

ST ANDREW'S
SCHOOL



The International School of The Bahamas
FOUNDED 1948



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To parents/guardians of students in Pre-School to Year 13

By post and e-mail - copy to St Andrew's website at www.st-andrews.com

Dear parents/guardians:

On behalf of the faculty and staff I would like to extend a warm welcome to those returning families and a special greeting to those of you new to St. Andrew's. The first day of school is Wednesday, 26 August, and we want all our children and parents to have a smooth and positive start to this academic year.

The purpose of this letter is largely informational and to some, may seem a tedious repetition of known facts. However, whether you are new to St. Andrew's or a long-standing member, please take a few moments to read the following items carefully as this letter represents but one means we will use during the course of the year to keep you up to date on important information and school developments.

Good communication- the key to being in the know!

We see school as a real partnership among students, parents/guardians and those with whom your children interact here at St Andrew's. Please feel free to contact us at any time. Of course, issues with your child's day to day schooling should be dealt with at teacher level first. However, if you wish to see the Dean of a section or a School Head, an appointment will be honored within 48 hours of our receiving the request.

Major communication between the school and home is achieved through meetings, telephone calls, notices posted around the campus, written communication and our website (www.st-andrews.com). Updated regularly, the website should be your first point of contact for information about the school.

Our **telephone system** here on campus has been a major cause of concern to everyone over the past year, as I am certain you are all aware. To help alleviate the problems we have experienced, we engaged Indigo Networks during the summer and anticipate that, with the updates planned, our service will be much improved in the new school year.

Every Wednesday, each student in the primary school should bring home a **Wednesday folder**,

containing relevant information. The weekly newsletter from the administration, *Heads Up*, is sent to families via email and is also placed on the school's website and on various notice boards around the school. *Heads Up* is published on Friday and remains the primary means of regular communication between the school and parents. Please note that *Heads Up* will not be sent out during the first week of the first trimester.

Changes of address, telephone numbers, e-mail

Please remember to notify the school immediately if any of your contact information changes. This applies to home, work and cell telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, fax numbers and home location. We sometimes need to contact you quickly and our database needs to be kept up to date. Please pass any change of address information to our Admissions Officer, Mrs Sally Varani-Jones at sally.varani.jones@st-andrews.com

A **community notice board** is situated outside the main administrative offices, and parents/guardians are welcome to use it. Materials are allowed only three weeks' display, and unauthorized items will be removed. Parents/guardians are asked to give their material into the office. The material will then be dated and placed on the board.

Policy manual

All operations of the school are covered in the school's policy manual. This covers the school's position on almost every issue that arises. The administration is charged by the board to work within policy and I am always ready to let parents know the school's official position on any matter.

The full policy manual may be found on our web site. To access it, take the following steps:

- ❑ Go to our website at www.st-andrews.com
- ❑ Click on *School Policies*

Withdrawal notice

One matter of policy that causes some concern to parents is **Policy 3-303**, which appears on the application form and reads, in part, as follows:

“In order to enable the school to plan for its financial responsibilities and for its staffing and class configurations, parents and/or guardians of all students, other than those in year twelve, are required to give at least one full trimester's notice of withdrawal of a student from the school or pay one full trimester's fees in lieu of notice.”

The administration has the responsibility of administering this policy and it is most helpful for all concerned when the requisite notice is given. Even if you are not sure if your child will be leaving, please let us know in good time and we can then issue a tentative withdrawal notice. Many thanks for your cooperation in this matter.

Enrolment and Staffing

As of this writing, our enrolment stands at a healthy 835 with full enrolment and waiting lists at several grade levels.

We welcome the following **new or returning faculty members** to the school this year. We are looking forward to their time with us and they are all excited about joining St Andrew's:

Ms. Denise Besant	-	Secondary Chemistry/ Science
Mrs. Nivia Clare-Bodie	-	Secondary University Counselor/ Teacher/ Psychology

Mrs. Nikki Cleare	-	Secondary Mathematics
Mrs. Ruth James	-	Primary Teacher
Mrs Frances Key	-	Primary Teacher
Ms. Mélanie Michel	-	Secondary Mathematics/ Science
Mr. Scott Lowe	-	Secondary IT
Ms Jessica Sweeting	-	Teaching Assistant, Pre-Reception
Mr. Thomas Zumchak	-	Primary Music

The names of the senior administrators, who form the administrative council (ADCON), are:

Mrs Evanne Archer-Bowe		Financial Manager
Ms. Allison Collie	-	Primary School Head
Mr. Frank Coyle	-	Secondary School Head
Mr Jeremy MacVean		Campus Manager
Mrs. Sharon Wilson	-	Principal

The quasi-administrative posts at the school this year are being filled by the following people:

Mrs. Darlene Bobrosky	-	Dean of the Junior Years
Mrs. Kathryn Dillette	-	Dean of the Middle Years
Ms. Yvette Simms	-	PYP Coordinator
Mrs. Michele Robinson	-	Dean of the Upper Years
Mrs. Lesley Sands	-	Dean of the Early Years
Mr John Kurton	-	IB Diploma Coordinator
Mrs. Rachael Williams		Middle Years Curriculum Coordinator
Mr. Peter Wilson	-	Athletics Director

Crisis Plans

The school has written and appropriate crisis plans in place to meet emergencies that could arise during the course of the school year. Not all of these are in the public domain, as we have to preserve confidentiality in some areas. However, the following details relating to an environmental crisis, such as a hurricane or severe flooding, should be noted and kept in an accessible place.

Environmental crisis

- a) In the event of a threatened environmental crisis - such as a hurricane or severe flooding - the school's crisis team will meet and make a decision as to how to proceed. Thereafter, communication will be carried via our telephone trees.
- b) The Principal is responsible for contacting the members of the administration. The Heads of School are responsible for contacting their faculty members, by means of the emergency trees. The Financial Manager is responsible for contacting all staff members, by means of their emergency telephone tree.
- c) Homeroom teachers are responsible for ensuring that messages are sent to the members of their homerooms. This is usually done by means of an emergency telephone tree.
- d) If school is closed by the principal, parents/guardians and all employees are advised that under no circumstances is anyone to attempt to reach the campus. If the school is closed, the gates will be locked and there will be no access to the campus for *anyone*. If for any reason parents/guardians are unsure of the situation, and cannot obtain *reliable* information, they

should err on the side of caution and keep their children at home.

- e) In addition to the foregoing, an appropriate message will be placed on the school's answer phones.

In the event that telephones are not functioning, the school will, if at all possible, broadcast messages on the "Love 97" radio frequency (FM 97.5) and Radio Bahamas (ZNS - AM 1540).

Once the crisis has passed, a message will be placed on the school's answer phones and on Love 97 (FM 97.5) and ZNS (AM 1540) radio to indicate when school is expected to reopen.

School Uniforms

School uniform is a **requirement** of all children attending St Andrew's and the school's community believes it to be an indication of the community's values. Students **must** wear the school uniform at all times when at school and also when attending certain school functions. The students will have uniform regulations outlined to them by the heads of school at their initial assemblies. The uniform regulations are detailed in the parents' handbooks and parents/guardians should note that infringements of the school's rules relating to uniform will be dealt with by disciplinary action. This is not something we find pleasant, as we would rather be doing more positive things with your children. So please help us by ensuring that your child leaves home each morning properly attired for school.

Please remember that a hat must be worn whenever a student is in the sun for an extended period of time. Hats are available from the school shop. In addition, owing to the risk of skin cancer, **we strongly encourage parents/guardians to ensure that their children apply sunscreen every morning before coming to school.**

School uniform items may be purchased from local retail outlets, including *Lorene's* and *Sandy's* in Palmdale. Several items are carried in the **school shop**, the hours of which for August are as follows:

School Shop Hours: Monday 17 August to Friday 29 August

Monday to Friday: 9:00 am to 2:00 pm

Regulation on Cellular phones—A Reminder

Please note that students are not permitted to bring cellular phones, MP3 Music Players or MP4 Video Players to school.

Campus Improvements

Since the closing of summer school, our maintenance team has been busily painting, repairing and improving everywhere on our 37-acre campus.

There are new walkways in the Infant playground and the Early Learning Centre car park. These are designed to improve the safety of everyone when moving around the school.

Campus Access

The Nassau East entrance is the main entry to campus. Parents, teachers and visitors will have access to and from the campus through this entrance during the school day via the security gate monitored by our security personnel.

The Yamacraw Hill Road entrance will be open until 9:30 to allow parents to drop off their children to the primary school. From 9:30 to 12:00, the gates to this entrance will be locked for security reasons and reopened from 12:00 to 13:00 to allow parents to collect their children who are half-day students in the pre-school. The gates will again be locked at 13:00 and reopened at 14:30, just before the end of school at 15:00 in the primary school.

Parents/guardians should feel free to “drop off” their children at the library entrance or at the drop off section on the road into the primary school area. But please do not park at either of these places—drop off the children and leave. If you need to park, please use one of the other car parks.

Drop-off Points

Car parks open to the parents/guardians of children at the school include the main car park, the car park at the swimming pool and the car park directly across the road from the pool. The teachers’ car park is not open to parents/guardians, as this is reserved for the secondary school teachers and staff members. Please do not use the teachers’ car park as a “drop off” point.

Please drive slowly on school grounds and, particularly when reversing, check that no child is around. Our gratitude is extended to all those parents/guardians who adhere to the traffic regulations in force at the school.

For the sake of new parents/guardians, and as a reminder to our existing parents, I am outlining for you the regulations. Please adhere to the following, in order to ensure both your safety and that of your children.

CAR PARKING AT ST ANDREW’S SCHOOL

- ❑ If you wish to drop off a child and then leave from the Nassau East entrance, please drive in, drop your child at the entrance to the new library and then leave immediately.
- ❑ If you wish to drop off a child from the Yamacraw Hill Road entrance at the designated times, again, please drive in, drop off your child at the drop-off point and then leave immediately.
- ❑ If you need to park, for example, to walk your child to class, please use one of the following car parks:
 - ❖ the car park at the swimming pool;
 - ❖ the car park outside the new science laboratories (across road from the pool);
 - ❖ the main car park (Yamacraw Hill Road entrance)
 - ❖ the ELC car park (Yamacraw Hill Road entrance).
- ❑ **Observe the one-way system in the main car parking area. Do not enter the one-way system the wrong way round.**
- ❑ Never drive on the grass or park on the grass.
- ❑ **Respect the fact that the upper car park is only for employees.** Parents/guardians are not allowed to use this car park. (Not even for dropping off students!)
- ❑ **Keep to the speed limit of five miles per hour maximum when on campus**

- ❑ Take care when reversing.
- ❑ **At all times, assume an unseen child is near your vehicle.**

We rely on your good sense of community to work with us in a school setting to ensure that safety in the car parks is maintained. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Children on campus

Please be reminded that primary school children are expected to be collected from school no later than 3.30 pm. Often, young children have been left here until dusk and this is patently unacceptable. In the event of an emergency, of course, we shall care for your child. But it is unreasonable to ask colleagues to stay long after the end of their working day in order to look after young children.

Also, children should not congregate in the main office at the end of school. If not collected immediately after school, they can wait at the benches just outside the main office.

Transportation

St Andrew's does not provide school transportation but it is happy to support initiatives from local bus operators whose vehicles are modern and well serviced.

If you wish to avail yourself of the transportation facilities offered by one of the companies that offers transportation services to and from school, please contact our Admissions Officer, Mrs Sally Varani-Jones, at 324 2621, (sally.varani.jones@st-andrews.com). She would be happy to put you in touch with an appropriate operator, although we do need to stress that all contracts for transportation are directly between the transportation operative and the parents/guardians of the children.

School trips

A form that needs to be signed by all parents/guardians in order to ensure that their children are able to go on school trips off campus will be sent home with each child in the first week or two of the new school year. Please sign this letter and return it as soon as possible, as your child will not be allowed to go on field trips until we have a signed copy of this letter on file. Thank you again for your cooperation in this matter.

All school trips are payable by the parent/guardian.

Cafeteria

Please remember that your child may either bring a meal to school or purchase one from the cafeteria facility, where a variety of food, including "healthy options", is on sale each day.

Swimming

The *Swift* Swimming Programme operates under the auspices of the school and offers a *Learn to Swim* programme under the auspices of *Swim America*. There are also programmes available for all levels of swimmers, right up to **Master level**.

Mr. Andy and Mrs. Nancy Knowles run this programme and they will let you have, early in the new school year, full details of the programmes available.

Secondary School Information

We plan to post class lists, locations and teachers on the board outside the administration building on Tuesday, 25 August at 12 noon. Please do not ring to find details before that time, as it is unlikely that class allocations will be finalized before Tuesday at noon.

On the first day of the trimester, Wednesday, 26 August, all Middle School and Upper School students, faculty and administration will meet in the auditorium at 8:25 am for the first day assembly.

A reminder to all middle and upper school students and parents **new** to the St Andrew's community: This year we are holding our induction morning on Friday, 21 August. The session will start at 9:30 am sharp and should be completed by 12:00 pm. This is for **new students to the school** only and not for last year's Year 6 students from St Andrew's, as they had an induction day at the end of last term.

Students attending the induction morning should come in school uniform if they have already made their purchase. However, if not, as indicated earlier, on this day the school shop will be open from 9:00am to 2:00 pm, for purchase of some items of the school uniform, including the PE uniform, and supplies. We hope your child will be able to join us on this day and we should be grateful if you would confirm your attendance by contacting Mrs. Melita Carey in the main office on 324 2621, or by e-mail to melita.carey@st-andrews.com.

Please remember that regular **school hours** for students in the Secondary School are from 8.25am to 3.15pm.

Primary School Information

We plan to post class lists, locations and teachers on the board outside the administration building on Tuesday, 25 August at 12noon. Please do not ring to find details before that time, as it is unlikely that class allocations will be finalized before Tuesday at noon.

On the first day of the trimester, all primary school students should go straight to their classrooms, where they will be greeted by their homeroom teachers and settled into the class.

New students to the school and their parents are welcome to attend the **orientation meeting**, which will be held on Tuesday, 25 August, at 9:30 am in the library. Parents and children will meet with primary administrators and then be introduced to their teachers and visit their new classrooms.

Please note: *The following information only applies to Early Learning Centre (ELC) children- Pre-School, Pre-Reception and Reception only.*

In an effort to ensure that the start of the school year is less overwhelming for our youngest students, we will, once again, begin the academic year with a "split entry" in the ELC.

On **Wednesday, 26 August**, ELC students whose last names begin with the letters A through L should report to school for a half day, 8.50am – 12.30pm. Students whose last names begin with M-Z will remain at home on Wednesday, 26 August.

On **Thursday, 27th August**, ELC students whose last names begin with the letters M-Z should report to school for a half day, 8.50am-12.30pm. Students whose last names begin with A-L will remain home on Thursday, 27th August.

On **Friday, 28 August**, all ELC students report to school for a half day, 8.50am-12.30pm.

On **Monday, 31st August, and beyond**- Regular school days for all students.

Please remember that **regular school hours** for the children in the Pre-School are 8.50am-12.30pm,

while in the Infants' School the hours are from 8.50 am until 3.00 pm. Junior school children, in Years 3 through 6, begin at 8.30 am and end at 3.00 pm. Teachers are in the classrooms at least ten minutes before classes begin, in order to welcome the children, and it is very important that children arrive at school on time for the beginning of the school day. The children do not have to line up and may choose either to stay in the classroom for a few minutes before school begins or to play until the bell goes, when they should make their way quietly to their homerooms.

This seems to have been a great deal of information to digest! However, everything needed to be said and is important for the smooth running of the school.

In closing, please remember that we are here to serve you and your children. My colleagues and I are dedicated to providing an excellent education and a 'home away from home' for your children. If we can be of any help to you at all, please do not hesitate to contact us here at school.

I am looking forward to a great start to the school year. Let's all work together to make this a rewarding and enjoyable one for your children and the whole St Andrew's Community.

With kind regards,

Sharon E Wilson
Principal