Heathdale Christian College

Middle and Senior School Handbook
WELCOME TO MIDDLE AND SENIOR SCHOOL

‘Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it’.
Proverbs 22:6

Welcome to Heathdale Christian College Middle and Senior Schools. Middle School incorporates Years 5 to 8 and Senior School Years 9 to 12.

Our two sub schools, which represent important stages of learning, have similar styles of operation with the aim being to maintain a smooth transition from Junior School through to the completion of Year 12.

With this in mind, much consideration is given to the changing needs of students as they develop foundational skills and knowledge and then begin to explore ways of applying these fundamentals to a broad range of applications.

It is also acknowledged that social, spiritual, emotional, cognitive and physical development will occur in students at different rates as they progress towards young adulthood. Therefore it is important to accommodate these differences, not by having differing standards and expectations for individual students, but rather by adjusting the amount of guidance, support and freedom students operate within for their particular stage of progress.

The Middle School has a theme of growing and learning as the students steer a course through the problematic transition years from primary to secondary education. Therefore there is a strong emphasis on building fundamental skills, habits and knowledge that become the foundation for learning. Providing educational challenges and opportunities for personal growth help to provide a smooth ‘bridge of development’ from the Junior School to the Senior School.

Students are encouraged to ‘spread their wings’ as they progress towards the Senior School, while still maintaining the safety of a nurturing and caring learning environment through the use of core teachers and a strong emphasis on the home group system to create a ‘family’ atmosphere for students.

In the Senior School the learning community is progressively expanded as students begin to specialize in particular areas of interest, taking more responsibility for their learning in the process. With the fundamentals in place, students have the opportunity to explore individual interests and broader applications, while maintaining strong social and educational connections.

As young adults, students are encouraged to build their character through the development of self discipline, intrinsic motivation, healthy self image and spiritual growth to best prepare themselves for future educational and vocational opportunities.

What an exciting journey as we partner with parents/guardians in guiding the development of students towards their full potential.

Head of Middle School
Head of Senior School
1. MIDDLE AND SENIOR SCHOOLS

1. CONTACTING THE COLLEGE
Details of requirements regarding contacting the College are outlined in the Whole School Handbook, under College Information.
Should there be issues families wish to discuss with the College, the first contact person should be the staff member involved, such as the teacher.
In most cases, parents/guardians should contact the Home Room teacher first. If that is not possible, the next appropriate contact is the Year Level Coordinator.

2. SCHOOL HOURS

2.1. School Commencement
School commences each day at 8.30 am. Parents/guardians are requested to ensure that children arrive at school in good time, but they should not arrive before 8.10 am, as no staff member is on duty prior to this time.
Lateness is always disappointing and requires significant adjustment and catch up time on behalf of the child and teacher. Please see that students arrive at the College by the appropriate time.

2.2. Arriving Late
Whilst arriving late is not encouraged, we acknowledge that sometimes it is inevitable. Students who arrive after 8.50 am should go straight to the Assistant Principals’ Office, as they must sign in and receive a Late PASS to take to their class teacher.

3. ABSENCES AND SIGNING OUT OF THE COLLEGE
Details of requirements regarding absence from school and leaving school early are outlined in the Whole School Handbook, under Attendance and Absences.
In the event of an emergency, the College must be able to account for everyone on site; therefore students must not leave the College grounds without permission.
Students who are to leave the College during the school hours, must bring a note from their parents/guardians and give it to their Home Room Teacher at the beginning of the day. They are then required to get a yellow Permission To Leave The School slip, signed by either their Home Room Teacher, Year Level Coordinator or an Assistant Principal.
Students must then bring this slip to the Assistant Principals’ Office and sign out prior to actually leaving the College grounds. If applicable, they are to sign back in on the same sheet when they return later in the day.
Following an absence from school, it is the student’s responsibility to find out about any homework or assignments that have been given.

3.1. Becoming Unwell at School
In circumstances where a student becomes unwell or suffers an injury during the course of the school day, they are to inform the appropriate teacher, who will send them to the First Aid Room if necessary.
First Aid Staff will assess the situation, and if it is decided that the student needs to go home, parents/guardians will be contacted to collect their son/daughter.
The student will be given a green Permission To Go Home Sick slip, which then needs to be brought to the Assistant Principals’ Office and given to Administration staff when signing out of the College.

3.2. Year 12 Students
Year 12 students are able to nominate two study periods a cycle in which they would prefer to study at home. These periods will be either at the start of the day where they will be able to arrive at school by Recess at 10.30 am or at the end of the school day where they would be able to leave at lunchtime.
Please note, necessary forms will need to be completed and this privilege is at the discretion of the Year 12 Coordinator.
4. HEALTH AND MEDICATIONS

Further information pertaining to health and medications is provided in the Whole School Handbook, under Health and Medications.

On the offer of a place, families will receive a Family Student Data Form on which parents/guardians will record things that are important for the College to know. It includes a permission slip for parents/guardians to sign giving authority for the administration of the appropriate remedy in an emergency.

When administered to a student with permission, First Aid Staff will record the student’s name, the date and time.

4.1. Medication at School

The College will not administer any pain relief to a Middle or Senior School student, unless prior consent has been given by the parents/guardians, as outlined in the Whole School Handbook, under Health and Medications.

ALL medication will be held in the First Aid Room and be administered ONLY by First Aid Staff. The Administration of Medication Policy is available from our College First Aid Rooms.

No medication or drugs are to be brought onto the College grounds by any student without our First Aid Staff being informed beforehand.

In cases where a Middle or Senior school student is required to take some form of medication, either temporarily or regularly, it is important that parents/guardians inform the College First Aid Staff in writing. Included must be the nature of the medication, the dosage and the reason for taking it.

It is preferable that only the numbers of tablets required for that day, or for the course of the treatment, are provided to the First Aid Staff. Whole bottles of medication are too dangerous in a school environment and not usually necessary. Short term medication can be collected from the First Aid Room at the end of the day.

5. DISCIPLINE

5.1. Merit and Demerit System

The merit and demerit system is for Middle School students only.

Three (3) demerits in one day or more than ten (10) in one semester will result in a detention of 60 minutes duration.

In the case of a homework demerit, the work must still be completed.

5.2. Unfinished Work

Students may be required to complete unfinished work or homework in special lunchtime classes.

5.3. Detentions

A red form gives details of after school and Saturday detentions. It must be signed by parents/guardians and returned to school the day after being received.

Issuing of the form is the only notification regarding these detentions and it is the student’s responsibility to pass it on to their parents/guardians.

Lunch Time Detention

Middle School students may be given a 25 minute detention during lunch time. This is usually given for failure to complete homework or assignments.

After School Detention

After school detentions are 60 minutes in duration. They result from significant behaviour issues or repeated failures in class work or homework. Students are informed early enough to let parents/guardians know that they will be late on a given day, Thursday for Middle School students and Friday for Senior School students.

Please note that after school detentions cannot be served at lunchtime. Usually students who travel by school bus will need to find alternative means of getting home if they are placed on after school detention. In case of difficulty, please contact the relevant Year Level Coordinator.

If a student is unable to attend an after school detention on a given day they must contact the Year Level Coordinator well in advance. They will then attend detention the following week.
Saturday Detention
Students on Saturday detention are to report in uniform to the Assistant Principal's Office at 9.00 am.

5.4. Student Work Cards
Where the conduct of a student becomes a problem, he/she will be required to carry a WORK CARD which must be signed by the class teacher every period of the day to indicate that work and behaviour have been acceptable.
Each afternoon the card must be shown to the student’s Home Room teacher before the student goes home. It must then be taken home and signed by his/her parent, so that the College is confident parents/guardians know what is happening.

5.5. SunSmart
As we are registered as a SunSmart school, during Terms 1 and 4, students must wear their College-approved hats at recess and lunchtime. This can also apply to other times when students are out in the elements for an extended period of time, such as a PE/Sport class. Penalties are enforced for failure to do so.

5.6. Referral for Professional Counselling
It is sometimes recommended that a student is assessed by a child psychologist or a family counsellor. It is usually necessary for the parents/guardians of the child to be involved. The College may be able to assist with identification of suitable counsellors. Charges are met by the parents/guardians.

5.7. Termination of Enrolment
The ultimate sanction available to the College is termination of enrolment. The Principal would consider such action in circumstances involving smoking, possession of cigarettes, alcohol or any prohibited substance, assault, intimidation or bullying, the use of racist, insulting or unseemly language, sexual harassment, persistent failure to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the College, lack of parental support for the College or any other conduct which, in the opinion of the Principal, would jeopardise the safety and/or welfare of staff or students or would tend to bring the College into disrepute.

6. HOMEWORK
6.1. Middle School
In Years 5 and 6, homework should take between 30 and 60 minutes per week night. Homework will be expected in a range of subjects.
In Years 7 and 8, one and a half hours (1½) per week night is expected for homework and revision. At exam times and the week or two before, homework and revision might extend to two (2) hours a night. A general guideline is seven (7) hours per week.

6.2. Senior School
In Years 9 and 10, up to two (2) hours of homework per week night should be expected. At exam times and the week or two before, homework and revision might extend to three (3) hours a night. A general guideline is 10 hours per week.
In Years 11 and 12, Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) students are expected to work for at least 100 hours a semester in each unit of work. This entails about 45 hours of home study, which works out at about five to six (5 to 6) hours per fortnightly cycle per subject.
Students may have sporting, club or work commitments on certain nights. On these nights they may do less work, but it will need to be made up on other nights. Strategies for study are published in the Senior School diary.

7. DIARIES
Students in Middle and Senior Schools are provided with a College diary at the beginning of each school year. Parents/guardians are encouraged to help staff in making the diary a valuable communication tool by writing any notes to teachers in it.
Following an absence from school, it is the student’s duty to find out about any homework or assignments that have been given and record this in their diary. Graffiti on diaries, as on other personal and school property, is forbidden. In Middle School, an objective for each lesson is to be entered into the diary. Details of homework will be copied from the whiteboard to the diary. Merits and demerits are recorded in the diary. It is the student’s responsibility to see that the diary is initialled at least once per week by one of their parents/guardians to confirm they have seen the report of the week’s work. Senior School students are issued with a school diary similar to the Middle School, but with some additional features. The diary is to be used to record homework and assignments.

8. INFORMATION EVENINGS
Our annual Middle School Parent Information Evening is held in early February, the date of which will be advised. A range of information evenings occur throughout the year for Senior School students and the dates will be announced closer to the relevant events. From time to time, special information evenings are held to deal with specific topics. Details and dates will be provided as appropriate.

9. LOCKERS AND SCHOOL BAGS
Students in Middle and Senior School are allocated lockers, located in their Home Room. The maintenance costs are included in the annual Curriculum Support Levy (CSL). Lockers must be kept neat with books stacked tidily and vertically within them. Students are permitted to go to their lockers before school, at recess, at the beginning and end of lunch and at the end of the day. Middle and Senior School bags must be zipped up and neatly arranged on the bag racks provided out the front of the student’s Home Room. They are not taken from classroom to classroom.

10. RESOURCE CENTRE
10.1. Overdue Book Procedure
First and second notices are given to the Home Room teacher who will inform the student of their tardiness. These notices occur when book is 14 to 28 days overdue. The third notice is a letter to parents/guardians advising them of the situation. It will request the immediate return of the book or payment of the cost to replace it, plus $5 accounting fee which is also charged to the family account if the book is not found within 14 days. The notice occurs when book is six (6) weeks overdue. For overdue class set resources, the student is notified of their tardiness via their Home Room teacher. No borrowing of further class set resources until outstanding book is returned. If the resource is one (1) month overdue, the student(s) account will be charged with the replacement cost.
The computer system used by the Resource Centre is user-friendly, but not infallible. If a student genuinely feels they are not responsible for books which are lost or overdue, please contact the staff in the Resource Centre so that they can clarify the situation.

11. CANTEEN
The College canteen operates five (5) days a week during term time as a service to students and their families, as students are not permitted to leave the College grounds to buy their lunch. Middle and Senior School students may order lunch and/or a snack through our canteen ordering system.
12. TRAFFIC SAFETY AND CAR PARK
Details of requirements regarding traffic safety and car park issues are outlined in the Whole School Handbook, under Traffic Safety.

12.1. Student Drivers
Students who are 18 years old and have obtained their licence are allowed to drive cars to school, ONLY AFTER they have registered the car and driver details with the College Principal.
Other students, including siblings, are not permitted to travel with a student driver until a written letter from the student’s parents/guardians is lodged with the College Principal.
Student drivers are to park ONLY in the Werribee Baptist Church car park closer to the church and not in the staff parking area or the main College car parks. Entry to the church is off Heaths Road.
Student drivers are required to observe all safety procedures and precautions outlined in the Whole School Handbook, as per those for parents/guardians.

13. EXCURSIONS
Details of requirements regarding excursions are outlined in the Whole School Handbook, under Excursion Permission Form.
A form each family has been asked to sign upon acceptance of enrolment, gives permission for excursions when students walk from the College, such as to assembly at the Werribee Baptist Church. More specific excursion permission forms will be sent home and must be completed to allow students to leave the College for an excursion via any other kind of transportation.
The College has noted an increasing problem with adherence to this procedure. Please ensure that all consent forms are signed and returned promptly. If students do not have the necessary signed consent they will not be permitted to go on the excursion.
Failure to have the correct excursion uniform may also result in a student not attending. Excursion costs in this instance may be charged.
Failure to have the correct sports uniform for Middle and Senior School sporting trips will also result in a student not being allowed to participate.
The following sports uniform must be worn: official College rugby jumper, tri-colour College polo-shirt, official College tracksuit pants or navy blue sports shorts with red piping down the side. Please refer to the Whole School Handbook, under the Uniform Section. The College sports bag, school bag or plain plastic shopping bags are the only bags acceptable for PE or Sport.

14. CAMPS
The value of camps in Middle School is in the social and personal development sphere, namely in terms of educational, self-confidence/self-reliance, friendship and integration issues.
Camps are held annually for students in Years 5 and 7 and parents/guardians will be notified in advance with relevant details.
Senior School camps take the form of faculty-based camps. The major emphasis of Senior School camps is to extend the range of curriculum learning outcomes and expand the learning experiences for the students. Parents/guardians will be notified well in advance if a camp is to occur.
Year 12 students have a commencement camp at the beginning of the school year. Please note that all camps are billed separately from the annual fees and are not included in the Curriculum Support Levy.

15. YEAR 7 ORIENTATION SESSION
On the last Friday of the Summer school holidays, all Year 7 students are required to attend a special orientation morning, prior to the commencement of the school year. Details will be provided to relevant families closer to the day.