

Information Handbook

Mount Evelyn Christian School

Contents

Parent Partnership	3	Medical Information	13
Partnership at MECS	3	Ambulance	13
Coffee Mornings & Connect Morning Teas	3	Asthma	13
New Parent Dinner	3	Exclusion from school	13
School Communication	4	First Aid	13
Parent/Teacher Meetings	4	Head Lice	13
Student Reports	4	Immunisations	13
Association & Board	5	Student Medication	13
Friends of MECS	5	Exclusion periods for Infectious Diseases	14
Working with Children Check (WWCC)	5	·	
Working Bees	5	School Hours	15
		Student Information	15
General Information	6	Computer Access & Internet	15
Christian Education Seminars	6	Community Service Representative (CSR)	15
School Attendance	6	Devotions	16
Calendars	6	Discipline	16
Camps	6	Electronic Devices	16
After School Care	7		
School Assemblies	7	Inappropriate Language	17
Banned Items	7	Instrumental Music	17
Bicycles	7	Homework	17
Car Parking/ Kiss 'n' Drop	7	Library Resource Centre	17
End of Term	8	Respect for Others	18
Excursions	8	School Wear	18
Visitors	8	Stationery & Text Books	18
Dress Code	8	Student Cars (Senior School Students)	18
Diess Code	O	Student Leaders	19
Dress Guidelines	9	Tribal Sports	19
Bus Information	10	Whole School Map	20
MECS Buses	10	Drimany and Middle Cahael Man	21
Martyrs Bus	10	Primary and Middle School Map	21
Student Conduct & Supervision	10	Senior School Map	22
Students Requiring Temporary Bus Pass	10	•	
Emergency Plan	10		
MECS Emergency Plan	10		
School Closure	10		
Emergency Response	11		
Emergency Communication	11		
Offsite Activities	11		
What to do at home	11		
Financial Information	12		
Fees	12		
-			
Conveyance Allowance Camps, Sport & Excursions (CSEF)	12 12		



Partnership at MECS

We love when parents look for ways to get involved! There are three main ways to be involved in your child's education at MECS.

- 1) The attitude that parents maintain is important. Are you open to building a strong relationship? Are you actively interested in your child's educational program? This involves healthy communication between home and school: reading the correspondence on Compass, communicating with the school when issues arise etc.
- 2) Assist your child as a learner. Are you aware of the learning support your child requires? Do you work in partnership with their teacher to help make their schooling as successful as possible? Can you assist and guide (not do their work for them)? Do they need extra support? Does your child's teacher understand what educational support they need? Parents are key in addressing these things. We desire for parents to work with us when issues arise. We want to work with parents to achieve the best possible outcome for their child. Sometimes this is a bit of a journey to take as children can have complex emotional and academic struggles.
- **3) Practical contribution.** We have a rich history of parent service at our school. Parents can assist in classes, supervise exams, help with camps and excursions, care for our beautiful facilities through working bees or participate in our cook offs to provide meals to families in need. Parents are also encouraged to join the Association, serve on the governing Board, participate in the Friends of MECS group, pay fees on time, attend concerts and events involving your child, read the iNewsletters and interact with teachers.

Parent Morning Teas

Every term, our Community Relations Officer organises delicious morning teas for parents. This is a lovely way to connect with other parents at MECS. We would love to see you for a cuppa and a chat!

New Parent Dinner

Our annual New Parent Dinner is one of the ways we welcome new parents into our community. If you are new to our school community, look out for an invitation to this great event! Come along and meet other new parents, teachers and Board members over a special meal. Invitiations are sent out early each year. This free dinner is often hosted mid way through Term 1.



MECS respects and values the vital role that parents play in their children's education. We have a long and rich history of parental involvement because we have experienced the significant impact it has on a child's learning development. We host orientation events to welcome new students to MECS, however there are multiple avenues for parents to connect into our school community.



Channels of Communication

Compass: All notices are communicated via Compass, our school's management system. Parents find it convenient to download the Compass app on their mobile devices, for ease of access and staying up to date with relevant school communication. All parents are required to set up access to Compass so that they don't miss important information relating to their child. New parents will be set up on Compass upon enrolment, and in the weeks leading up to their child's start date, they will receive their login details and instructions on how to use Compass. Compass allows parents to do the following:

- · View their child's attendance
- · Receive school communications relevant to their child
- · Digitally sign off on school permission slips
- · Update their family contact information
- View their child's timetable and upcoming events on the school calendar
- · View their fee balance
- · Communicate with their child's teachers
- · Book parent/teacher interviews

MECS Matters iNewsletter: the school's iNewsletter is released on a weekly basis through Compass. Please take the time to sit down with a cuppa and read through the newsletter. Every week is full of different events around the school! The newsletter is generally for school news and not for clubs and event advertisement.

MECS Facebook and Instagram: Parents can also follow the school on Facebook and Instagram:

@mountevelynchristiansch

Parent Teacher Interviews

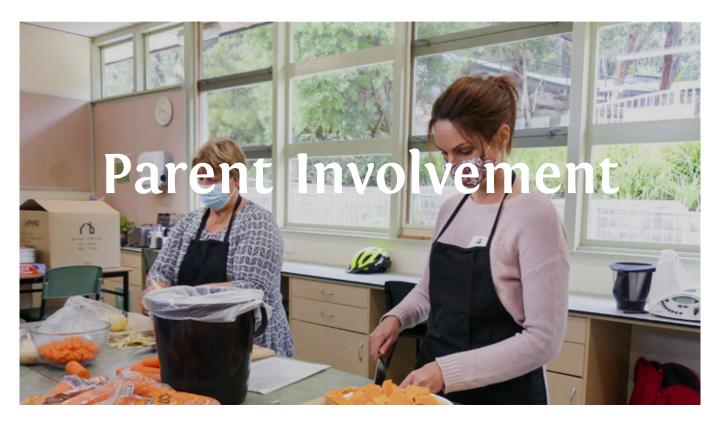
Parent/Teacher Interviews are held twice a year. These meetings are important and compulsory for parents to attend. Where possible, we encourage both parents to be present as this is the most impactful demonstration of parental involvement in their child's learning. To make it accessible for both parents to be present, Parent Teacher Interviews at MECS are currently held online via Microsoft Teams. Parent/Teacher interviews are also booked online via Compass. Closer to date, parents will receive specific instructions on how to do this.

Primary and Middle School Parent/Teacher Interviews allow for open discussion pertaining to the socioemotional and academic growth of students. Year 9 students are expected to attend Parent/Teacher Interviews with parents. Senior School students are required to attend Parent/Teacher Interviews with their parents. During this time, the educational journey of the student is discussed. Students are also encouraged and given goals for growth as deemed necessary by the teacher.

Parents are asked to respect the time frame provided for Parent/Teacher Interviews. To ensure that every parent gets seen in a timely manner, please ensure your punctual arrival and prompt departure at the conclusion of the interview. For those who require a longer discussion, an alternative time and date can be set with the teacher at the end of the interview.

Student Reports

School reports are released via Compass twice a year. These will indicate student progress and achievement in each area of the curriculum. The report will also record goals that have been set for the following semester. These reports should be used by parents to help support their child's education journey. Continuous reporting is available for parent viewing all year through Schoolbox.



MECS Association and Board

MECS is owned and operated by both past and present parents and staff, who join together to form the MECS Association.

Founded in the mid-1960s, the MECS Association has governed the school through a parent-governance model. This means that passionate parents oversee the direction of MECS, ensuring that the major governance decisions are made in line with the school's vision and mission.

The Association elects Board members to govern on their behalf. Board members maintain and generate bible-based, best-practice governance policies to sustain and grow the school's vision. The Board is also responsible for appointing Executive Leadership roles at the school: the positions of Principal, Administration Manager and Assistant Principals.

For the ongoing success of MECS, it is vital that the school maintains a strong and committed Association, who will help the school prosper and continue to provide Christ-centred education. The Association has an informal meeting twice a year to receive updates about the school. Christian parents who are passionate about MECS and Christian education are invited to contact our Community Relations Officer, Jenny Taylor, about Association membership. (Email jtaylor@mecs.vic.edu.au or phone 9738 6000.)

Friends of MECS

MECS is blessed with parents and grandparents who love volunteering at school. The school currently has Fair Trade and 'Locally Made' Mother's Day and Father's Day stalls; as well as 'Cook Off' days where volunteers spend a day cooking meals to fill the school's Community Freezer. This puts the school in a position to assist people in the community when they are sick or struggling. Being involved in Friends of MECS is an excellent way to get to know other parents, and feel part of the community. To enquire or get involved, please contact our Community Relations Officer, Jenny Taylor.

Working with Children Check (WWCC)

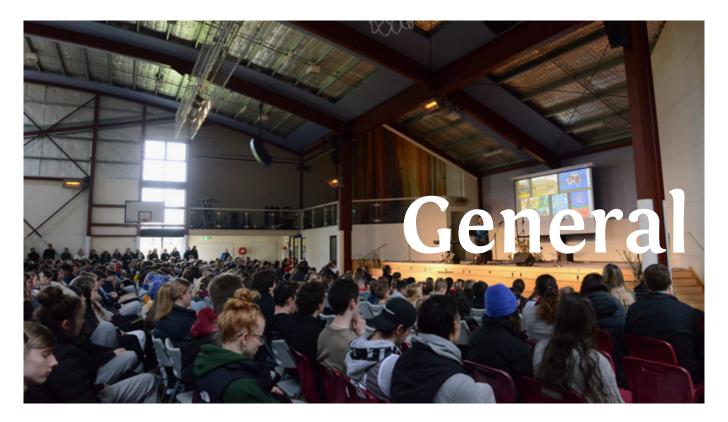
Volunteering is a wonderful way for parents to get to know know their child's classmates, other parents and staff Volunteers at school, as well as excursions and camps, must have a current Working With Children Check (WWCC). This can be easily obtained by application at the Working With Children Check website. Volunteers must provide their WWCC card to the office. If MECS is listed as a volunteer organisation on the WWCC application, the school will receive updates everytime the card is renewed.

On top of having a current Working with Children Check, parent volunteers are also required to read through the school's Child Safety Policy and sign off that they will adhere to the principles and requirements outlined in the policy.

Working Bees

A great way to get to know other school families is to participate in the school's Working Bees. All families are required to be represented at Working Bees throughout the year (minimum 5 hours annually, per family). A form is completed at the beginning of the year to indicate your preferred Working Bee date/s closer to your chosen date, you will be sent the job list for you to indicate your preference for particular tasks. The task list is finalised by the Property Manager and communicated out to families just before the Working Bee. If a family does not attend the minimum requirement for Working Bees, a fee of \$150 will be added to the family account in lieu of non attendance.





Christian Education Parent Seminars

By joining with MECS in partnership, you have committed to understanding what Christian education is all about. In becoming a partner, not a consumer, there are some key ideas that we want parents to understand.

For this purpose, we run Christian Education Parent Seminars, where we explain and discuss what is distinctive about MECS. All new parents are required to attend 2 of these within the first 2 years of joining MECS. These seminars are a very important element of the partnership arrangement between MECS and parents, and provide an opportunity for the school and parents to explore together what 'partnership' means in the context of MECS, and why partnership is such a fundamental element of MECS. They also provide explanation of the MECS approach to curriculum and why we do things the way we do.

You may recall the 'Partnership Agreement' that you signed when you accepted an enrolment position at MECS. This document is a summary of the relationship between parents and the school and it outlines the specific expectations the school has of parents. Because relationship is not a 'one way street', the Partnership Agreement also outlines what parents can expect of the school. One of the commitments in this Agreement is that parents will attend these 2 seminars during their first two years at MECS.

Early next year, you'll receive an invitation to these seminars, outlining the seminar dates for the year.

Calendars

Annual calendars for the following year are made available online to parents from the end of Term 3 of the current year. Important dates can be found on the Compass calendar.

School Attendance

Student absences: If your child is unwell or will be absent from school, please ensure you notify the school before 9.30am on the day by submitting an attendance note on Compass.

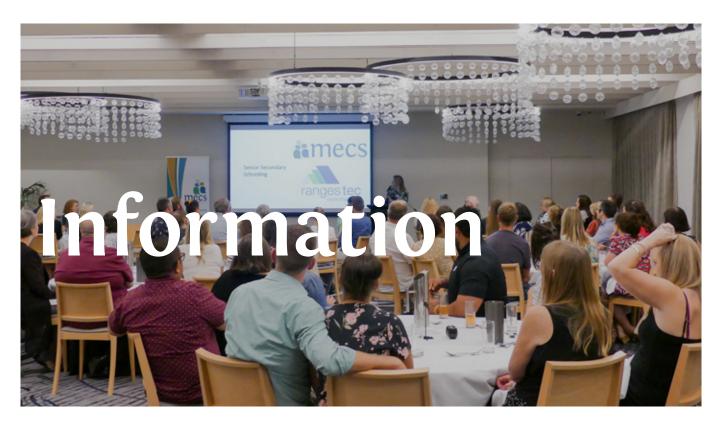
Late Arrivals: Students who arrive after 8.50am (Primary School) or 8.45am (Middle & Senior School) need to have had an attendance note submitted by parents on Compass. This helps the school know that they have had permission to arrive late. Primary and Middle School Students are then required to report to the Main Office, Senior School students to the Senior School Office to sign in before going to class. If students do not complete sign in, they will be marked absent.

Early Departures- Primary and Middle School students who need to leave early must be signed out from the Main Office by their parent or a listed emergency contact. Students are not permitted to sign themselves out. Please note that only parents and people listed as emergency contacts for your child will be able to collect students during school hours. We require direct parental permission for anyone else to collect your child during school hours. Senior school students can sign themselves out early, however parents must provide prior consent by submitting an attendance note on Compass.

Senior school students whose regular timetable includes an early finish on a regular day may request staff to consider a regular early leave pass. A form is to be completed and submitted via the Senior School office.

Camps

Camps are a compulsory part of the Core S tudies program at MECS, as they provide significant learning experiences. Beginning in Year 3, camps occur in every year level throughout the whole school (except Year 11). The costs of all camps are included in the school fees. Parents are advised of dates for each level's camps as soon as dates are confirmed.



After School Care

3CKidz Care provides afterschool care at MECS. They partner with a number of Christian schools around Melbourne to provide quality, Christian after school care. Afterschool care is available every school day between 3:30pm and 6pm. 3CKidz Care fosters a safe and nurturing environment where children are involved in fun activities. A healthy afternoon snack is provided at each session. 3CKidz Care services are eligible for Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate. Please enquire directly with 3CKidz Care on (03) 8790 3921.

School Assemblies

Parents are invited to attend school assemblies at MECS! The whole school meets once a term, but each section of the school also regularly meet together. The Primary school holds 'Get Togethers' (GTs) on alternate Monday mornings around the school. Primary classes take turns to run the GT. The Middle School runs 2 assemblies per term, whilst the Senior School conduct 15 minute assemblies once a week.

Banned Items

A number of items must not be brought to school by students under any circumstances: alcohol, cigarettes/e-cigarettes, matches, lighters, knives, illegal drugs. If any of these items are found with students, the matter will be addressed by student's Assistant Principal and disciplinary action will be determined according to school policy.

Bicycles

Students who ride bicycles to school need to observe the following guidelines:

- · riding inside school grounds is prohibited;
- bicycles should be securely stored in the bicycle racks in front of the maintenance shed;

- · helmets must be worn at all times when riding the bicycle;
- bicycles should not be used by students other than the owners;
- if crossing any major roads, students are expected to dismount and cross at the pedestrian crossings provided.

Car Parking/ Kiss'n'Drop

The Gate 1 carpark that is accessed via 14 Hawkins Road is available for short visits, office drop-ins or for an appointment with a teacher. This carpark is not to be used for student drop off. The Kiss'n'Drop zone (off the York Road service road) is to be used specifically for student drop off in the morning and pick up after school. It is NOT a parking zone, and parents are requested to move through the area safely and efficiently. Buses also utilise this area and arrive at 3.40pm, so it is helpful if the number of cars in the zone decrease then. For safety reasons, we ask that students exit from and get into the car from the left hand side of the vehicle only.

The lower gravel carpark, accessed via Gate 3 off York Road service road, can be used for a longer period of parking if you are assisting with a school excursion. Please observe the spaces set aside for parents of Kinder and Foundation students only. Parking on the basketball court area is permitted at drop off and pick up time for parents who need to get out of their car to walk their child to the classroom, or visit the office. However, cars may not be left in this space after school has started, as the area is used for sport. This area is also not to be used as a drop off zone - the Kiss'n'Drop zone must be used instead.

The Senior School has its own carpark for Senior School staff, students and visitors. There is also a specific, marked drop off and collection area. This carpark is accessible via Gate 2, 32 Hawkins Road.



End of Term

At the end of Terms 1, 2 and 3, students will be dismissed at the normal time. **Term 4 finishes at 2pm for all students.**

Excursions

We do not require parents to provide permission for every excursion their children attend. As part of the partnership agreement you sign when you enrol your children at MECS, you agree to let the school take your child on excursions. However, you will receive notification of all excursions, so that you are fully informed of any off site activities. You are also able to communicate with the teacher any concerns you may have about your child's participation.

Visitors

Visitors to the school are asked to park in the administration carpark at 14 Hawkins Road (Gate 1) to report to the office. All visitors must 'sign in' on the Visitor's Kiosk in the office and receive a temporary visitor slip before they go anywhere on the school grounds. Visitors must sign out using the Kiosk when leaving the grounds.

- support the central function of the school learning
- · be appropriate and comfortable for a school setting
- support the health and safety of students, including abiding by sun-smart and hat policies
- · be neat, modest, clean and in good repair
- not have images that are inconsistent with the Christian ethos of the school (e.g. violent images, skulls)

Class teachers check the standard of dress- students who do not comply with the dress guidelines will be followed up in accordance to our discipline processes. If there is a serious dress infringement, parents will be notified and asked to pick up their child from school.

Dress Code

MECS does not have a uniform, however students are expected to adhere to the dress guidelines outlined on page 9. The guidelines provide students with guided freedom in the dress choices they make. Student dress should:

Dress Guidelines

	No underwear showing/not see through			
TOPS	c.,peccaa			
	 No cleavage No exposed underarm 			
	Sleeves need to fully cover the shoulder and have underarm seam			
SKIRTS				
	 Secondary School - Skirts/dresses must at least come to the tips of fingers when standing, arms straight and hands on thighs. 			
&	The top of the dress (bodice) must meet the requirements for 'TOPS', or another top must be worn to			
DRESSES	ensure compliance.			
	Shorts must come to the <i>tips of fingers</i> when standing, arms straight and hands on thighs (except for PE –			
SHORTS,	see below).			
-	All long pants - no backside or underwear exposure at any time.			
TROUSERS,	Triniary School — all brands/styles of leggings (including files leggings) must be worn with			
JEANS,	dresses/skirts/skorts/shorts over the top			
LEGGINGS	• Secondary School - leggings of any brand (including MECS leggings) are permitted without outer garments,			
	but they must be <i>modest</i> and <i>juny opaque</i> .			
	No ripped clothing.			
	In Terms 1 & 4, students must have hats with them at all times, and on their heads when not under the			
HATS	roof-covered ways.			
патэ	Senior School: Hats must be worn in Terms 1 and 4 when using the Oval as this is shared space			
	 Appropriate and recommended hats are available from the office. Alternative hats may be worn but must have a full brim of 6cms. 			
	Must be safe and provide good support.			
FOOTWEAR	Must have enclosed toe and secured heel (when on tiptoes, the heel stays on).			
	No Ugg boots, slippers, thongs, sandals or flimsy slip-on shoes.			
	Primary School – NO makeup. Skin care cream to cover pimples is acceptable.			
MAKE UP	Secondary School – subtle make-up appropriate for school. No extra application during the day.			
	No fake nails permitted.			
1514/511551	Primary School – one pair of earrings, either studs or sleepers (maximum 2 cm drop), no bracelets or anklets			
JEWELLERY	Secondary School – two pairs of studs or sleepers (maximum 2 cm drop), no bracelets or anklets			
&	 No other facial jewellery in Primary & Middle School. Senior School - one discrete facial piercing is permitted. All other jewellery must be removed (NOT covered). 			
PIERCING	Rings: Primary School – none; Secondary School – safe and subtle, maximum of 2.			
	Necklaces should be single, subtle and safe (but not allowed in PE, Manual Arts or Science Labs).			
	Should not be extreme and must be within range of natural hair colours.			
	Should not cover eyes.			
HAIR	Primary School - all students with hair longer than shoulder length must have hair tied back.			
HAIN	 Secondary School - hair may be worn down, except for subjects where it might pose a risk to safety (e.g. PE, 			
	Science Labs, Manual Arts, Cooking classes etc). All students who have hair that is shoulder length or longer need to have a hair tie with them to enable them to tie it back when required.			
	Runners (or other appropriate footwear) must be worn.			
	Shorts should be no shorter than the <i>thumb tip</i> when standing (hands by sides).			
	Primary School: shorts/skorts/track suit pants (no exposed zips or buttons), MECS sport top. ALL leggings			
	(including MECS leggings) must have outer garments over the top (shorts/skorts) for PE/Sport lessons. No jeans.			
PE &	Years 7-10: shorts/skorts/fully opaque leggings/tracksuit pants (no exposed zips or buttons) and MECS top			
SPORT	to be worn in PE and Sport sessions. No jeans.			
	 Years 11 – 12: appropriate active clothing for PE practical classes. MECS sports top and schoolwear options are recommended. 			
	MECS Sporting Events - students are encouraged to dress in the colour of their tribe for these events.			
	 Interschool Sporting Events - students competing in interschool activities must wear <u>BLACK</u> 			
	shorts/skorts/opaque leggings or track suit pants with MECS sport top.			
L				



MECS Buses

MECS has 4 separate private bus routes travelling through the Croydon/East Ringwood, Croydon/Mooroolbark, Boronia and Healesville areas. The exact route of each bus is set at the start of each year depending on where the students live, however, the general routes are:

Croydon routes: Mt Evelyn, Mooroolbark, Chrinside Park, Croydon, Croydon North and Kilsyth, East Ringwood

Boronia route: Montrose, Kilsyth South, Boronia, Bayswater, Ferntree Gully and Knoxfield

Healesville route: travels along Maroondah Highway through Lilydale, Coldstream, Yarra Glen and on to Healesville.

Plus new routes to Gembrook/Cockatoo and Belgrave

The annual cost of seat allocations on the bus service is currently \$586 per student (charged with the school fees), however this may be amended at the end of the school year. There is a Conveyance Allowance rebate available for eligible families. The Conveyance Allowance is a Government rebate available to some families who live a minimum of 4.8km from the school, by the most direct route. A separate Conveyance Allowance form, available from the MECS School Office, will need to be completed early in the new year. Information relating to availability of seats on each bus is available from the Bus Coordinator, via the office.

Martyrs Bus

This is a free bus service provided by the State Government for students living in areas between Warburton and Wandin. There are limited seats available on this bus service; application forms are available from the Main Office. Annual passes are allocated to students early in the school year. Students must present the pass to the driver when entering the bus. If a pass is misplaced or no longer in a usable condition, please contact the Main Office.

Temporary Bus Passes

Students who have a permanent bus seat are not to take a friend to travel home with them, unless the friend has organised the purchase of a temporary bus pass. Temporary bus passes are available from the office for \$2 per day (not available for Martyrs Bus).

MECS Emergency Plan

We have a thorough Emergency Management plan in place which outlines our response to a number of different emergencies, including a response plan to bushfire threat. MECS is classed as one of 728 "bushfire-at-risk" schools in Victoria. We take the possibility of a fire very seriously. We engaged the services of an external consulting company to conduct an assessment of our fire readiness. This particular company has been used to conduct similar assessments on many schools in high risk bushfire zones. Recommendations from this assessment have been incorporated into our plan.

Our process for ensuring we are well prepared for a bushfire is based on advice from Montrose CFA and the consulting company we engaged. Many fire hose reels are located around the school; and gutters are kept clean. The fuel load in the conservation area is kept low. We conduct evacuation drills and have an uninterruptible power supply for our phone system. We also have an SMS system in place to communicate with parents.

School closure

We monitor Bureau of Meteorology forecasts for the degree of bushfire risk in the Central fire district. If the forecast is Code Red (Catastrophic) for this district, the Victoria Department of Education will close their "bushfire-at-risk" schools with 3 days' notice (if possible), with final confirmation by no later than midday the day before closure. MECS will be closed if the forecast is Code Red (Catastrophic) in the Central fire district.

Once the decision to close is confirmed, there will be no change – regardless of improvements to the weather conditions immediately before the closure – this will help limit confusion and organisational difficulties.

During the fire risk period we will advise you of any closures or other relevant information via Compass and Facebook through this period. We will also utilise our SMS system to communicate with you if required.

The school will also close if the CFA issue either a 'Watch and Act' or 'Emergency Warning' for the suburbs of Mt Evelyn, Montrose, Mt Dandenong, Kalorama, Silvan and Lilydale. On days predicted to be 'Extreme' the school will not close however, extra precautionary steps will be taken, including reminding all staff of procedures to follow should a bushfire threat occur.



MECS Emergency Response

In the case of a bushfire threat, see our reponse below:

- In situations of extremely short notice (less than 15 minutes would only occur if the fire originated from a source in the immediate school vicinity) all staff and students will remain in the classroom they are currently in, and follow a number of steps to minimize their potential exposure
- If we are provided with more warning time, we will relocate all students and staff to 'bushfire shelters' – these are the buildings located on the school grounds that have been assessed to be safer than others because they do not face direct bush. These buildings are signed and we conduct drills early in the year to refamiliarise all staff and students of the process and the locations.
- If we have significant amounts of warning time (greater than 2 hours) we will relocate all students and staff to the bushfire shelters and from there begin the process of evacuating off site. We have established a plan with the Emergency Response Coordinator from Yarra Ranges Council for how this would occur, and we would liaise with them at the time of the emergency to determine the safest location for evacuation. You will be kept updated via Compass/Facebook and SMS text messages.

Emergency Communication

During an emergency, we ask that you do not call the school as it is essential that we keep the telephone lines free, and staff free to respond to the emergency. Rather, we will keep you regularly informed with updates via SMS messages. If SMS/ Compass/ Facebook isn't accessible (or we are unable to use these methods of communication), you are able to call one of the Emergency Parent Contacts to obtain updates: these are parents who have committed to being available during an emergency as contact points. The school will provide them with regular updates on the status of the emergency, and parents can contact them, rather than the school, for updates. Each year you will be provided with a laminated list of the Emergency Parent Contacts and their mobile numbers.

Please do not come to the school to collect your child/ren in the event of an immediate unexpected bushfire threat. This will cause traffic chaos, and may hamper our ability to safely keep an account of all students. It can also prevent a rapid roll out of our response plan, and may place your own life at risk. In any event, police may prevent your access. If you do come (against our advice) and insist on removing your child/ren you will be permitted to do so provided you sign out the child/ren. Only parents or legal guardians will be able to collect children in these circumstances (we will not release any child to another person).

Offsite activities

We carefully assess the risks involved in any offsite activity, including the assessment of bushfire risk. Any events occurring during bushfire season include the preparation for and response to the risk of bushfire. Risk Assessments for camps during the bushfire season must include the Emergency Procedures information from the venue/ campsite. Events will not be approved when the risk of bushfire has not been assessed.

What to do at home

- Talk to your children about responding to a bushfire.
 Help prepare them emotionally to deal with the threat. If MECS has to close, talk to your children about why the school is closed and reassure them of their safety.
- Ensure you are familiar with the Fire Danger Index. MECS is located in the Central Fire district.
- Make sure the school always has up to date information concerning your mobile phone numbers.
- Please plan for school closures by ensuring you have someone who can mind your children - no child should be left at home alone.
- In the event of an emergency, do not phone the school.
 It is essential we keep phone lines open. Rather, check
 the website for updates or contact the Emergency
 Parent Contacts. You will be provided with these
 contact numbers at the start of each year.



School Fees

Within the first few weeks of the school year, you will receive an invoice for the full amount of school fees your family needs to pay the year (if you start mid-year, it will be the prorata amount). All fees must be paid by 30 November every year, with approximately 25% due by the end of each term. Monthly or fortnightly payments can be arranged over ten months. We will send you a statement at the start of each term reflecting your fee account.

Parents who pay the tuition fees in full in February receive a 3% discount. Those who pay half in February and half in July receive a 1.5% discount.

School fees enquiries are to be directed to **finance@mecs. vic.edu.au**. If financial diffulties arise and you're unable to make school fee payments for legitimate reasons such as job loss or health problems, please contact us as soon as possible to discuss options.

Conveyance Allowance

The Conveyance Allowance is a government allowance payable to parents of students who live more than 4.8 km from school. The following information is taken from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) guidelines for Conveyance Allowance from the website www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/studenttransport.htm.

To be eligible to receive a conveyance allowance, a student must:

- · be school age
- reside more than 4.8 kms by the shortest practicable route from the nearest school attended
- be enrolled at the nearest government primary or secondary school, or at the nearest appropriate registered non-government school having regard to the following factors:
- a student is ineligible for a conveyance allowance if there is a nearer denominational school of the same denomination as the school attended. Multi-/inter-

- denominational schools established under the direct auspices of a group of churches will be considered as denominational schools of each church
- a student cannot claim a conveyance allowance if there is a nearer multi-/inter-denominational or Christian school than the multi-/inter-denominational or Christian school attended
- a student cannot claim a conveyance allowance if there is a nearer non-denominational school than the nondenominational school attended.
- a student cannot claim conveyance allowance if the journey to school is possible via public transport

Claim forms are available from the Main Office. Payments are made at the end of each term. Once a form has been completed it needs to be renewed only if a change of address or change in mode of transport takes place or when adding another child.

Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund (CSEF)

The CSEF is a State Government grant program whose aim is to ensure that school students can participate in camps, sports events and excursions. It doesn't apply to Kindergarten children. Families holding a valid means-tested concession card will be eligible to apply. This means:

Centrelink pensioner concession, Health Care Card, foster parent with a DHHS temporary care order, or a Veterans Affairs pensioner. Eligible families need to apply for the CSEF via the appropriate form, which can be downloaded from the Department of Education and Training (DET) website (google 'CSEF') or is available from the school office.

A payment of \$125 for Primary School students and \$225 for Secondary School students will then be paid directly to MECS to be used towards camps, sports and excursion costs for the benefit of the student. The grant is credited to the family's school fee account as the costs of excursions and camps are included in your fees.



Ambulance

It is strongly recommended that all families maintain current membership of the ambulance service. In exercising our duty of care, if a student experiences an illness or injury of a serious nature, an ambulance will be called (at the parent's expense) to take the student to the hospital. Parents will be notified as soon as practicable.

It is MECS policy for a staff member to accompany students in the ambulance to the hospital if a parent is not available. Parents will be advised to meet the ambulance and the student at the hospital.

Asthma

It is expected that all students who are diagnosed with Asthma have an Asthma Action Plan, submitted along with their Student Emergency Information at the time of enrolment. We also expect that students suffering from asthma will carry their own inhalers at all times. Asthma plans must be updated yearly.

Exclusion from school

There are some conditions and illnesses which require a period of exclusion from school, due to levels of contagiousness. The table on the following page outlines exclusion time periods and requirements for return to school. Please familiarise yourself with these.

First Aid

In the case of minor injury or illness, students will be sent to the First Aid Room. First Aid will be administered by the First Aid Officer. When an injury or illness appears more serious, parents will be notified to pick up their child to seek medical attention. If parents cannot be contacted, the emergency contact person on the child's emergency details form will be contacted.

Head Lice

Head lice are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice: this happens frequently in schools. They do not transmit any infectious diseases. If a student is found to have head lice while at school, parents will be called and informed. They will not be sent home. The student may only return to school after treatment has commenced, with a note from the parent. Please make sure the rest of the family is also treated to assist in preventing the spread of the problem.

Parents are encouraged to frequently check their children for head lice to assist in controlling head lice at school. This is best done by using an inexpensive white hair conditioner on dry hair to more easily spot the lice.

Immunisations

The Shire of Yarra Ranges provides optional immunisations for students in various secondary year levels at no cost to parents. The specific immunisations change year to year - parents will be informed which immunisations are available to their child. Parents are required to complete and return a consent card.

Student Medication

If your child requires regular, long term medication during school hours, this information must be provided on the Emergency & Medical Information form. For short term medication requirements (i.e. a course of antibiotics), please notify the Main Office. The First Aid Officer or Main Office receptionist will administer medications to students. Medication can only be administered as directed *in writing* by parents on an 'Administration of Medication' form, available at the office.

All medications must be provided to the office in its original packaging, in a container clearly marked with student's name, dose and name of medication, and times required to be administered. MECS has a supply of paracetamol, ibuprofen and antihistimine available for students who require it during school hours. Parents need to provide permission for their child to be given these medications when deemed necessary by a qualified first-aider, at the commencement of their child's schooling. Parents will receive notification when their child receives any of these medications, indicating the time, reason and dosage given.

Minimum period of exclusion from primary schools and children's services¹ for infectious diseases cases and contacts

Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019

Schedule 7

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Number	Conditions	Exclusion of cases	Exclusion of Contacts
1	Chickenpox	Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash appears in unimmunised children, but may be less in previously immunised children	Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded
2	Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased	Not excluded
3	Cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
4	Diarrhoeal illness*	Exclude until there has not been vomiting or a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
5	Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later	Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to return by the Chief Health Officer
6	Glandular fever (Epstein-Barr Virus infection)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
7	Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
8	Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	Exclude until 48 hours after initiation of effective therapy	Not excluded
9	Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness	Not excluded
10	Hepatitis B	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
11	Hepatitis C	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
12	Herpes (cold sores)	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible	Not excluded
13	Human immuno-deficiency virus infection (HIV)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
14	Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing	Not excluded
15	Influenza and influenza like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer
16	Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded
17	Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash	Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of exposure with any infectious case, or received Normal Human Immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 144 hours of exposure of any infectious case, they may return to the facility
18	Meningitis (bacterial —other than meningococcal meningitis)	Exclude until well	Not excluded
19	Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy
20	Mumps	Exclude for 5 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded
21	Molluscum contagiosum	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
22	Pertussis (Whooping cough)	Exclude the child for 21 days after the onset of cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment	Contacts aged less than 7 years in the same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment
23	Poliovirus infection	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery	Not excluded
24	Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	Not excluded
25	Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash	Not excluded
26	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer
27	Shiga toxin or Verotoxin producing Escherichia coli (STEC or VTEC)	Exclude if required by the Chief Health Officer and only for the period specified by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded
28	Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well	Not excluded
29	Tuberculosis (excluding latent tuberculosis)	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious	Not excluded
30	Typhoid fever (including paratyphoid fever)	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer

Regulation 111

A person in charge of a primary school, education and care service premises or children's services centre must not allow a child to attend the primary school, education and care service premises or children's services centre for the period or in the circumstances:

- * specified in column 3 of the Table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 2 of that Table; or
- * specified in column 4 of the Table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child has been in contact with a person who is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 2 of that Table.

*Diarrhoeal illness includes instances where certain pathogens are identified including Amebiasis (*Entamoeba histolytica*), Campylobacter spp., Salmonella spp., Shigella spp. and intestinal worms, but is not limited to infection with these pathogens.

Further information

Please contact the Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Section on 1300 651 160 or visit www.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion



Primary School		
8:45am	Music plays – go to classrooms	
8:50am	Devotions commence	
9:00am	Classes commence	
10.30-11.00am	Recess Years 3-6	
11.00-11:30am	Recess Years F-2	
11.00am-1:00pm	Classes Years 3-6	
11.30am-1:00pm	Classes Years F-2	
1:00-1:10pm	Primary Lunch Eating	
1:10-1:50pm	Primary Lunch Play	
1:50pm- 3:10pm	Primary Classes	
3:10pm	Clean-up bell	
3:15pm	End of day	

Middle & Senior School		
8:45am	Devotions	
9:00-10:15am	1st Quarter	
10:15-10:35am	Break 1: 20 mins	
10:35-11:50am	2nd Quarter	
11:50-12:30pm	Break 2: 40 mins	
12:30-1:45pm	3rd Quarter	
1:45-2:05pm	Break 3: 20 mins	
2:05-3:20pm	4th Quarter	
3:20-3:30pm	Dismissal	

Computer Access & Internet

MECS does not require students to provide their own computer or device. There are devices allocated to each class, as well as computers in the library and Study Centre for individual use. From 2023 onwards, Years 7-10 students will be using school issued Personal Learning Devices (laptops).

Students are issued with an ICT Network Use Policy document at the beginning of each year (or upon enrolment). This policy articulates the students' rights and responsibilities for the computer network use within the school. Parents are emailed the ICT Network Use Agreement, which parents and students are required to read and accept. Once the school receives electronic notification that the form has been accepted, the student will be issued with a password, allowing them access to the school's communication network.

MECS has also put into place a number of strategies for the safe usage of the internet by all students. These include:

- Students agreeing to work within the school's guidelines and honour the agreement that they are expected to sign (before access to the internet is permitted).
- A software filter system operates which minimises access to harmful or inappropriate material.
- A monitoring system that is triggered when particular words or phrases are entered or when students attempt to access certain types of sites.
- Staff supervision of students when they are using the computers.

Community Service Representative (CSR)

Each Year 7 & 8 student is assigned one to three afternoons per year to help out in the Main Office. This "helping out" is designed to give the students a first hand view of the operation of this part of the school, and to provide a service to the school community. This is a valuable role for the students and the administration staff appreciate this service being available each day. Duties include laminating, paper cutting, taking items/messages from the office to the classrooms and other varied tasks.



Devotions

Students start the school day with a time of devotions. Primary students have this with their class teacher; in Middle School, this is with the student's home room/pastoral care teacher. In Senior School each student is assigned to a 'Connect-In' group with a specific teacher. This teacher is responsible for the pastoral care of each of the students within their group.

Devotions may include discussion of important relevant topics, the reading of scripture, singing and/or prayer time. Important day-to-day matters are raised and the distribution of correspondence for parents is carried out during this time.

Discipline

Rules are necessary for safety, property protection and effective learning. These will be communicated clearly to students and we request parents' cooperation when there is a need to enforce them.

Restorative Practice

The MECS approach to discipline follows the principles of Restorative Practice, which recognises and helps students understand that relationships are damaged when behaviour goes wrong, or poor choices are made. Students learn to take responsibility for their actions and understand that there are consequences for their behaviour.

This approach acknowledges each person's unique perspective. It also helps to build relationships and assists students to work towards restoring the problem. Students learn that issues and problems can be worked through resulting in forgiveness, healing and restoration. We believe that this process is in line with a Christian perspective – we forgive each other as God forgives us. We seek restoration of relationships, as God does with us.

Discipline incidents that centre around a breakdown of

relationship are approached by having a 'Restorative chat' using the following four questions:

- 1. What is the problem? We help students identify what went wrong, and understand that the person is not the problem, the problem is the problem.
- 2. Who is affected? Who was hurt by these actions? How were they hurt?
- 3. How can we fix the problem? We assist students to see the need for an apology and for them to put right the relationship and things that have gone wrong. They identify that the relationship and trust has been damaged.
- 4. How can we make sure this doesn't happen again? We help students identify why it happened and what underpinned the action that caused the problem. Consequences appropriately applied help the student consolidate their understanding and set right the broken relationship.

Where necessary, parents will be informed of behavioural issues with their child. Parents support the school and the school supports parents by working together when there are problems. A timely phone call, email or meeting for serious incidents, keeps parents in the loop and ensures that students know that all the adults in their lives are working toward their growth and wellbeing.

Within classrooms, teachers outline behavioural expectations at the beginning of each year. Students who choose not to follow these guidelines can expect consequences, the nature of which will depend on the age of the student and the nature of the misbehaviour.

Electronic Devices

iPads

iPads are valuable items that should not be brought to school. Primary and Middle school students are not permitted to use these devices at school during school hours, on



excursions or on camps, unless specifically permitted by a staff member. Any iPad that is seen during school hours will be confiscated by the teacher and returned at the end of the day. Students who have iPads confiscated a second or subsequent time will have it confiscated for a week. If student needs to bring their iPads to school, they may hand it in to the Main Office to mind before and after use.

Mobile Phones & Smart Watches

Primary students must hand in their mobile phones to the office at the beginning of the school day. They can collect them at the end of the school day.

Middle School students need to hand their mobile phones to their teacher at the beginning of each school day, which will be securely locked up till the end of the day. Any mobile phone that is seen during school hours will be confiscated by the teacher and returned at the end of the day. Students who have their mobile phone confiscated a second or subsequent time, will face more serious consequences.

In the Senior School, electronic devices may only be used during study blocks or when out of class (although not on excursions) and should not be audible to others. If mobile phones or electronic devices are not used appropriately, they will be confiscated until the end of that particular day. The school will bear no responsibility for student mobile phones as these are the responsibility of the individual student.

Inappropriate Language

Inappropriate language will not be tolerated in class or in the school grounds. Students who have been found to have used inappropriate language, will be dealt with in accordance with the school's disciplinary policy.

Instrumental Music

MECS offers private tuition in a number of instruments including piano/keyboard, voice, drums, classical and electric guitar, bass guitar, woodwind and strings. Regular performance opportunities include assemblies, recital and concert evenings, lunchtime gatherings and community

events. All tuition is provided by qualified instrumental teachers. Forms and further information for instrumental tuition are available from the office.

Homework

Information regarding homework will be provided to you at the start of the year, based on your child's year level. The following information is a rough guide.

Primary School students are given homework appropriate to their year level. Their homework may include project work, spelling, numeracy and/or reading.

Middle School students are expected to maintain a good homework routine, generally doing homework for the recommended time, 4 nights per week. If students need to catch up with homework they should do this on the weekends. Guidelines for Middle School homework: Year 7: 30–45 minutes; Year 8: 40-50 minutes; Year 9: 50-60 minutes.

Senior School

Student guidelines for homework should average the following over five nights per week: Year 10: 2 hours; Year 11: 3 hours; Year 12: 3 hours.

Library Resource Centre

Hours

Before school (from 8:30am); after school (until 4:00pm); every lunchtime (12:30 – 1:50pm).

Library bags

Library bags are essential for all Primary students for research work and lunchtime borrowing.

Lost resources

Students are responsible for resources borrowed in their name. The library prefers to have library items returned, but in the case of a lost item, parents are responsible for paying for the item to be replaced.



Respect for Others

At MECS each student is cared for and respected as a child of God. Respect for others should be utmost in students' interaction with each other at all levels. If at any time a student feels unsafe or uncomfortable within class or out in the school yard, they or you should always discuss this with their classroom teacher.

In order to preserve this respect, and in keeping with our communal commitment to serve the Lord, students should observe the following:

- No student should feel unsafe, intimidated or excluded by others or be seen as a 'victim' by those of forceful character.
- No student should endure or inflict ridicule/teasing/insult of any type upon others.
- No student should be confronted with or use blasphemous, improper or crude language.
- No student should endure or inflict any physical contact upon others.
- No student should regard him or herself as being more important than others.

Students are called upon to encourage each other in a spirit of support and cooperation to ensure the strengthening of class relationships. Strict discipline procedure will follow any breach of our code of respect for others.

Schoolwear

MECS has a range of both compulsory and optional schoolwear available for sale, including hats, shorts, leggings and jackets, and the compulsory MECS sports t-shirts. Orders are to be placed through the RH Unfirom website. Website purchases will be delivered to MECS for free on the following Tuesday and sent home with your child. Alternatively, MECS uniforms can be purchased directly from RH Uniforms at 12/100 New Street, Ringwood 3134. rhuniforms.com.au

The green sports t-shirt is compulsory for all students in Foundation – 12, and is to be worn to any sporting events.

A broad brimmed hat is compulsory for Primary and Middle School students. We strongly encourage all students to purchase their hat through the school, however other 6cm broad brimmed hats are acceptable. Hats are available to purchase from the Main Office at anytime.

Stationery & Textbooks

Individual student stationery, and text books for Middle and Senior school students, is required to be purchased each year. This is available through Lilydale Books as our preferred supplier, and as a fundraiser for MECS, or may be sourced privately by parents. Early in Term 4 the stationery and text book lists and details of the purchase process are sent home to parents for the following year.

Stationery for Primary School is supplied by MECS and given to students as they require it. This is included in fees.

Student Cars (Senior School Students)

Senior School students who are licensed drivers and drive themselves to and from school must observe the following:

- These drivers must not carry other student passengers unless the school has written permission from the passenger's parents to do so. This includes commuting to and from school or school events such as excursions etc.
- Students should park their cars in areas designated by the Senior School Coordinator.
- Utmost care should be taken when moving cars within the school grounds.
- Note that the speed limit along Hawkins Road (off York Road) is 40 kmh and adhere to this speed.



Student Leaders

Student Leaders are students who display leadership gifts and who set a good example to others. There are a variety of student leadership opportunities at MECS. All student leaders are expected to be role models within the community and each position requires a commitment to completing a variety of tasks and attending required training activities.

Tribal Sports

Each student is a member of one of 4 MECS tribes:

Warlpiri Name	Meaning	Colour
Wirri	Water	Blue
Mani	Clouds	White
Jarra	Flame	Gold
Kaja	Outback/bush	Red

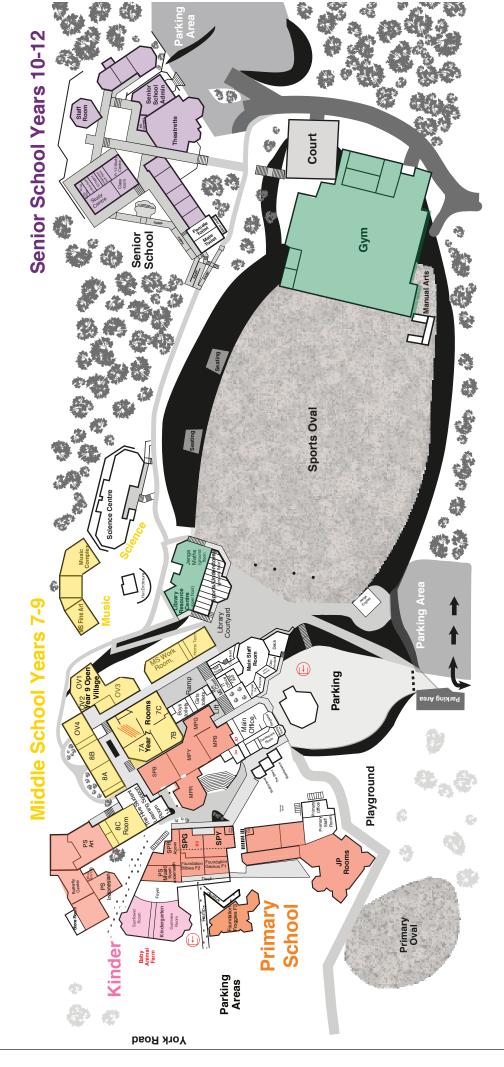
Students gather in these tribes for various activities, such as cross country runs, swimming carnivals and athletics days. These activities provide opportunities for students gifted in sporting ability to display and develop their Godgiven talents, and for the other students to celebrate and appreciate these gifts in others.

Students are encouraged to dress in their tribe colours for each event. These days are intentionally structured to provide for the participation of all students, which for some may mean a supporting role. Sports days are therefore compulsory for all students.

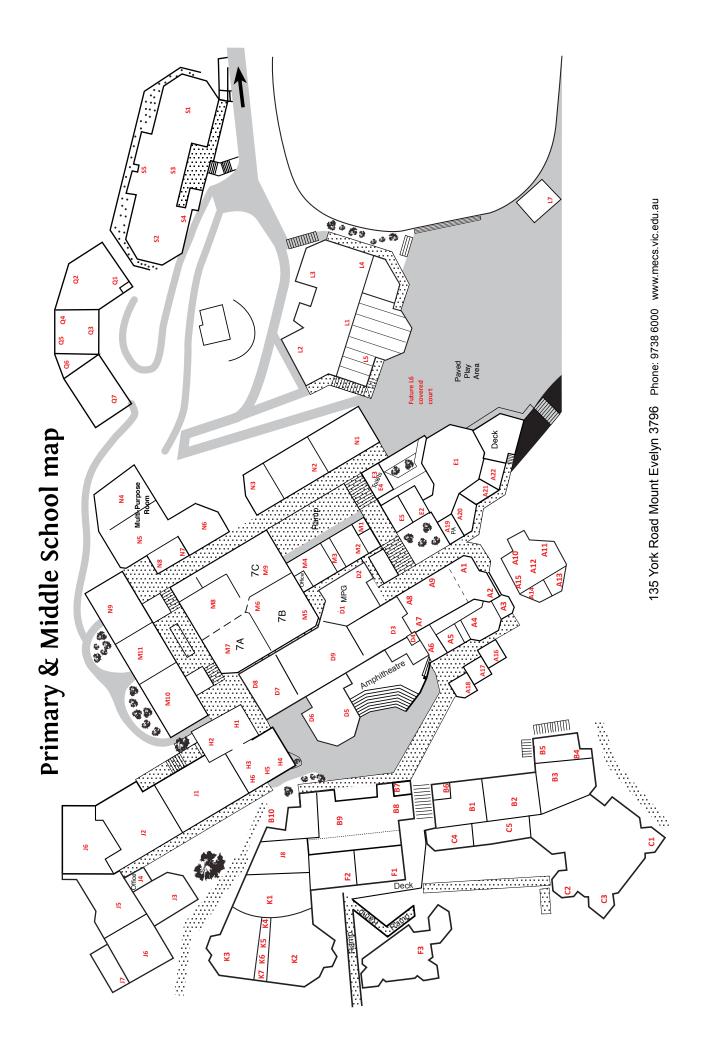
Parents will be provided with information relating to their child's participation in any significant sporting activities, and in some cases will be invited to come along and observe and/or help out. We love having parents along to cheer on the competitors and be part of the fun.

Further Questions?

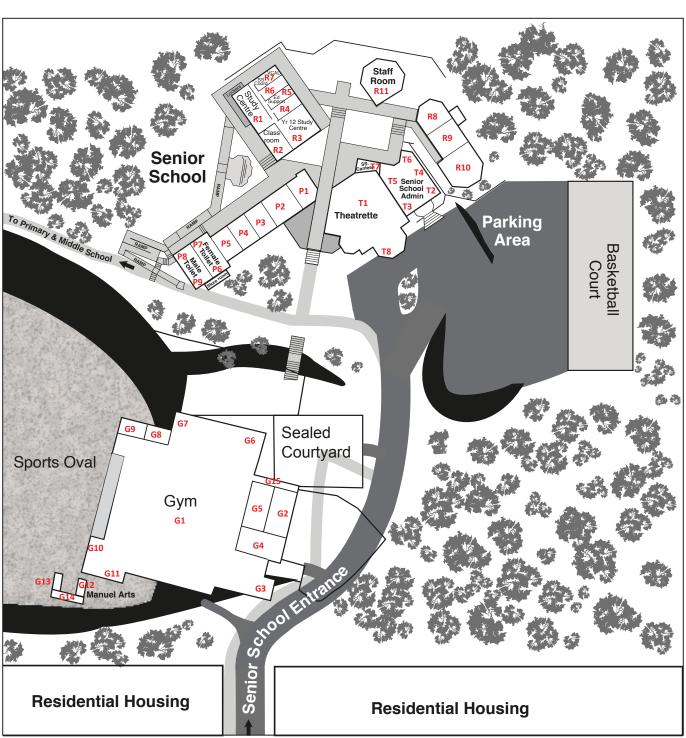
Please feel free to contact the office with any questions you may have. We are more than happy to assist you.



MECS School Map









www.mecs.vic.edu.au







