St Margaret's College

Balanced foundations, bright futures.

Parent Student Handbook

2027



School Office

12 Winchester Street, Merivale,
Christchurch 8014

PO Box 25 094
Christchurch 8140

03 379 2000
admin@stmargarets.school.nz

Office hours: 8:00am until 4:30pm

Maggie's Shop

12 Winchester Street, Merivale,
Christchurch 8014

03 363 1901

Direct dial numbers

Absence line: 03 353 2560 ext 1
Principal's EA: 03 363 1902
Finance: 03 353 2563

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St Margaret's College values the opportunity to work together with parents, whānau and students. This handbook provides some essential information.

He waka eke noa
We are all in this together

Notes

Key staff 2027

Leadership team

Diana Patchett
Executive Principal

Sian Evans
Head of Senior School (Years 11-13) (HoSS)

Kathryn Gray
Head of Middle School (Years 7-10) (HoMS)

Bridget Compton-Moen
Head of Junior School (Years 0-6) (HoJS)

Sarah Bradley
Director of Preschool

Rachel Clemenger
Director of Boarding

Rev. Stephanie Clay
Chaplain

Fionn Moore
Business Manager

Jane Lougher
Director of Community Relations

Brian Woods
Director of Information and Communication Technology

Melanie Forsyth
HR Manager

Jacq Gilbert
Deputy Head of Senior School (Academic)
(DHoSS Academic)

James Evans
Deputy Head of Senior School (Student Care and Experience)
(DHoSS Student care)

Rachel Quigley
Deputy Head of Middle School (DHoMS)

Heads of faculty

Linda Chong
Centre for Innovation

Trudy Keys
Creative Technologies

Deborah Matheson
English

Julia Smith
Health and Physical Education

Chris Walker
Humanities and Social Sciences

Stefanie Hossbach
Languages

Catherine Bell
Learning Enhancement

Tamara Lerios
Mathematics

Amanda Woods
Performing Arts

Richard Freeman
Science

Callum Arnold
Visual Arts

Deans

Lucy Mackie
Year 7 & 8 Dean

Amanda Surridge
Year 9 Dean

Gabby Farrar-de Wagt
Year 10 Dean

Nick Ryan
Year 11 Dean

David Thompson
Year 12 Dean

Helen MacDonald
Year 13 Dean

Other key staff

Susie Campbell
Admissions Manager

Jo Fogarty
International Student Manager

Jenni McLaughlin
Careers Pathway Advisor & Facilitator

TBC
Director of Sport

Sonya Hill
EA to Executive Principal

Valerie Eves
International Baccalaureate Co-ordinator

Felicity McKay
Library & Study Centre Manager

Sue Bealing
Director of Co Curricular Arts

TBC
Performing Arts Facilitator

Erin Reeve
Foundation Manager

Caroline Fletcher
After school care

Boarding staff

Julia Hipkins
Day Supervisor

Stacey James
Boarding House Manager
(Middle School – Julius House)

Mary Balsom
Boarding House Manager
(Senior School – Kilburn House)

All staff contacts:

first name.surname@stmargarets.school.nz



General information

After school care

After school care is available for girls in Years 0-8 from 3:00pm–5:30pm, Monday to Friday. It can be utilised on a permanent or casual basis.

We offer after school care as a service to parents and as a way of ensuring that girls are cared for in a safe and stimulating environment.

All Year 0-6 girls who are not collected within 15 minutes of school finishing will be asked to go to the after school care room. After school care is based in the Junior School. Girls are given afternoon tea and are then supervised while they do their homework, as discussed with each parent. They are then free to take part in organised activities or choose their own activity. Please contact Caroline Fletcher for further information: **afterschoolcare@stmargarets.school.nz**.

If a student in **Year 1-8** has a late sports practice, they **must** go to after school care, not be at school in a classroom or breakout space unsupervised.

Assemblies and Chapels

School assemblies and Chapels are held generally twice a week, and are usually taken by the Chaplain (Chapel) and the Heads of School and Executive Principal (Assembly).

Every girl in the school attends and the Anglican character of the College is maintained in the readings, prayers and hymns.

Attendance and absence

The school day is as follows:

Year 0-3 8:25am – 3:00pm
Year 4-13 8:25am – 3:30pm

On Wednesday, classes finish at 2:30pm for sport for Year 9-13. Year 0-8 finish at 3:00pm on Wednesday.

Absence – unexpected

Girls are expected to attend school punctually and consistently. Rolls are marked regularly throughout the day and all absences must be accounted for. **Parents are asked to submit their daughter's absence via SchoolBridge, our College app, before 8:30am if their daughter will be absent. Alternatively they can call the school absence line on 353 2560 extension 1 or email absences@stmargarets.school.nz**.

Illness

Girls who become ill at school **go to the School Office first**. They are then sent to the Health Centre, staffed by a registered nurse, where parents may be contacted to come and collect their daughter. Girls may not go home without a clear understanding between parent and school that the parent accepts responsibility for the sick student.

A longer illness (three days or more) requires a medical certificate for students in Years 11–13 to be provided via email to absences@stmargarets.school.nz

If the girl has a formal assessment due, they must follow the specific process with the Deputy Head of Senior School (Academic) outlined in the Assessment Handbook.

If parents are aware that a prolonged absence due to illness is likely, notification must be given as soon as possible in writing to the relevant Head of School.

Lateness

If a girl arrives at school after 8:25am she MUST report to the School Office and sign in.

Girls who are late for any class must present a late slip to the teacher when they arrive. The slip should state the reason for being late and be signed by a staff member.

Leave

Requests for leave for one day or longer for family, independent sporting events or other reasons should be made to the appropriate Head of School by email, well in advance. We value student attendance and wish to support students' learning by asking parents to avoid extended family trips or days away from school except for exceptional circumstances or illness. Senior students assessments cannot be rescheduled unless the absence is for illness, bereavement or sports representation. See the Assessment Handbook.

Year 7-13 students who arrange to be away for more than one day need to contact all of their teachers beforehand to find out what work they will need to catch up on. For longer periods of time, an 'Out of School Learning' schedule form must be completed prior to the absence and signed off by teachers that the work has been completed within a specified time.

Leave during the school day

It is essential that we know the whereabouts of all students during the school day. No student may leave the school grounds unless a note from a parent or an appointment card has been given to the student's **tutor** who will issue her with a sign-out pass. The student must sign out at the School Office where she presents her **sign-out pass** to office staff. She must sign in on her return. We expect, where possible, that all appointments be made outside school time.

Wilful absence

Wilful absence or truanting results in a school detention. This may take place in a supervised lunchtime or after school depending on the gravity of the offence. Failure to attend will result in further action.

Reporting

If student attendance drops below 85%, learning and achievement can be affected. Parents will be notified regularly if attendance is below this national threshold.

Ministry of Education guidelines also require schools to act and notify parents when unjustified absences reach five days in a term.

Bicycles / Scooters

Bicycles and scooters are to be kept in the lock up area near the school pool and **must** be locked. Please make sure your daughter has a suitable lock and encourage her to lock her helmet to her bicycle/ scooter. For safety reasons girls may not ride in or out of the gates or through the grounds on any bike, scooter or skateboard.

Cafeteria / Dining room

The school cafeteria is located in the Kilburn Dining Room and students from Year 7-11 may eat there at interval and lunchtime or in another designated area. Girls may either choose from a wide range of reasonably priced and well-balanced foods or bring their own food to eat in the cafeteria. Students and families may order lunch on the Kindo app before 9am.

Payment can also be made by means of a barcode on the student's personal ID card (see ID Cards) and cafeteria accounts are sent out to parents each month. Please ensure that cards are well looked after. Students who do not present their ID cards cannot make purchases.

Career pathways

A regular programme of careers awareness runs from Year 10 to Year 13 and our Career Pathways Facilitator and Advisor provides girls with extensive advisory and information resources and arranges visiting speakers, careers symposia and trips to tertiary institutions and employers. She assists girls to produce high-quality curriculum vitae. Further careers education is given through the Life Skills Programme in Years 11-13.

The Careers Pathways Facilitator is happy to meet with parents and their daughters to discuss career options. Appointments may be made through your daughter or by ringing or emailing them directly. Current relevant information on courses and careers is published in the careers newsletter. Sign up here:



Cars

Girls who have a particular reason e.g. live a considerable distance from school, may drive to school. Daygirls may not park inside the school grounds or in key drop-off areas for parents. Other girls may be transported only if the driver has a full licence and they have written permission from their parents and the parents of the driver. This includes transport to and from all sports events. Girls are required to adhere to the parking restrictions around the school and respect our neighbours' driveways.

Students driving to school are to register their car registration (plate) and licence type with Deputy Head of Senior School (Student Care).

Parents who are delivering or collecting girls at the Winchester Street gates, should be aware of the **congestion and danger** that often exists before and after school and every care is to be taken. Please do not double park or park across driveways when dropping off or picking up your daughter. Parking wardens regularly patrol surrounding streets. The drop-off zone on Winchester Street is permit only for Preschool and Junior School families. The Papanui Road entrance may only be used by boarding families.

Parents may not drive into the Andover or Tonbridge Street entrances to the school. This is not to be used as a drop off or pick up area for students. These entrances are reserved for staff cars and students with bicycles or scooters.

Changes of address and telephone numbers

The School Office must be notified of changes in address and telephone numbers as soon as they occur.



Emergencies do happen and we need to be able to inform parents immediately as well as ensure all correspondence reaches the correct address.

Updated forms are sent to parents electronically at the beginning of each year, so we would appreciate their completion. Updates can also be made via **stmargarets.school.nz/parent-information**.

Chapel services

Chapel services are an important part of College community life. We gather as a whole school to begin each week. The Community Calendar sets out the dates, times and expected attendance for all Sunday Chapel services.

Being together fosters our community feeling and parents are invited to attend these services supporting their daughters in Chapel life when capacity allows.

During the year there are Eucharist services and other forms of worship in the Chapel including compulsory Sunday evening services, Chapel attendance is recorded for all students. Year 6-13 students must attend five of these services over Terms 1-3 and Year 0-6 must attend three. If one is missed students must negotiate with the Chaplain to attend another service.

Two further Chapel services are marked as compulsory Middle and Senior School events and attendance is compulsory. These are the Founders' Day Service and Carol Service.

Connecting with our community

Communicating effectively with our parents and caregivers is of the utmost importance. Key sources of information are as follows:

Calendar of events

The Events Calendar is available via SchoolBridge and KAMAR. This is as accurate as possible at the time of publication but may change from time to time as notified in the newsletter. Please continue to check the calendar regularly as it is updated throughout the term.

School newsletter

Updates are also provided in the SMC Newsletter from **communications@stmargarets.school.nz**. This is circulated once per fortnight.

SchoolBridge

Our parent portal, SchoolBridge, contains a wealth of information

for students and parents and can be accessed via the SMC website or app. Information available includes:

- **Events calendar** – upcoming school events
- **Permission slips**
- **Parent - teacher interview bookings**
- **Curriculum information**

Email

Notices, letters and interim reports are sent to parents and caregivers by email. It is important that the primary email contact address we have for you is one that you regularly access. Please let the School Office know if you change your email address.

SMC Connect

Our community website **smcconnect.school.nz** lists all upcoming parent and community events, is home to our Foundation Business Directory and publishes regular updates about our alumnae and wider community.

Evergreen

Our Evergreen community magazine is published twice a year and contains news and articles about all aspects of school and alumnae life. A copy of the magazine is sent to all families.

Other communication

The school also communicates with parents through:

- written academic reports
- parent/teacher interviews
- letters, emails and telephone calls
- career information evenings
- curriculum booklets
- curriculum information evenings
- focus evenings

We also share school news and celebrate the efforts and achievements of our girls on the following:

- Facebook – **facebook.com/stmargaretsnz**
- Instagram – **@st_margarets_college**
- LinkedIn – **@st Margarets College, Christchurch, New Zealand**

Parent communication with the school may be:

- by a telephone call, email or letter to relevant staff
- by a telephone call to the School Office, who will direct you to the appropriate person
- by making an appointment with the Executive Principal, Heads of School, Dean, Tutor or classroom teacher
- by requesting a special conference of teachers (through the Dean)
- through communication with the Heads of School requesting leave
- pastoral concerns with your daughter to the Head of Junior School, Deputy Head of Middle or Senior School (student care)
- curriculum questions may be discussed through the Head of Junior School or/ Head of Faculty firstly then Head of Middle School or Deputy Head of Senior School (Academic).

The College communicates with students:

- Year group meetings
- at tutor time daily
- in assemblies
- via daily email notices on Student Notices
- Google Classrooms

SMC App

Parents and students are regularly sent alerts regarding key events through the SchoolBridge App. It is also a handy source of information on your mobile. The App will also be used to alert parents in the case of an emergency. The App can be downloaded by searching for **SchoolBridge** in the App Store or Google Play. Please ensure your daughter's year group is correct and notifications are switched on.

SMC News

The latest news and events can be found on the SMC website: **www.stmargarets.school.nz**

The SMC Newsletter is emailed to families every second Thursday during term time. Junior School parents also receive a weekly newsletter each Friday during term time. Please let the School Office know if you change your email address.

We like to acknowledge the girls' efforts and achievements both inside and outside the school.

Please scan these QR codes to see the submission forms.

Arts submission form

Sport submission form

Text / Emergency communication

Text messages to parents and caregivers are reserved for emergencies or particular information. In the case of an emergency, a text message will be sent to each student's primary caregiver. It is vital that we have the correct information so please let the School Office know if you change your mobile number, or update your details via: **stmargarets.school.nz/parent-information**.

Website

The St Margaret's College website **www.stmargarets.school.nz** is updated regularly and contains information about many aspects of the College. During an emergency, the website is a key source of information. Emergency messages will be displayed prominently and updates will be posted as they come to hand. Visit the Parent Information tab along the horizontal menu for parent resources.

Parent Community Involvement

Cultivating connections

St Margaret's College has a strong and active community of parents,

caregivers, alumnae and supporters who contribute to school life in meaningful ways. The Parents and Friends Association, the Old Girls' Association and the Foundation each play a distinct role, but all three share the same commitment to the College and the girls it serves. If your family is new to St Margaret's, or you would like to be more closely involved in school life, this guide is a good place to start.

Our St Margaret's Community

The Parents and Friends Association comprises current parents, caregivers and friends of the College. The PFA's mission is friend-raising rather than fundraising and it is focused on promoting and nurturing positive connections for parents and whānau in an active, inclusive community. PFA members organise and host events throughout the year in support of community building, and hold informal meetings and catch-ups twice per term.

The St Margaret's College Foundation provides sustainable financial support to the College, drawing on the generosity of current and past parents, alumnae and friends of St Margarets. The Foundation is committed to generating and stewarding funds that enable the College to continue its history of excellence, and hosts a number of events throughout the year for the community, including the Foundation Spring Lunch.

The Old Girls' Association brings together St Margaret's alumnae, nurturing connections from the past, enriching the present and inspiring the future. The Association hosts events for alumnae on campus and globally, as well as for current students through the Career Bytes programme, and is responsible for the Leavers' Ball, a celebration for families at the end of their daughter's Year 13.

Getting involved

Whether you have five minutes, a few hours, or a talent you are happy to share, there are many ways to get involved in life at St Margaret's.

Join the PFA

The Parents' and Friends' Association is one of the easiest ways to become more connected with the school community.

Through the PFA, parents can:

- Meet other parents across year levels
- Support school events and community initiatives
- Help with friend-raising activities
- Contribute ideas, energy and practical support
- Be part of a welcoming group that helps bring people together

You do not need to have lots of spare time or previous experience. The PFA welcomes parents who can help regularly, occasionally, or simply turn up when they can.

Come along to community events

School events are a great way to meet other families, connect with staff, and feel part of the wider St Margaret's whānau.

Look out for:

- Year group social events for parents
- Community gatherings for regional families
- Family breakfasts by age group
- Annual Family Picnic
- The St Margaret's College Foundation Spring Lunch
- Special awards assemblies
- Sunday Chapels

Get involved in learning and parent education

There are opportunities throughout the year for parents to engage with the learning journey and hear from experts in areas that matter to young people and families.

These may include:

- Parent Education Series events with external speakers
- Curriculum information sessions
- Future-focused education conversations, such as Year group orientation and information sessions

These events help parents better understand the world our girls are growing up in, and how school and home can work together to support them.

Support sport

Sport is a huge part of life at St Margaret's, and parent support makes an enormous difference.

Ways to help include:

- Managing a sports team for weekly games, tournaments, or one-off events
- Assisting at ISSA Zone and Canterbury events
- Coaching a team
- Helping with transport or carpooling to games
- Supporting from the sidelines
- Assisting with team communication
- Encouraging girls to give things a go

You can also come along and support major school sporting events such as:

- Athletics Day
- Cross Country
- Winter and summer sports fixtures
- Tournament days and finals

Celebrate the performing arts

The performing arts bring our community together in some of the most memorable moments of the school year.

Key events include:

- Performing Arts Showcase
- Twilight Concert
- Annual school productions
- Music, dance and drama performances
- Theatre Dance Academy events

Become a homestay host

By hosting an international student, our families can build strong connections and lasting friendships with students from overseas who are studying at St Margaret's, while sharing with them the very best of Kiwi culture. Homestays can be long or short term, full time or select weekends.

Share your skills, time or networks

Our parent community includes people with a wide range of experience, ideas and connections.

You might be able to help by:

- Speaking at a parent or student event
- Sharing career or industry knowledge
- Supporting a learning opportunity
- Helping welcome new families through the PFA
- Connecting the school with community opportunities

However you choose to engage, your presence helps strengthen the sense of community that makes St Margaret's special.

If you would like to hear more about any of these opportunities, please contact us: **connect@stmargarets.school.nz**

Complaints / Concerns

If parents have a query or concern over fees, cafeteria charges, or other charges the Finance Office can help.

If the issue concerns their daughter's property, locker, attendance pattern or a general school problem, including relationship issues between students, parents should speak to or email the tutor initially.

Academic concerns should be discussed with the teacher in the first instance. If further follow up is required then the tutor, dean, Head of Faculty or Deputy Heads of School can be approached.

Parents are always welcome to discuss their concerns with the tutor in the first instance.

Curriculum evenings

Our introduction to Senior School Evening takes place at the beginning of Term 1 for families with daughters in Year 11 and 12. It covers our Year 11 curriculum, the Senior School Foundation Diploma, or dual pathway of National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) and the International Baccalaureate (IB) and the culture and expectations we hold for our students.



Our Dual Pathways event is held in Term 2 and provides students and parents with information on the National Certificate of Educational Achievement and International Baccalaureate. Senior Learning Pathways evening is held in Term 3 for Y10-12 students and whānau to provide information on subject and career choices for the succeeding year. It is important that parents and girls take full advantage of these opportunities. Senior Learning Pathways information is available via SchoolBridge, this is updated in Term 3. The website outlines course options for the following year for students in Years 11-13, both NCEA and International Baccalaureate.

Damage to property

Girls are expected to take responsibility for any damage they cause and to report it promptly to the School Office. Repairs for substantial damage caused by careless behaviour will be charged to the student. The student herself will repair minor damage, wherever possible. Lost or damaged books or equipment must be paid for.

Deadlines

When students are given major assignments, research projects or other work to be assessed, a firm time and date is set for the work to be handed in. Unless an extension of time is requested, and agreed to by the Deputy Head of Middle or Senior School (Academic), the deadline must be met.

Year 11, 12 and 13 students will be issued with an Assessment Handbook at the beginning of the year outlining the school policy.

Deans

Deans assist the work of the tutors and provide further support for students through their pastoral care role. They also form a contact between the tutors, the Deputy Heads of School and the Heads of School.

Year 7 & 8 Dean
Mrs Lucy Mackie

Year 9 Dean
Mrs Amanda Surridge

Year 10 Dean
Miss Gabby Farrar-de Wagt

Year 11 Dean
Mr Nick Ryan

Year 12 Dean
David Thompson

Year 13 Dean
Mrs Helen MacDonald

The first point of contact should always be with your daughter's tutor.

Discipline

Implementing a discipline procedure requires all staff to be involved, consistent and committed. To promote a positive learning environment and ensure optimal learning conditions, all students must be aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Students have the right to:

- be respected as individuals
- have organised and competent teachers
- have homework and assignments given out with appropriate notice

Students **must** meet the expectations of:

- arriving at class punctually with ALL necessary learning materials
- being prepared to listen and learn
- being courteous and obeying instructions
- respecting staff, students, their work and property
- mobile phones to be switched off and left in bags/lockers gate to gate, from 7:30am–4:30pm.

Should the learning of students be disrupted then discipline procedures will be as follows:

Withdrawal for serious breaches of behaviour

The teacher will inform the tutor and the dean in the first instance, enlisting their help. Parents may be contacted. If the student persists in misbehaving she will be warned that if the behaviour continues she will be withdrawn from class to work on her own under supervision. She will also be required to attend a lunch time detention the same week.

If she is removed from class, she is to report immediately to the School Office.

Re-admittance to the class must be negotiated between the teacher and/or dean and the student prior to the next lesson.

Any subsequent withdrawal will result in an after school detention. Parents will be notified and a behavioural agreement may be implemented.

There is no tolerance for physical violence or serious breaches of behaviour.

Daily Report Forms are available for girls who are persistently misbehaving or not working well in class. The dean organises this, in collaboration with the tutor.

Detentions are used for lack of punctuality, incorrect uniform and behaviour issues. Students must report to the specified place at lunch time or immediately after school. Failure to report at this time or continual offending will result in a family meeting and a possible behaviour agreement or further consequences.

Uniform: Staff may give a detention for incorrect uniform. For persistent offences parents will be contacted and girls sent home to change. Class time missed will be made up in an after school detention.



Disrespect of staff or student: Immediate referral to the dean. Parents will be contacted.

Jewellery: Confiscated and kept in the School Office. In the first instance, jewellery is held until the end of the week. In the second instance the school will hold jewellery until the end of term (see Uniform).

Mobile phones: Please refer to the mobile phone section later in this handbook.

End of year activities

(See also Special Occasions)

Senior external examinations, both NCEA and International Baccalaureate, are held from October to December. All examinations are held at school. Year 12 and 13 usually have study leave for three or four days immediately before their external exams and do not attend school again except to return books and clear lockers on Sign Out Day and to attend the Carol Service and Prizegiving (including practices).

Year 0-11 continue classes until school finishes.

Founders' Day Service

Founders' Day takes place at the end of Term 3. It is a celebration of our founders and our Anglican values.

Carol Service and Prizegiving is compulsory and full formal uniform with blazer must be worn. Please see the Uniform Handbook.

Fees

Tuition and boarding fees are determined on an annual basis and communicated via a letter from the Trust Board Chair each December, together with updates to the College terms and conditions.

Payment options are available and details can be obtained from the College's Finance Office.

Additional sundry expenses (cafeteria, stationery, school trips etc.) are invoiced monthly on a separate account and paid by direct debit.

Health and safety

We have robust processes in place for managing the health and safety of our community while they are on our campus and under our care.

We conduct periodic Hazard Hunts, and staff are required to report hazards and incidents immediately, including via the PeopleSafe app and to members of our Health & Safety Committee. Should parents and caregivers note any hazards or incidents while on campus, or while participating in or watching a College activity, we ask them to report them by calling our Reception or emailing admin@stmargarets.school.nz.

Health and Wellness Centre

The Health and Wellness Centre is located in Warren House (at the Papanui Road end of the campus) and is staffed by a qualified nurse, three counsellors, and a physiotherapist twice a week. Appointments for boarders to see a doctor at a local medical centre can also be made.

Girls who feel ill at school must report to the School Office first. They are then sent to the Health Centre where their condition is assessed and parents may be contacted to come and collect their daughter. **Girls may not go home** without communication between the parent and school nurse to ensure that the parent accepts responsibility for the sick student.

Students may make appointments with the College nurse or the counsellors to discuss any health issues, social issues or other queries and issues of concern (see also pastoral care/wellbeing).

Homework

Homework is set at the discretion of the teacher and will vary according to year level and subject choices. It is a part of learning and should reinforce classroom teaching. All Middle and Senior School students are required to have a diary either in hard copy or digital. Middle (Year 7-8) a hard copy, Senior (Year 9-13) either.

Senior School (Years 11-13)

The aim is to encourage all students to be individually responsible for their own learning. Time spent on homework tasks will vary. Students must learn to manage their commitments and deadlines so that some balance is maintained between school and family, other interests, co-curricular activities and relaxation. Details regarding assessment and policy for lateness of work are outlined in the Assessment Student Handbook.

Middle School (Years 7-10)

Tasks will be clearly defined by teachers, including due date, format and expectations. Tutors will discuss time management with all students early in Term 1 and encourage and monitor desirable homework patterns and routines. Routines must be

established so that all students learn to organise themselves and take responsibility for their own learning. Core and optional subjects may have homework three nights per week.

Junior School (Years 0-6)

In the Junior School, home learning is seen as a way to consolidate classroom learning, build confidence and develop automaticity in fundamental skills. Junior School students are expected to spend time every day on home learning which is appropriate for their age group. Teachers will give guidance on this at the beginning of the year at our Meet the Teacher event. Homework will include some required daily practice of maths facts, sound packs, spelling, personal reading etc, and may include some optional topics being explored at school.

Homework lapses

Homework requirements not completed will be followed up:

a) The class teacher discusses non-completion of homework with the student in the first instance. If there is a genuine reason, supported by a note from parents or the Boarding House Manager, a reasonable time to complete the task will be negotiated.

b) For persistent non-compliance

- the student will be referred to the Head of Faculty or Curriculum Leader and the Tutor will be notified. A lunch time detention or an after-school detention may apply. Parents will be informed. This will take precedence over all other commitments.
- if the tutor has received information about homework lapses from more than one subject teacher, the tutor will check with all teachers to see if a pattern is emerging. Parents will be invited to meet with their daughter, the tutor and/or the dean.
- if the behaviour continues it becomes a discipline issue and is referred to the dean.

Honours

Excellence in arts, sports and academic work is recognised by the award of a Pocket or Silver Tie, which is a prerequisite for Honours.

Outstanding performance at regional level or above, as well as service in that activity, is generally required for an Honours Blazer (red blazer). Awards criteria are available via SchoolBridge.






House system

There are six Houses at SMC – Kōnini (purple), Kōwhai (yellow), Mānuka (white), Matipo (brown), Rātā (red) and Rimu (green). Houses foster a sense of belonging, fun and friendly rivalry and further encourage the integration of students vertically from Year 0-13.

There is a House Prefect who is supported by a teacher in charge of each House and a council of Year 12 and 13 students. House meetings are held regularly to encourage participation in cultural and sporting events.

House events

We hold several calendared House events throughout the year including Athletics Day and Swimming Sports in Term 1, and Cross Country and House Day in Term 2.

Houses also engage in a number of informal, friendly competitions throughout the year, including House planting, and sustainability initiatives.

Here is an overview of the major House events. Further information will be provided to students and their families in advance of these events.

Athletics Day

Athletics Day is our first House competition of the year, and takes place early in Term 1. It is held at Ngā Puna Wai and whānau are welcome to join us. It is an opportunity for the girls to have fun as a House, try a few athletics events, and if they wish, compete for qualification to the Canterbury Secondary Schools Athletics events.

Boarders are transported to the event by bus, and day families can choose to take their daughter directly to Ngā Puna Wai or register her to travel by bus.

Girls wear their SMC tracksuit or their House colours. They are expected to compete in at least one track and one field event. A schedule is shared with students in advance and girls are asked to meet at their chosen event at the appointed time - there is no advance sign up.

House Swimming

Also held in Term 1, on campus in the school pool, this is another opportunity for the girls to compete in informal, fun races, or to compete for qualification at the Canterbury level as part of a half day competition for each School.

Girls can dress in their House colours, with their swimming costumes. Swimming hats are required, and are available in House colours from Maggie's Uniform Shop.

Due to capacity constraints around the pool, parents do not generally attend the Middle and Senior events.

Cross Country

This event is held at the beginning of Term 2, in Hagley Park. Middle and Senior School girls are walked to and from the park in tutor groups, while Junior School girls walk in their classes. Middle and Senior School students arrive to school in their day uniform and change into PE gear or their House colours before leaving campus. Junior School girls may attend school in their PE kits or House colours.

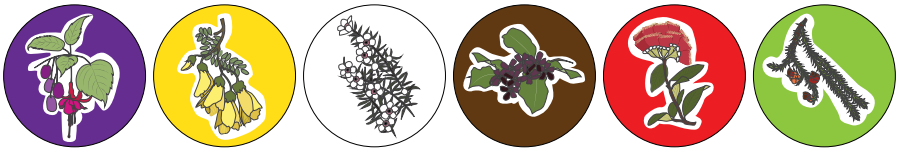
Whānau are welcome to attend. The event is held at North Hagley Park, at the Carlton Corner.

House Day

Also held in Term 2, House Day is a full day of activities, culminating in our House Plays. The girls spend the morning competing across a range of competitions, from sports games, to arts challenges, to puzzles, before joining together for their House Plays.

Girls wear House colours and may be asked to bring an alternative costume to wear for their House Play performance.

Unfortunately families are not able to join us for House Day due to capacity constraints.



ID cards

Every girl in the school must have a personal SMC ID card, complete with her photograph. These cards can be used in the cafeteria to purchase food and drink, in the library, and at Maggie's Shop for purchasing stationery, uniform and other items. It is essential that the girls take great care of them as purchases or book loans cannot be made without an ID card. Year 0-6 teachers take care of these for Junior School students.

Parents are able to regulate the amount spent in the cafeteria by contacting the School Office. If a girl loses or damages her card it can be reissued at a cost. If a further card needs to be issued within the same year, an authorisation note from parents is required and charged to the student's account.

If a card is forgotten, a temporary card can be obtained from the School Office. Temporary cards can only be used three times per term and are held by the school.

IT support desk

The IT Support desk is located in the Library/Study Centre. Help is available for all technology-related issues.

Leaving procedures and testimonials

The parents of students who intend to leave school must give a **Term's notice** in writing to the Executive Principal.

Please see specific Terms and Conditions for withdrawal from Boarding.

Testimonials and references

Full school testimonials are provided for girls who complete their school careers at SMC. Girls are urged to fill out application forms and nominate three teachers well in advance of their leaving date. All information is then forwarded to their tutor. Graduation certificates are issued when a girl completes her school career at SMC. Girls who transfer to another school are not eligible for a full school testimonial or for a graduation certificate.

Staff have discretion to provide private character references, but not under official school letterhead, except in special circumstances approved by the Executive Principal.

Library and Study Centre

The Library and Study Centre is open for all students from 8:00am until 5:00pm, Monday to Thursday and 8:00am until 4:30pm on Friday. It is staffed by a trained library team and includes facilities for photocopying, computing, email and internet. Girls may come and browse our books or use the reference and study facilities to research homework assignments at lunchtime or after school. The Centre also provides extensive online resources located on SMC Live, including links to online databases, a referencing tool, blogs and more.

Lockers

Every girl in Years 7-11 is assigned a locker for her sports gear, books and lunch. It is essential that she provide her **own lock and key** from the first day of Term 1.

Lost property

Lost property is placed into the school lost property at Maggie's Shop. This is available Monday – Friday between 10:00am – 4:00pm in Term time. A list of named gear held in Lost Property is published regularly on Student Notices. Any items still unclaimed at the end of the term are donated to charity or disposed of. Small items of value (e.g. watches, glasses, jewellery) are held in the School Office.

Parents should encourage their daughter to take every precaution to keep her belongings safe. All personal belongings and equipment including clothing, sports shoes, laptops, bike helmets and sports bags **must be named.**

Maggie's Shop and Café

Maggie's Shop is situated at the Winchester Street entrance to the College. The Shop is open 10:00am–4:00pm and the café 7:45am–4:00pm during term time and at special times in the holidays.

The shop accepts eftpos or cash as preferred payment options. Students may charge items to parents' accounts, using their student ID card.

The shop stocks all new school and sports uniforms, pre-loved uniform items of good quality, stationery, computing and subject specific needs, tickets, toiletries, sundries, Old Girls' and SMC merchandise and more. Maggie's Shop also handles items of lost property.

Maggie's Cafe is open to the community. Only Year 13 students may use the cafe during the school day.

Mobile phones

We are committed to valuing and protecting the school day as a time for students to engage with teaching and learning, and encourage our girls to connect with each other and with the wider life of the school.

- With this as our desired outcome, there are controls in place around the use of mobile phones during the school day so these devices do not interfere with school life.
- These controls are to be observed gate to gate between 7:30am and 4:30pm on school days, as well as special school events (e.g. Founders' Day, Sunday Chapel services, Prizegiving).
- Mobile phones are to be kept at home, in lockers or in school bags, not carried on the person (i.e. not in pockets or blazers).

- Phones brought to school should be switched off during the school day.
- These controls are also in place during examination periods.

If there is an urgent need for communication that cannot wait until the end of the school day, students and parents can make contact through the School Office.

Should a mobile phone be visible during the school day, in contravention of these guidelines, there will be the following consequences.

First time, the phone will be confiscated, labeled and held in the office until the end of the school day. Parents will be emailed to advise of the student breach and notified that a further infraction will require that they collect the phone. At the end of the school day, the phone may be collected by the student, though it will be handed back to the School Office the following day and held safely there for the day.

Second time, the phone will be confiscated, labeled and held in the office. Parents will be called to advise of the student's second breach and asked to collect the phone at their soonest convenience. For our boarding families, a member of the Boarding House team can collect it at the end of the day. Phones will stay at home or be handed back to the School Office for the following two days for students to collect at the end of each day.

Third time, further consequences will be applied should a student be found to be in breach of these mobile phone restrictions a third time, this could include afternoon detention, and a meeting with the student, her parents (by phone with boarding parents), and a Head of School.

There are many social, emotional and academic benefits to be realised for our girls from greater controls around mobile phone access during the school day, so we appreciate to the support of our community to establish these expectations at SMC.

Money

We discourage girls from bringing large amounts of money to school. We recommend any girl with money should **lodge it at the School Office** for safekeeping. We cannot be responsible for money left in classrooms, bags, lockers or changing rooms. Please encourage your daughter to be prudent.

Non-school activities in school time

All appointments for doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, driving instructors and driving tests etc. must be made outside school hours where possible. If it is absolutely essential to leave school during the day, a student must sign out and sign back in at the School Office.

An appointment card or written parental permission must be given to her tutor at tutor time who will then issue the students with a sign-out pass to be given to office staff at the time of signing out.

Pastoral care and wellbeing

The pastoral care of every student is given high priority at SMC. A network of staff work together to ensure the wellbeing and safety of every student.

Year 0-6 students are under the care of their classroom teacher. Students in Year 7-10 and 11-13 belong to vertical groups of students, under the care of a Tutor. (See Tutor System).

The **Tutor Teacher** is the first point of contact for parents should they have any queries about their daughter's progress or welfare.

Early in the year, parents and their daughter meet with their tutor to set goals for the year.

Other staff who also provide support to students include class teachers, Learning Enhancement staff, Heads of Faculty, the Dean, Chaplain, Counsellors, School Nurse, Boarding House Manager, Careers Facilitator, International Student Manager, and Heads and Deputy Heads of Junior, Middle and Senior Schools.

Trained counsellors are available to girls and parents as required and are based in the Health Centre. Students needing to see the school Nurse must first visit Reception for a Health Centre pass.

What is Counselling at SMC?

- Professional and confidential counselling service for all students and staff during term time.
- Promoting healthy communication between families, peers, and staff.
- Mediation and restorative practices.
- Identifying students at risk and providing the appropriate support.
- Providing opportunities to resolve issues in relationships.
- Ensuring all services are accessible for all students.

Wellbeing at SMC



Liz Baynes
Counsellor



Kate Gardner
Counsellor



Miriam Poh
Counsellor

Who?

There are three qualified counsellors located at the SMC Heath Centre.

Where?

The Health Centre is located at the Papanui side of the school, nestled beside Julius boarding house and behind St Mark's Chapel.

When?

Counselling is available by appointment, however Counsellors will make themselves available at short notice if urgent, whenever you need a confidential person to talk to about anything which is causing you concern. Eg. low mood, family, grief loss, peer group issues or academic stress.

How?

Students can complete a self-referral form via SchoolBridge. Parents can make an appointment by emailing their daughter's Dean or emailing counsellors direct via **counsellor@stmargarets.school.nz**.

Why?

Talking to a person you can trust really helps. Counsellors are confidential, non judgemental, and open minded. Counsellors are trained to help people find a way to solve their problems and move forward in their lives.

For students and staff

How to contact a counsellor at SMC

• Visit SchoolBridge and click on Counsellors to fill in the referral form.
• You will receive an auto reply.
• A counsellor will then make contact via email and schedule an appointment.

Initial intake appointment

• Risk assessment
• Introduction explanations
• Confidentiality explained
• Plan made for moving forward.

Who needs to know

• With consent from young person, liaise with parents and/or external supports such as boarding house/external agencies.

Options discussed

• For short term individual counsellings plan 1-3-6 sessions
• Assessment and goalsetting in every session.

Further support

• If the student needs further support then the counsellor may recommend GP referral to outside agencies.

For parents / caregivers

How can I speak with a counsellor?

Contact your daughter's Dean or contact the team via **counsellor@stmargarets.school.nz** and a counsellor will make contact to arrange a phone or face to face appointment. The counsellor will explain how counselling works, including confidentiality.

How can I make an appointment for my child?

To make an appointment for your child, contact **counsellor@stmargarets.school.nz**.

PFA

The Parents' & Friends' Association (PFA) promotes and nurtures positive connections for parents and whānau. It is a great way to get involved with the College community, helping organise events and to friend raise rather than fund raise. Meetings are twice a term and everyone is welcome.

The PFA also supports the school's parent education series, booking experts in their field to share their insights with respect to common parenting challenges.

More details and upcoming events are available on SMC Connect, and in the newsletter.

School Office

The School Office is located in Winchester North. The office is open from 8:00am until 4:30pm. Contact details are on the inside cover page of this handbook. The office is staffed by a Receptionist, Administrators and the School Secretary. The Admissions Manager is also in the main School Office.

The Executive Principal's Executive Assistant may be reached on (03) 363 1902 between the hours of 8:00am and 4:30pm.

Finance staff are located in the Finance Office, 1st floor of Winchester North.

Community Relations Office, the Foundation and the Old Girls' Association Office are all located at 28 Winchester Street.

School policy on alcohol, smoking / vaping and drugs

SMC is a smoke and vape free school as required by the Ministry of Education. The school has a Health Education programme which considers all aspects of alcohol and drug prevention education. One of its aims is to help students establish and practise responsible behaviour. The College also has a policy with regard to what is acceptable when girls are under the jurisdiction of the school – that is, whenever they are in uniform, on outings, field trips, sports trips and other similar occasions. These rules apply to boarders at all times when they are under the jurisdiction of the Boarding School and includes all outings except when with parents. Professional help from a counsellor, nurse or other agencies will be available to any student requiring it for any alcohol, drug or smoking/vaping problem. The school policy on alcohol, drugs and smoking/vaping is as follows:

Alcohol

In accordance with the present law, no girl may buy or be in possession of, or under the influence of, alcohol while on school grounds, during school time or at school events.

Smoking/Vaping

The possession of tobacco, cigarettes or e-cigarettes (vaping equipment) is illegal for under 18, as is smoking or vaping. Any breach while on school grounds, during school time or at school events will be regarded as a serious offence and will result in disciplinary action. Parents will be informed. The entire SMC property is smoke and vape free.

Drugs

The possession of, or taking of, any drugs other than on medical prescription, is forbidden. Any involvement at any time will be treated very seriously. Appropriate parties will be informed. Drug testing may be required when use is suspected. From time to time drug searches may be carried out through the school.

School trips

Camps

Term 1 – Year 7 and Year 9 Camp, Year 12 IB Camp.

Term 2/3 – Year 12 Leadership Retreat, Year 7 and 8 Big Day Out, Year 8 Camp, Year 11 and 12 Personal Development Days

Term 4 – Year 10 Camp, Year 11 Diploma Days, Year 4-6 Camps, Year 9 Surf Days.

Cultural trips

Cultural trips are occasionally organised to Japan, a French-speaking country, Vietnam, Greece, Italy, or the USA. Students have the opportunity of participating in exchange schemes organised by the school. Different year groups may visit a local marae.

Exchanges

We offer a number of exchanges to our students throughout the year, as well as the opportunity for families to host our overseas exchange students in their homes. These exchanges help form life-long friendships, treasured memories and foster global understanding.

School trips

Field trips are a regular part of study in many subjects such as geography, biology and physical education. In the Middle School in ENSS, and the Junior School in the Inquiry topics. If overnight is involved parents will be asked for consent. If the school trip impacts on the learning in other areas, parents will be notified.

Sports trips

Sports trips are an integral part of inter-school competition, particularly in rowing, hockey and netball. Teams also take part in the Quadrangular Tournaments with sister schools.



St Margaret's College Foundation

The Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the school and a stand-alone charitable trust. It provides financial security for the school's future, as well as supporting a range of initiatives that ensure generations of girls have the opportunity to thrive.

There are many ways to support The Foundation with further information on smcconnect.school.nz or by contacting the Foundation Manager.

Special occasions

There are three special occasions that are compulsory for students to attend:

- Founders' Day Service held in the evening (Year 6-13) in Term 3.
- Carol Services are in the last week of the school year. Parents are warmly invited to attend.
- Prizegiving ceremonies are held for Senior, Middle and Junior Schools, at the end of Term 4. Parents are warmly invited to attend.
- For all these occasions formal uniform must be worn.

Sunday Chapel is held regularly throughout the year, in the Chapel or Transitional Cathedral and parents are warmly welcomed. Other services are notified in the Term Calendar.

Speech and drama

Students may take private speech and drama lessons with visiting teachers and many girls are entered for the examinations held by Trinity

College, London or the New Zealand Speech Board.

Lessons are timetabled to minimise disruption to academic classes. Refer to the Arts Handbook for further information.

Sports

Girls may play a wide variety of sports at school and compete in competitions. Basic training in most sports is available in the school sports education programme and specialist coaches provide more advanced coaching. Full details are available in the Sports Handbook.

The school has tennis and netball courts, a hockey turf, a cricket net, a heated swimming pool and a well equipped gymnasium, including a fitness centre and rowing centre.

SMC has a Fitness Co-ordinator and girls are encouraged to have an individual fitness programme prepared. The Fitness Co-ordinator also organises fitness programmes for girls in the top teams for some codes.

The Student Sports Council, a group of Year 12 and 13 students, is very active in helping organise all sport in the school.

Stationery

Stationery lists are published on the website under Parent Information. Stationery can be ordered online via the OfficeMax MySchool website. Stationery purchases may be made throughout the year from Maggie's Shop.

Year 7-13 are encouraged to have a diary, hard copy or digital, to aid time management, homework and other commitments.

Student achievement

Academic

Academic progress is rewarded during the year by the presentation of Academic Bars to recognise achievement and effort. As relatively few are given, they are much prized.

Silver Ties are awarded to girls who achieve excellence in Years 11 – 12 in Foundation Diploma, IB or NCEA.

The Gold Academic Excellence Bar recognises students with the highest academic achievement.

The Academic Silver Bar is awarded for academic excellence in the Middle School Prizegiving.

Certificates may be awarded during the year for excellence in a particular area. Honours blazers are awarded for outstanding achievement. Selection is subject to specific criteria.

The Junior School holds termly Celebration Assemblies where achievement and effort are acknowledged.

Cultural

Excellence in the Arts for achievement in dance, theatre, music, debating, public speaking and visual arts is awarded by the presentation of Pockets or Honours blazers. Specific criteria apply.

Sport

Excellence in sport is awarded by the presentation of Pockets and Honours blazers. Specific criteria apply.

Note: Some Year 13 students, who have met the criteria, may have their Honours blazer awarded mid-year. All awards criteria is available via SchoolBridge .

Student courses of study

Full outlines for the Foundation Diploma, the NCEA and International Baccalaureate courses are set out in the curriculum documents for each level, available on SchoolBridge.

Students have the opportunity to enter academic competitions and awards throughout the year, e.g. BrainBee, ICAS. These are organised through curriculum areas.

Student problems and grievances

Students who have any queries or difficulties with their academic work, other students, school commitments, staff expectations or any facet of their school life, should in the first instance discuss the problem with their Tutor who will be able to advise and counsel.

If the grievance persists, the student should approach the Dean or Head of Faculty who may refer the matter to the relevant Heads of School, or the Guidance network. If necessary, a family discussion may be set up or independent advice or counselling sought.

Taxi cards

Taxi cards are only available from the Boarding Houses for the use of boarders or from the Sports Office for the use of sports teams travelling to sporting fixtures.

We expect, where possible, that all appointments be made out of school time. If, however, it is necessary for a daygirl to attend an appointment during school hours it is the responsibility of parents to organise travel to and from the appointment. Taxi cards are not available from the School or Finance Office for daygirls.

We support the use of registered taxis rather than Ubers.

Telephone

The School Office telephone is available to students in an emergency. Urgent telephone messages for students can be left at the office and every endeavour will be made to pass them on.



Tutor system

We strive to recognise potential, develop talent and achieve excellence. This is best accomplished within a 'disciplined environment and a stable, caring, family atmosphere'. We wish to develop and support the personal and special needs of each girl.

An important aspect of SMC's pastoral care is the tutor system. Students in Year 7-10 (Middle School) and Year 11-13 (Senior School) are placed in vertical groupings of students, and a teacher, called the tutor, is responsible for their wellbeing and progress. The Year 13 girls act as the peer support and buddies for the younger girls. Year 0-6 students are under the care of their classroom teacher.

Each tutor group belongs to a House, with four Middle School tutor groups and four Senior tutor groups in each House. Each Middle School tutor group is buddied with a Senior tutor group. There are social interactions between these groups to enhance the Buddy system. The tutors have the support of the deans and the respective Heads of School. Together they ensure a positive learning and social environment for each student.

Girls meet daily in their tutor groups. Early in Term 1, the tutor meets with each student, together with her parent(s) or guardian, to review the previous year and set realistic goals in academic, personal, cultural and sporting areas for the current year. These goals are reviewed by the tutor and student through the year.

The primary role of the Tutor is to oversee the wellbeing and progress of each girl in the tutor group. Any query or concern a parent has should be directed to the tutor in the first instance.

Visitors to the school

Visitors must call and register in the School Office and seek help in facilitating their business. They must sign out on departure.

If parents need to see their daughter for any reason, we would request they go to a member of staff to arrange this, via reception. Please don't walk through the campus informally.

Please note that only service dogs are permitted on campus.

Appointments with the Executive Principal are easily made through the Principal's Executive Assistant or by an email or phone call to a staff member. Parents are most welcome to contact the College at any time.

St Margaret's College

Balanced foundations, bright futures.

12 Winchester Street
Merivale, Christchurch 8014

03 379 2000

stmargarets.school.nz