skills and knowledge learned in lessons or as homework, which prepares your child for their exams. We expect students to complete at least one hour of revision a week in Years 10 and 11 in addition to their homework. Advice about how to revise is provided to students in Years 10 and 11, and we invite you into school for Information Evenings to find out how you can support your child with their revision.
Rewards	Pupils are rewarded for progress, attainment, effort and homework in subjects, as well as for behaviour and attendance. There are lots of different types of rewards ranging from house points and postcards home to assemblies with certificates and prizes. Once a term, reward trips are offered to a limited number of students to places such as the cinema, a theme park or ice rink.
Set	Your child will be set in English and maths, and this will determine their classes in some other subjects in Years 7 and 8. In Years 9, 10 and 11, your child will be set in English, maths and science.
SENCO	Specialist Educational Needs Co-ordinators are responsible for a school's SEN policy and ensure that students with special educational needs or disabilities receive the support they need in school. Our SENCO is Mr Greg Prout: 02380 322603, gprout@stgcc.co.uk
SLT and ELT	The Senior Leadership Team is the group of people responsible for leading the school. They are supported by the Extended Leadership Team.
Sports day	This happens once a year in late June / early July. Years 7 to 10 participate. They compete in tutor groups.
Target grade	Your child will be given target grades in Years 7 and 8 in the four Life Without Level (LWL) bands – Extending, Applying, Developing and Foundation. In Years 9 to 11, they will be given a target grade for GCSE. These targets are based on their ability in subjects.
Teacher	Your child will have lots of different teachers, usually a different one for each subject. The teacher that your child has in one year may change the following year.
Term	The school year is divided into three terms – September to Christmas, January to Easter and after Easter to July. The term dates are on the college website. Please check this as our finishing dates sometimes differ by a day or two compared to local primary schools or to those listed on the Southampton City Council website.
Text book	This is a reference book that might also have activities. Pupils do not write in them. Your child will not have their own copy. Not all subjects use these type of books.
Trinity	This is our support unit which helps students who may have special educational needs, disabilities, behaviour concerns or who need some extra help with friendships, managing anxieties or starting a new school. A team of learning support assistants, including staff specially trained in supporting emotional needs, are based in Trinity. They are led by our SENCO, Greg Prout, and work closely with other staff in college. They are supported by outside agencies, including a mental health nurse.
Tutor	Your child's tutor is responsible for their pastoral care – this means their personal, social and academic needs – in college. They will see your child every morning in registration and for PSHE lessons. They are supported by the progress leader for their year group. You can contact your child's tutor by writing a note in your child's planner or by contacting the school via telephone (02380 322603) or email (info@stgcc.co.uk)

Uniform	All pupils must wear college uniform, as specified in the planner and on our website. There is also a PE kit that your child is expected to have with them for PE lessons. Guidance on acceptable hair-styles and our policy on make-up are also in the planner.
Website	Our website is at www.stgcc.co.uk
Work experience	In the summer of Year 10, students complete two weeks of work experience. This is unpaid and is intended to give your child an idea of careers and working life. They are expected to arrange this themselves with support from their tutor, progress leader and our careers advisors.
Year group	This refers to the year of which your child is part, for example Year 7 (when aged 11-12), Year 8 (aged 12-13) and so on.

Attitude Grades

Behaviour

5 Outstanding You are a role model, working enthusiastically and to the best of your ability. You support your peers

4 Good You are willing to learn and therefore you listen carefully and respond readily. You are active and positive.

3 Satisfactory You have the right attitude for learning. Occasionally you are off task, disrupting the learning of others

2 Improvement Needed You have poor focus and therefore your attitude to learning is too variable. You often come to school without the correct equipment

1 Unacceptable You are constantly off task. You often receive warnings for distracting the learning of others

Classwork

5 Outstanding
Your classwork is of a high quality and you work independently on extension tasks

4 Good Your classwork is of a high quality

3 Satisfactory You remain on task and do your best to complete all the tasks

2 Improvement Needed You are sometimes off task and do not complete all the work set

1 Unacceptable You are often off task and therefore complete very little classwork

Homework

5 Outstanding Your homework is consistently of a high quality and you often add extra details

4 Outstanding Your homework is consistently of a high quality and you often add extra details

3 Satisfactory Your homework is ok and on time but you can do better

2 Improvement Needed Your homework is of a poor quality and / or often late

1 Unacceptable You rarely do any homework



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