

Year 7 Transition Handbook

2026



We Strive We Achieve We Excel



Dear Year 7 Families,

We warmly welcome all new and existing families to our school community, as your child begins their secondary school journey with us. Transitioning into Year 7 is an exciting milestone and we look forward to partnering with all families to ensure your child feels supported, challenged and can thrive both academically and personally.

Moving into Year 7 brings new opportunities, challenges and experiences. We recognise that this time can also be filled with anticipation, excitement, and at times, uncertainty. Please be assured that our wonderful staff are committed to guiding and supporting both students and families every step of the way.

At our school, our values of respect, citizenship and challenge, are at the core of everything we do and reflect our commitment to cultivating a safe, inclusive and engaging learning environment. We hold high expectations for learning, behaviour and attendance, where every day matters, and every minute counts. We believe that strong and consistent support from home and school, students can achieve their personal best.

Strong and consistent partnerships between families and schools are central to student success. We value open communication and encourage all parents and carers to actively engage with thee school throughout each academic year. This partnership helps ensures your child feels connected, supported and confident as they begin their secondary school journey.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. We look forward to building a positive and collaborative relationship with you as we support your child to flourish in Year 7 and beyond.

David Black

Assistant Principal

Wantirna College, 90 Harold Street, Wantirna VIC 3152

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Key Staff Members:

Below are key staff members and their respective locations within the school.



Carrie Wallis (WAC)

Principal



David Black (BLA)

Assistant Principal -Middle School, Wellbeing & Inclusion



Andrew Biggs (BIG)

Leader of Middle School -Transition & Learning Improvement



Daniel Brooks (BRO)

Leader of Middle School -Student Management & Engagement



Rebecca Howell (HOW)

Learning Specialist of Wellbeing & Engagement (Years 7-8)



Tajinder Wulff (TWU)

Mental Health Practitioner (Yr 7-8)



Amber Thomson (THO)

Year 7 Level Leader



Della Zhang (ZHA)

Year 7 Level Leader

Other Key Staff Members:

- Leader of Wellbeing Chelsea Collings (COS)
- Leader of Inclusion Kylie Rackham (RAC)
- o First Aid Staff Members Melissa Wade (MWA) & Eva Gray (EGR)



Communication Guide:

We are here to support you and your child with any concerns/questions you might have. To streamline communication and ensure all concerns/questions are addressed promptly and effectively, we encourage the following process:

First Point of Contact - Transition Support Teacher

Your first point of contact should be your child's Transition Support Teacher. This staff member teaches your child for three periods a week and will develop a strong, positive relationship with your child. The Transition Support Teacher is you and your child's 'go to' person for support. Their contact details will be available at the beginning of the school year.

Second Point of Contact - Year Level Leaders Amber Thomson (THO) & Della Zhang (ZHA)

Your second point of contact should be your child's Year Level Leaders. The Year Level Leaders oversee their cohort of students and are responsible for supporting both students and teachers. The Year Level Leaders will respond to incidents that have arisen at school as well as respond to questions/concerns forwarded from the Transition Support Teachers. Where required, the Year Level Leaders will triage incidents and questions/concerns to the appropriate Leader of Middle School.

Third Point of Contact - Leaders of Middle School Andrew Biggs (BIG) & Daniel Brooks (BRO)

Your third point of contact should be the Leaders of Middle School. The Leaders of Middle School work closely with the Year Level Leaders to provide appropriate supports and resolve incidents relevant to their portfolios.



Compass is the College's management system platform that is used as the primary communication between the College, Parents and Students. Each family member will receive an individual login that can be used to keep up to date with:

- key events, including your child's schedule / timetable
- your child's attendance, including ability to add an attendance note
- · payments for events, camps and excursions.
- access Compass via your web browser or through the Compass School Manager app (apple / google)

Please contact the General Office if you have not received your parent log in details or if have any questions regarding Compass.

A comprehensive parent guide on how to use Compass can be accessed by searching 'parent guide' in the search bar.



Curriculum and Daily Schedule



Ве	ll Times
Locker Bell	8.40
Period 1 Start	8.45
Period 1 Finish	9.59
Period 2 Start	10.04
Recess Start	11.18
Warning Bell	11.40
Period 3 Start	11.45
Lunchtime Start	12.59
Warning Bell	1.46
Period 4 Start	1.51
Period 4 Finish	3.05



Parent Engagement Expectations

Learning and Attendance

- Help your child to attend school every day 'everyday matters, every lesson counts'
- Monitor learning and attendance by regularly checking Compass and Maestro
- Discuss with your child what they are learning in class and help them complete homework and meet deadlines

Behaviour and Respect

- Know the school's rules and supporting them at home
- Support your child to take responsibility for their actions and support school issued consequences (Learning Recovery, Community Service)
- Ensure your child is in school uniform everyday (or provide a note)
- Model respectful behaviour in how you speak to and about school staff, families, and others both in person and online we want the best for your child and need to work together in a respectful way

Safety

- Work together with staff if your child is having problems at school to understand and resolve the issue contact us
- Ensure your child knows it is okay to ask for help from a trusted adult at school.
- Know what your child is doing online and taking necessary steps to minimise risks (limiting online time or phone usage)



Wellbeing and School Readiness

Starting Year 7 is an exciting time filled with new opportunities, friendships, and experiences. Moving from primary to secondary school can feel like a big step, and it's completely normal for you and your young person to experience a mix of emotions, from excitement to a little nervousness. Our school is here to support your family every step of the way. Throughout the year, your young person will meet new teachers, learn new routines, and discover subjects and activities that help them grow both academically and personally.

Wellbeing and Support:

Your young person's wellbeing is our priority. Secondary school can bring changes, new environments, more independence, and different expectations. If your young person ever feels unsure, overwhelmed, or simply need someone to talk to, there are many people who can help: classroom teachers, Year Level Coordinators and Sub-School Leaders, and the Wellbeing Team. We encourage students to speak up early, check in with trusted adults, and use the wellbeing resources available. Remember, asking for help shows strength, and every student deserves to feel safe, supported, and connected at school.

At Wantirna College, we offer a range of supports to assist students with their wellbeing needs. These include but are not limited to:

- Whole-school approaches and events that focus on mental health promotion and education
- Small group programs and targeted interventions to support and enhance their mental health and wellbeing and build/strengthen their independence and social and emotional skills
- One to one wellbeing support to receive short-term individualised and targeted interventions (for those that have been identified)
- Referrals to external agencies and support for those that have ongoing or more complex wellbeing needs

If you feel like your young person is struggling in a particular area and would like to discuss this further, please reach out to a member of staff listed above, following the communication guide.

School readiness

Being ready for secondary school means understanding that your young person will have increased responsibilities and will need your support to develop habits that help them succeed. There are some activities and ways that you can help your young person prepare for secondary school at home during the school holidays.

Some of these suggestions are:

- Creating a space at home for study/home learning that is free from distractions
- Knowing their/your travel route in advance: this may include knowing and printing the bus timetable, having a back-up plan if the bus is cancelled or late, or if you are driven to school, knowing what time to leave so that you can be at school on time and ready to learn by 8:45am (when Period 1 starts)
- Discussing with your young person an agreed drop off/pick up location as it can often get busy during peak times
- Colour-coding books/materials for each subject to make it easy to select what they need for each class at their locker during transition time
- Encouraging and supporting your young person to eat breakfast and bring a packed lunch/snacks to school. It is not uncommon for students to become reluctant to pack food or eat at school, so we encourage easy to eat and hand-held food that they can eat at break times. As their bodies are growing and changing rapidly adolescence, nutritious food and eating regularly throughout the day will assist with brain function, stamina and ultimately, learning and engagement within the classroom for the entirity of the day.

Being Prepared Each Day

Arriving at school prepared helps you start each day with confidence. Make sure your laptop/device is charged, your books and materials are packed, and your uniform is ready the night before. Check your timetable to see which classes you have, and bring any equipment you may need. Being organised reduces stress and helps you make the most of your learning. A good night's sleep (recommended guidelines for adolescents is 9-11 hours per night), breakfast, and a positive mindset can also make a big difference in how you feel and learn throughout the day.

Importance of Communication

Maintaining open and supportive communication at home plays a vital role in helping students navigate the transition to secondary school and any worries they may have. Parents can support this growth by creating regular opportunities for calm, judgement-free conversations about school. Some simple strategies that can be used to support this are:

- asking open-ended questions ("What was something interesting that happened today?")
- checking in about emotions rather than just tasks
- listening more than you talk and becoming curious about your young person's schooling journey

As children move into adolescence, one of the most powerful things parents can do is shift from being the "fixer" of problems to becoming a trusted **consultant**. Inviting your young person to suggest their own solutions before offering advice, can strengthen their confidence and independence. Allowing students to voice their concerns builds and strengthens self-advocacy – a life-long skill that prepares them for adulthood.



First Day of School/START Program:

Year 7 and 12 students will begin the 2026 school year on Wednesday 28th January.

START Program:

The first three days of year 7 are dedicated to the START Program. Year 7 students will undertake various activities to assist them in navigating the school grounds, developing relationships and connections, setting up their laptops and organising their locker and learning materials. Students will also partake in instrumental music trials.

What to bring:

- Pencil case with stationary.
- o Recess food, lunch and a water bottle.

We recommend students bring their resources over the course of the first three days.

Year 7 Transition Camp:

The Year 7 Transition Camp is a core experience for year 7 students, building positive connections to Wantirna College by developing relationships with peers and staff. Students will work in small groups and home groups to overcome challenges and solve problems.

Dates:

Location:

Wednesday 11th of February – Friday 13th of February 2026

Campaspe Downs (Kyneton) 1302 Trentham Rd, Tylden VIC 3444

Please refer to event on Compass for further details.

Consent & Payment:

Cost - \$565

Consent & Payment Due Date – Wednesday 4th February



Books and Resource List

Campion is a, One Stop Shop - For your convenience all payments for our digital learning platforms - Edrolo, Mathspace Smart Lab, and Education Perfect - are listed on the Student Resource List and can be purchased through Campion. It saves you time and money (NO additional service fees, FREE home delivery and REDUCED COSTS on stationary items and some of our digital learning platform fees).

- Link to Resource List can be found here: Wantirna Campion Online Ordering Portal or click on the QR code:
- Access Code 6XMJ
- To access the free home delivery offer must be placed by close of business on Friday 19
 December 2025 in order to be delivered to your nominated address by 23 January 2026.
- All Resource List PDFs are accessible in Compass in 'School Documentation' in the 'People'
 Menu.



This year's list includes the purchase of a mini-whiteboard and markers for every student. Mini whiteboards are a powerful way for teachers to assess students throughout the learning process. Teaching with mini whiteboards support students to understand, encode and recall key knowledge and skills during the lesson. This year teachers have been embedding use of mini whiteboards to check for understanding and scaffold learning, through our Professional Learning work. This will continue to be a key teaching strategy next year.



Phone Policy

In accordance with the Department's <u>Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy</u>, personal mobile phones must not be used at Wantirna College during school hours 8.45am to 3.05pm, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted.

At Wantirna College:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored away (lockers) during school hours
- Mobile phones can be used to purchase food at the Orchard within the purchasing zone only
- Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see policy for further details)
- When emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school's office.

What if I'm out of uniform?

Students who are out of uniform are required to bring a note from home and obtain an approved uniform pass for the day from the Assistant Principal's office in the Administration Building.

Scan the QR code to access the College's Mobile Phones Policy:





Student Dress Code Policy / Uniform Shop Booking Arrangements

Students are expected to comply with the Student Dress Code while traveling to and from school, during school hours and when attending school activities.

The full list of Wantirna College's compulsory school uniform items are available here or click on the QR code

Making an Appointment

Appointments for Grade 6 families to attend the uniform shop can be made via Compass, under the Community tab and then 'Conferences'. Bookings start every 5 minutes and run for approximately 20 minutes.

Uniform office hours are:

Every Monday and Thursday from 3-5pm this term until 15th December.

2026 Dates	Appointment times
Tuesday 20 th Jan	9.00am – 3.40pm
Wednesday 21 st Jan	9.00am – 3.40pm
Thursday 22 nd Jan	9.00am – 3.40pm
Friday 23 rd Jan	9.00am – 3.40pm
Monday 26 th Jan	PUBLIC HOLIDAY - CLOSED
Tuesday 27th Jan	Curriculum Day - CLOSED
Wednesday 28 th Jan	Term 1 starts for years 7 & 12.
Thursday 29 th Jan	3.00-5.00pm
Saturday 31 st Jan	9.30-11.30am



<u>Important of Attendance</u> – 'Everyday Counts, Every Lesson/Minute Matters'

Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education.

Why it's important:

We all want our students to get a great education, and the building blocks for a great education begin with students coming to school each day, ready to learn. Research shows that regular attendance builds strong learning habits, supports social connections and ensures students stay on track academically.

Missing even a few days can have a significant impact - there is no safe number of days to miss. Each absence means lost learning opportunities and can affect both academic progress and social development. By coming to school every day, students develop the resilience, responsibility and habits they need to succeed in further study, the workplace and life beyond school.

What we do to support and recognise attendance:

- Regularly **promotes** and **celebrates** the benefits of school attendance and its positive impact on learning and wellbeing.
- Track and monitor patterns of student absence and engage with families to proactively discuss potential risks of disengagement, including a range of intervention strategies to support re-engagement.

Student Absences:

In line with the Government's commitment to compulsory attendance, the College is required to ensure all absences are recorded pursuant to DET guidelines. It is the responsibility of a student's parent/carer to explain why their child is absent/late.

This can be done using the parent portal on Compass, by written note, by phone call to the General Office or by face-to-face conversation with a staff member. Given the convenience of the Compass portal, this is the preferred method by:

- Adding an 'Attendance note' for their child via the attendance section on Compass, including details on the reason for their absence

Laptops

Learning With Technologies (LWT) will once again be our preferred supplier, offering quality laptops with a comprehensive 3 year warranty and insurance cover, as well as an onsite technician to undertake warranty and repair work.

New in 2026, they also offer a Chromebook that provides the necessary functionality and performance required by students, whilst being nearly 50% of the cost of the Windows-based alternative. Click here or Scan the QR code below access the laptop portal.

All laptops ordered from LWT will be preconfigured and available for collection from the school via appointment between Wednesday 21-Jan and Friday 23-Jan, at which time students will be able to set their password and familiarise themselves with some of the applications they will be using daily when they start school.

Place your order before 31-Dec-2025 to have your laptop guaranteed for delivery prior to the commencement of school.

Orders received after 31-Dec-2025 but before 14-Jan-2026 will be delivered on a best-efforts basis.

Orders placed after 14-Jan-2026 will be shipped to the school individually and attract an additional delivery charge.

Please note that laptops ordered under this program cannot be delivered individually prior to Christmas.

Each week between now and 14-Jan-2026, appointments will be made available for families who order a laptop.

IMPORTANT - For families who choose to purchase a laptop from another source, instructions on how to connect to the school network and access the necessary software to download are being finalised to take in the latest Department of Education guidelines and policies. School staff can only guide students and families on these items and cannot undertake work on 3rd party device.



School - Wide Positive Behaviours

School-wide Positive Behaviours Matrix is an evidence-based framework that helps schools create positive, safe and inclusive learning environments by explicitly teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors. It aims to improve students' social, emotional and academic outcomes by focusing on a shared, school-wide approach that includes clear expectations, teaching, and positive reinforcement.

Our Expected Behaviours are:

School	LEAR SPA		BUILDI GROU	INGS & JNDS	IN T	THE UNITY		CES
Challenge We Strive to Achieve and Excel	Set learning Seek and us Give our bes Persevere to	e feedback st effort	Always demo positive beha Help keep ou beautiful	viours	Volunteer for activities and opportunitie Help others support	l leadership s	Paticipate pos digital platfor Balance our t devices/socia other activiti	ms ime on Il media with
Citizenship We Honour the Environment and Community	Help keep le calm, safe ai Allow teach and student Co-operate	ers to teach s to learn	Use all facilit intended Eg. rubbish bins Put rubbish i	The Orchard, and toilets	Actively part events Adhere to ru transport an spaces	iles on public	Protect our (personal det reputation	(and others') ails and online
Respect We Respect Self and Others	Attend ever day, on time and ready to Actively listed participate	, fully equipped learn	Care and mai buildings and Stay within s	grounds	pride and res	e College with spect before nool and after	Only use digi learning at so Always obtai create and sh videos	hool
at all times, we:	Wear Full School Uniform	Use Respectful Language & Tone	Are Responsible for our Actions	Are Kind, Inclusive & Show Gratitude	Keep Ourselves & Others Safe	Welcome the Contribution of Others	Follow Teacher Instructions & School Rules	Make Good Choices



Instrumental Music

Wantirna College is proud to be a leader of Instrumental Music in Victoria. We take a holistic approach to music education with students actively engaged in both instrumental lessons and a vibrant ensemble and performance program. Since the College's beginning in the early 1980's, Wantirna College has produced excellent musicians. Many graduates of Wantirna College are professional working musicians, actors and music educators. As a College, Wantirna has seen the benefits of positive music education through several generations.

Music is not only for Music students!

As well as the fun of learning an instrument, students develop many valuable skills that are transferrable to, and benefit, their academic work – it's no coincidence that many of the school's Captains are also music students.

Our Instrumental Music students have weekly group, or individual, lessons with leading music educators. Over 20 instruments are offered, and all Year 7 students will have the chance to try them at our **Year 7 Instrument Trial Day on Fri 30 January, 2026.**

Why should students learn a Musical Instrument?

Benefit	Details
Aids in Transition to	Instrumental Music students have the advantage of working closely in small groups with
Secondary School	their teacher every week. This teacher will get to know students individually.
Enhances Learning & Academic achievement	Studies show that students who learn an instrument see a 28% increase in academic
	results. Students develop strong organisation, communication, problem solving &
	resilience skills which are transferable to their other studies.
	From taking responsibility over their instruments and learning, to mentoring younger
Fosters Leadership	students, as well as leading sectionals/warmups, etc. Students develop confidence and
	leadership.
Fosters Creativity	Students learn to express themselves through music and gain appreciation for the creativity
rosters Creativity	of others. Exposure to new and different music genres and experiences.
Mental Health benefits	Learning an instrument is known to release dopamine and serotonin and develops fine
	motor and coordination skills. The program fosters social connections, with students also
	developing a sense of community and belonging, that leads to positive wellbeing outcomes.
Physical benefits	Playing an instrument improves memory, brain development & critical thinking skills. It can
Filysical belieffts	also improve chronic illnesses such as asthma and allergies.
Social Benefits	Students learn to make friends and connections across different year levels and enjoy
Social Belletits	unique experiences such as Music Camp, Gala Concert and festivals.
Delia Confidence	In preparing for performances, students learn how to manage and overcome performance
Builds Confidence	anxiety. Each time a hurdle is overcome, students develop resilience and gain confidence.
	Tertiary pathways for students who learn an instrument include, Music Education, Music
Pathways	Therapy and Performance. Many alumni perform in highly respected community bands that
	foster lasting connections.
It's fun!	

The Instrumental Music program is subsidized by the state government to ensure that the program is accessible to all students. This brings the cost of learning one instrument down to only \$550 for the year. For full details of the Instrumental Music program, including costs, and please see the 2026 Instrumental Music Handbook, below.

2026 Instrumental Music Handbook



Year 7 Instrument Trial Day 2025



First Aid

The First Aid Centre is located in the Administration Building and is staffed by two qualified college nurses, Melissa and Eva. The Centre is open during school hours to provide care for any illnesses or injuries that occur throughout the school day.

Medical Records:

All student medical information previously provided to government primary schools is automatically transferred to Wantirna College's medical records. Over the next few weeks, First Aid staff will contact parents or guardians if any clarification or additional details are required.

Medical Management Plans:

Students diagnosed with anaphylaxis, severe allergies, diabetes, epilepsy, or asthma will be contacted via phone or email. Families will be asked to supply updated management plans to Wantirna College before the start of the 2025 school year.

Anaphylaxis Management:

All students that may suffer from Anaphylaxis are expected to provide an epi pen to the First Aid Centre and carry a second epi pen in their school bag for travel to and from school.

Asthma Management:

All students who have asthma are expected to carry their Ventolin with them at all times.

If you wish to discuss any student medical concerns, please contact the First Aid Centre:

(03) 9881 7125

Image: firstaid@wantirnacollege.vic.edu.au



Key dates for Semester 1 2026

Wednesday 28th January: First day of Year 7

Friday 30th January: Year 7 Instrument Trial Day & Expression of Interest Form sent to Families

Tuesday 3rd February: Student Photo Day

Wednesday 4th February: Instrument Expression of Interest forms due **Thursday 5th February:** Year 7 Family Night (all parents required)

Tuesday 10th February: House Swimming Carnival Wednesday 11th Feb – Friday 13th Feb: Year 7 Camp Friday 20th March: Academic Review Conferences

Thursday 2nd April: Last day of Term 1 Monday 20th April: First day of Term 2 Wednesday 6th May: House Cross Country

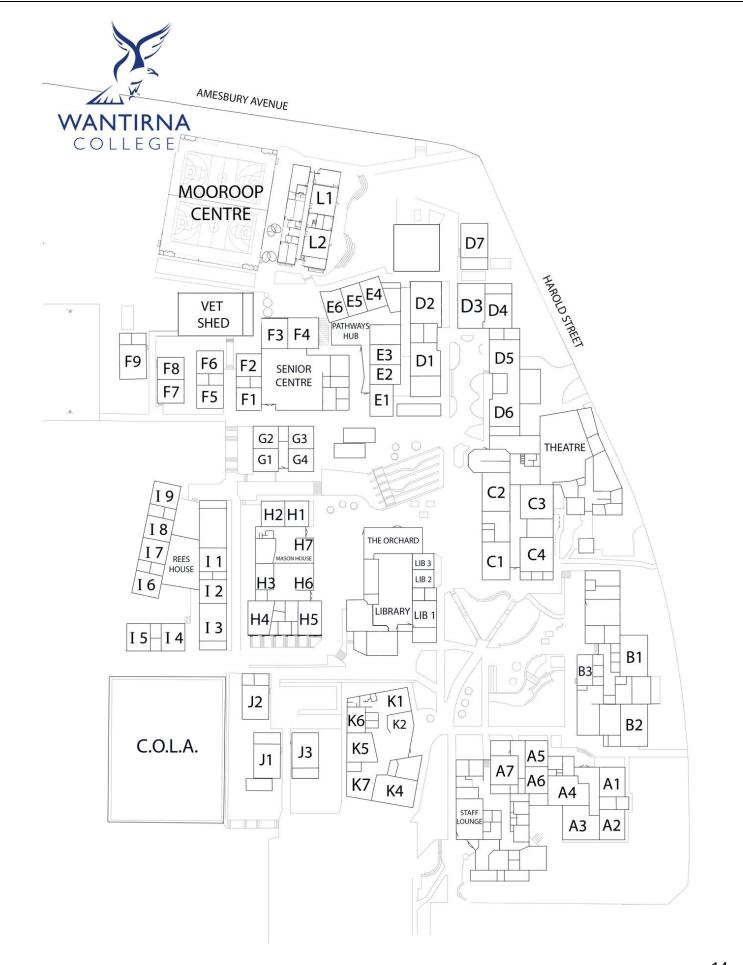
Friday 26th June: Last day of Term 2

Please note: The above dates are correct at the time of publication. As dates may change, please refer to the Compass calendar for the most current schedule of events.

Additional Resources

- Tips for starting secondary school (DET): https://www.vic.gov.au/tips-starting-school#children-starting-secondary-school-year-7
- Tips for Neurodivergent students starting secondary school: https://icannetwork.education/neurodivergent-students-guide-to-starting-high-school/
- Attending School Resources: https://www.vic.gov.au/attending-school
- Further tips for starting secondary school (DET): https://www.vic.gov.au/new-year-learning#help-with-school-costs-and-fee

Information booths	Guiding questions for families	Notes
Wellbeing & Transition Supports	 What wellbeing programs are available for Year 7 students? Who can my child talk to if they feel anxious or overwhelmed starting school? How will the school support my child's transition from primary to secondary? What can our family do at home to support a smooth start to Year 7? 	
Uniform	 What are the compulsory uniform items? Are there second-hand uniform options available? What is the process for ordering uniform for 2026? 	
Tech support / student laptops	 What are the laptop specifications required for Year 7? How do we access a laptop for next year? Who do we contact for technical issues during the year? The importance of purchasing a laptop through the school? 	
Sub School / Camp / Locks / Orientation Day	 Meet the Year 7 and wider middle school team for 2026? Have a go a practicing your lock for 2026. When is the Year 7 camp and what does it involve? How are lockers assigned? Who is the main point of contact for Year 7 families? 	
Resource list / timetables	 Where can we find the book / resource list for 2026? What does a typical day /week of Year 7 look like? What is our teaching, learning and wellbeing priorities for 2026? 	
Inclusion	 What supports are available for students with learning needs or disabilities? Who do I contact if my child needs learning adjustments or ongoing support? Who do I supply past assessment reports to support my child's transition? How can the school support my child with programs to develop social and communication skills? 	
Instrumental Music	 What instruments can students learn at school? How can learning an instrument enhance learning in other subjects? How do we sign up for instrumental lessons? Are there ensembles or bands students partake in? 	
Parent Engagement and Involvement	 What is the difference between parent engagement and parent involvement? What opportunities exist for parents to volunteer or join committees? How does the school communicate with families? How can families get involved in the school community? 	





Discover your Wings