



Western
Heights
College

I can start now

Parent Handbook 2021





Quick reference guide

Key dates:

Term 1 27 January to 1 April

Term 2 19 April to 25 June

Term 3 12 July to 17 September

Term 4 4 October to 17 December

Students return on Thursday
28 January for Ready to
Learn Interviews.

First Day of Timetabled Classes
Friday 29 January.








College Website and Parent Compass Portal:

www.whc.vic.edu.au

College 24 hour Attendance Line:

5277 1177 – Option 2

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Welcome

Welcome to Western Heights College. Our College has a strong commitment to working in partnership with parents and families so that each individual child learns and achieves their best. Western Heights College prides itself on the relationships we build between students and their teachers, knowing from research and experience that students learn best when they are in a safe and successful learning environment.

It is such a pleasure to be the Principal of Western Heights College. Students entering Year 7 have the opportunity to establish continuity in their academic progress, early integration into the culture of the College, as well as benefiting from a broad range of learning experiences and the extra-curricular opportunities available. Facilities at Western Heights College are world class. It will be the aim of all staff to help the students settle into their new college community and build the skills, attitudes and values they will need to fully participate in the rich educational life that our college offers. Western Heights College has

been created to ensure a safe and secure environment that promotes positive social interaction between students and collegiality amongst staff and parents. Both Mentor Group and Subject Teachers will assist in ensuring that your child is able to move with ease from primary to secondary education. Importantly, at Western Heights College our Year 7 Learning Community Team will provide a seamless transition.

Western Heights College enjoys outstanding physical resources that provide students with the best possible educational opportunities. The modern facilities and teaching and learning practice represent an exciting opportunity for students and parents, and will establish the College's culture, values and nature. Western Heights is committed to the academic and personal growth of every student. Students will be provided with a well-balanced curriculum that focuses on English, Mathematics and Science, while embedding communication technology, thinking skills, ethical behaviour,

creativity, self-management, teamwork, cultural understanding and social competence. Our aim is to challenge students to be the very best they can be. Teachers at Western Heights will help every student reach their potential. The skills needed for the 21st century, which support a love of learning that goes beyond the classroom environment, will be actively embraced. The current generation of learners are digital natives: their experiences are both real and virtual, with their family and social activities framed by online environments.

This means that their adolescent identities are strongly influenced by the opportunities and challenges of high-speed internet connections, borderless social networks, and a wealth of information of highly variable quality and reliability. This is the future we will help shape at Western Heights College.

Fiona Taylor
School Principal



Supporting parents and students

The College provides support to students in a number of ways and recognises that all students are individuals and may need various levels or types of support at different times during their education. Western Heights College therefore has a range of supports in place for students at all year levels.

Educational Support

Educational Support aims to support students who are having difficulties coping within their classwork and assignments. This can occur with modification of tasks and assessments, or support within the regular classroom or individual learning programs to allow students to reach their potential in learning.

Educational Support aims to support students who need assistance to help them achieve with their learning. Funding is received from the Education Department for students who qualify for special funding in the PSD Program for those who have a diagnosed disability, requiring an individual program.

Teachers and Education Support Officers working in the area of Educational Support, assist students by helping within the classroom and by withdrawing students to support them with more specific assistance in a small group.

The Educational Support Team consists of an Educational Support Services Coordinator and Teaching Aides. These staff work together to help students meet the demands and reach their full potential educationally.

Parents Supporting Students

The successful education of your child depends upon the productive and co-operative interaction of child, teacher and parent. The child and the teacher have obvious and important parts to play, and so do you. Experience shows that your child has improved chances of success if you:

- Encourage them to do their best at all times, in class work and other College activities.
- Encourage and support your child to be at school, on time, every day.
- Encourage them to meet the College's expectations in areas such as behaviour, uniform, organisation etc.
- Ensure they are properly equipped in relation to books, pens, charged slate PC, other classroom requisites, and uniform.
- Take a regular interest in his/her learning and school activities.
- Share with your child your expectations that they meet the College's expectations and show them you expect them to accept the consequences when this does not occur.
- Contact the College early if you become aware of a serious problem.

It is often best to avoid total acceptance of what your child tells you about any conflict situation without clarification. The best procedure is to contact your child's Mentor teacher to discuss the issue and clarify the events or issues.

Learning Communities

At Western Heights College, our students learn in Learning Communities. Each year level has a learning community being where students 'live' with their learning space, lockers and the majority of their classes within their building. Each learning community has a Community Leader who leads the community staff and students.

The learning community is made up of students of that year level, the community leader, mentors and class teachers.

Mentor Teachers

Every student has a mentor teacher. The mentor teacher develops a close relationship with their students as part of the mentor role; and in Years 7 – 9 teaching them for a significant amount of time and being based in the learning community to ensure ease of contact. In recognition that attendance has a significant impact on learning the mentor teachers promote the importance of attending school and will follow up absences.

'Ready to Learn' Mentor Teacher Meetings

Students and their Parents/Carers will have a 15-minute meeting with their child's Mentor Group Teacher on the first day of the school year on Thursday 28 January. Students will attend in full school uniform and bring all of their books and stationery, which they will leave in their locker. An information pack will sent be to you early in January. This information will provide details about the process and how to book your interview. Some of the material is information for you to keep and some is required to be returned to the school on "Ready to Learn Day".

Each Parent/Carer will be asked to make a 15- minute appointment for "Ready to Learn Day" with their child's Mentor Group Teacher. Students will need to have attended a "Ready to Learn" interview prior to commencing school.

Arrangements will be made for families if they are still on holidays or have medical reasons for not being able to attend an interview.

The purpose of the interviews is:

- To allow the opportunity for all Mentor Group Teachers to meet all of their students with their parent/carer and have a positive supportive interaction with them.
- To ensure that students are fully organised and prepared for learning and are able to meet all of the requirements of a student of Western Heights College including having the correct uniform and equipment.
- Deal with administrative matters in a timely and efficient manner.

The "Ready to Learn Day" process will ensure a positive, smooth and productive start to the school year and will ensure that every student is prepared for learning.

Positive Behaviours Approach

Western Heights College has developed a whole College approach to the maintenance of a safe and supportive learning environment where all people are respected. Our aim is for all students to continue to develop as young people who are confident, collaborative and contributing 21st century citizens.

An important aspect of the positive approach is that all teachers explicitly teach our expected behaviours, just as we teach other curriculum areas; literacy and numeracy, believing that all of our students will be successful. Teachers use positive language, encourage and reward behaviours that meet the College expectations.

In the event where a student does not meet the expectations, the College will apply consequences and also adopt a supportive and encouraging role that allows the young person to learn and apply strategies to enable them to manage their own behaviour and learning into the future. The student's Mentor will assist them in this process and inform and involve parents as necessary. Western Heights College uses a restorative practices approach to solving problems that occur at school.

Student Wellbeing

Student wellbeing refers to action taken within a school by its leaders and community members to promote and enhance student wellbeing of a personal, social, physical, emotional or mental nature. Key elements of student wellbeing are positive self-regard, respect for others, positive and respectful relationships, responsible behaviours and personal resilience.

While some people have special responsibility for pastoral care, we believe student wellbeing care to be the responsibility of all members of the school community.

The College has a team of staff who specialise in student support. At times mentors or classroom teachers may suggest that a student would benefit from further support and seek the assistance of a member of the team. Alternatively as parents, you can refer your child to a member of the Student Well-Being and Engagement team by contacting the students' Mentor teacher. Members of the team are:

Jenny Eastwood
Chaplain Youth
Worker

Lisa Cooper
Health Promotion School Nurse

Sonia Gibson
Mental Health Practitioner

Emma Cvitak
School Lawyer

The College also has access to the Barwon North Central Educational Network which includes, Psychologists, Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Visiting Teachers for the hearing and vision impaired. This support is an integral part of the Student Wellbeing team. Specifically they can provide with referrals from the school consultations with parents and staff, targeted programs to meet student needs, advice and referral to support services available in the community. Referrals to the Network are often made by staff and parents, but students are also welcome to self-refer. Contact is made with parents, and if there is serious risk of harm, steps are always taken to ensure the student's safety. The College Well-Being Team can be contacted directly on 5277 1177, through the general office or with the assistance of any member of staff. The College is also a part of the Geelong Project Program which conducts a needs analysis of all our students each year in a way of assessing what supports Barwon Youth Child and Family can offer our College community.

Student wellbeing occurs when a personal interest is taken in each student. To enable this each student is a member of a mentor group throughout their schooling at Western Heights College. Each morning the students will meet for 10 minutes in the care of a Mentor teacher. Mentor Groups meet at the beginning of each day.

The Mentor Group teacher will usually be the first point of contact between home and school where there is a concern about a student's welfare or progress, or for the explanation of a student absence.

Learning and Teaching

At Western Heights College student learning is personalised, relationship focussed and targeted at improving the individual learning outcomes for all students. This is based on understanding the skills, dispositions and needs of the 21st Century learner to enable them to participate in and influence their futures in a global, knowledge based economy and society.

Learning and teaching is based on these key understandings:

- ✓ Relationship schooling – the recognition that effective relationships and a safe and supportive environment provide the conditions to improve student learning.
- ✓ All students will have a Mentor who is the key contact in the relationship between the student, the parent and the College.
- ✓ All students have dynamic personal learning goals that morph into pathways plans (MIPs). Individual student learning data, goals and achievements are core to these plans and maintained on the College network.
- ✓ Effective teaching practices and strategies (pedagogies) – recognition that the nature of schooling has changed in that learners demand instructional practices that enable them to be active learners as opposed to passive receptacles of content. (College wide pedagogy statement)
- ✓ Building staff capacity through targeted professional learning opportunities.
- ✓ The effective use of learning technologies, especially via the BYOD Laptop Program. Additional information about this program is included in this handbook.
- ✓ Effective learning requires authentic tasks and assessment practices so that conceptual learning and understandings are transferrable beyond school life – Curriculum is developed, evaluated and refined in accordance with the Department of Education and Training policy and frameworks. The College uses the Backward Design Model (Wiggins and McTighe) to focus planning on clearly articulated endpoints in order to ensure all learning is purposeful.
- ✓ Access to 24/7 learning through the College's intranet and SharePoint facilities.
- ✓ Effective communication, collaboration, creativity and reflective skills are key skills for the 21st century learner.
- ✓ Learning communities create the environment for community, collaboration and effective relationships and are a key organisational factor in the College.
- ✓ A belief that schools do not operate in isolation from their community (local and global).
- ✓ A commitment to lifelong learning for all.
- ✓ The design of our buildings and use of classrooms and flexible learning spaces to support the curriculum, instructional practice, relationship and community practices.

Students in Year 7, 8 and 9 have the majority of their learning time being spent in their mentor space, (classroom), within their Learning Community. The Mentor takes primary responsibility for the individual learning program of each student in their group. The Mentor is the key person in relating to both parents and the other teachers who work with students in their group. The Mentor continues to have a significant role in the connection between the student/ family and College as students' progress through the College.

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

Enabling young people to be the best learners and to pursue their potential is our focus. In 2021 all Year 7-9 students will participate in the College's AVID program. Based on educational research, AVID aims to improve learning outcomes for all students through the explicit teaching of learning skills. In Personal Learning, AVID students will build trust and confident learning relationships that will enable them as both independent and collaborative learners. AVID learning will also focus on WICOR (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organisation and Reading). While the initial emphasis on teaching AVID strategies will be in Personal Learning, AVID strategies will be embedded in each of your child's learning areas to enable them to become more proficient learners.

AVID is a structured learning system organised around accountability relationships with students, teachers and parents. In 2021, parents/carers will be invited to attend workshops with students to learn more about AVID and the way in which you may support your child as a learner.

PREP – Preparation, Review, Extension, Private study

The College term for learning activities undertaken outside class is PREP, reflecting the establishment of effective learning behaviours in our students. At all levels, students should be doing the kinds of activities detailed below. Teachers expect that as students' progress through year levels that their PREP will increase in time, challenge, complexity, frequency, quantity and quality. They also expect that student attitudes such as commitment, independence, self-motivation, effort and self-responsibility will increase at the same rate.

Preparation: organisation, checking study planner, locker, bag, class equipment, supplies, pre-reading including texts and newspapers, writing priority lists, checking instructions, planning, time management, preparing questions for areas of least understanding, goal setting, drafting.

Review: revision, re-reading, skills practice, repetition, memorizing, reflection, self-evaluation, using feedback, discussion of ideas and concepts covered in class, applying skills.

Extension: exploring and extending ideas, developing curiosity, broadening general knowledge, investigation, problem solving, wide reading, independent projects, enrichment activities, experimentation, self-directed learning, applying skills in new challenges.

Private study: completing class work, independent practice, reinforcing good study habits, establishing routine, applying and exploring learning technologies, developing study habits, training for senior study demands and post school learning.

Tutoring

Each Monday and Wednesday afternoon between 3.30pm and 4.30pm tutoring is offered to all students looking to achieve the best they can in their learning with a particular focus on literacy skills. If you are interested in this program, please contact Susan Harrington at the College.

BYOD Laptop Program

There is an expectation that all students at Western Heights College will have access to flexible ICT resource that meet the needs of the flexible learning spaces and how our students and staff use them. Learning is available anywhere, anytime and to do this effectively our students need their own device.

The BYOD program will offer families more choice in selecting an IT device that suits their child's pathway and learning journey.

College Library

The College is located in the Orange Building. Western Heights College has a shared use arrangement with the Geelong Regional Library (GRL) and therefore, members of the public are able to use our library. Also, all College students are able to join GRL thereby having access to both collections. Detailed information is available from the College Library.

ICT Acceptable Use policy

Students are required to use the computers and other equipment in a responsible way for educational purposes only. Details of this policy can be found on our website at www.whc.vic.edu.au

Instrumental Music

Students have a marvellous opportunity to become members of the school performance groups, by learning to play a musical instrument. Tuition is included and instruments are available for hire.

Parent participation and communication

College Calendars

College term calendars are prepared for each term highlighting dates and times of events for both students and families. This is distributed at the end of the previous term to each student and are designed to be placed for easy reference, such as a notice board or your refrigerator.

Contacting College Staff

In general, the best method for contacting your child's Mentor or class teachers is to telephone the College Office on Phone No: 5277 1177. Give the receptionist the name of the teacher you wish to speak to and if the staff member is available you will be connected otherwise a message will be taken to return the call.

You can also contact each individual staff member by sending them a message or email via the College parent portal Compass.

In most cases, your call/contact is likely to relate to a concern about your child. In these cases, the person who is most likely to be able to help is your child's Mentor. Parents will be informed of the name of your child's Mentor at the beginning of the school year.

If you wish to meet with a staff member it is best to phone and make an appointment. Most teachers have timetabled commitments including teaching, planning and yard duty. Visits without appointments are likely to result in disappointment. To ensure the privacy and safety of all Western Heights College community members, visitors, including parents, must come to the Administration Centre to meet staff or collect your child.

Information Evenings

Meetings of parents and teachers of particular Learning Communities are held during the year to provide information on course selections, and other matters.

Parent Newsletters

These are produced regularly throughout the year as indicated in the College Calendar and are available online via an emailed link. The Newsletters contain details of upcoming events and interesting articles on the varying activities at the College. Parents are encouraged to read the Newsletters, being one of the main forms of communication with families, to keep up to date and informed on College news and events. A reminder email is sent for this each fortnight as it is posted online.

Parent involvement in the College

Parents are encouraged to be involved in the life of the College. College Council is one way that parents can participate and there are a number of parent representatives on council. Parent nominations are called for each March and the term of office is for two years. Principals at the College can provide additional information on the many ways in which parents can be involved.

Student Led Conferences


Student led conferences will be arranged at appropriate times during the year. Written reports will be issued to parents for each Semester (e.g. at the end of Term 2 and Term 4). Interim reports will also be issued to parents prior to the end of Term 1 and Term 3. Additional Parent/Teacher Interviews can be scheduled as required. These may be initiated either by the parent or by the Mentor Teacher at any time. If you feel that an additional parent/teacher interview is necessary, contact your child's Mentor Teacher to arrange a mutually convenient date and time.

Student Study Planner

Every student is expected to use the Western Heights College study planner and to have this with them in each class. These have been designed to serve three main functions:

1. To provide students and their parents with a ready reference regarding school events, routines, procedures, personnel and contact points. Some of the items included in the Study Planner are:
 - plans of the College
 - term dates, holidays, dates of some major school events
 - College expectations
2. To assist students to develop sound study habits and organisational procedures. Students should record school or class events, study tasks, tests, assignment deadlines etc., and consult these on a daily basis.
3. To assist in the communication between home and school. Teachers or parents may use the Study Planner to send simple messages to each other. It is recommended that parents check the Study Planner weekly and sign to indicate that they are conversant with the contents.

The student Study Planner is to be used only for the purposes stated. If students wish to have decorative pictures or photographs and record personal and social events, they should purchase a personal diary in addition to the College study planner. The study planner is an essential education item and will be supplied to students in mentor groups.



**I can help
guide my
child's College
journey**

Beyond the classroom

Camp, Tours and Cultural Experiences

Western Heights College has a long and proud history of camps. We value providing affordable opportunities for our students to experience different environments and cultures whilst enhancing the leadership and personal growth of our students. The camps program aims to instil in students a sense of independence, resilience and flexibility through a range of experiences which utilise the outdoor environment locally and internationally. At each year level there are camp, tour and cultural study opportunities embedded within the College program as core or elective units but also as additional experiences to enhance College life.

Year 7 Camp 2021

3 x Day Anglesea Valley Lodge – occurs in February.

The Anglesea Valley Lodge (Wensleydale) is a recent addition to Auscamp's property portfolio. This site offers many great activities including: bike riding, archery, camp cooking, bushwalking, climbing wall, slack lines, Initiatives, zip lining, canoeing. There is also an adventure centre, rope activities, navigation courses, rogaining and bush camping facilities.

2021

Year Level	Program Length	Location	Time of the year
7	3 day	Anglesea Valley Lodge	Term 1
8	4 day	Strathbogie Ranges	Term 2
9	8 weeks	School for Student Leadership Student Exchange – Utaloy International School China – 3-4 Students	Term 4
9-11	10 Day	South Korea Cultural Tour	Term 3
	3 days 2 nights	Snowsport	Term 3
	9 day	Fiji Highlands Cultural Immersion Tour	Term 3
	10 day	Kokoda Leadership Program	Term 4

2022

Year Level	Program Length	Location	Time of the year
7	3 day	Anglesea Valley Lodge	Term 1
8	4 day	Strathbogie Ranges	Term 3
9-11	10 Day	China Cultural Tour	Term 3
	1.5 day/1 night	Snowsport	Term 3
	9 Days	Fiji Highlands Cultural Immersion Tour	Term 3
	5 day	Talarook Rail Trail (Leadership Challenge)	Term 4

College Houses

The houses are:

Vines
Barton
Minerva
Quamby

All students and staff members are assigned to houses, with siblings generally in the same house. The College Sports Carnivals are major College events being house based competitions. Everyone displays their house spirit by dressing in house colours and cheering on their teams. There are many different ways that students can earn house points beyond competing in the sports carnivals, with a variety of other house-based activities. The house system, through the student house leaders, promotes a positive environment across the College as well as leadership opportunities and experience.

Out of Uniform Days

During the year on specific days (one per term), the students are permitted to wear neat, casual clothes instead of school uniform and they pay for the privilege. This money goes into the Social Service funds which are then dispersed to worthy charities. The same principles of safety, modesty and respect for others applies to casual clothes as to uniform. Students who dress on those days in clothing which distracts or offends or renders them unsafe may be withdrawn from activities or sent home.

Sport

Involvement in inter-school sport is on a voluntary basis. Students are often required to attend meetings and practice sessions during lunchtime. Competitions are held on organised sports' days throughout the year. The sports played at the present time for both boys and girls are – hockey, tennis, athletics, baseball, cross-country running, table tennis, badminton, cricket, netball, volleyball, football, softball, soccer and swimming.

Student Assemblies

College assemblies are held each term to recognise significant events and inform the entire student body of matters of general interest or importance. These are led by our College Captains. The College has developed a significant tradition for these assemblies celebrating student success and recognising important events such as an Anzac service. Middle Years and Later Years assemblies are also held regularly throughout the year.

Community Leaders will call assemblies as required throughout the year to inform students of a particular level, of matters pertaining to them. Student College Leaders lead the Community assemblies.

Student Leadership

Students have an important part to play in decision making and the development of the College. Opportunities to display leadership are numerous and include areas such as charity events, assemblies, music, talent quests, representation at community events, community service, cross age tutoring, environmental issues, lunchtime activities, open day, social justice issues, sports carnivals, student issues, student publications, and student conflict resolution. Through their organisation and participation in these and other areas, students undertake the responsibility to promote and model the Western Heights College values around which Western Heights College is built and to serve the student body within an atmosphere of shared goals and team building.

Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of elected leadership roles. These include:

- Two Mentor Group Leaders are elected
- Student Year Level Learning Community Leaders at Years 7 -11 are elected
- Four House Captains and deputies at Year 11 are elected
- Two College Captains

The College Student Leadership Team is then formed with the Student Year Level Learning Community Leaders at each Year Level, House Captains and College Captains and their deputies. The Student Leadership team will meet regularly every 2 weeks. Student Leaders are supported by Teacher Learning Community Leaders.

The College Captain and Deputies meet informally with the Principal to discuss significant issues and events weekly.

General information

Absence from School

School attendance is a high priority at Western Heights College. Our duty of care demands that we know where students are during school hours, therefore the College must be informed of student absences before 9:30am on the day the student is absent. Our preferred method of notification is by the Attendance Line on 5277 1177 option 2.

The College will notify parents by an SMS on their mobile phones if students are absent or late to school without reason. This occurs each day starting at approximately 11:00am. Please ensure the College has your current mobile telephone numbers.

Accidents and Emergencies

At school the focus is on students learning. If a student is ill and not fit to cope with a full day of learning, parents should keep the child at home.

Students who become ill or injured are to report to their Mentor teacher or any other teacher close by, who will deal with minor problems. If necessary, parents are notified to collect their child and/or receive treatment. Students will not be permitted to leave the College without contact first having been made with the parent or guardian.

Parents of students who have pre-existing health problems or who develop significant or chronic ailments are asked to notify their child's mentor teacher. Where necessary please ensure that a small quantity of prescribed medication (asthma sprays, etc.) sealed, named and labelled with clear directions is left with the mentor so that the child has prompt relief when required.

Attendance at Whole College Events

The College schedules a number of sporting and cultural events during the course of each school year e.g. College swimming and athletic carnivals. These days provide important opportunities for the growth and development of individual students and are critical for the development and celebration of community. Normal classes do not run on these days and the events are an integral part of the education of each student enrolled at Western Heights College. Students must attend all College events as a condition of their enrolment.

Bus and travel information

The School Bus Program is run by Public Transport Victoria. Students may be eligible for a seat on a bus at no cost if they:

1. attend their nearest government school
2. reside 4.8 km or more from the school
3. reside greater than 1.6 km of their home from their nearest school bus service

The College Office can provide further information and application forms. Families should contact the Regional School Bus Co-ordinator, on 4243 0504 or go to: www.education.vic.gov.au/travelling to school to download the School Bus Program's policy and procedures and eligibility brochure.

All country buses deliver and pick-up students at the Bus Turn-Around Area on Carey Street.

Geelong buses follow their normal transport system routes and students pay the appropriate travel fare.

Lunch Arrangements

It is expected that parents will make lunch arrangements for their child in one of these ways:

- By providing a packed lunch for the child to bring to school.
- By providing money for the child to order and purchase lunch at the College canteen. A variety of hot and cold foods is available.

Students are not permitted to leave the College grounds to go to the local shops.

If your child has forgotten their lunch please bring this to the College Office, Administration Centre, in a bag labelled with your child's name, and it will be delivered to them. Parents cannot drop items off directly to their child during the school day – This includes arranging Uber eats or Deliveroo for your child.

Breakfast Program

In 2021, Western Heights College will be offering a free breakfast to each student as part of the Foodbank Relief Program. This will be served daily to students.

Canteen

The College canteen provides an excellent service for students and staff. The menu is updated regularly, and we work hard to maintain a healthy and affordable canteen options for students. Students using the canteen should show courtesy and consideration towards the people serving in the canteen. Good manners are important at all times, including queue etiquette. Students can also order food through the schools Qkr App by Mastercard the secure and easy way to order and pay for items from your phone at a time and place that suits you. With Qkr you can: – Pay for school lunches. See your receipts on the app and get them sent by email if required. Simply place your order on the day before 9:15am. We will still be accepting cash orders through the canteen as well.

To use this option follow the steps below:

Step 1. Download Qkr! On your Android phone or iPhone. iPad users must download iPhone app.

Step 2. Register Select your Country of Residence as 'Australia' and follow the steps to register.

Step 3. Find our school WESTERN HEIGHTS COLLEGE. Our school will appear in 'Nearby Locations' if you're within 10kms of our school, or search for our school by name. Step 4. Register your child. When first accessing our school you will be prompted to add a student profile for your child/children. This allows you to make orders and payments for them.

College Facebook Page

The College Facebook page will celebrate student day-to-day work with photos. It will also contain reminders about school events and activities.

College Newsletter

The newsletter is published every 2-3 weeks during school terms. We ask that parents and students read the newsletter as it is one of the main means of communication. The newsletter link is forwarded electronically via email to parents. Please advise the College of your current email address. In accordance with the College's sustainability policy, we do not post out printed copies of the newsletter unless specially requested by parents.

Compass Learning Management System

Compass is a way for parents to access our school intranet to view important information about their students. At the start of the year, parents will be provided their username, password and instructions on how to use Compass at The Ready To Learn meeting on Thursday 29th January. Compass allows parents to have access to up to date assessment information as well as reports. Using Compass allows you to access up-to-date and meaningful information about our school and your

students' progress. Compass includes many different features including:

- Monitor your child's attendance and enter approval for absence or lateness
- Communicate with your child's teachers and update your family contact details
- View your child's timetable and the school calendar
- Download progress and Semester Reports
- Book Student-Teacher-Parent Learning Conferences. See page 8
- Provide consent for events
- Pay for school excursions and events
- Receive notifications and have access to a live news feed (like Facebook)

Our school will advise parents when any new feature becomes available for parent use. Compass is easy to use, simple and reliable. We are excited about the role it will play in supporting your students learning, communication across our school and connecting with you and our College community.

Emergency Contact

Please make sure that you keep the College up to date with your current contact phone number during school hours, i.e. your work telephone number and the name and telephone number of someone who will be available in the event that you cannot be contacted.

The College does not provide personal accident insurance or ambulance cover for students. Parents are responsible for the costs of medical treatment, ambulance and other transport costs. Parents are advised to become subscribers to the Victorian Ambulance Scheme. If your child has an accident which requires immediate medical attention, and we cannot get in touch with you or your representative, an ambulance will be called, and the cost will be your responsibility.

First Aid

If a student should require first aid, the class teacher or teacher on duty is to be informed and the injured student taken to Administration Centre for treatment. If a College representative believes that an injury or illness is of a serious nature, an ambulance will be called.

Homework and Study

Homework often involves writing; however, it may also involve a wide range of activities such as reading, memorisation, construction, drawing, musical composition and so on. It may be part of an assessment task conducted over an extended period or a short, one-off task related to that day's class work. All homework should be written into the student planner. Mentor Group teachers and subject teachers will monitor this throughout the year. Even if homework is not formally set or shown in the planner, students should still spend time at home revising or reading. Homework, if done regularly, should be neither excessively time consuming nor burdensome. Organisation is a key skill that is a focus in Year 7. Students should not receive homework for the first two weeks in Term one to allow them to adjust to the demands of a new school, teachers and subjects. Once habits are established, students should be spending approximately four - five hours per week on homework.

Intranet and Internet Access

The College runs a sophisticated intranet which is easily accessed by all students at school. This provides a comprehensive amount of information for students (including timetables and daily announcements) and has links to specific learning resources. Students are encouraged to read the announcements daily and use their web messages to communicate directly with teachers when required. Internet which is filtered by DET for appropriate content is also available. All students can also access the College intranet from home using their College usernames and passwords. Access is gained from the College website www.whc.vic.edu.au.

Late Pass

If a student arrives late (after 9.00am) they are to report to the general office. A late pass will be provided to the student and this must be shown to the teacher before entry to the class granted.

Leave Pass

If a student needs to leave the school grounds during the day, a leave pass must be provided to reception in the College Office. Normally, the Year Level Learning Community Leader signs such a pass before the morning Mentor Group commences. The student retains the leave pass for identification and to show their classroom teacher prior signing out of the College. Students returning to the College must sign in at Reception in the Office. If possible, we ask that appointments be made out of school hours.

Medication

When students are required to take medication during school hours, parents must provide a signed letter with the medication which should be labelled with the student's name, dosage and the time medication is to be taken. Medication will be stored and dispensed by the First Aid Officer and details will be recorded in the Medication Register. Where possible, parents are advised to call into Reception and speak with the First Aid Officer about this.

Students with special medical or health needs (i.e. anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy) must have a medical action plan signed by a medical practitioner (updated annually). In addition to this, students who require an EpiPen (autoinjector), must also have an Individual Anaphylaxis Management Plan. This will be completed by the school in consultation with parents/carers. Once finalised, this plan will be signed by the parents/carer and the Principal. Parents must provide one epipen for the student to carry with them at all times.

Any queries please contact the College Office on 5277 1177. For further information please go to: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/health/anaphylaxis> or contact Asthma Victoria on 1800 645 130 or www.asthma.org.au

Personal Property

- Please encourage your child to take care of his/her property and make sure everything is clearly named.
- School backpacks are to be kept clean and free from graffiti and stored in the locker during the day.
- Private property brought to school by students is not insured nor is the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development responsible for any loss. Accordingly, students are encouraged to not bring valuable items such as portable music devices, mobile phones and other electronic equipment to school.

The expectation is that this will be kept in the student's locker during the school day.

Reporting and Assessment

Academic progress will be reported through the Compass Parent Portal. Student Led parent Teacher Conferences occur in Term 2 and Term 3 and provide an important opportunity to discuss a student's progress with individual teachers. We urge parents and students to attend these meetings. At other times, parents can contact teachers directly should any concern arise. Parent communication is also encouraged via the Planner, by email via the Compass Parent Portal or by phoning the College.

Sick Bay

If a student is unwell they should ask their class teacher for permission to go to the sick bay. Students are asked not to ring home themselves if they are unwell. If the student is not well enough to return to class, a parent or the nominated emergency contact will be notified and asked to collect the student. The student will need to be signed out through the General Office when collected. Please ensure you have notified the College of an emergency contact person in the event a parent cannot be contacted.

Student Leadership

Students have an important part to play in decision making and the development of the College. Opportunities to display leadership are numerous and include areas such as charity events, assemblies, music, talent quests, representation at

community events, community service, cross age tutoring, environmental issues, lunchtime activities, open day, social justice issues, sports carnivals, student issues and student publications, student conflict resolution. Through their organisation and participation in these and other areas, students undertake

the responsibility to promote and model the Western Heights College values around which Western Heights College is built and to serve the student body within an atmosphere of shared goals and team building.

Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of elected leadership roles. These include:

- Two Mentor Group Leaders are elected
- Student Year Level Learning Community Leaders at Years 7 -11 are elected
- Four House Captains and deputies at Year 11 are elected
- Two College Captains and deputies are elected

The College Student Leadership Team is then formed with the Student Year Level Learning Community Leaders at each Year Level, House Captains and College Captains and their deputies. The Student Leadership team will meet regularly every 2 weeks. Student Leaders are supported by Teacher Learning Community Leaders.

The College Captain and Deputies meet informally with the Principal to discuss significant issues and events weekly.

Student ID card

Each student is issued with an ID card which displays their name and photo ID. These cards are used for printing, photocopying, borrowing library books and to 'swipe in'; when a student arrives late to school. Students are encouraged to wear these in the plastic pouch and lanyard for easy access and identification. Lost cards can be replaced through the College Office.

2021 Student Uniform

(from the College Uniform Policy)

Students are expected to wear the College uniform with pride. The purpose of the College dress code is:

1. To enhance the reputation of the College.
2. To assist in developing a sense of individual pride in students and promote development of their personal presentation skills.
3. To promote a sense of collective identity within the College.
4. To promote individual student safety, group security and reasonable standards of health and hygiene.

It is condition of enrolment that all students wear the College uniform.

It is highly recommended that each item of clothing is clearly labelled with the student's name in order for lost uniform to be returned to the owner. Summer or winter uniform may be worn at the discretion of the student.

The College uniform suppliers are PSW Uniforms. Address: 164 Malop St, Geelong VIC 3220, Phone: (03) 9768 0383

The College is currently in a transition period for its new school uniform. For the start of 2023, all students will be expected to be in the new school uniform.

Personal Appearance:

- Hair is to be neat and clean. In some circumstance's students may be required to wear hair nets or other forms of cover for reasons of safety or health.
- All clothing is to be clean, neat and in good repair.
- Appearance and/or apparel to be such that they are not likely to distract any person from classroom learning.
- When wearing casual clothes, such as for a mufti-day, it is to be appropriate to the circumstances e.g. an excursion may require solid footwear. Tee-shirts or other items are not to have extreme or offensive diagrams and/or statements.

Year 7-8 Uniform	Year 9-12 Uniform	Specialist Sports program
<p>Academic Uniform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navy Dress Shorts • Navy Dress Pants • College Dress • College Skirt • School White Shirt • Navy V Neck Pullover • School Soft Shell Jacket • School Cap <p>Sports Uniform (Sports Days ONLY)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Rugby Jumper • College Polo Shirt • College Navy Sports Shorts • College Navy Tracksuit Pants 	<p>Academic Uniform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer check skirt • Summer Check dress (pre-2020) • White Shirt (long sleeves or short sleeves) • Navy dress shorts • Navy pants • White, Navy or Black plain socks • WHC Kilt (pre-2020 version acceptable) – must be knee length or longer • (Students may wear navy tights with kilt). • Blue school trousers • Navy v neck wool blend pullover with WHC logo (pre-2020 acceptable) • Navy v neck vest with WHC logo (pre-2020 version acceptable) • Black leather school shoes • must be flat heeled lace-ups • (cut below the ankle and able to be polished). <p>College blazer (optional)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain navy, maroon scarves may be worn for warmth. • Navy Backpack • PRE 2020 SPORTS UNIFORM ACCEPTABLE • Sky blue sports polo with WHC logo • Navy sports shorts • Navy microfiber jacket with WHC logo • Navy microfiber track pants 	<p>Everyday Uniform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSP Soft Shell Jacket • SSP Navy Shorts • SSP Navy Tracksuit Pants <p>Playing/Training Kit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSP Playing Kit • SSP Warm Up Top • SSP Training Singlet • Optional • SSP Hoodie • SSP Beanie • SSP Socks • Can be ordered through the Indigo Wolf Link 4 times per year.

- Watches and religious symbols such as a crucifix are permitted. Other jewellery is not allowed.
- With the exception of a simple stud or sleeper for ear piercings, or a single discrete small stud in the nose, no body piercings are permitted. Taping of piercing accoutrements will not be accepted as a substitute for their removal, as taping can constitute a health and safety risk of equal magnitude to the accoutrement itself.
- Student are not permitted to wear makeup

- In representing the College in the community, it is expected that students observe the Student Dress Code. An approved exemption is required in circumstances where this expectation may not be able to be met.

Exemptions: At times items of student uniform require cleaning, repair or replacement which renders the student unable, on a temporary basis, for up to two days, to comply with the Dress Code. In such circumstances, parents/guardians must provide a written explanation to the child's mentor teacher who will issue a short-term Uniform Pass in the child's study planner.

Resources for parents

College Fees and Charges

School Councils are able to request payments or contributions for education items and services from parents and guardians for students in Victorian government schools in the three categories – Essential education items, Optional education items and Voluntary financial contributions.

Parent Payment Categories

Essential education items – are items which parents/guardians pay the school to provide or may provide themselves if appropriate. These items are essential to support instruction in the standard curriculum program.

These items include:

- materials that the student takes possession of, including textbooks and student stationery
- materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. design & technology, food, arts, photography, catering)
- College uniform
- transport and entrance for camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend.

Some subjects/studies and activities have a set charge which is listed in the relevant year level curriculum handbook and are payable at the beginning of the school year.

Excursion costs (travel, admission charges, lectures, guest speakers and other programs outside the normal curriculum) if applicable to a study will be collected prior to the activity.

Optional education items – are items provided in addition to the standard curriculum program and are offered to all students. They are provided on a user-pays basis and if parents/guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them e.g. non-compulsory, extra-curricular programs or activities such as camps, Instrumental Music etc.

These items include:

- Special Entry Programs – such as the WHC Specialist Sports Programs.
- extra-curricular programs or activities e.g. Instrumental Music, formals / dinners
- College-based performances, productions and events; and
- College magazine, class photographs.

Voluntary financial contributions – College Council invite parents/guardians to make a donation in the form of a voluntary financial contribution to the College. Library / ICT School Fund: The College Council has determined that each family will be asked to contribute an amount of up to \$50.00 annually which will be spent on Library and Information & Communication Technologies (ICT). This contribution will be TAX DEDUCTIBLE. Our student Library systems and ICT facilities are being continually updated and integrated into the curriculum in all learning areas. This requires significant annual expenditure. A world class education requires more than the Government is able to provide.

Other support options

The College appreciates that families may sometimes experience financial difficulties in meeting requests for payments and contributions. We have several support options available to assist parents, including State Schools Relief Committee support and welfare and support agencies that have established partnership arrangements with schools to provide further assistance to students and their families. Please contact the College for more information.

Payment Arrangements

Parents and guardians will be provided with early notice of payment requests for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions. Payments are kept to a minimum with payment requests and letters fair and reasonable.

To further assist parents with payments, several payment options are available:

- Full payment to the College Office located in the Administration Centre
- Direct Deposit/s or BPAY into the College bank account (for further information contact the College Office)
- Payment over the phone – you may phone the College and pay using your credit card
- Make regular payments using Centrelink – Centrepay.
- A payment plan – making regular instalments (for further information contact the College Business Manager – Kerri Dale)

Alternative payment options are available through the College with parents encouraged to make an appointment with the Assistant Principal or Business Manager to discuss circumstances and available options.

Payments may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used.

Payment requests or letters to parents will be itemised and the category each item falls under will be clearly identified as an essential education item, optional education item or voluntary financial contribution.

Receipts will be issued to parents immediately upon making payment.

Reminders for unpaid essential education items or optional items will be generated and distributed on a regular basis to parents.

All records of payments or contributions and any outstanding payments by parents and guardians are kept confidential.

Daily Routine

All students are expected to enter the building and prepare for their learning prior to the scheduled time. Learning is organised into 100-minute sessions; however, timetabling may result in some split sessions as follows.

Daily Timetable	Times
Staff Briefing (Tuesday and Friday in main common room)	8.45am
Lockers & Prep	8:50am
Mentor Group	9:00am – 9.10am
Session 1	9:10am – 10:00am
Session 2	10:00am – 10:50am
Recess (25 minutes)	10:50am – 11:15am Music played / last 5 minutes
Session 3	11:15am – 12:05pm
Session 4	12:05pm – 12.55pm
Lunch (40 minutes)	12.55pm – 1:35pm Music played / last 5 minutes
Session 5	1:35pm – 2:25pm
Session 6	2:25pm – 3:15pm
Afternoon Mentor Meeting (collect phones)	3.15pm – 3.20pm
Dismissal	3:20pm

At Western Heights College we promote student independence and organisational skills. WHC students are expected to check their watches to ensure they are always on time.

Expectations and Procedures

The following procedures have been developed to ensure that the school operates efficiently and is a safe and pleasant learning environment for all.

School Yard Supervision

Student yard areas are supervised from 8.30am – 3.20pm on normal school days. The bus set down is supervised until all drop offs are completed in the morning and until the last bus has collected student's afterschool – approximately 3.50pm.

Student on Extended Leave/Absence

When students are absent during regular school term:

- Parents/carers are to write or email the student's mentor teacher providing details of why and when the student will be absent from school. This correspondence will be acknowledged by the College.

- Western Heights College teaching staff will not provide work for students who are absent from class and miss teaching/learning due to holidays taken in term time, unless organised weeks in advance. Work will be provided for medical absence.
- Course outlines will be provided by the subject teacher and available through the school intranet if requested so that parents can deliver/arrange appropriate instruction through a tutor.
- If the student is absent for a period longer than two weeks, the assessment of their work will be made on the tasks completed for the period of the semester they have been in attendance at school. These absences may have a detrimental effect in subject areas where sequential learning is important.

- It will be the responsibility of the student to arrange alternative dates for assessment task completion prior to departure.

Lockers

Each student is provided with a locker:

- combination locks can be purchased from the College office
- students will not normally be permitted to attend lockers during class time
- under no circumstances should valuables be brought to school
- the College accepts no responsibility for items stored in lockers
- lockers are only to be used for the storage of school books, sports equipment and lunch
- combination lock numbers should be memorised, but not written down. Students who forget their combination number can request this information from the General Office. Under no circumstances should students tell others the combination numbers to their lock.
- lockers must remain locked at all times
- stickers, labels or other similar material must not be attached to lockers
- writing, of any description, is not permitted on the outside or inside of lockers
- the College reserves the right to inspect lockers and their contents at any time
- any breach of locker security is to be reported immediately to the Learning Community Leaders
- students are responsible for the combination lock issued to them. Those who lose their locks will be charged the cost of replacement.

School Yard

- contact games are banned as they can lead to serious injury and damage to clothing. Games must not involve 'scragging', pulling or pushing, running around buildings or paved areas is not permitted but allowed and encouraged on the oval.
- bikes are not to be ridden in the College grounds immediately before and after school. They must be locked and left in the appropriate racks. Students who ride bicycles to school must use the bike racks and are required to provide their own lock. As required by law, all bike riders must wear an approved safety helmet.
- skateboards and scooters must not be ridden in the school grounds. If ridden to school they must be locked immediately in the racks provided.

Out of Bounds Areas

Vines Road food venues between 8.55am and 3.20pm. (year 12 students are exempt from this rule but must sign out of the College and leave via the front gate if visiting local cafes during breaks) The skate park is also out of bounds during school hours.

Mobile Phones/Smart Watches

In 2021 all mobile phones brought to school by students will be locked all day in a secure lockable cabinet in their homeroom at morning mentor meeting. They will be returned to students from their mentor room at 3.15pm. Any late students must securely lock their mobile phone/ smart watch in the secure cabinet in the general office before entering any classroom in the school. It may be picked up from there at the end of the school day.

Messages for Students

Parents sometimes call the College asking for a message to be relayed to a student. It is unfair to expect that message will be delivered to students during the school day unless it is urgent or relating to an emergency. We have a large campus with numerous classrooms and play areas. Students can be attending any number of activities, classes, excursions, assemblies etc. We ask you to consider the disruption that the delivery of a message can cause to staff and students. As mobile phone use is not allowed during class time, we also ask that you do not text your student during learning time.

Travel and Public Behaviour

Responsible behaviour is expected of students at all times. This is particularly important when travelling to and from school on buses. The travelling public and fellow students are to be treated with respect. Failure to meet these expectations may result in the loss of the right to travel on the bus and / or some other appropriate disciplinary action. Students are to follow directions given by staff supervising the bus set down.







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Stay in touch
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