



MELBOURNE
RUDOLF STEINER
SCHOOL

Parent Handbook



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*Our children come as the greatest gift of life to us.
With loving attention we introduce them to
the heart of the World, and we create a sanctuary
for their individual blossoming.
Our children, in their turn, learn to express their unique
creativity in service to the world,
in wise fulfillment of their destiny.*

Dear Families:

This booklet is to help you understand the nature of our school and of the ways in which we function as an educational community. Our education encompasses an approach to the child from the time they are born through early childhood, primary and secondary schooling. Living with our children and educating them seems to us the greatest task we can perform for a joyful present and a hopeful future.

* * *

What do our children need from us? What do we most wish to do for them?

Love is, of course, the essence of the answer to both of these questions.

Our children must have our love to nourish them every day of their growth to adulthood, and it goes beyond this, for they need our love every day of their lives, even after we have passed over the threshold of death. We, for our part, will know our life to be fulfilled as we give love to our children and share their joys and trials on the path towards maturity. We may consider many tasks to be essential in our life, but loving our children has first claim upon us.

Education prepares our children for life. The way children are educated by family, school and society determines so very much about their innate attitudes, and their will to act in the world. Children live in deep community with their parents and teachers and guardians, because by their nature they are innocently open to all the influences of the world. In consequence, what we adults really are, and what we are really trying to do with children has a profound influence upon their character. Our being, and our deeper impulses; these have more influence than our educational techniques or our stated aims. It is of the essence, therefore, that all of us who educate children shall educate with love for them, for their eventual independence, and for their aims and aspirations. We parents and guardians and teachers therefore strive to create a community which will lovingly care for the interests of the children, and will protect them from self-seeking influences which would rob the youngsters of their natural growth to freedom. Commercial and political and dogmatic religious influences can be balanced in the soul of a mature adult, but we must protect the children from such influences which are not based upon a loving concern towards freedom.

Each of our years of education, from the innocent early childhood years to the trial by fire of the Victorian Certificate of Education, requires that we look with wonder and love at the efforts of the child to become a citizen of the Earth, and the challenge is always there to find loving methods to initiate the child into our ways of understanding the world.

At this school we provide an education which is based upon an understanding of children as divine beings who have descended to Earth from spiritual spheres. Because we teachers have been on Earth longer than the children in our care, we have the opportunity to help them find their way into human culture. We know that we are not adequate to this task, but our understanding is that by our loving interest in the children, and by our constant striving to engage fully with them and with our subject, we allow them to grow beyond us to their own full potential for self-realization and working for the world. It is a miracle to observe again and again how our students can take what we teachers offer them and use it to develop faculties and knowledge far beyond that which we can demonstrate or embody. Our teaching therefore is offered in service to the unfathomable potential and destiny of each one of our children, and it must be offered with imagination and love for both our students and our subject if it is to nourish the free development of the human beings in our care.

We have what is called the *Steiner Curriculum*, this being a shared body of knowledge accumulated by hundreds of Steiner Schools over ninety years and in many different national settings. This is a blessing to us, for it allows us to enjoy the fruits of experience of the world community of Steiner Teachers. However it is secondary to the principle of teachers striving to understand the nature of the children before us, and learning to love them in a deeply responsible way, and bringing our subjects to them in a form commensurate with the stage of growth they are enjoying. We are trying not to force demands of the subjects upon the students, for this would require us to step into a rather impersonal and unsympathetic role. Rather we use the great tools of true imagination, art and music, and we work to engender the warmth of enthusiasm, and the glow of reverence for that which is worthy of the children's devotion. This does not preclude the necessity for plain hard work to finish that which must be completed, or to learn that which must be known, but it is vital that these demands are presented in the context of a loving and supportive community.

We watch generation after generation of young people pass through the school and grow through the community life of our school. We teachers try to grow with them, we rejoice in their triumphs and transformations, and we watch them leave us and go out into the next stage of their lives. Now we have many students who are children of former students, and we feel that the culture of our school grows richer by the year. Each new generation brings fresh and remarkable impulses both to our school community and to the world, and we strive to create an educational system which allows them to express their unique contributions to society.

* * *

School Logo

Set into the floor of our second kindergarten, there is a bronze foundation stone. As a three dimensional solid, this stone is a truncated pentagonal prism.

On the upper surface is the 'sunseal', an abstract, symbolic representation of human consciousness immersed in the spiritual ocean of being. This drawing comes from a series Steiner made in the first decade of the last century exploring the metamorphosis of growth.



The College of Teachers has decided to use this symbol as the basis for the design of the school logo on all our printed communications and signs. The College is grateful to Gozer Studio for their ongoing creative work on this signature and the school's website.

The symbol can be used as a basis for contemplation on the nature and evolution of the human being. As a signature it will express our duty towards the good development of all human beings, and of all the other living creatures that are our companions on Earth.

The College of Teachers

The College of Teachers is the guide of every aspect of the school's life. Ultimately it is the final decision maker in all matters. College meets each Tuesday after school. (There are separate Kinder, Primary and Secondary meetings on other days.) Every staff member is able to attend and meet others as equals in this forum of responsibility. Consensus is used at all times to reach decisions rather than voting. The position of College Chairperson rotates within the staff. College meetings include an artistic activity, a period of meditation, study of educational principles, and discussion and decision making on school matters.

The College carries the spiritual impulse of the school and continually reworks the curriculum in the light of the times in which we live. Because the College group is large, sub-committees are formed from time to time to research particular areas of the school life and report their findings back to College. Matters may move more slowly with this method of operating but the value of the group working in equality and holding and nurturing the ethos of the school seems to the College to be the true and future way of working in freedom. It provides the example for the students of work colleagues who co-operate as equals, rather than having a hierarchical structure of employer and employees. Our current chair of College is Jo Stirrat.

Avenues of Communication

If you wish to discuss any matter regarding your child's education, you should contact your child's teacher/guardian. Teachers are available by appointment.

A further avenue of communication is the Administration Group. All matters concerning the curriculum and educational principles of our school can be discussed with members of this group. This Group meets twice weekly and is available through any of its members - contact the school office staff for a register of current members and their contact numbers. Matters you may wish College to consider can be raised through your Class Teacher or Guardian, the Administration Group or by writing to the College of Teachers.

Correspondence sent to the College will be addressed by representatives of College.

Our Bursar, John Mulhall, will assist you with any financial matters and the office staff Tricia Martin, Jenny Sheers, Alison Pritchard, Alison Margaritis, Jenny Heslop and Narelle Bright, will direct your enquiries to the appropriate person.

Policy/Guidelines

Please enquire at the school office if you need information regarding the School's Policies and Guidelines. Members of the Administration Group can assist you with this. Please contact the office for appropriate contacts.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

These are held during the year and are an essential part of the school's educational philosophy. In these meetings the curriculum is explained in the light of how it supports the children at their particular age. Teachers will notify you of dates and times and reminders appear in school newsletters.

Class Liaison Parents

Within your class group of parents two people take on the role of class liaisons. Often in the early years the class teacher may approach parents or sometimes people simply volunteer or are nominated through the parent body. The main task of the class liaison is to facilitate communication between teachers and parents or within the parent body itself. For example they may initiate a "telephone tree" to notify parents if a camp is unexpectedly late in returning to school; they inform and organize activities and tasks for Market Days or the School Fair; they support and inform new parents where possible; they also help with the organisation of class events for parents. Their interests extend to class dinners, suppers at parent evenings and organising extra requirements for camps in the earlier years. They usually develop the art of delegation within the parent body and can provide a sense for the well being of families in a class. For example, class liaisons can arrange for parents to provide meals or transport for a family faced with illness or perhaps a new addition to the family. Liaisons are usually appointed during term I at the first parent evening or sometimes parents are happy to stay on for a few years.

High School Assessment and Reports

An 'Interim Report' is sent home to parents at the end of term one. This report, containing a brief summary of the progress of the student in each subject, is followed by an invitation to parent-teacher interviews held on the Thursday of the second week of term two. This is a half day for high school students and interviews run 1.30 – 4.30 pm and 5.30 – 8.30 pm. As well, comprehensive reports are provided at the end of each semester and follow up interviews are organised if needed. The reports are descriptive in nature and provide a picture of the student in the particular subject, as well as feedback on assessment.

Performance Information

Under the Australian Government's Programmes for Schools Quadrennial Administrative Guidelines 2005 - 2008, all schools are required to make a commitment to ensure that School Performance Information is made publicly available in at least two formats, within six months of the completion of the programme year [August]. A hard copy of the record is available from the school office and it is also posted on our website www.mrss.com.au

Information Sheet

A weekly sheet is sent home each Thursday via your email address – please check to see if the school has your correct email address. There are a few hard copies kept on the shelf just inside the office door if you would like one. Please make sure you receive your copy as it will keep you in touch with the activities of the school. A list of staff and their involvement in school life will be sent home attached to the information sheet early in term one.

Once a fortnight the School Community Association prints a Community Newsletter that can be used for the placement of personal advertisements. There is a fee involved and office staff can help you with information. The Community Newsletter helps build the sense of community and gives the opportunity for parents to support each other. This will be sent via email along with the Information Sheet.

Student Welfare

Student welfare is primarily maintained by the class teacher (in classes 1-6) and class guardian in the secondary school. Teachers' strive to establish teacher/parent relationships based on openness and trust. In early years the parent and class teacher have regular opportunities to share concerns and discuss issues. Parents are welcome to contact class teachers, guardians or subject teachers to arrange interviews if parents have concerns. Teachers may also contact parents where it is felt necessary.

Teachers make daily reflections on their students and class teachers strive to consciously recall the day, the child and the events in the calm of the evening.

Rudolf Steiner gave different meditative verses for the teacher to consider. Many teachers use these as a source of inspiration and support in the work with the students.

If it is felt children may require counselling or further assessments from a child psychologist or other therapists, parents may be supported in finding appropriate specialists in this field.

Support Education

The School is aware of the needs of some children for support over a range of areas of development - physical, social, artistic and intellectual covering language and numeracy.

The social welfare of the students is carried largely by the class teachers with children with special needs, and aims not only to address academic shortcomings. Perhaps more importantly it aims to develop confidence and increase the child's self-esteem. Often with greater self-esteem comes more positive and successful participation in both academic and social aspects of school life. Students are referred for extra support by class teachers/guardians or subject teachers and parents may request assistance for their child through consultation with the teachers. The programmes are implemented in a variety of ways: *individual*

lessons - one to one with a specialist teacher; *small groups* with usually two to six children removed from class to work with one teacher; *in the class room* - a special education teacher goes into some class lessons to support one or more children with special needs in the subject. We have had several students for whom government integration funding has been granted. Work with these students may include class room support, an individual program and assistance from an aide.

If appropriate, children may be referred to private therapists for other specialist assistance. These include Extra Lesson, Motor Development Therapy, Psychologist, Speech Therapist or Doctors.

The Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School and Early Childhood Program works within the parameters of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992), and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 in working with enrolment applications from, and teaching children with special needs in our school.

Along with all schools Australia wide, our school is required to collect and report data on students with a disability, as part of the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD). The NCCD requires us as teachers in our school to make professional judgements, to ascertain whether a student has a disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act. We also must evaluate the level of an adjustment that needs to be made for each student, and collect relevant data and report on how many students we have with disabilities. We endeavour to provide adequate and appropriate support and provisions for each student with a disability.

School Council

The School Council is composed of a group of staff and parents who meet monthly to provide direction on non-educational matters concerning the running of the school, including finances, buildings and other administrative matters.

Members of the Council are drawn from the College of Teachers, parents of the school who have certain areas of expertise in business and finance, long standing parents and a representative of the School Community Association Committee. Please contact the school office for a current list of names.

School Community Association

This is an association of parents, teachers and friends of the school, who through their various activities support the School's principles of education and the strength of the community that surrounds the school.

The Association provides a focus or formal channel for the many needs and activities of the school community and takes responsibility for the wider social activities of the school, such as the Fair, the Warranwood Art Show, bush dances and fundraising. Presently most of the fund-raising in the School is under the auspices of the School Community Association. Then, in consultation with the College of Teachers, funds are directed where required. The funds raised by the SCA have made some really wonderful things possible within the School, including the building of the School Hall, the refurbishment of the Library and the Dining Room and the provision of disability access throughout some parts of the School. The School Community Association (SCA) is also concerned with the enhancing and strengthening of relationships between various groups within the school community and wider community.

All MRSS parents and staff are members of this Association which has been formed for the benefit of us all. Meeting dates and activities are put in the weekly Information Sheet.

SCA Café “Nest”

Open daily 8.30 am – 10.00 am. *Nest* is situated on the southern side of the Oak Hall building and garden. Nest is a not for profit venture intended to build social connections and support within the School Community. We warmly welcome volunteers to support this community venture. Please come and share a warm drink and conversation after dropoff.

Market Days

Once a term the School Community Association holds a Market and it is held in the gardens of Oak Hall and the Acorn room. Beautiful handcrafted items, most lovingly made by our own parents, are for sale along with a variety of stalls selling items such as biodynamic compost, children's toys and books. There is also a 'Market Café' where you can sit and enjoy delicious food and coffee and tea, and socialize with other members of the community. Dates are advertised in the Information Sheet. The SCA is always looking for volunteers to help run the Market; let the office know if you are interested.

Doll making classes – with Sharmian. Contact the school office for dates.

Family Play Groups Melbourne Steiner Playgroup offers a play based program in a beautiful setting, with seasonal songs and stories, craft and parenting support. These independently run playgroup sessions are taken by experienced leaders and are held in the Acorn Room at MRSS on Wednesday and Thursday mornings 9.30-11.30am and on Monday and Tuesday at the nearby Michael Centre.
Enquiries: Meron Lovegrove mobile 0400 196 012 email melbsteinerplaygroup@bigpond.com

Library

Our school library is a wonderful resource for our students and teachers. During the day the facilities are in high demand and need to be available solely for the use of teachers and students. Although it cannot operate as a public library it offers borrowing facilities to parents of the school when a child enters kindergarten.

Children begin independent visits to the library sometime in class three after the class makes its first special library visit. Class teachers would prefer younger children not to attend the library until then but still enjoy the lovely selection of picture books that parents may borrow.

Library times for parents are Monday to Friday 3.15 - 4.00 pm during the school term.

Senior High School students may use the photocopier in the library. Please see one of the librarians before you use the copier.

Emergency Procedures - Bushfire Emergency Plan

The School will be closed on days declared Code Red and Extreme by the CFA. These ratings may be found on the CFA website at www.cfa.vic.gov.au. If there is time, we will also post the school closure on our website mrss.com.au

Many of our families and staff live in areas prone to the risk of bush fires.

Please refer to the school's guidelines and procedures for bush fire information obtainable from the OHS officer in the school office.

The school conducts fire and emergency drill practise during the year.

School Photograph Day A professional school photographer comes to the school once a year and takes photographs of all the classes from kindergarten to year twelve and individual photos from class one to twelve. Information regarding the date, payment, etc. will be sent home with the weekly Information Sheet.

Beginning the Day ... Main Lesson

We would like to give you a picture of the start of each day at school. Just as the birds stir before the first rays of the sun gently touch our earth and their song brings our awareness to the start of a new day, so the children greet each other. They come into the rooms and catch up with their news. The rooms are filled with a buzz and chatter. This is how they "warm" their day before the school commences.

If the students don't have time to do this before their work begins - the day starts with a jolt, on an "in-breath" with no time to reach out into their environment and to their companions. Stress has crept in and the wonder of the day is dimmed a little. We ask you as parents to make sure your children have this space.

Please allow time for them to come to school in a relaxed way so that before school commences this very important activity can occur and the social fabric of the class has a chance to re-form and the day can begin with warmth and friendliness.

Secondary students also need a little time to greet each other before the day's work begins. Their social milieu should be one of graciousness and friendliness and for this to be cultivated time and space is needed.

Through the whole school, from class one - twelve, each school day begins with an extended *main lesson* in which a particular subject is studied in depth for approximately three weeks.

Normal human life alternates between wide awake consciousness and sleep. We know that one is necessary for the other and we could not really claim that either one is superior to the other, although we of course derive greater enjoyment from the full awareness that we have when we are awake. In terms of the students' education we try to adhere to the principle of balancing wakefulness and sleep.

In presenting a topic to the children we therefore wake them up as we present new ideas and dimensions to them. By taking the approach of bringing the subject matter in an intense way the student becomes fully engaged with this topic. Ideally, we would then like this topic to rest, 'go to sleep' in the child's consciousness, just as on a day to day basis we like to present topics to the child in the day time and allow the child to absorb them in sleep that night. To best facilitate this we run our program in blocks of what we call 'main lesson' periods. The first part of each day (one and a half hours) for some three weeks will be spent in the study of one subject. So, for example, each morning the student may arrive at school and spend the first one and a half hours in an art class. This allows a very efficient immersion into the subject at hand. At the end of the three week period the child will begin a new main lesson, for example mathematics, and we allow the topics of our art main lesson 'to go to sleep' in the child's consciousness. In a way this is like giving the child a chance to digest and make his/her own the topics experienced in the art main lesson. This being the case we find that when later in the year or next year we return to another art main lesson the child shows the benefit of having fully assimilated the work of the previous main lesson.

The alternative wherein we continue dealing with the subject a few times a week for the entire year we have found to be of less benefit in terms of depth of immersion by the children in the topic at hand and the degree of personal growth that the children experience through this topic. However, we do find with subjects that require a great deal of practice and rote learning, regular shorter periods through every week will give the children a chance to learn and to apply what was presented in the main lesson. So, for example, we have regular practise lessons in language and mathematics.

Where possible, the more practical activities we try and present in the afternoons when the children have to some extent exhausted their mental acuity on the more theoretical subjects of the morning.

Class Assembly

Secondary students begin and finish the day with a class assembly with the class guardian(s). A morning and afternoon verse are spoken on each occasion, the roll is taken and notices, newsletters or other relevant messages are given. In the afternoon classes are required to complete specific jobs in order to leave the room clean and tidy for the next day.

School Times

Primary

Classes 1 - 6 - 8.45 a.m. First bell - we ask that they arrive (8.30/45 am so they can greet their friends and have a short play before final bell (8.50am)

Classes 1 - 3 home time 3.00 p.m. (Class One times may vary from our norm. Class teacher will communicate with you. Wednesday is a half day for Class One)

Classes 4 - 6 home time 3.15 p.m.

Morning Break 10.30 - 11.00 am (depending on length of the main lesson)

Primary Lunch 12.15 - 1.00 pm

Secondary

First bell 8.45 a.m. Form Assembly commences - ML commences 8.55 sharp

Home time 3.25 p.m. for classes 7 - 10

Years 11 & 12 3.15 or 4.00 p.m. - depending on subjects taken.

Morning Break 10.25 - 10.45 am

Secondary Lunch 1.00 - 1.45 pm

Teachers are present from 8.30 a.m. and a teacher is on duty until 4.00 p.m. We ask that children do not arrive before 8.30 am and are collected by 4.00 p.m. The school office is staffed until 4.30 pm if your child needs to phone regarding pickup.

Collecting your primary child after school:

Rhythm plays a great part in maintaining our overall well-being and happiness. This is important for us all but is vital for young children. Each day in Primary School there are activities that demand movement and there are also times of rest. Each day has its in breath and out breath, as does the cycle of the week, month and year.

After being dismissed from the Primary classes at the end of the day, children are often tired and hungry. Ideally children of the Lower Primary School will be met by a parent or guardian in the playground outside the office and taken home. Children in Upper Primary classes often make their way down to the 'big oval' or rotunda before heading home. At this time the children understand that their 'bounds' extend only to the flat, visible area of the oval. We request that children do not play anywhere beyond the fence line bordering the oval without or with parental supervision.

Thank you all for your cooperation in helping to maintain a healthy rhythmic life for the children at our fantastic school.

VCE Year 11 & 12 - The school timetable for VCE students includes period 7, 3.15 - 4.00 pm, so VCE students have a longer day at school. All students are expected to attend morning assembly at 8.45 a.m. before they go their separate ways. Because of the lengthened school day VCE students are permitted to sign out when their last lesson for the day has finished. (Occasionally a class at the end of the day (period 7) may be cancelled due to the absence of a VCE teacher. Signing out when there are no further classes is a privilege and may be withdrawn if this privilege is abused. With privilege also comes responsibility. When students' timetables are finalised, students are expected to convey times and days to parents so that all are aware of the varying finish times. If a class is cancelled students are also expected to communicate with parents, if they have signed out, before they leave the school grounds. This is seen not just as a responsibility but a common courtesy and training for life.

Another important aspect of the VCE period of school is study skills and making proper use of time. When students do not have main lesson they will still be expected to attend school to maintain a healthy rhythm and work ethic. Absences or late arrival requires a signed note from a parent. Those students without a scheduled main lesson will be expected to work on homework or study in the library.

Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School After School Care 2020

MRSS offers after school care for primary school children (Prep – Class 6) 3.00 pm – 6.00 pm. Monday – Thursday during the school term. Bookings and Enquiries afterschoolcare@mrss.vic.edu.au

Messages from Parents to Students

When parents phone the school office with a message for their child changing pick-up or after-school arrangements, it presents logistical problems.

It is at best extremely inconvenient, and sometimes quite impossible, for office staff to leave their duties to search for your child. When the message is passed on or pigeonholed to the relevant teacher or guardian, it can be overlooked or forgotten, especially if the teacher/guardian does not cross paths with your child again that day.

The solution is that students should know at the beginning of their school day what is to happen at the other end, especially if there is to be an unusual pick-up time or altered after-school arrangements. This is particularly the case for younger children, who feel more secure when they know of any irregularities in the day's rhythm before leaving home.

For older students, if you know in advance that you may need to alter or confirm arrangements, please follow either or the following procedures:

tell your child they must ring you from the school office during their recess or lunchtime to confirm arrangements,

OR

phone through a message to the school office having that morning told your child to call into the office at lunchtime to collect it.

Please do not seek to communicate electronically with your child during the school day, as this puts them in breach of the school rules.

Of course, in the case of emergencies and unforeseen contingencies, by all means phone the school office on 9876 2633.

Your cooperation in this matter will greatly assist the smooth running of the school.

Traffic Safety and Parking within the School Grounds

These are our children; each one of us must ensure their safety.

There is a speed limit of **10 KM PER HOUR** within the School grounds at **ALL** times. Always be aware of students and young children.

There are defined designated walking paths and crossings and we ask pedestrians to please use them for everyone's safety.

We ask you to adhere to the following:

Southern Driveway & Rotunda:

- We remind parents that the roundabout/rotunda area outside the kindergartens is a **NO ENTRY/NO PARKING AREA** for parents and visitors from **8.00am – 4.00pm**. This area is for disabled car parking, deliveries and emergency services **ONLY**. **Access to this area will be blocked off at 2.30pm on weekdays in a bid to stop vehicles parking in this area and improve safety.**
- The parking bays outside the Oak Hall Building in the Southern Driveway are for **STAFF ONLY**.

Central Driveway & Car Parking:

- Drop-off and pick-up zones along the Central Driveway are **NO PARKING ZONES**. These are signposted. Please do not park your vehicle in these zones between **8.00am – 4.00pm** as they are designated drop-off/pick-up **ONLY** and are not to be used as a parking bay. For safety and traffic flow please drive as far forward as possible before stopping and allowing children to exit the car.
- **NO RIGHT HAND TURN** out of Central Driveway onto Wonga Rd, during peak times. This is per Road Rule 91. MRSS has a “No Right Hand Turn” sign in place, with the prohibited times displayed. Please be advised that as Road Rule 91 is an enforceable road rule, Victoria Police and Maroondah Council officers will be monitoring the area for vehicles performing illegal right hand turns. Penalties will apply for non-compliance.
- Please **DO NOT STOP** on the roundabout. This is very dangerous and blocks the flow of traffic.
- There is limited short-term parking facing the Oak Hall Building opposite drop-off zones. When using this short term parking area, families are encouraged to reverse out of parking bays and drive up and around the roundabout in order to exit the school.
- A pathway is in place beside the Central Driveway. Students and their families are encouraged to walk along this or the existing pathway behind the Kindergartens, rather than walking on the roadway itself.
- Parking for parents with prams is available within the first four bays past the boom gate in the Central Driveway. If this is full, alternate parking is in the Northern Car Park. ***Parking beyond this point is not permitted and is for STAFF ONLY.***
- **Northern Car Park**
- ***This is the main designated parking area for all parents.***

There are parking bays available for use in the Northern Car Park. School is accessed via the walking path from the bottom of the car park or via the footpath along the front of the school.

Disabled Car Parking:

The designated disabled parking bays are located outside the Main Hall on the Southern Driveway, and outside the Oak Hall Building on the Central Driveway. Drivers must display the appropriate disabled sticker on their car window.

Parking Permits and Special Requests:

If a situation arises that requires special consideration, please contact the school office to obtain the relevant parking permit to display on your car window.

Learner Drivers:

Parents please ensure that young people learning to drive (**L- Plates**) - DO NOT DRIVE INSIDE THE SCHOOL GROUNDS.

P-Plate Drivers:

Under no circumstances are students to drive their cars within the school grounds. Students who drive to school will need to park in the street as parking will not be available to them inside the school.

This rule has been established in the interests of all members of the School community including the Class 12 students themselves, for whom cars can easily become a form of distraction and “escape” in a year when they should really be very focused on their studies, particularly whilst they are at school.

A Note about Grassed & Garden Areas:

We would like to ask that parents DO NOT PARK their vehicles on grassed and garden areas. Doing so often results in grassed areas dying off and/or damage to gardens.

Our Neighbour, The Melbourne Therapy Centre:

We request that parents DO NOT PARK their car in the Centre’s car park and that students DO NOT WALK through the Centre’s car park, property and gardens on the way to and from school.

Absences

Primary School Absences

Please send a note to your child’s Class Teacher after an absence for any reason. We ask you to phone the office in the morning before 8.45 am if your child will be away from school and please advise if he/she was scheduled to have a music lesson. Leaving school during the day (dentist appointment, etc.) requires that the student bring a note of explanation *before* the planned departure. For extended absences please phone the Class Teacher/Guardians.

Secondary School Absences

Absences are to be notified to the school office before 8.30 am where possible. Please leave a clear message on the answering machine stating your child’s name, class, and reason for absence. Please also advise if they are due to have a music lesson or ensemble that day including the name of their music teacher.

Anticipated late arrivals should also be phoned through to the office before 8.30 am including the child’s name, class and expected arrival time and reason for lateness.

All Secondary students who arrive late to school (after 8.45 am) must come via the office.

Leaving school during the day (dentist appointment, etc.) requires that the student bring a note of explanation *before* the planned departure. **All Secondary students must come via the office and sign out before leaving the school premises, VCE 11 & 12 sign in the Library.** For extended absences please phone the Class Teacher/Guardians.

We have implemented a system of texting both parents of students who are not at school. We start sending these at approximately 9.15 am however the mornings can be busy and if we have your prior notification it makes this task much simpler and faster!

If you receive a text from us we would appreciate your prompt response. Thank you.

The society in which we live places ever increasing pressure on the environment that constitutes a healthy childhood. There is a recent phenomenon of the promotion of cheap holidays outside regular school holiday periods.

When a child is ill they are absent from school, but as they are convalescing at home they are in a quiet place and still able to 'dream' into what may be happening with their peers in class. When they return it is as if a place has been held for them buoyed by their wondering and longing.

A child returning from a holiday is in a very different space. There is likely to have been lots of activity and stimulation, allowing little or no time for quiet consideration of their peers at school. Unlike when children are ill and it seems a place is reserved for them within the group, children having had a stimulating holiday often find it very difficult to return into the social life of the class and to enter into the work. Friendship groups may have altered since their departure and games will have changed. To adjust back into a healthy rhythm with the class can take many days, weeks or even months. Children who fall behind in work activities such as craft can easily lose heart and find it difficult to summon the will to fully engage with their own creativity. Children in such a state not only weaken their own will forces but can often act in such a way that distracts other class members from their work.

A child who has been absent due to illness returns to school with a longing to be back. A child returning from a holiday is brimming with that experience when they return. The effects of that experience are likely to be felt by the rest of the class.

We understand that from time to time situations arise in families that necessitate children being absent. We request that you seriously consider whether any absence from school is absolutely necessary and is in the best interests of your child and your child's class.

Illnesses & Accidents

Please make sure you complete your Medical Release Form & Student Data Collection Form on CareMonkey as soon as possible. We need to know your current phone number, etc., in case of an emergency.

Immunisations

It is a government requirement that the school hold immunisation records for all primary students. As such, all students must provide, at the time of enrolment, an Immunisation History Statement regarding their immunisation status. This document can be obtained from the Australian Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809. This does not mean that your child has to be immunised but that the school must hold a record of your child's immunisation status. From 2016 the school is not permitted to enrol students in the kindergarten who are not up to date with the vaccination schedule fully. This is a Federal Government requirement, to which we are not permitted to make any exceptions.

Infectious Diseases: Please inform your child's Class Teacher/Guardian should your child contract an infectious illness. They will give you details of exclusion periods.

Excursions & Camps

Excursions and camps require the completion of medical release forms specific to these activities. Forms and information will be sent home before the activity and **must be completed and signed by parents before a student will be allowed to go on the excursion or camp.**

School Rules

Part of our school philosophy is a belief that a vital part of living on Earth is caring for others and for the Earth itself. We believe this leads to peace and deep happiness. Therefore, when students or teachers join our school we expect them to join in a community life where:

we all look after one another;

we try to be helpful and open to others;

we help look after the buildings and grounds;

we strive to maintain, and with maturity to build, a positive environment in which we will all grow to greater human freedom and expression.

On a mundane level this expresses in such obvious rules as: speak decently, look after health, avoid breaking things, learn and cultivate positive attitudes. Our students are entitled to spend their time at this school feeling valued and supported by all who study, work or otherwise attend here. In order for their individuality to flourish, their lives need to be free from all forms of abuse, oppression and humiliation. Our aim is never to make a child fit a certain mould, but instead to facilitate the development of each unique individual. We value sensitivity and openness to beauty and encourage our students to do the same, as these attributes are essential for the development of the self.

More specific secondary school rules including our Anti-Smoking Policy are printed throughout the year in the weekly Information Sheet and sent home with a fees mail out.

The school is subject to National and State Laws and supports the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to: elected government; the rule of law; equal rights for all before the law; freedom of religion; freedom of speech and association; the values of openness and tolerance.

Clothing

Steiner Education values the importance of childhood and encourages parents to shield children from influences that seek to push them into early adolescence. Kindergarten and Primary Class Teachers request that the children wear plain clothes of pure colour (use the colours of the rainbow as a guide to what is most appropriate) with no logos or advertising. The world of fashion and advertising and adolescent hairstyles and colourings do not belong in childhood and it is far more desirable to greet a child's smiling face than be struck by a slogan or logo.

We request moderation in clothing and hairstyle to bring a due respect to the daily work place and we hope torn clothing and inappropriate slogans will not appear. Dress should be decent and non-provocative (e.g. not too revealing, no offensive or illegal messages. Make-up and jewellery are more appropriate for adolescents. While children are young, play and movement are essential and we do not wish this to be limited or endangered in any way. Earrings can be caught by fingers during play and earlobes torn. Earrings and necklaces are particularly dangerous during gym and sport. Children enjoy playing with their mum's and older sister's nail polish - but please have them remove it before they come to school.

Singlet tops or t-shirts with very narrow straps leave the children at risk to sun burn. If your child wishes to wear a singlet on a very hot day, please ensure they also have a light cotton short sleeved shirt to cover them when they are outside. Sun hats are an essential piece of clothing and must be worn at all times when the children are outside. Ensure that the hats that your child wears serves the purpose of casting shade rather than being cute. Because of the intensity of the sun in the middle of the day, teachers feel it is wiser for the children to remain inside if they have not brought their own hat.

For safety and hygienic reasons, it is recommended that students wear proper footwear to school and in class.

Bicycles, Scooters, etc.

Bikes and other student transport vehicles are to be taken directly to the bicycle storage area on arrival at school and ridden directly out of the school grounds when they are retrieved after school. Thus riding is allowed only on the road beside the oval at designated times.

Sunhats

In the warmer months during the school day, children need to have adequate protection from the sun. Hats must be worn at all times when the children are outside during the summer months. Because of the intensity of the sun in the middle of the day, teachers feel it is wiser for the children to remain inside if they have not brought their own hat. Shoulders also need full protection and long or short sleeved tops prevent painful sunburn. Sun cream is provided in the classroom for those who wish to use it or you may send your child along with his/her own supply.

Mobile Phones

With parent permission, students may bring mobile phones to school - these are particularly required by students who travel on public transport.

Rules for mobile phones are:

Classes Seven to Ten students will have their mobile phone collected at the beginning of the day and stored in their classroom, in wooden locked boxes. Phones will be handed back during afternoon verse time.

Please refer to the MRSS Mobile Phone Policy Classes 7 – 10 at the end of this booklet.

Ordinarily, when communication with parents becomes necessary during the day, students may have access to a telephone in a school office with teacher permission. However, a Class Guardian may give permission for a student to use his or her mobile phone when there are exceptional circumstances.

We ask parents not to ring their children at school during class times (yes, it has happened!). **Parents are asked to refrain from using their mobile phones in the school grounds, especially around the kindergarten, primary play area and dining room.** Please step into the school office or use the car parking areas to return or make your calls if they are urgent.

List of Rules for High School Students - a copy is sent home to all high school students

Learning Environment

Respect should be shown towards the teaching and learning situation. Students are expected to arrive on time with appropriate materials necessary for class. Placing feet on tables, eating and drinking during class, using foul language and coming to class soaking wet etc., are not acceptable forms of behaviour.

There is a time-out scheme for classes. Students who are unable to discipline themselves during a lesson, can be sent out to sit with their class guardian or in the back of a senior class for the rest of the lesson. By doing so, we try to avoid further confrontation between the student and the teacher, and allow the rest of the class to continue with the lesson. A follow-up meeting between the student and the teacher should take place as soon as possible after the event in order to discuss and clear the situation.

Dress and Appearance

There is no prescribed school uniform. However, dress should be decent and non-provocative (e.g. not too revealing, no offensive or illegal messages). For safety and hygienic reasons, proper footwear must be worn to school and in class.

Language

Teachers and students address each other by the first name.

As we like to keep the standard of our communication as high as possible, we regard indecent language as not appropriate and consider abusive and violent language as an offence.

Health – over page

Smoking, alcohol and other drugs are not permitted at school, and in the immediate neighbourhood (e.g. the milk bar, bus stop outside) during supervised school hours. No spitting on pavements, staircases, etc.

Children with infectious diseases (i.e. childhood diseases, viral flu, etc.) or head lice shall stay away from school until cleared.

Aerosol-Free Environment

Spray cans of deodorants, antiperspirants and perfumes have become popular among our secondary students.

Although many of these products are designed to be long-lasting, some students apply and re-apply them at school, and those who are around them (or who enter the space for some time thereafter) cannot avoid inhaling the aerosols. Unfortunately such products contain a range of chemicals that cause headaches and asthmatic episodes in some people.

For some time now, we have sought to educate our students towards more appropriate use of these products, but have been unsuccessful at bringing about a change in behavior.

We have therefore made a decision that students cannot bring these aerosols to school.

If your son or daughter feels that they must bring a deodorant or antiperspirant to school, please supply them with roll-on products as an alternative.

Illicit Drugs

In the case of incidents involving illicit substances the school will contact the parents or guardians of the student(s) as soon as practicable. It is the school's duty of care responsibility to report incidents to appropriate authorities.

The possession, use, distribution of illicit drugs is prohibited under the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 (Vic)*. Parent Information - Supplying alcohol to minors in a private home. Liquor Control Reform Amendment Act 2011 – From November 1, 2011, the *Liquor Control Reform Amendment Act 2011* (the Act) makes it an offence under the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998* for a person to supply alcohol to a minor (a person under the age of 18 years) in a private home without the consent of the minor's parent or legal guardian. Under these laws, a person who supplies alcohol to a minor without a parent or legal guardian's consent could be subject to the same penalty faced by licensees who supply alcohol to minors in licensed venues – a maximum fine of more than \$7000. For information go to www.justice.vic.gov.au/alcohol.

Anti-Smoking Policy

No student is allowed to smoke at school or in the surrounding neighbourhood of the school, including the shops, bus stops, or adjoining bushland, smoking is also not allowed during school activities, e.g. excursions, work experience, camps. Nor is the possession of cigarettes or lighters permitted.

Students in the presence of other students who are smoking will be seen as supporting the actions of the smokers and will thus face exactly the same consequences as the smokers themselves.

CONSEQUENCES

1. The first time a smoker or companion is reported will result in:
a teacher contacting the parent/guardian
suspension* the following school day with appropriate school work being assigned to help compensate for the absence.
2. A second offence will result in the same procedure but a suspension* of two days and proportionally increased make-up work.
3. A third offence will result in the same procedure but:
suspension* for a minimum of three days
the student may return to school only after a satisfactory interview with the parent/guardian at the school.
4. Subsequent offences will result in either extended suspensions or expulsion.

We recognise medical evidence that smoking is harmful to the health of smokers and anyone in their company. The effects of smoking are addressed in both formal and informal settings and at various levels in the school. Under these circumstances we feel the responsibility to discourage smoking by supporting a strong anti-smoking policy at school.

Any parent/guardian who believes his/her child is addicted to smoking and thus finds this policy impractical is asked to contact the appropriate class guardian for discussion as soon as possible.

* Teachers may elect to choose appropriate alternative to suspension

Safety

Skateboards may not be used on the school premises; they will be confiscated if used by either the owner or other students. Any skateboard brought to school must be kept in an appropriate storage place to be decided by the class guardian.

Bicycles, Scooters, etc.

Bikes and other student transport vehicles are to be taken directly to the bicycle storage area on arrival at school and ridden directly out of the school grounds when they are retrieved after school. Riding is allowed only on the road beside the oval at designated times.

Appropriate helmets must be worn by people coming to school on bicycles.

No ball games inside or in classroom areas.

No water balloons allowed at school.

Traffic Safety

Learner drivers - Parents please ensure that young people learning to drive -L- platers - do not drive inside the school area. Under no circumstances are students to drive their cars within the school grounds. This means that students who drive to school will have to park in the street (or delegated parking area) as parking will not be available to them inside the school.

This rule has been established in the interests of all members of the School Community including the Class 12 students themselves, for whom cars can easily become a form of distraction and "escape" in a year when they should really be very focussed on their studies, particularly whilst they are at school.

Sunhats

In the warmer months during the school day, students need to have adequate protection from the sun. Hats must be worn at all times when the students are outside during the summer months. Because of the intensity of the sun in the middle of the day, teachers feel it is wiser for the students to remain inside if they have not brought their own hat. Shoulders also need full protection and long or short sleeved tops prevent painful sunburn. Sun-cream is provided in the classroom for those who wish to use it or you may wish to send your child along with his/her own supply.

Hot Weather

The school will stay open in hot weather. The curriculum may be modified appropriate to the conditions of the day. If a family decision is reached that conditions will be too difficult for the student, the student should stay home all day and the parent send a follow-up note to guardian/teacher the next day. Students **will not** be dismissed partway through the day; our policy is not to let a student leave during the day without parental permission. Fire Danger Ratings: On days declared 'Code Red and Extreme' the school will be closed. Please refer to the school's guidelines and procedures for bush fire information.

Physical Education Attire

Please note that for all PE and sport classes, runners and clothing appropriate for the activity are required. (Jeans, and certain dresses are not considered appropriate). All students will be required to wear a hat during the summer months. Students who do not bring their own will have to use one from the school. Sun-cream will be made available to those who wish to use it.

Boundaries

There are set boundaries during recess and lunch breaks. A map of these boundaries is displayed in the dining room and individual classes have their own and are displayed in their class room.

Electronic Devices (MP3 Players, mobile phones, games, ipods, etc.)

In this fast and noisy civilization, our senses are often bombarded with more than we are actually able to cope with. Because nervousness, hyperactivity, poor concentration and other symptoms are the obvious results, use of electronic devices is banned at school, and students are strongly discouraged from using them on the way to school. [Students who bring inappropriate or prohibited items to school will find that these are confiscated for a period of time.] Special arrangements apply to high school camps and parents and students will be advised of this through parent meetings and notices.

Student use of mobile phones

With parent permission, students may bring mobile phones to school - these are particularly required by students who travel on public transport.

Rules for mobile phones are:

Classes Seven to Ten students will have their mobile phone collected at the beginning of the day and stored in their classroom, in wooden locked boxes. Phones will be handed back during afternoon verse time.

Please refer to the MRSS Mobile Phone Policy Classes 7 – 10 at the end of this booklet.

Ordinarily, when communication with parents becomes necessary during the day, students may have access to a telephone in a school office with teacher permission. However, a Class Guardian may give permission for a student to use his or her mobile phone when there are exceptional circumstances.

Graffiti

Sprit based felt tip pens (textas) and other materials that maybe used for graffiti are banned in the school and will be confiscated.

Violent Or Aggressive Behaviour

All forms of violent behaviour, including habitual bullying, will not be tolerated.

- Incidents should be reported to the class teacher or guardian
- In instances where this behaviour is seen to be premeditated and in cases where this behaviour has become a pattern of response by a student, a strong response is called for, such as an immediate suspension. A decision on this should be reached by the class teacher or class guardians.
 - Parents should be contacted and, if appropriate, a meeting arranged.
 - All parties involved should present their sides of the story to a staff member responsible for investigating the incident and a report made to the appropriate branch of College for consideration.
- Repeated incidents can result in the student being expelled, following consultation with the College of Teachers or its appropriate branch.

Abusive language is a form of violence in itself. We believe that it is extremely important for us to help make students more aware of the language that they use, especially today when derogatory and obscene words have become so commonplace in the vocabulary of our times. We recognize the power of abusive language when it is directed with intent to injure, and students who continually resort to its use with fellow students or staff will be responded to as with other forms of violent behaviour.

Multimedia technologies have created new domains in which young people learn and interact. Technology such as mobile phones, SMS, in-phone cameras, emails and chat rooms can be an effective way to learn and a great way to communicate. Unfortunately some people use this technology to bully others by sending threatening or unwanted messages or spreading nasty rumours. A government website netalert defines cyber bullying as: "*Bullying that is carried out through an internet service, such as email, chat room, discussion group or instant messaging. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS). Examples of cyber bullying include teasing, spreading rumours online, sending unwanted messages, or defamation.*" Cyber bullying will be responded to as with other forms of violent behaviour.

School Times

Supervised school hours are Monday to Friday 8.30 am - 4.00 pm
Class assembly 8.45 am
Main Lesson starts 8.55 am
School for classes 7 - 10 finishes at 3.25 pm (lessons finish 3.15 pm) Attendance at form assembly is compulsory.
Exceptions for VCE Students
When VCE students finish classes at the end of their day, they may leave school after registering in the attendance book located in the school office.
Yr 12 students who do not have a ML may arrive later (if permission granted by class guardian) and must register upon arrival in the attendance book located in the school office.
Yr 12 students who drive cars to school may not leave and return in their cars during the day.
Yr 12 students may leave school to walk to the shop at morning tea and lunch

Punctuality and Absence

School activities are valued functions and are compulsory, with few exceptions.
When a student returns from an absence, he/she should bring a note from a parent to the class guardian explaining the absence.
For a predictable absence during the school day, a note **beforehand** from the parent is necessary. The class guardian should sign the note for the student to show to the teachers of the class/es to be missed.
A student may leave school only with the guardian's/class teacher's permission and school office must be notified.
Extended voluntary absences, such as family holidays, should be discussed with the class teacher/guardian beforehand so that the impact of the absence on the student's progress can be considered.
A parent should phone the school if the student is away and also advise if he/she was scheduled for a music lesson.
Un-excused absence, i.e. "wagging" of a day or of a class, is dealt with by the class guardians/ teacher as they see appropriate. It is regarded as a serious matter.
Consistent tardiness is a problem that is dealt with by the class teacher/guardian in appropriate ways.

Offences Against School Rules

There are prescribed penalties for some offences (e.g. smoking) which Class Guardians explain to their students. Most other offences are dealt with according to the situation by subject teachers, class guardians or a combined group. Parents are informed where this is warranted by the seriousness of the offence and/or penalty. For example, if there is to be an after-school detention, parents will be contacted and given advance notice.

Students who bring inappropriate or prohibited items to school will find that these are confiscated for a period of time.

The school is subject to National and State Laws and supports the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to: elected government, the rule of law; equal rights for all before the law; freedom of religion; freedom of speech and association; the values of openness and tolerance.

Lost Property

Parents/students can check the lost property tub/rack in the school office. At the end of each term items not collected are sorted and donated to a local Op Shop. PLEASE name your child's clothing, camp equipment, lunch box, back pack etc. and there will be a much greater chance that the item will be returned.

Dining Room

Morning tea and lunch need to be brought to school for classes one and two. The children eat together in the classroom and it is a strong social activity. From class three the Class Teacher will inform the parents of a gradual introduction to the dining room. Please keep lunches simple and healthy. Please do not include lollies or highly sweetened items. We try to be as environmentally conscious as we can and would like to minimize what needs to be thrown away, e.g. yoghurt & cardboard drink containers. We suggest the use of washable containers that are filled at home.

Class four upwards are welcome to purchase lunch in the school dining room.

The dining room is run by a professional chef, Connie Pititto, with adult and student assistants.
Because of the increased numbers of students and staff, we are unable to serve parents morning tea and lunches in the dining room.

Student Borrowings

If your child has left their lunch or lunch money at home on the kitchen bench, they may borrow money from the school office to purchase lunch from the dining room (class 4 - 12). We ask that this money is paid back the following day, if possible, by the student so they learn that if they borrow money it is their responsibility to pay it back. At the end of term if money has not been paid back then it will be added to your term fees.



Music

Music is a very important part of the curriculum at our school. As we work with the imagination and creativity of the children in all of their learning, by working artistically we directly affect the inner life of the child so that all things they do are living experiences. Because of its nature, working directly on the soul and spirit, music particularly affects the child in this way. It can be observed that a student who is seriously devoted to making music, alone or with a group of fellow musicians, has the ability to approach the rest of his or her work with great depth, an ability to be socially harmonious with others, and a balanced perception of self-worth and of the worth of others. By becoming a member of an orchestra or choir the child finds that he or she is important to the whole, while at the same time realising that all the others are equally important. When music flows through the class work, this inner feeling becomes part of the child's everyday experience. Far more than just an abstract knowledge of music flows from the presence of music in the class room and in the curriculum. Music pervades everything, every activity from early childhood through the classes, especially the early classes. It fills the air all day long, from the first morning song, to recorder playing, to ring games and dances; music weaves through the day until the last going home song.

In addition to classroom music, each child starts learning violin, viola or cello in class three, so that in late class three or class four each student can contribute his or her part to the group music experience of class orchestra. This work continues throughout the Class Teacher years and lays the foundation for any future work with music. For this part of the children's school work it is especially important to maintain good communication between the class teacher, the instrument teacher and the parent. It is **very** important that all decisions about the child's lessons be made in consultation between those three parties. Music which is part of the curriculum is compulsory from classes three to eight and the cost is included in tuition fees. Timetabled class nine and ten music ensembles are also included in fees.

From class nine to twelve the choice of continuing an instrument is left to the student and parents. Individual lessons, non timetabled ensembles and music theory are an additional cost to parents and billed separately on your fee statement.

A weekly ensemble session forms part of the timetable for years seven to ten and is included in the core curriculum. The type of ensembles vary according to the instrumental choices of the students, but may include, for example, guitar groups, wind groups and a-capella singing. These ensembles give midyear concerts and they perform during the school's annual Open Day.

In the more senior years rock and jazz groups may form. Many students continue musical studies as part of their V.C.E. VCE music subjects incur additional costs which will be billed separately.

It is important that parents remember to let the office know if your child will be away from school and also advise the music teacher if he/she has a scheduled music lesson.

Five lessons written notice, or payment in lieu, is required for any changes to music lessons.

We know you will enjoy all your child's class concerts over the years. How fortunate our children are to have these musical experiences! How many of us have had the wonderful opportunity to be part of a large string orchestra?



Camps/Outdoor Education Class Three - Eleven

Camps begin in class three, as an integral part of the school curriculum and are seen as extremely valuable experiences for the children. Our camps provide embodied, intimate, caring and reverent encounters with Nature in a wide variety of places, with the intention of creating a culture of care with regard to Nature, ourselves and others. The camps also give a safe and happy opportunity to begin the development of real independence from family, to become self-sufficient.

The program has been designed to provide the most appropriate experiences for each age group through immersion in a particular environment and through the activities undertaken. All of our program is tent-based and provided by specialist outdoor educators on the school staff.

An example of this is the Bushwalking Program, which so well serves the needs of our 14 - 15 year olds. As one begins to assume responsibility for one's own life, the sense of setting out on a journey with all of life's real necessities carried on one's back is a marvellously liberating experience - educating in the sense that a lack of preparation on your part will impact on the quality of your experience. The next walk provides the student with the opportunity to reassess, and to plan differently. One learns too that discomfort is OK, that difficulty is often the pathway to some of life's sublime experiences. Through navigation one also learns how to find one's way, and through the multitude of (often intense) social interactions, one learns how to relate to one's fellows. What a wonderful preparation for life!

Without outlining the benefits of every camp here, a second example might further illustrate our views: One of the Class 11 experiences is the Mt Arapilies - rock climbing camp. Students in Class 11 are reaching the 'business end' of their schooling and soon will be extending themselves to see what they can achieve. In rock climbing one starts from the easily achievable and soon tackles what at first seems impossible. That task eventually is relegated to 'easy' and the next experience awaits. The whole camp becomes a series of achievements and a mini lesson for life. On their final morning the students, who have spent the night under a large overhang, awake to witness one of the most magnificent dawns imaginable. What developing soul qualities are warmly nourished by this rising sun and the morning stillness? What a fantastic reinforcement of all that is important in life, and what a wonderful way to combat the cynicism that seems to pervade so much of modern life!

It is not possible here to describe the benefits of every camp the school provides but the examples above do illustrate the essential role camps play in our educational endeavour. Therefore in order to do justice to educational aims of this school, all camps are mandatory. By far the majority of students love all the camps and are fully committed to the outdoor program but over the years there have been a few who, for a variety of reasons, have been reluctant to participate. Because camps play such a prominent role in our education, non-attendance can send a powerful message of rejection of much that we offer. Consequently commitment to the camping program is compulsory for all students. Every experience within the program is within the capability of every student and experiences will be modified in response to the students and the weather to ensure this is always the case. In unusual instances, it is possible that a student may have a particular difficulty with camps, in which case the expectation would be that there is a demonstrable ongoing commitment to resolving and overcoming the difficulty. For a few students there might be the odd occasion when unavoidable circumstances (such as illness) prevent their participation in a particular camp. There is of course no problem with this, but we do require suitable explanation and documentation. In these circumstances, if a student is unable to attend a camp they stay at home and return to school when their class returns. They do not join another class during this time, except in class nine and above.

To prevent conflicts between camps and music exams, students, parents and music teachers need to consult the camp dates for the coming year to utilise the option to state dates to avoid when scheduling exams.

In class nine, camps feature prominently with several bushwalks and a longer working camp on a subsistence farm in South-Eastern NSW. Fundamental to the program is a philosophy of creating healthy relationships and self-development in the context of living in, building relationships with and caring for Nature.

School Fees

The Commonwealth and State Governments provide recurrent per capita funding to the School. However it is necessary for the School to charge fees to make up the funding shortfall. Fees are charged by all non-Government schools. MRSS has a fee policy to ensure that all parents are aware of their responsibilities in this regard.

With the enrolment and acceptance of a student in the School, parents are committing to meet fees charged to enable the education of their children. Parents' commitment is essential when the School formulates its annual budget and fee levels.

Fees are determined in Term IV for the next school year. Parents are notified of the Schedule of Fees before the School Fair and Open Day. Fees and charges are subject to amendment by the Company Directors and are payable in advance. Fee Statements are sent at the beginning of each term and payment is due within 14 days of the beginning of each term. Only in exceptional circumstances will a pupil be allowed to continue at School if previous term fees remain unpaid.

As not everybody is financially able to pay fees in advance, progressive payments are also accepted. If fees are unable to be paid on time in full then please contact the School Office. Discounts are available to parents who wish to pay the full year fees in advance.

Fees can be paid by cash, cheque, direct debit, Visa, Master Card, American Express and EFT. When making direct deposits to the School's bank account, please include your six digit family ID Code, which you will find on the fee statement.

A full term's written notice must be given before removing a pupil from School. Should this period of notice not be received, a term's fees will be payable in lieu. If parents wish to hold a place for their child who is absent for lengths of time (e.g. travelling with parents), full tuition fees will be payable. If a holding fee is not paid the student will be removed from the class list and placed on the waiting list. Long term absences will need to be considered carefully following discussions with teachers, the bursar and parents.

The School sets aside a limited amount of funds to assist long term parents who may be experiencing financial difficulties. Parents should contact the School Office for more information and to arrange for a confidential meeting.

Extra-curricular School Activities:

The school is aware that families make sacrifices in order to meet the cost of their children's education. We understand also that sometimes extra-curricular activities are out of reach financially, and strive to provide a full, rich Steiner education within the general curriculum. In fairness to all, it will be a general policy of the school that involvement in voluntary, extra-curricular school activities will be conditional on the school's finance group being satisfied that school fees are in hand.

A specific example is a second music instrument. Two approvals (parental & finance group) will be required before a student can commence a second music instrument.

Parent Involvement

There are many areas of the school that need loving attention and help, and we are always grateful for volunteer parental input. For example, the school library welcomes help with book coverings and filing, the office sometimes needs help with compiling the information sheet and there are many others areas that could be blessed by human endeavour. Regular working bees have not occurred for some years and it is hoped these will eventuate again and friendships can be formed through giving to the school in this way.



The Kindergarten

The Kindergarten program is based on the knowledge of the development of the human being given by Rudolf Steiner. We recognise that each child who enters the kindergarten has a unique destiny to fulfil and take it as our task to create the best circumstances possible to help each child unfold healthily and appropriately, thus enabling the child to take the developmental steps that are of fundamental importance to their future

roles as free, creative individuals.

The kindergarten meets the child in the first seven-year phase of life, in which the young child builds up a healthy physical body. In these years the children also make the most extensive progress that will be made in a whole lifetime of development in the area of physical growth and organ development, as well as in language, cognitive, social, gross and fine motor skill development.

Ring-a-Rosie Three Year Old Kindergarten - located in a tranquil garden nestled in between our two kindergartens, we offer a three year old kindergarten program.

A special booklet, put together by the Early Childhood Faculty, is given to all new parents entering the kindergarten.

Waiting List Enrolment of Siblings

Parents of young children are at school so often, and we know how easy it is to forget to enrol your new baby because, of course, you know we know about your happy event! However, to obtain a place in the kindergarten and school you still need to fill out that enrolment waiting list form early as we have waiting lists through kindergarten, primary school and many high school classes. Phone, or call into the office for an enrolment form, we would like to meet the new member of your family as well.

Information about National Standardised Tests (AIMS / NAPLAN)

Students are normally withdrawn by their respective parents (or carers) from participation in standardised tests. A specified withdrawal form is available from either the Class Teacher, Guardian, or from the office, each year. However, in the history of our school the majority of our parents have withdrawn their children.

Summary of explanation follows:

The school is obliged, under its funding agreement, to provide standardised tests to any student that has not been withdrawn by their parent or carer (unless they are absent or, in rare circumstances, meet the criteria for exemption). It is therefore the parents' responsibility to complete a withdrawal form if you do not wish for your child to participate.

The Federal Government has previously recognised that Steiner schools have an approach to education which warrants their exclusion from participating in standardised assessment program such as NAPLAN, which is in large part the reason that withdrawal forms are available to parents.

Many (non-Steiner) schools that do not have significant students being withdrawn have *altered* their educational programmes to specifically undertake test preparation. We do not alter our educationally rich programmes, as these would effectively be either undermined or diminished.

Student Exchanges

Our school is a registered Exchange Organisation that participates in the Steiner School Exchange Program around the world. During Class Ten a select number of students each year embark on this wonderful opportunity to participate in an exchange with another student who attends a Steiner/Waldorf school located overseas. These cultural exchanges have, in the past, taken place with schools in Italy, France, Germany, Australia, Canada, Switzerland, the UK, Japan and America.

Absence from our school is to be no longer than one school term. Our students may depart for their exchange in the Christmas/Summer school break and will return at the end of Term I to start Term II in class ten. The exchange period is approximately four months in length. The visiting student is able to attend for the same period between Term II to the end of Term IV of class ten.

If the exchange takes place in a country in which the language is other than English, then reasonable fluency in that language is expected. Discussion with the language teacher/s is required for this option.

The Australian Government has specific regulations that we, as a registered Exchange Organisation, must meet. Jenny Heslop assists our students and their families, as well as the visiting exchange students and their families, in providing necessary documentation to meet these requirements.

Class Guardians will introduce the Exchange Program to the class in year nine.

For general enquiries about our Exchange Program please email student-exchange@mrss.com.au

Creating a Healthy Lifestyle

In choosing a Steiner school education parents realize they are choosing a philosophy of education that strongly advises against the use of TV, DVDs, computer games, online content and mobile phones in children's lives.

Class teachers cannot stress enough that children without these media benefit greatly both in the short and long term. In the classroom these children tend to exhibit a wholesome interest in their work, show considerable will to engage in all activities and most importantly of all retain that most vital power of childhood - WONDER.

There is an increasing amount of evidence from various bodies that the electronic media can harm the healthy development of young children.

As an alternative to TV watching and computer games teachers have made some suggestions for providing a healthy lifestyle for children.

In the USA various social movements have been working towards encouraging families to remove TV from their lives. "Turn off and tune in to your family", was one of their "slogans". TV may appear to be a good babysitter but in reality children who are used to creating, playing and working in their own time emerge as far more resourceful and independent.

It was felt that above all else children really need a close contact with nature on a daily basis.

Providing the space for children's creative activities is very important. A place in the garden could be set aside, provided with planks and rocks, outside cloths, a sandpit, perhaps a tree house, a swing, a gardening area, etc. The main activity is in the "building" so that games can be invented and played. This area needs to be maintained with the rocks and planks returned to their neat stacks so that activities may be done again and again.

For indoor activities parents could provide drawing paper, crayons, clay, plasticine or play dough, wool scraps and needles, rocks and shells which have been found on outings to rivers and beaches.

Time needs to be set aside for drawing or indoor building. We encourage parents to set up the crayons say at 5.00 p.m. every evening. Doing the activity at the same time every evening, establishes a rhythm that will ultimately carry the activity by itself.

Older children love to use their own real tools - hammers, spanners, saws, hand drills, etc., to make things. There are booklets available on carpentry for children. Little electric motors are fun with balsa wood and glue. Magnets, model kits, meccano and pulleys are some more suggestions. Of course, there are many craft activities using frames, bead frames, small sewing machines (non-electric), knitting needles, wood carving tools and more. Some children love to pull apart old radios or use pulleys to build a tree house. Ropes can be used for a flying fox or for rock or tree climbing.

Evenings provide a time for a rhythmic and regular meal and bed time procedure. Things to do are play in a warm bath, help to make the meals and set the table, light the candle to begin the meal. A bed time story with a candle and a constant bed time will complete the day in a healthy way.

Be confident that a determined approach by parents will result in children regaining their imaginative and creative expression and play. This may take them some time, so persevere, for a freeing of children from the effects of T.V. will result in them regaining their childhood as well as serving education purposes such as enhance language skills, improve the ability to concentrate at will, be able to participate in lessons, practice creative imagination, penetrative thinking and improve sociability. Benefits of a training of healthy expression become particularly evident in adolescence.

It is important that children under ten years of age are given the opportunity to fully rest after a busy school day. Until children reach class four they have not developed a sufficient sense of self to be able to engage in competitive sport in a healthy manner. We strongly advise that activities outside of school are limited during the kindergarten and early class teacher period.

Understanding Our Children

These are some of the thoughts that shape our curriculum ...

...In our class 'communities' and in our curriculum, we try to bring a little of the whole world...

Class one to class eight forms a journey and a complete curriculum. A class teacher, with whom the children form an intimate bond, guides the class throughout, assisted by specialist teachers.

The journey of a child through the class teacher period takes place in a warm community, in a beautiful natural environment and with the continuity of relationship of the class teacher. Surrounded by these pillars each child can find her/himself within the world.

... children learn with their whole beings... they deeply inhabit the feeling world... and are engaged through imagination...

Class one marks the beginning of the 'Class Teacher' period. In most cases this involves the teacher staying with the group of children from class one through to class eight.

The child of this age responds immediately to warm and vital people. This is because s/he experiences knowledge not as a defined 'subject' such as maths, but as a unity which is expressed in a person. So there is a natural attraction to adults who can tell stories, describe images in vivid living words and be present to the moment. These vibrant qualities, then, inform the job of the classroom teacher.

In class one the children make the all important transition from kindergarten to school where formal learning begins. For many children this is the very first experience of sitting still at a desk. And it takes some getting used to!

Children in class one are immersed in a rhythmic, engaging and deeply nourishing life from the moment they enter the room until the time they leave. They are individually greeted each morning and bade farewell in the afternoon, often with a riddle or question to contemplate until their return next day.

Routines are established, desks are sat at, games are played, shapes are physically explored, numbers are sung and drawings are made. The outlook, architecture, routine and materials of the school create a rich, artistic sense for form and space. Encouraged to be themselves within the group, the children's physical, feeling and imaginative lives are all supported and fed.

Through the telling of fairy tales the class one teacher conveys messages of beauty, goodness and truth to the children, enriching the child's inner life.

... a wonderful, strong capacity for focus... ... curiosity and humour abound...

The class two child is full of curiosity and, in many cases, a burgeoning sense of humour. This means that as well as being the go-to person for questions, adults may well find that they're the subject of pithy seven year old observations.

Class two children begin to show an awareness of the world around them although they still do not clearly see themselves as separate from it. These children resonate deeply with legends and fables, recognizing both the everyday attributes of humans which are shown through animals, and those saintly qualities that human beings can strive towards. The Celtic myths strongly resonate with the feeling qualities of class two children.

Themes covered include legends and myths, based on Aesop's Fables or Russian Fables, Celtic Wonder Tales, the Celtic Dragon Myth and The Kind of Ireland's Son.

... with introspection comes a greater awareness of the self in relation to the outside world... a threshold is crossed...

... the children build a shelter, a safe, secure place on earth, from hand crafted mud bricks...

Class three is a rich time of inner development for children with a focus on practical subjects such as farming, gardening, and building. This is the year in which the children may build a shelter from hand crafted mudbricks. The exploration of Old Testament and Hebrew stories provide a solid foundation from which to serve this important stage of personal development.

By class three children bring greater confidence and fluency to their reading and writing. Work in maths focuses on measurement and also builds skills utilising the four processes.

The children are introduced to written music and start lessons on a stringed instrument – violin, cello or viola. A two night camp is held towards the end of the school year. Craft, music, language and eurythmy continue, with subjects such as Bothmer gym, farming and building being introduced.

... the new found power to ask questions and to see the world with new eyes... balancing the inner self with the outer reality...

In class four the main lessons assist the children to integrate their inner selves with the outer realities they face. Norse myths and legends are explored in depth because they are full of courage and valour. The children's expanding consciousness is supported through subjects such as geography and the topic of 'man and animal'. In English the children study grammar, further reading, written and oral expression and listening skills.

Maths sees an emphasis on fractions and practical work. The children continue to participate in Eurythmy – which gives conscious awareness of their surroundings - along with form drawing, painting, music, drama, gymnastics, sport, clay and wax modelling, craft and language study (French and German). A three night camp is held in class four.

... cultivating a newfound sense of justice, truth and self...

There is a sense in the class five children of 'gathering up' the experiences of childhood – a completion of this stage of their lives and an inward preparation for the next step.

Class five children have an understanding of placing events in time and history. They learn about ancient peoples – in particular the myths and legends of ancient India, Babylonia, Sumeria, Persia, Egypt and Greece. Studying the development of these civilisations they gain a sense of where our history begins, feeding the class 5's natural curiosity. The children are directed to observe the natural world, experiencing its beauty and form, pattern and number. They gain grace of movement, harmony and balance in themselves, which mirrors their deepening relationship with the world around them.

Maths subjects link in with the exploration of ancient buildings, the calculations performed in their construction and the development of number. English continues with study of grammar, poetry, reading and creative writing. As in earlier years the children participate in eurythmy, painting, form drawing, craft, drama and physical education. A five day camp to the Grampians occurs toward the end of the school year. The children also continue foreign language study and music which involves orchestra, recorder, singing and a weekly lesson on their chosen stringed instrument.

...questioning, challenging, enjoying robust discussion.....

Class six children are able to grasp cause and effect, see things from another's point of view and enquire deeply before forming or modifying an opinion. They are ripe for the wonderful discoveries of scientific exploration, the ideas of great Ancient Greek thinkers like Pythagoras and Aristotle, and the achievements of the Ancient Romans.

Class Seven: In this year children awaken to the world at large and as well they become aware of an inner world of new thoughts and feelings, which includes their developing sexuality.

They are beginning to ask questions of themselves and about their lives. Now is a valuable time to build on the idea of biographical studies – both personally and also through the study of the lives of individuals to whom the students can look up, as examples of great character and accomplishment. Students at this age seek role models and by offering examples that are not constricted by popular culture or the fads of the day, there is the opportunity for ideals and inspiration to seep in and permeate the blossoming individuality that characterizes this delightful age.

A study of the stars and their nightly movements and an exploration of the formation of mountain ranges and volcanoes provide immediate interest for them.

A study of the physical body and how, for instance, digestion works, also answers the strong need they have to come to an understanding of their physical world and the connections between cause and effect.

The main lesson on 'the great voyages of discovery' assumes an allegorical significance for the class seven student.

The curriculum of the year seeks to meet the newfound individuality of the 13 year old. An English main lesson called Wish, Wonder and Surprise leads students to express poetically their newly awakened sense of self.

Class eight completes the class teacher period. The fourteenth year brings strong new perceptions and a readiness to study the laws that underlie natural processes, artistic laws, the laws of mechanics.

The discoveries of the Renaissance form the basis of this year. The advent of puberty leads to a strong awareness of the processes of the body and a new self consciousness. These complex feelings of awakening are met by a study of The Renaissance and the plays and sonnets of Shakespeare. The beginnings of scientific thinking in the Renaissance and the emergence of a new individual self consciousness that began when long held views of the world and faith came under scrutiny are comparable to the development of young people entering puberty. Engagement with great literary works and cultural studies help the class 8 student find outer resources and resist self absorption.

Main lessons include a study of the Renaissance, Geology, the Dawning of the Intellect – covering the Renaissance and Shakespeare on the one hand and Inventions and Machines on the other, the Age of

Discovery, Processes of Change, Responsibilities of the Individual. Care is taken to interweave Art into History, Geography into Science, English into Art.

Discoveries about the human body lead to a study of anatomy and the processes of the body.

A camp at Mutawingi in NSW introduces the Class to the deep sense for country, community and the law of indigenous Australians.

By class nine the intense relationship with the class teacher has been replaced by specialist teachers whose subjects, materials and methods are interrelated and suit the specific age of the student. Class guardians guide the class during the rest of the secondary years developing a deep connection as the children continue working towards becoming young adults.

This year is often a tumultuous transition, perhaps a complete 'rebuild' for some young person, or at the very least a time of deep change. Scales fall from their eyes about the world and they see adults as flawed ordinary people. At the same time they encounter strong new feelings, sexual awakening, first love. They are sensitive to hurts and unsure of their own adequacy.

Our approach to this transition is to offer an intensive series of outdoor walks and camps in a number of contrasting environments. Through such challenges, through humour and a deep familiarity with the young person who has been with us for some time, we help them to find a way to see difficulties without cynicism.

Class work is designed to awaken powers of thought and judgment, strengthening their youthful powers while discussing real social and world concerns.

Class ten: The sometimes tumultuous class nine student returns after the holidays more thoughtful, more measured. The 16 year old student asks who am I? What, besides my inheritance and circumstances, am I? A class ten student wishes to engage in measured conversation, expressing their views and enquiring as to the origins and causes of world affairs. Our work is to help them develop from passing judgments to forming judgments.

We value the beauty and vitality of middle school students and we strive to help them move gently but surely through their natural deep immersion in the vast range of human emotions and ideals into the wonderful balance of rich thought and feeling and physical dexterity that we see displayed in our senior students.

A review of world history offers consideration of early forms of government. The class play in this year is a more contemporary work. Efforts are made to create cultural and social links to a wider world with community service, work experience, city excursions. A more academic approach to subjects helps to develop discrimination and observation.

The year 11 student has a sense of being a young adult. At our school this is the year when students can exercise choice in subjects and, while maintaining some breadth, pursue their own particular enthusiasms.

Year 11 students are not so black and white in their responses and are interested in more subtle psychological processes. They have increased social awareness, not only condemning injustices but beginning to think how to better things. The irritations of puberty settle and they are able to enjoy a more comfortable relationship with their peers, their teachers, their physical strength. The year 11 student begins to consider what they can use to orient themselves in life.

In English we study the Parzival story and other texts that embody the sense that life is a journey, full of beauty, mysteries and meetings. Testing and faltering are a part of this wonderful journey.

During the year 11 undertakes a rock climbing camp at Mt Arapiles which is a culmination of their outdoor education experiences and which wonderfully reveals and celebrates to them their inner and outer resilience.

The year 12 student has reached the ultimate year of school and looks back over their school life together with the friends who have accompanied them for many years. They are developing their own independent thoughts and enquiries.

The vista of the future begins to unfold. Looked up to admiringly by all younger classes they can enjoy the privileges of being the senior students. They embark on their VCE courses as opportunities for deep engagement with their chosen subjects and exploration of their own dispositions. The challenge of the year is taken up with pride.

Eurythmy - unique to Steiner Schools

Eurythmy - Kindergarten & Classes 1- 8

"The human being is a form arising out of movement. Eurythmy is the continuation of Divine Movement, the Divine Form in the human being. Through Eurythmy, the human being comes nearer the Divine than otherwise could.
Rudolf Steiner

In many ancient descriptions of the creation, God spoke and through The Word, the World came into being. The human being is seen as a small world containing a spark of the Divine consciousness. In the earliest stages of human evolution consciousness was in tune with the Divine, the human being "walked with God", and understood the Language of the Universe. In these times speech, song and movement were one. In ancient Centres of Spiritual Schooling or Mystery Centres as they are sometimes called, ritual movement and dance directly related the human being on earth to the cosmic realities that influenced human life from the realm of the stars and the planets. From these centres of wisdom came the great religious and cultural impulses guiding humanity.

Eurythmy, in a totally modern form, as a performing art, is a rebirth of this ancient Wisdom of the Stars, of the Origins of the Human Race. Every sound of speech, every law of language, each tone and interval of music has its very specific gesture or movement in space. These, as an expression of soul and spirit, create an art form of great beauty and content. For this reason Eurythmy can be called Visible Speech and Visible Song.

Each gesture has its own inherent colours. From a knowledge of these soul-spiritual colours, the colours for performance costumes are chosen. The garments are designed to encourage the observer to experience the movement as arising in the space around the human form rather than from within it. This impression is even stronger when a number of eurythmists move in relation to each other, imbuing the space between them with content.

It requires great spiritual perception, such as Rudolf Steiner possessed, to discover the laws of form and movement inherent in language and music. Most people however, have a natural sense for them. As with all the arts, Eurythmy, adapted to the needs of children, is of great value in education. It also has great healing power when modified to suit the particular needs of illness.

High School Philosophical Statements

VCE Physics

A study of physics is central to any good 'liberal' education. Physics has shaped our world in so many ways that an understanding of its influence is crucial to any attempt to come to grips with modern humanity—its strengths as well as its weaknesses. The technology that physics has brought us is very obvious. Technology, however, despite our modern obsession with it, is only one of the important outcomes of our search for an understanding of the physical world around us. And perhaps not even the most important one.

Before Galileo and Newton, life was dominated by authority. The words of Aristotle, as interpreted by the Church, were regarded as the source of all knowledge of the physical world. But Galileo's insistence on believing what he saw through his telescope, changed all that forever. The greatest gift of the Renaissance was science – the search for truth in freedom. It was the beginning of modern physics.

Physics has played a central role in the development of our modern world-view. Not just the technology, but more importantly, the place of freedom and the importance of the search for truth. It is an inspiring story of

dedicated men and women pursuing noble goals. It is also a very human story; it is not without its rivalries and jealousies, its errors, its false leads, and even downright frauds—but surely a story capable of inspiring the new generation to move on and upwards, to continue the search for meaning and purpose, and for human compassion, rather than simply becoming more and more obsessed with the gadgets.

The political agenda that has driven the VCE in the last couple of decades has largely centred around the need to make Australia economically and technologically competitive. As a result, many VCE subjects — including Physics—seem oriented toward this goal. While not disputing the need for technological progress, should this really be the main task of education? If we act on the assumption that the most pressing reason to do physics is to join the technological race, are we really doing our students justice? Should not education aim to pass on the best of human culture, and leave the students free to decide how best to use it?

If this is indeed our task, and thus, in so far as the VCE requirements allow, our course has more of an emphasis on physics as ‘a way to understand our world’ than as a way to produce more and more clever gadgets. The aim is to educate the students about the ways in which physics has helped to enable the progress of human culture—as distinct from inducting them into a means to join the technological rat race.

It is as though we can think of ‘the world around us’ in two ways—either we concentrate on the ‘man-made’ world of technology, or we see it on a broader plane—the very nature of the universe in which we live. Of course the technology is important, but if we see it as **part** of the greater purpose, rather than as **the** main purpose, our study takes on a different meaning. It becomes part of the great human quest to understand our world, to find purpose in our lives—sense of purpose much more profound than trying to come up with the next clever gadget.

Richard Eckersley, of the ANU, has said that... “There has never been a period in human history when so much hangs in the balance between what is, and what might be ... when it is so clear that we are, each of us, ‘decision-makers’ in deciding the destiny of humankind.” Surely the role of education, particularly at secondary level, should be to pass on the best of human understanding and culture so that the next generation is equipped to cope with these unknowables. If our aim is simply to equip the child to fit into society, we are ignoring education’s greatest and most noble goal—the development of the essence of our humanity. It is hard to believe that this essence has much to do with ever faster computers. But it may have a lot to do with understanding our cultural heritage, and sharing its benefits while curbing its excesses. The study of the real nature of physics can help us greatly in that task.

Chemistry

Nature displays the same unbounded magnificence in an atom as in a nebula. Any new means of study reveals Nature to be greater and ever more diverse, fecund, unpredictable, beautiful and richer, and unfathomably immense. Jean Perrin

The scientific investigation into the underlying principles and dynamics of nature requires curiosity, imagination, persistence and debate. From this perspective, studying the physical and chemical nature of materials brings us closer to an understanding of ourselves, and the world around us.

The air in this room, which may appear inanimate, actually consists of gas particles and constant motion, just as the Earth we are living on is in a dynamic state, spinning around our Sun. If we look closer at the gas particle, the atoms, which force it into being, are made up of electrons spinning around a stable nucleus in never-ending motion. And so the experience of Chemistry has meaning on different levels:

- 1) The atomic level where material transmutations are observed by changes in physical properties, such as colour, texture, or strength.
- 2) Within the individual, where material transmutations are a reflection of spiritual transformations,
- 3) *and*, Universally, where reflections of microscopic events occur on a grand cosmic scale.
- 4) A beautiful example of this occurring is when a student observes a range of particular elements absorbing heat from a Bunsen burner flame, which “excites” an electron within each atom to a higher energy level. Each atom instantaneously emits the energy as a specific colour of bright light.

As the students observe this, their teacher observes their faces lighting up as they experience the joy and wonder of Chemistry.

English and the Humanities

Steiner distinguishes three great stages in the relatively recent development of humanity: the sentient soul, the mind soul and the consciousness soul eras. In the first of these, human consciousness was more imaginative and intuitive: people felt the reality of spiritual beings working through themselves and the world. This is reflected in many world mythologies awed and reverent awareness of the gods. In the second phase, corresponding to Greek, Roman and Medieval European civilisation, the power of human reason appears, along with ideas of human freedom, compassion and human justice. The spiritual beings are still acknowledged, but more as a matter of faith and belief than direct experience.

In the third period, that of the consciousness soul, starting with the Renaissance, human reason and awareness become even more powerfully focussed on matter and the outer world. Religious belief is challenged with the emergence of sceptical, but still often reverent, modern science.

The Steiner school curriculum recognises that each individual human being passes through these stages as they grow up. The Primary School, whilst recognising the already emerging thinking ability in the children, strives to nurture and support the best qualities of the sentient soul: reverence, imagination, love of beauty, keen sensory awareness, artistic and creative expression. In the High School we strive to build upon this rich foundation, as more mature critical and intellectual faculties start to emerge.

In English and History the students are exposed to a range of literary, dramatic, visual and media texts. One helps them to be interested in and engaged with these texts by discussing not only WHAT they are about, but also HOW and WHY they have been written or produced. Students are encouraged to develop a perceptive and critical sensitivity to the ways in which language is being used in written, spoken and visual forms of presentation.

An essential consideration in the Steiner School curriculum is the way in which young people's attention is directed more and more to the outer world. This is a natural and healthy tendency particularly in teenagers; however, it can become excessive to the point that the outer completely overwhelms the inner, especially in the age of information and electronic technology. Therefore, it is important to find ways to strengthen and support the inner life, through a range of creative, reflective and analytical activities. Knowledge and information need to be digested and transformed through the student's own inner activity; they must be given every opportunity and be encouraged to find and express their emerging sense of selfhood and identity through their work.

Drama is one particularly valuable activity in this regard, encouraging as it does the engagement of the whole human being, rather than just the intellect. Our civilisation tends to reward intellectual cleverness and efficiency, at the expense of the human heart and soul. It is important in teaching to encourage the harmonious interaction and development of all the soul's forces: thinking, feeling and willing. We hope that the world may thereby recover some of its wholeness.

Contemporary human beings are more and more beginning to work out of the consciousness soul: a strongly developed sense of their own individuality and personal freedom. This however is often expressed in a one-sided and materialistic way. It is possible through all subjects, not only English and the Humanities, to nurture a sense of essential and universal human values, such as compassion and selfless service to other beings. Many young people today, although still working largely out of sentient and mind-soul consciousness because of their age, have a strong sense of spiritual values and a great spiritual potential, without being tied to any particular religious tradition. To support their questing and open-minded spiritual attitude is one of the Humanity teacher's highest aspirations.

Mathematics

Mathematics gives us the opportunity to train our thinking in the simplest possible circumstances. We start from a small number of clearly stated assumptions and work in accordance with a few definite rules to reach a conclusion which we can readily verify. This is a luxury denied most other disciplines.

The mathematical techniques we learn can assist us as we look into the world of materials and forces around us, formulating laws that apply to the part of reality associated with measure and number.

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The strengthened thinking we gain through mathematics can serve us well in other domains of life. When we study history, we cannot start with simple assumptions and reach conclusions that we can readily verify. There are too many factors involved for that to be feasible. However, the clarity we experience in mathematics can stand there as an ideal, and encourage us to identify key factors, give each one its appropriate weighting, and acknowledge the bounds of validity of the conclusions we draw.

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The healthy soul life requires the several different modes of consciousness involved in the disciplines that school life offers. To mention just two:

The mathematician works with focussed awareness.

The poet, by contrast, is conscious on a very broad front, seeking, sensing into sound textures, layered meanings, the rhythms that kindle remembrance. The front of awareness is broad, but not diffuse. Rather we have an awakening, so that sensing becomes an act of excitement and wonder, and *sensing in thinking* an act of intuition.

For part of our day we need a poet's awareness. For part of day we need a mathematician's awareness. We need *both* of these states of awareness in rhythmic alternation.

But the human being is infinitely rich in potential. In each of us lives not just the mathematician and the poet, but the biologist, the historian, the musician, the physicist, and so on. Each one needs time to unfold its own activity, time to establish its characteristic mode of consciousness.

Our spirit lives in systole and diastole, its rhythms birth and death, waking and sleeping, drawing to a centre, expanding to the periphery. The spirit cannot live without this rhythm, and it has a hunger for the varied activities that mark its phases.

We see the benefits to our students of a curriculum that calls on many different modes of awareness to satisfy a fundamental need of the human spirit.

Physical Education

The prime aim of Physical Education is to help children find a healthy orientation in the world through the medium of physical bodily activities. Therefore we introduce the children to a wide range of physical education and outdoor activities in the hope that they will find practices which will be of interest to them and will suit their body type. As adults, we know that at different stages of our life, differing activities present us with the appropriate challenges to growth and inspire us to maintain our good health. For example the teenage footballer may become the middle age practitioner of Martial Arts and evolve into an older person keeping themselves trim and healthy through Tai Chi. Therefore, by presenting as diverse a range of activities to the children as is possible, we are preparing them for their future selection and practice of sports exercises of their choice.

As students of Physical Education we are awed by the human body's potential. Records show that it allows both impressive sprint (100 metres in under ten seconds) and long distance running performances (42 kilometres in just over two hours). Our bodies are capable of awesome feats of muscular strength (ability to lift up to three times our body weight), yet we are also capable of using our bodies as vehicles for artistic expression, with movements and gestures that touch our hearts.

By exploring our physical nature we deepen our knowledge of the capabilities of our bodies: Our body can increase its rate of cellular energy 'combustion' twenty times, increase its intake of air thirty times, triple our heart rate which, in conjunction with an increase in ventricle size leads to a six-fold increase in blood flow. Our bodies' regulatory mechanisms, ability to repair and make adaptations are of such amazing complexity that we can only make the merest beginning of an understanding, though it is to be hoped that our imagination is stirred, leading to a lifelong interest.

Many of the children pursue highly competitive sporting activities in teams run outside of our school, because this is their interest. For the average student though, our aim is to help them improve their own prowess and to find their way into areas that will interest and benefit them. Whether it be gymnastics, games skills, social sports or outdoor activities, the student will meet the challenges of facing their own physical limitations, improving themselves through striving, learning to work with the will of others, and enjoying a growing sense of self-reliance coupled with responsibility for those around them. The pursuit of physical education can be a joyful one and because of the diversity of activities open to us can include the full participation of all the students. In the Steiner system, we see the growth of consciousness as the most essential feature of human education and because of this we value the development of a harmonious and healthy body because only in such a 'temple of the spirit' can a human being find their fullest spiritual functioning.

Studio Art

Art work tunes the soul, develops will and gives expression to experience in ways which words fail. Students here are no strangers to art making, as the curriculum is presented through drawing, painting and modelling all through the early years. When they arrive in the senior years they generally can happily and easily draw and make things and settle to building more skills.

At this school all work until year 11 is given as set class exercises. As the teenager reaches year 11 the curriculum gives an opportunity for individual projects. After many years grounding in both discipline and skills, and the reassuring support of teacher directed projects, the strongly developed and nurtured will of the student can give practical expression to their emerging individual interests and visions.

The young adult now explores thoughts in a different way. When the student is fresh and 'grounded', then these thoughts can find practical expression, and not be frustrated and ineffectual.

Through the study of other artists and a consideration of the way the arts play a role in society, students can find a context for their own aspirations. Here, we present the arts as meaningful insight into the consciousness of man in different periods and different cultures.

The work you see here today is full of enthusiasm for life, love of beauty, faith in human endeavour, and endless invention.

Art

The joy of making, of struggling to give form to something new. Finding a way to transform minerals, chemicals, stone, cloth, into an object that conveys secrets, mysteries, dreams - our thoughts, our passions, our very being.

Art is pleasure, the brush sweeps the canvas with a rhythm dictated by the whole body. Art is fun, the discoveries and surprises delight and inspire. Observe little children filled with joy by their muddy efforts, their little constructions, their marks of runny paint! That wonderful feeling never fades, not even when we are 80.

Art can be painful, frustrating, elusive, difficult.
An inner and outer struggle.

Art is transforming, it communicates, it describes, it inspires.

It voices who we are - as an individual, as a society.

At its finest, Art reveals what we aspire to, what we can be, if we try hard enough! Art is magic!!

Biology

This is the study of living creatures.

It builds on the sciences of physics and chemistry, but because life is unique, biology demands its own methods of observation, and its own language and conceptual frame-work.

Every organism is a miraculous expression of our vast and intelligent cosmos. Life is *the* great treasure; this is what we find to be so touching as we look at the creatures around us. We are all ultimately vulnerable because we are alive. No matter how great or tiny the creature, its treasure is its *life*.

We can use biology to deepen our knowledge of the other creatures with which we share the Earth. However the results of materialistic research alone will not lead to wisdom, for it engages only with the chemistry and physics of organisms. But this research can inform our consideration of the beauty and wisdom of the existence of other creatures, and it is then that the vast gifts of biological research can guide us in understanding the essence of life.

Our studies can help us find the appreciative and wise relationship to Nature that will enrich all life.

Music

Music is central to human culture. It arises in everyone spontaneously and is loved by everyone. It does not imitate anything from the world around us, and yet it presents a universal language for expressing everything in human experience, from the most earthly exuberance to the most refined spiritual perception. Throughout the school we live into the essence of music, seeking to find at each level of the child's unfoldment, the forms that give adequate expression to its mastery of the world.

In the timelessness and endlessness of the pentatonic scale, the young child, immersed in fairytales and a-dream in the world of nature, finds deep fulfilment. Much later the world of symphonic form with its fine structure and the discipline this entails, gives deep pleasure to the alert intellect. And at all levels song calls to the non-cerebral part of the child's being, leading it to light and freedom.

Drama

Although students study the same VCE Drama Design in all schools in Victoria, the Drama experience is unique at the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School.

Why? Because the students have had Drama in the curriculum from primary all the way through to Class Ten. Each year the Play has been a highlight of their school year. In the high school they have studied Pantomime in class seven, Shakespeare in class eight, Improvisation in class nine and Contemporary Drama in class ten, giving them a depth and breadth to begin their VCE Drama.

The VCE Course itself requires the student to use their creative mind to construct Drama, and with this background that we offer, the student is especially advanced. This sets the foundation for a wonderful relationship with Drama for the rest of their lives.

Language

To accept another language, is to accept other people. Learning another language is an exercise in good will : I come to you, you don't have to come to me. To have more than one name for the same thing (the tree - der Baum - l'arbre - arbor,) adds another dimension to one's life.

Why German?

German is the language of a cultured nation that produced personalities whose influence is felt to this day far beyond German boundaries. This influence stretches from the realm of music (Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Schubert ...) to the Natural Sciences and the Humanities, in particular Philosophy, Psychology,

Archaeology, History (Mendel, Einstein, Plank, Heisenberg, Freud, Jung, Schliemann ...). German is the language in which the mainstreams of modern philosophy have found expression (Leibniz, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Hartmann, Husserl, Heidegger).

As a language, German is highly structured and precise. The way a person thinks is revealed in the structuring of his sentences; a sentence can be as long as the thought to which it gives expression. This is a characteristic of German. Thoughts are not strung together in main clauses but are frequently interwoven with subordinate clauses, bringing in related ideas, pictures, aspects, before the main thought (main clause) is taken up again and completed.

The overall picture must be clearly seen from the very start if it is to flow into one complex structure of interdependent clauses. This same principle also applies to much less complicated sentences, if one considers the position of the verb; infinitives, past participles, separable prefixes and finite verb in subordinate clauses stand at the very end of each clause. The structure of the language itself demands overseeing a complete content before this content can flow into one sentence.

Another characteristic of German is the pictorial nature of words. The meaning of a word is often reflected in its 'sound'. This leads to a rich variety of words, all describing one element but each in a slightly different way, each 'sounding' to its own picture. Many a translator knows the difficulties of finding English equivalents of expression: e.g.

The verbs that express moods of flowing water:

wallen, wogen, sausen, brausen, brodeln, gluckern, glucksen, träufeln, tröpfeln.

Each word has its own nuance, describes its own slightly or greatly different picture, makes its own characteristic sound. Comprehension relies on feeling into the language rather than intellectual understanding.

Why French?

For 1,000 years or more, to the end of the 18th century, French was the most important cultural language of the western civilised world (Latin being the scholarly language). The Gallic spirit took hold of Latin in early middle ages and created with it "Old French". French became the focal point of civilisation at the time of the medieval "Chansons de Geste" (earliest recorded French), songs of heroic deeds. The language flowered with the Troubadours and became the expression of courtly love and chivalry. Later on, French became the international language for the educated and conscious class. People spoke French as the main form of social intercourse, often not being able to speak their native tongue without a French accent, if at all. Philosophy, Politics, Diplomacy, Fashion, Cuisine, the entire social life in Europe was living and expressed through French for many centuries. Other languages, English in particular were influenced and shaped through the prevailing "lingua franca". Gradually, the Age of Enlightenment led to modern philosophy, modern science and rationalism, and after the Romantic period, with upcoming world-wide nationalism, French experienced a decay in its use.

Yet, as a language, French remains the carrier of the Romantic element, and it is this element of "savoir vivre" which we want to bring to our students. For the primary school, many stories and songs are available to give to the children a love for France and French, which is not only a heap of irregular verbs and expectations to the rules, but a living language which brings many beautiful stories from a long time ago. For the secondary student, French brings the opportunity to train the intellect, practise an open mind, become literate and fluent in a second language, and take on something of a culture that told the world for 1,000 years "ce la vie".

Current Term Dates and Camp Dates can be found on our website www.mrss.com.au along with curriculum information.

We hope this gives you some background to Steiner education. It is a big study and is not meant to replace talking and meeting with class teachers and guardians.

Subject offerings in the high school

'The subjects become the stuff of the world through which is woven an integrated view of the universe. Each child is seen as gifted, worthy of enrichment from all subjects in the curriculum.'

Waldorf Education – A Family Guide Betty K. Staley

In our class 'communities' and in our curriculum, we try to bring a little of the whole world.

The small size of our school is not the main reason we only offer core subjects.

Our intention is to offer students all the arts, humanities and sciences for as long as possible, with choices first occurring in years eleven and twelve. We hope to cultivate a balanced curriculum, which will touch on as many aspects of knowledge as possible and give a many sided experience to our students.

Students will not only benefit because of the content covered in these subjects, but also from the modes of thinking and perceiving those different disciplines bring. For example, Science subjects train us in a particularly careful and measured observation, while the arts cultivate our inner perception.

There are many benefits from the whole class setting about a task together, as we do here until year eleven.

During tertiary study we anticipate that students will pursue the genius of a particular discipline. We make sure that we are offering the core subjects required for entry into university courses and further training.

It has become fashionable in schools generally to offer a very wide number of subjects, allowing students to specialize early. It is possible now to take subjects that traditionally have not been offered until university, such as legal studies, psychology. These subjects are not prerequisites for further study.

This array of choices can be bewildering to young people, and it is possible, in such a system, for them to make poor choices, closing down options for future study.

Our society encourages specialization. It is a good thing if schools resist this trend. Someone who will be a plumber or a physicist will benefit from taking, say, art in high school, especially because this door may later close to him or her. Someone bound for work in social welfare or psychology will benefit from having been introduced to literature, exploring what it is to be a human being in an artistic way.

There are also many benefits of a small community, and of continuity in school. Students who travel right through the school build very deep friendships and have a sense of completeness when they come to the year twelve assembly.



Courses in Steiner Education

The Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar is based on the grounds adjacent to the school at *The Michael Centre*, 37A Wellington Park Drive, Warranwood.

The Seminar offers certificate courses of a Wednesday evening for parents wishing to know more about the educational principles underlying our approach to education.

The courses' involve a study of the stages of incarnation of the child's spirit, and cultivates an awareness of the fullness of expression that is possible at each stage.

The courses encourage artistic creativity, essential for parents and teachers wanting to deepen their appreciation of the many and varied expressions of individuality.

For those who can make the commitment there is also a full-time Advanced Diploma in Rudolf Steiner Education at the Michael Centre, which is held Mondays to Thursdays over two years.

For enquiries contact the Seminar on: phone: 9876 5199 Email: office@steinerseminar.com or visit their website: www.steinerseminar.com.

Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School Development Program

DEVELOPMENT

More than forty years ago the Melbourne Steiner School was started by voluntary contributions (both financial and time), and today, they are just as important for the on-going development and maintenance of the core elements at the school. There are a number of ways you can donate and make a difference for the children of today, and children of the future.

You can choose whether to make your donation to the Bursary Fund or the Building Fund, or leave it to School to make the decision on your behalf.

With your support, MRSS will maintain its independence and continue as a vibrant place of learning, maintaining the highest ideals of human creative endeavor and purpose, assured of financial stability and progress.

Through the years government funding has played an important role in the development of MRSS. The beautiful building at the front of the school is a testament to government contributions. However we must face the fact that future funding assistance from government will diminish. We need to look to other funding sources to assure the financial future of our school.

The MRSS Development Program, an initiative of a group of parents working closely with the College of Teachers, was established to ensure this objective. The Program offers supporters of Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School many alternatives for providing financial assistance to the school in ways that suit their particular circumstances.

With your support, Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School will maintain its independence and continue as a vibrant place of learning, maintaining the highest ideals of human creative endeavor and purpose, assured of financial stability and progress.

For further information please contact the Development Officer on the school number.

Alumni

The wider Alumni Community for Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School includes former students as well as former staff, parents and friends of the School. The word Alumni refers to a group of people who have attended/graduated from a school or university and includes both genders.

What is the value of an Alumni network to the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School?

- Keeping alumni of MRSS in touch with each other and with the School.
- Maintaining active interest in the school in regards to Information Sessions, Open Days, Art Shows and Community events.
- Organising professional, networking and social activities for alumni.
- Communicating alumni news and interests back to the school.
- Offers of assistance – utilising Alumni skills and knowledge for the benefit of current students, (eg: advising students about aspects of study and career paths) and a skills database to support the School.
- Contributing to Scholarships, the Building Fund and other opportunities for donating to the school
- Offering voluntary time to the school with organising events (such as reunions and other School events).
- Providing Alumni Profiles for use by the School at events, to inform potential students and their parents and to showcase the wide range of careers/paths that are followed.

* * *



MELBOURNE
RUDOLF STEINER
SCHOOL

Our School is a place of sanctuary for childhood.

Here we know that every child is a sacred gift to the world.

We, the adults, are entrusted with their care.

Each of our thoughts, words, and deeds are to be beneficial to their wellbeing.

Our task and responsibility is to nurture the young people, and to help them accomplish their growth to full human freedom.

To this end the school has its existence

Child Protection and Safety Policy

Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School has developed the following Child Protection and Safety Policy. This policy is an overarching document that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse. This policy and the School's approach are intended to be proactive, preventative and responsive. It is an assumption, as we endeavour to comply with changes in the regulatory environment in which we operate, that the School already regards child safety as being of utmost importance and that we provide a safe environment for the children that we teach. While compliance with the Child Safety Standards is mandatory and every member of our staff bears a real responsibility for this compliance, achieving a culture of child safety is an active and ongoing process which should be reflected in every aspect of our school, rather than stored in documents to be periodically reviewed and consulted.

Staff member(s) responsible:	Art Curl
Date last reviewed:	19 th March 2018
Next major review:	2019

School Commitment

Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be a primary focus of our care and decision-making.

Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

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Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved in Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

In its planning, decision-making and operations *Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School* will

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

Policy

At Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School we have a zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to creating a culture of safety for children that reflects the finest qualities of humanity. The School regards its child safety responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintain a child safe culture.

Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's exposure to family violence. Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive Child Safety Program designed to keep children safe.

The School's commitment to child safety is based on the following overarching principles that guide the development and regular review of our School practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse.

1. All children have the right to be safe.
2. The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
3. The views of the child and a child's privacy must be respected.

4. Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children are established in our *Child Safety Code of Conduct* and are the subject of review by the College of Teachers and training on curriculum days
5. The safety of children is dependent upon the existence of a child-safe culture.
6. Child safety awareness is promoted and openly discussed within our School community.
7. Procedures are in place to screen all new staff, volunteers who have contact with students, third party contractors and other education providers (extra lesson, after school care) who have direct contact with children.
8. Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
9. Child protection training is mandatory for all staff and volunteers* who have contact with children.
10. Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible for all members of the School community.
11. Children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds have the right to special care and support including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
12. Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support.

**Examples of volunteers who have contact with children may include volunteers involved in School camps and excursions, coaching sporting teams or assisting in learning activities.*

Child Safety Program

This program provides the framework for:

- The development of practices, policies, roles and procedures that promote child safety within the School;
- The creation of a positive and robust child safety culture;
- The promotion and open discussion of child safety issues within the School; and
- Complying with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child safety in Victoria.

Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Safety Program

and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated. We adopt a risk management approach by identifying risk indicators and assessing child safety risks based on a range of factors including the nature of our School's activities, physical and digital environments and the characteristics of the student body. Our Child Safety Program relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse and establishes practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse. It includes:

- Clear information as to what constitutes child abuse and associated risk indicators;
- Clear procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse;
- Strategies to support, encourage and enable staff, volunteers, third party contractors, other education providers, parents and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters;
- Procedures for recruiting and screening, staff and volunteers;
- Pastoral care strategies designed to support students and keep them safe;
- Policies with respect to cultural diversity and students with disabilities;
- A child protection training program;
- Information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse to protect, support and assist children;
- Guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality;
- Policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the Victorian Child Safe Standards); and
- A schedule for reviewing and changing the systems.

As a part of Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School's induction process, all staff and volunteers are required to complete an induction on the content of our Child Safety Program.

All staff and volunteers are provided with ongoing child protection training at least annually.

Staff, volunteers, third party contractors and other education providers are supported and supervised by the College of Teachers to ensure that they are compliant with the School's approach to child safety.

Responsibility

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. At Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School all members of the staff, as well as volunteers, have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. Specific responsibilities include:

Board of Directors

Each member of the Board of Directors is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to allow the School's Child Protection and Safety Policy and the Child Safety Program to be effectively implemented within the School and are responsible for working with the College of Teachers to ensure effective implementation.

The College of Teachers

The College of Teachers is responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Protection and Safety Policy and the School's Child Safety Program are implemented effectively, reviewed regularly and that a strong and sustainable child safety culture is maintained within the School.

The School's Child Safety Coordinators

A number of staff members are nominated as the Child Safety Coordinators, but the responsibility is understood to be shared by all staff. In some cases, including the Class Teachers, the role of Child Safety Coordination will be understood to be a normal part of their responsibilities rather than a further role to be performed. Our School's Child Safety Coordinators will receive additional, specific training with respect to child safety issues. They are the first point of contact for raising child protection concerns within the School. They are also given responsibility for promoting and maintaining a culture of child safety within the School and assisting in coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

Staff Members

All staff are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Safety Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Safety Coordinators.

Volunteers

All volunteers are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Safety Code of Conduct and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Safety Coordinators.

Third Party Contractors

All service providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Safety Program. All Third Party Contractors (service providers) engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment. The School may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the contractors.

Other Education Providers

An Other Education Provider for the purpose of the School's Child Protection and Safety Policy is any organisation that the School has arranged to provide any element of the education provided by the School, to a student or students enrolled at the School. The delivery of such may take place on School premises or elsewhere. All Other Education Providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Safety Program. All other education providers engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment. Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the external education provider.

Our Child Safety Program provides detailed guidance for members of the Board of Directors, staff and volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our School's nominated Child Safety Coordinators. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Third party contractors, other education providers, indirect contact volunteers, students, parents/carers or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact one of the School's Child Safety Coordinators or a member of The Administration Group. Communications regarding child safety will be treated confidentially.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.

Child Safety Code of Conduct

A Child Safety Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It provides a high-level statement of professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships. When individuals are clear about behavioural expectations, they are more likely to act appropriately with each other and with children. When everyone is aware the Code of Conduct and the reasons it is so important to uphold, the School environment becomes much more transparent and people are accountable for their behaviour. Above all, a Child Safety Code of Conduct helps to protect children from harm.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct set out below is designed to stand-alone. It can also be incorporated in

whole or part into broader Codes of Conduct that are developed within the School, including other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular staff at the School. The Code is made available to all staff, volunteers, families and students.

This Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all adults towards students. The Code serves to protect students, reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur, and promote child safety in the School environment. It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. Where a staff member breaches the Code, Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal. The Administration Group of the College of Teachers will be responsible, as delegated by the College and the Directors, for receiving, investigating, making findings, reporting and recommending action to the College in respect of any alleged breaches of this Code of Conduct. It is understood to be normal practice for the Administration Group to seek comprehensive professional advice on matters of alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct. The School will review the Code annually.

Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within our School community. This includes all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, volunteers, third party contractors, other education providers and parents/carers.

These include:

- Behave as a positive role model to children.
- Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children.
- Be vigilant and proactive with regard to child safety and child protection issues.
- Provide age appropriate supervision for students.
- Comply with School policies with respect to child protection.
- Treat all children with respect.
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse children.
- Use positive and affirming language toward children.
- Encourage students to 'have a say' and then listen to them with respect.

- Respect cultural, religious and political differences.
- Help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact, and socialise.
- Intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate behaviour towards others or acting in an unkind humiliating or vilifying way.
- Report any breaches of this Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- Report concerns about child safety to one of the School's Child Safety Coordinators and ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met.
- Where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure, as quickly as possible, that the child involved is safe.
- Call the Police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a student's safety.
- Respect the privacy of children and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.

DO NOT:

- Engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards children or expose students to such behaviour.
- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or inappropriate language with children.
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children or discriminate against any child based on culture, race, ethnicity or disability.
- Engage in open discussions of an adult nature in the presence of children.
- Engage in any form of sexual conduct with a child including making sexually suggestive comments or sharing sexually suggestive material.
- Engage in inappropriate or unnecessary physical conduct or behaviours including doing things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves.
- Engage in any form of physical violence towards a child including unreasonably rough physical play.
- Use physical means or corporal punishment to discipline or control a child.
- Engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a child serious emotional or psychological harm.

- Develop 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).
- Engage in undisclosed private meetings with a child that is not your own child.
- Engage in inappropriate personal communications with a child through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a child.
- Take or publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a child without parental / carer consent.
- Post online any information about a child that may identify them, such as their: full name; age; e-mail address; telephone number; residence; school.
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

Reporting Child Abuse

The Program also includes information about how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our School's nominated Child Safety Coordinators.

Potential reports may be of:

- an offence against a child
- an offence by a staff member of the School
- an offence by another adult in the School Community or beyond
- an offence by another child
- the suspicion of an offence
- a risk that may contribute to an offence occurring

It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities. **It should be noted that reporting a matter internally does not release you from other legal and regulatory obligations that you may have.** Please see the School's *Duty of Care in Relation to the Reporting of Sexual Offences Policy* for more information

Third party contractors, other education providers, volunteers, students, parents or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact one of the School's Child Safety Coordinators.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know' basis.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger, the Police should be contacted immediately on 000.

Our Child Safety Staff - Make a Report or discuss an issue...

Name	Position (role)	Phone	Email
Damian Stone	Leading Child Safety Coordinator (Student welfare)	0428 307553	damo@mrss.vic.edu.au
Art Curl	Child Safety Coordinator (Outdoor education)	0428 342224	arthur.curl@mrss.vic.edu.au
Deb Albrecht	Child Safety Coordinator (Support Ed)	0421 800356	deborah.albrecht@mrss.vic.edu.au
Ali Staley	Child Safety Coordinator (Primary)	0419 949664	Ali.staley@mrss.vic.edu.au

End of Policy

Mobile Phones at MRSS

Introduction

The Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School has a thoughtful, careful approach when introducing electronic technology into our school environment. Our school values the contribution and opportunities of various technologies that align and complement the Steiner philosophy.

This policy aims to meet the global immersion in electronic technologies with the philosophy and impulse of the school. Increasingly, electronic technologies such as mobile phones have been present in children's lives at younger ages and often pose a distraction to the way we learn and teach. On the other hand they provide an often important communication tool when traveling to and from school. With this in mind the current policy has been developed with the consideration and final approval of The College of Teachers, Administration group and Secondary Teaching group to uphold the values of the school, maintain student safety and protect personal equipment.

This policy covers all of the school community, staff, students and visitors. It is to be noted that it asks for an increased parental involvement and support than may have been expected in the past.

While this policy covers classes 7-10, similar policies will be developed for VCE and primary students, however, given the differing needs and logistics of these two groups it has been decided to develop 7-10 as phase one.

It is a requirement of school that all students, staff, parents and visitors understand this policy and the role they need to play in supporting the values of the school.

Mobile Phone Policy Class 7-10

Developed by the Secondary group with the support of the Admin group

Passed by college on 12/11/2019

To be enacted Term 1 2020

INTRODUCTION: MRSS recognises that many students feel a need to carry a mobile phone and accepts that there are genuine reasons for their use (for example to contact parents after music, sports practice, or whilst travelling to and from the school). However, they can be disruptive to the learning environment and negatively impact on the development of students' skills of social interaction. Therefore, the College has developed a set of expectations relating to the possession and use of mobile phones.

PURPOSE: To provide clear expectations to students, parents and staff regarding the responsible and appropriate use of mobile phones by students at MRSS and to ensure that mobile phone usage does not cause disruption to the learning environment or social setting.

AIMS:

- To prevent any disruption to teaching and learning by the use of mobile telephones.
- To promote social interaction amongst students without the reliance on mobile phones.
- To facilitate the effective protection and supervision of all students.
- To educate students about appropriate use of social media in order to prevent harm to themselves and to others.
- To protect the privacy of all MRSS community members, particularly students and members of staff.

DEFINITIONS:

Mobile phone refers to hand-held electronic device and tablets

IMPLEMENTATION:

Phones are not to be used at any time by students on school property unless under staff supervision. This includes before and after official class times of 8:45am – 3:20pm. After-school students must not use phones until they are beyond the rotunda at the northern car park, or other clear school boundaries. If yard duty staff see children using a phone they will not be confiscated however, guardians will be notified the following day and consequences followed as per policy.

Phones to be handed in during Morning Verse.

Each class has a wooden box with a padlock to hold the phones for the day. This box will be bolted into the classroom and the lock will be able to be opened with any staff key.

The top section of the box where the post slot is holds the phones that are confiscated or if a student arrives late and a staff member is not present. Also, a Class List that guardians can use to keep track of people caught with phones and calls made home to parents in response.

The bottom section of the box holds the phones that were handed in during the morning.

Phones are then handed back during Afternoon Verse time.

Staff actions if student found with phone:

1. Staff member or student to take their phone directly to their room and post it in the box. If a student is sent to do it then it is the responsibility of the staff member to let the Class Guardians know of the breach of phone policy.
2. Guardians are then to follow up in line with consequences as set out in this policy.

BREACHES:

Students who use their mobile phone inappropriately at school may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement and/or Bullying policies. In some circumstances, students' mobile phones may be confiscated and stored securely.

Unless a breach of this policy is considered to be of a serious nature, the following consequences will apply:

First time - lunchtime detention with parents notified by guardians via phone or email.

Second time – After-school detention to be facilitated during a P7 class. Parents notified and asked to stop students bringing their phone at all and made aware of the next level of consequences should this happen again.

Third time: parents will be asked to come in to collect the phone and meet the guardians to discuss their child's phone use.

If no safety issue and with parental consent the phone is kept in the locked classroom box until parents can arrange pick up. Parents will be made aware of this consequence after the second incident.

Fourth time - Increased parental involvement and support at the discretion of the guardians with reference to the school's general Behavioural Management policy as opposed to the Mobile Phone policy.

NOTES:

The above incidents will occur over the timeframe of 1 term. There may be some flexibility around the progression of stage 3 to 4. If a guardian feels the circumstances require visiting stage 3 twice before stage 4 they may do so.

Staff, parents and visitors will endeavour to keep their personal mobile phone use away from public spaces, eg library, dining room, school yard and confined to personal offices and spaces.

SPECIAL EXEMPTIONS:

If a student is deemed by Special Ed Dept to need to take photos of whiteboards etc during class then the class teacher can do this on their phone and send it to the student before the lesson ends. Other uses of technology will be individually assessed on a case by case basis.