



**Merrimac**  
State High School  
Gold Coast, Australia

**Pride in Excellence**

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**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2023**

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## OUR SCHOOL

Merrimac State High School, established in 1979, welcomes students and their families on their educational journey from Year 7 to Year 12. We operate as one school with both junior and senior phases of secondary education; and cater for the academic, cultural, sporting and social endeavours of all students. Merrimac State High School boasts a strong community reputation as offering high quality academic programs with clear pathways to university and employment opportunities, made possible by industry and community partnerships. A platform of school tradition brings recognition and celebration to each student as they make their way through the school, from Year 7 Induction to Year 12 Graduation.

Our School offers innovative programs that form direct pathways into future careers including world class STEAM and Cyber Security courses and outstanding Sporting and Art facilities. We welcome you and your child to the Merrimac family.

Our International Program is accredited by Education Queensland International and offers student enrolments in excess of 70 students each year.

## PHILOSOPHY AND VALUES

### PHILOSOPHY

Merrimac State High School strives to build positive relationships, value differences to promote collective wellbeing, encourage lifelong learning, and contribute to the school, family and wider community to make our planet more equal, fair and sustainable.

Our school community has the capacity and disposition to examine issues of local, global and cultural significance; understand and appreciate different perspectives; establish positive interactions with people of different national, ethnic, religious, social or gender backgrounds; and take action toward sustainable development and collective wellbeing.

Education is a shared responsibility promoting a spirit of co-operation and belonging. Our students are prepared for life as literate, informed, resilient, happy, responsible and caring individuals who take 'Pride in Excellence'.

### VALUES

We stand for Respect, Responsibility and Reliability.

There is a strong belief that everyone has the right to be respected and the responsibility to respect themselves, others and property. It is expected that all members of the Merrimac community are reliable in their commitment to ensuring that their actions have only a positive influence on all. To ensure students and staff can achieve their best within a safe and caring environment, school values have been developed and are exemplified by all members of our school community.

The 3 Rs of: Respect, Responsibility and Reliability are embedded in our whole school approach to managing student behaviour, through our explicit instruction of positive behaviours for learning (PBL).



## OUR FOCUS

Merrimac State High School has a proud academic history which boasts a strong profile within the community. Teacher focus on academic achievement and student excellence is recognised through the semester-based Academic Honour's list. Scholarships and early entries to University are awarded annually to students who have achieved outstanding results in their academic endeavours. Merrimac State High School, aims to have our Students successfully graduate, with a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) or a Queensland Certificate of Individual Attainment (QCIA).

We commit to quality student outcomes achieved through studying a seamless curriculum which incorporates Junior and Senior Secondary Phases of Learning.

### JUNIOR SECONDARY

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are members of the Junior School. They across their core in Year 7 undertake their studies with a familiar group of students and a reduced number of teachers. These first three years of a secondary education build academic strength, and extend the challenges established in Primary School foundations. Students move seamlessly from Year 9 to the Senior Phase of Years 10, 11 and 12.

Junior studies in Years 7, 8 and 9 focus on 21st Century Learning connected to the real world. Students' learning opportunities deliver intellectual challenge, goal setting, electronic engagement, collaboration and many other skills defined as relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner. We are preparing students for the "how to" in a world of work not yet truly defined.

Australian Curriculum studies are implemented within all subjects. These programs develop essential knowledge, understanding, skills and capabilities and provide a national standard for student achievement in core learning areas. A commitment to curriculum quality is maintained through a continuous enquiry cycle and renewal of junior school programs.

Merrimac High offer a compacted Australian Curriculum across year 7-9 and influences the curriculum across Year 10 in readiness for Senior School. Junior students are able to be a part of multiple Summit (Excellence Programs) and can choose several electives each Semester across year 7-9.

The Summit Programs and the STEAM Academy for Year 7, 8 and 9 students cater for high performance in Academic, Dance, Music, Triple Threat (Musical Theatre) and High-Performance Sport. This unique program stimulates learning with our high achieving students.

### SENIOR SECONDARY

Senior learning, in Years 10, 11 and 12 continues academic and personal development and begins to refine student focus onto successful pathways to industry, further education and employment. Year 10 establishes the foundation for Years 11 and 12 through a curriculum comprising General, Applied and Industry Pathway Subjects. Students can focus exclusively on tertiary entrance through an ATAR score and the study of 5 general subjects or a more flexible pathway where they may choose to explore and negotiate a range of 'earning and learning' career options tailored to individual learning needs.



## JUNIOR STUDENT INFORMATION

Merrimac State High School has invested significantly in staff and facilities to welcome Year 7 students to High School.

There is an identified Year 7 precinct at our school. Year 7 classes have home rooms to reduce their movement around the school in their 1<sup>st</sup> year. With modern facilities in Science, The Arts, Sports, Technology and the Library, all set in a spacious environment, this makes Merrimac State High School an excellent place to study and learn. Dedicated Year 7 playground areas are in place, with ample covered seating, handball courts, table tennis tables and basketball hoops.

Junior students are welcome to use our expansive playing fields and sporting equipment, including a 25 metre pool, tennis courts, football fields, cricket pitch, netball courts, an outdoor exercise gym and an indoor sports hall. This level of resourcing supports an active and accessible range of recreational and competitive sport for all.


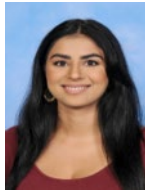
IT connectivity and fast internet serve to make Merrimac High a learning environment rich in 21st Century opportunities. In 2023, under the BYOD program, students will bring their own laptop computer to school. Access to the school network will be fast and available to all students.

## JUNIOR AND SENIOR SECONDARY CONTACTS


*\*The staff below is for 2023. Deputy Principals and Deans for 2023 can be found on the school website. Staff is subject to change.*

At Merrimac State High, students are well supported. If difficulties arise, friends, Class Teachers, Phoenix Teachers, Deans, Guidance Officers, Industry Liaison Officer, Chaplain, Heads of Departments (HOD), Deputy Principals and the Principal are all available to provide assistance as necessary.

The table below shows our network of support staff available to help.

			
Year 7 & 8 Deputy Principal Celia Norling <a href="mailto:cnorl1@eq.edu.au">cnorl1@eq.edu.au</a>	Year 9 & 10 Deputy Principal Susan Bell <a href="mailto:sbell53@eq.edu.au">sbell53@eq.edu.au</a>	Year 11 & 12 Deputy Principal Jason Gibbs <a href="mailto:jgibb15@eq.edu.au">jgibb15@eq.edu.au</a>	Inclusion Deputy Principal Rachel Deere <a href="mailto:rdeer1@eq.edu.au">rdeer1@eq.edu.au</a>
			
Dean Year 7 Sam Mulcahy <a href="mailto:smulc18@eq.edu.au">smulc18@eq.edu.au</a>	Dean Year 8 Chris Redler <a href="mailto:credl1@eq.edu.au">credl1@eq.edu.au</a>	Dean Year 9 Anna Flynn <a href="mailto:aflyn44@eq.edu.au">aflyn44@eq.edu.au</a>	Dean Year 10 Geetika Sodhi <a href="mailto:gsodh3@eq.edu.au">gsodh3@eq.edu.au</a>



			
Dean Year 11 Daniel Hodgetts <a href="mailto:dhodg63@eq.edu.au">dhodg63@eq.edu.au</a>	Dean Year 12 Asha Cameron <a href="mailto:acame154@eq.edu.au">acame154@eq.edu.au</a>	HOD English Jenna Moore <a href="mailto:jmoor344@eq.edu.au">jmoor344@eq.edu.au</a>	HOD HPE Chris Eisenhuth <a href="mailto:ceise6@eq.edu.au">ceise6@eq.edu.au</a>
			
HOD Humanities Kay Simpson <a href="mailto:ksimp112@eq.edu.au">ksimp112@eq.edu.au</a>	HOD Inclusion Sarah Du Kamp <a href="mailto:sduka2@eq.edu.au">sduka2@eq.edu.au</a>	HOD Mathematics Paul Gray <a href="mailto:pgray14@eq.edu.au">pgray14@eq.edu.au</a>	HOD Professional Practices Lori Hayes <a href="mailto:lhayes60@eq.edu.au">lhayes60@eq.edu.au</a>
			
HOD Science Ben Cramp <a href="mailto:bcram16@eq.edu.au">bcram16@eq.edu.au</a>	HOD Student Support & Engagement Andrew McMahon <a href="mailto:amcma39@eq.edu.au">amcma39@eq.edu.au</a>	HOD Technologies Daniel Ricardo <a href="mailto:drica5@eq.edu.au">drica5@eq.edu.au</a>	HOD The Arts Cara McLennan <a href="mailto:cmcle209@eq.edu.au">cmcle209@eq.edu.au</a>
			
HOD Junior Secondary (7&8) Dahna Woods <a href="mailto:dwood236@eq.edu.au">dwood236@eq.edu.au</a>	HOD Middle Secondary (9&10) Chris Wood <a href="mailto:cwood78@eq.edu.au">cwood78@eq.edu.au</a>	HOD Senior Schooling Samantha Blake <a href="mailto:scbla0@eq.edu.au">scbla0@eq.edu.au</a>	International Student Co-ordinator Tammie Moss <a href="mailto:tmoss65@eq.edu.au">tmoss65@eq.edu.au</a>
			
Pathways Officer Jenny Whiteway <a href="mailto:jwhit379@eq.edu.au">jwhit379@eq.edu.au</a>	Industry Liaison Officer Rachel Skrabanich <a href="mailto:rskra1@eq.edu.au">rskra1@eq.edu.au</a>	Guidance Officer Amber White <a href="mailto:avans18@eq.edu.au">avans18@eq.edu.au</a>	Guidance Officer Ellie McGahey <a href="mailto:emcga@eq.edu.au">emcga@eq.edu.au</a>



Student Concern		Student Services Personnel Available
Personal Health	Health issues affecting progress, sexual and drug related inquiries, general health and nutrition.	Nurse, Guidance Officer, Doctor
Counselling	Personnel concerns affecting progress, self-harm, student protection.	Guidance Officer, Psychologist
Spiritual Advice	Grief and loss	Chaplain, Psychologist
Self-Esteem	Anxiety, feelings of worthlessness, self-harm, mood swings	Deans, Chaplain, Guidance Officer, Psychologist
Bullying	Harassment and ongoing bullying concerns (physical, emotional and cyberbullying)	Deans
Friendship Issues	Friendship breakdowns and rebuilding of friendships	Deans, Chaplain
Career Advice	University, VET and Cert inquires, future planning	Guidance Officer, Industry Liaison Officer, Social Worker, Transitions Officer
Family Circumstances	Homelessness, Independent living arrangements, change of living circumstances	Guidance Officer, Chaplain,
Academic Progress & Learning support	Homework support, learning difficulties, masterclass and extension programs and subject choices.	Curriculum Heads of Department, Junior and Senior Secondary Heads of Department, DP Inclusion
Inclusive Education	Social, emotional academic support & advocacy	Deputy Principal, Head of Special Education Services

## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Students experience inclusive education when they can access and fully participate in learning, alongside their similar-aged peers, supported by reasonable adjustments and teaching strategies tailored to meet their individual needs. Inclusion is embedded in all aspects of school life, and is supported by culture, policies and every day practices.

Disability is defined in the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) (Cwth) and the [Anti-Discrimination Act 1991](#) (Qld). It includes a range of disabilities, including learning disabilities and health conditions. All disabilities, conditions or disorders can have an impact on the student's functioning at school in a variety of ways. The student's disability may be lifelong or temporary and strengths, interests and needs will be different for each student and may change for a student during the year and as they grow.

## THE NATIONALLY CONSISTENT COLLECTION OF DATE (NCCD)

The NCCD is a national data collection reported by schools each year. NCCD records students who have received a reasonable adjustment to address the functional impact of a disability. It enables schools and the department to better understand the needs of students with disability and how they can be best supported at school.

Reasonable adjustments are recorded in the NCCD in 4 levels:

- **Extensive** – students have very high support needs and are provided with extensive targeted measures and sustained levels of intensive support at all times.
- **Substantial** – students have substantial support needs, receive essential adjustments and require considerable adult assistance at most times, on most days.



- **Supplementary** – students receive adjustments in addition to the strategies and resources already available for all students.
- **Support provided within quality differentiated teaching practice** – students are supported through usual school processes, without drawing on additional resources.

## SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

Queensland state schools work to ensure the success and wellbeing of every student with disability through every stage of learning in an inclusive education system.

Reasonable adjustments are made by state schools so students with disability are able to access and participate in education on the same basis as students without disability.

Parents play a vital role in their child's education, with students, parents and schools working together to identify and develop the right reasonable adjustments for each student.

To assist parents to understand the supports available for their child and other departmental processes, information on a range of topics and supports is provided on our website.

## FIRST NATIONS STUDENTS

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands across Queensland. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state. Merrimac State High School deeply values First Nations perspectives and fosters leadership opportunities and experiences for students in this space.

Achieving a successful schooling outcome greatly enhances employment prospects for all young Queenslanders.

A key priority is that every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student in Queensland is afforded the opportunity to achieve success.

The department has an array of education initiatives to support and extend First Nations students. These draw upon the culture and identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve positive educational outcomes for all.

## SENIOR STUDENT INFORMATION

Merrimac State High School has invested significantly in staff and facilities to ensure all students have a quality education, which will prepare them for their choice of pathways after Year 12 studies. Staff are skilled and well qualified to deliver world class education. They do this in modern and spacious facilities. State of the art facilities in Science, The Arts, Technology and Sports makes Merrimac an excellent place to study and learn. Expansive playing fields, 25 metre swimming pool, tennis courts, cricket pitch, netball courts, outdoor table tennis tables, indoor and outdoor exercise gyms and an indoor sports hall are available for all students to use. Add this to a green leafy environment and Merrimac is a pleasant place to be enrolled.

IT connectivity and fast internet serve to make Merrimac High a learning environment rich in 21<sup>st</sup> Century opportunities. Our school now has a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program whereby students bring their own school approved device to support and further their education. Access to the school network will be fast and available to all students with the approved devices.





## SUBJECT SELECTION

In Term 3 in Year 9 students access a Subject Book containing curriculum information and the necessary details for making subject choices for the following years. Student subject choices must be approved by Heads of Department and Administration before specific subjects for further study are allocated. These decisions are based on student record of achievement in junior studies aptitude for the subject and a record of appropriate behaviour where there are specific conditions e.g. workplace health and safety requirements always met.

Decisions regarding Senior Pathway subjects are made with Parents, Student and Teacher at SETP. Here students will decide if they are an "ATAR or FLEXI" pathways student.

Senior is a three year course of study formalised at the year 11 & 12 point.

Year 11 and 12 studies are seen as a continuous, two year program. Students and parents are asked to research and consider carefully subject selection for Years 11 and 12. The SET plan process aims to assist in considering realistic options for students and hyperlinks in the OneSchool application provides a wealth of career planning information. All students can access their SET Plan, from the school website, using their user name and password, at home or at school. Each student should enter Year 11 with the aim to minimise or eliminate subject changes and to build a deeper capacity throughout the entire course. This allows students to have a number of options open to them after successful completion of senior studies.

Whilst it is quite normal to "not know" what you want to do when you leave school, it is also likely you will already have some indication of subjects you like, are successful at, and would like to experience in more depth in senior. It might be true that you know what you don't want i.e. to continue studying after Year 12 or certain types of employment. All of these feelings contribute to deciding on your next pathways.

Flexi students have the option to study some certificate & Diploma courses on campus, further improving their access to employment or study in areas they desire.

There are some specific terms that all Year 11 and Year 12 students in the senior school need to understand as part of being a senior student. These include:

## QUEENSLAND CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION (QCE)

The Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) is Queensland's school-based senior schooling qualification awarded to eligible young people at the completion of the senior phase of learning, usually at the end of Year 12.

The QCE records achievement of a significant amount of learning, at a set standard and pattern in contributing studies, while meeting literacy and numeracy requirements.

It is expected that all Merrimac students graduate with a QCE.

## AUSTRALIAN TERTIARY ADMISSIONS RANK (ATAR)

The ATAR was introduced for students commencing **Year 11 in 2019**, who will graduate in or after 2020 and seek entry to tertiary courses.

The ATAR is the primary mechanism used nationally for tertiary admissions and indicates a student's position relative to other students.



## WHAT IS THE ATAR?

The ATAR is the standard measure of overall school achievement used in all other Australian states and territories. It is a rank indicating a student's position overall relative to other students.

The ATAR is expressed on a 2000-point scale from 99.95 (highest) down to 0, in increments of 0.05. ATARs below 30 will be reported as '30.00 or less'.

## ATAR ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for an ATAR, a student must have:

- satisfactorily completed an English subject
- completed five general subjects, or four general subjects plus one applied subject or VET course at AQF certificate III or above and
- accumulated their subject results within a five-year period.
- Merrimac State High School ATAR pathway means students will study a minimum of 5 general subjects for 2 years to support QCE point attainment.

While students must satisfactorily complete an English subject to be eligible for an ATAR, the result in English will only be included in the ATAR calculation if it is one of the student's best five subjects.

## ATAR CALCULATION

The ATAR will be calculated by combining a student's best five subject scaled scores. Scaled scores will be derived from a student's subject results as reported to QTAC by the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA), using a process of inter-subject scaling. Inter-subject scaling is where raw scores for a given subject are adjusted so the results for that subject can be compared fairly with the results of any other subject.

## VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET OR FLEXI) AND THE ATAR

Each VET qualification level (certificate III or higher) will have a single scaled score that can be included in a student's ATAR.

For example, a Certificate III in Hospitality and a Certificate III in Laboratory Skills will each have the same scaled score; this will be regardless of the duration or area of study of the Certificate III.

It is expected that the scaled score for a completed VET diploma will be higher than that for a completed VET certificate IV, which in turn will be higher than the scaled score for a completed VET Certificate III.

Further ATAR information can be found at <https://www.qtac.edu.au/atar-my-path/atar>

## MY PATH

The first of its kind, My Path is an innovative tool from the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) that helps Year 9 students choose their senior subjects, determine their ATAR eligibility and check whether their senior subject selection will meet prerequisites for courses they may want to pursue after Year 12.

My Path enables access to the most up-to-date tertiary prerequisite information available and can be accessed at <https://www.qtac.edu.au/atar-my-path/my-path>



## ENROLMENT

All students living within the school's Enrolment Management Plan (EMP) zone are welcome to apply for enrolment at Merrimac SHS. Students who live outside the Enrolment Management Plan should carefully consider the out of catchment enrolment process outlined in our Enrolment Management Plan. Details are available from the school website.

Students, in either category above, may apply for Selective Entry. Our Selective Entry Program gives Merrimac State High School the opportunity to select students from both within and outside our boundary to participate in our high-performance programs. The Summit Programs include STEAM Academy, Academic Summit, Dance, Music, Triple Threat and Sport Summit.

## FIRST DAY 2023

All students return Monday 23 January 9.00am.

## PHOENIX SYSTEM

School spirit and traditions are centred on the Phoenix, a mythical and majestic bird symbolising hope and endurance. The word "Phoenix" describes the tradition in this school of supporting students as they strive towards our philosophy: Build Positive Relationships, Value Differences, Encourage Life-long Learning and Contribute to the school, family and wider community. These sentiments link then to our aspirational school motto, "Pride in Excellence". We explicitly teach values & expectations, social & emotional skills & well being through the Merrimac Minds Matter (MMM) program.

In our school, "MMM" teachers are responsible for instilling this philosophy and our values with their students. Each teacher creates a climate for their students to learn about our school culture and our way of celebrating being part of Merrimac State High School.

## ASSEMBLIES

These assemblies are held regularly to celebrate success within the junior school, recognise student achievement and share information relevant to students. Sometimes students will assemble according to year level, house groups or interest groups according to the purpose of the assembly.

## MMM TEACHER ROUTINES

- Help with looking after the *wellbeing* of the student in the school environment
- Help students understand school policies
- Support and work co-operatively with the Dean
- Ensure accurate marking of Class Roll
- Refer students to the daily student notices
- Use the organiser to communicate with parents
- Actively teach positive behaviour & social skills in line with school values
- Check students' uniform & policy each morning. Refer infringements to Deans to rectify.



## STUDENT WELLBEING

### MERRIMAC MINDS MATTER (MMM) LESSONS

Merrimac State High School prioritises student wellbeing which is reflected through the appointment of a Head of Department for Student Leadership and Wellbeing and year level Deans whose primary role is to support our students' social and emotional needs. Our 'Merrimac Minds Matter' wellbeing program aims to develop protective factors amongst our students through the promotion, prevent and early intervention of mental health.

Each week students participate in a timetabled wellbeing program 'Merrimac Minds Matter' (Triple M). These lessons, developed by our Head of Department, engage young people in relevant and meaningful discussions with teachers to build relationships, develop resilience and mindfulness. These lessons contain 'wellbeing builders' to guide frequent classroom conversations around personal character strengths, goal setting, time management, health and wellbeing.

Our 'Triple M' wellbeing program aims to support, empower and connect all students to ensure their every success in and beyond schooling years. It has been designed specifically for the needs of our students after site specific data collection identified peaks in particular student concerns and interventions offered in support. As a result, school wide term focus units have been developed, finding opportunities to develop greater consistency in our student wellbeing approach and engaging our community in positive education. We also provide opportunities for parents to gain a deeper understanding of these focus areas through our Parent Information sessions. Here, parents have an opportunity to engage with experts from the wider community present the most recent and relevant information to support adolescents to succeed in the high school environment.

## STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Merrimac State High School encourages all students to participate in the varied leadership opportunities available in both the Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary School.

Leaders at Merrimac SHS uphold a culture of service to others by being **aware** of their community needs, modelling an **attitude** that is positive and proactive, and being committed to enact positive change through their **actions**. Our student leaders understand their social responsibility and are encouraged to volunteer in the wider community and participate in service – learning programs at school. It is expected that nominated leaders model exemplary behaviour and uphold our school values of Respect, Responsibility and Reliability to the highest degree.

### **School Leaders demonstrate the following capacities;**

- Consider the needs of others before their own
- Acknowledge different perspectives
- Build a strong sense of community
- Are involved in a range of extra-curricular activities which reflect a commitment to serving their community
- Demonstrate effective time management skills
- Maintain a sound academic base
- Model a positive attitude and pride in our school, reflecting the school values of respect, responsibility and reliability.

Students can nominate themselves for leadership positions throughout the year, through the application process & with their Dean.



Through our student leadership approach of servicing others, we aim to foster a strong culture of community awareness. Our students are encouraged to be the voice and the action for change in modern society. Our goal is to support all students to become successful, healthy and happy contributing members of our community, where our core values of **respect, responsibility** and **reliability** are reflected in their daily lives.

## SCHOOL CAPTAIN, PREFECTS AND HOUSE CAPTAINS

In Year 11 students are given the opportunity to apply for senior leadership positions in Term 3 via a rigorous selection process involving a written application and interview. School captain's duties include representing the school at formal and informal functions during outside school hours, leading whole school assemblies, being positive role models and demonstrating responsible behaviour. They must be visible and show initiative in achieving positive outcomes in the School and local community.

## INDIGENOUS STUDENT LEADER

This leadership position is offered to students who identify themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and are in Year 12. The primary role of this position is to increase awareness of our Indigenous culture across our school community, and be a positive role model for future Indigenous leaders, demonstrating success can be achieved through education.

## INTERNATIONAL MENTORS

International Mentors involve students from the Senior School who work closely with the Senior International leader and visiting international students. Each mentor is required to participate in regular meetings, school events and is responsible for offering support to enrolled international students when approached.

## COMMUNITY INITIATIVE LEADER – YOU CAN SIT WITH ME

This leadership opportunity is available to Year 10 students who will drive our school wide anti-bullying community initiative. Students involved in this leadership role are responsible for coordinating 'You Can Sit With Me' activities to raise awareness and support, initiating fundraising opportunities in conjunction with the student council and model exemplary behaviour and support to any student in need whilst wearing the yellow band.

## STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

All students will have an equal opportunity to become involved in the Student Representative Council. The Council is a means of making a positive contribution to the school and aims to increase communication between and among teachers and students. Student councillors present ideas to benefit the student body as well as organise social functions for students, foster school spirit and generate pride.

## PEER MENTORS

The Peer Mentor Program is a long-standing leadership opportunity for Year 10 students with the primary focus of supporting Year 7 students through the transitioning processes into high school. Each Peer Mentor is assigned a Year 7 MMM class with whom they develop a supporting relationship with. These leaders are required to collaborate with their year level Dean to ensure our junior students are welcomed into a safe and supporting high school environment.

## LEO'S LEADER (THROUGH ROTARY)

Is an outstanding way for Juniors to begin community service. Gold Coast City Council leadership exists for Year 10 & 11 students



## JUNIOR SCHOOL CAPTAIN

Junior School Captain: In Term 3, Year 8, students are given the opportunity to apply for a junior captaincy. Much like senior captains, junior leaders are encouraged to identify a goal or an area of interest that they can actively promote to positively influence the school community. Junior captains will be responsible for assisting in school assemblies, be required to attend school functions after hours and leadership camps throughout the year. It is also expected they attend regular meetings with the Principal and sit on school committees including the Student Representative Council.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR JUNIOR SCHOOL

Our school's philosophy and values have underpinned the specific approaches adopted for this age group of students. We deliberately plan for a welcoming environment and for staff who are focused towards developing students who are ready for their futures.

### RESPECT | STUDENT WELLBEING

The social aspect of schooling plays a critical role in students' lives, with friendship being a key to making a successful transition and academic life for young teenagers. Organised lunch time activities will feature significantly for junior students.

Peer support and mentoring programs are important strategies for successful transition. Merrimac has a strong culture of commitment to integrated school practices that develop the social and emotional learning of students, e.g. School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS), Mind Matters framework, positive reward system (Phoenix Dollars), online wellbeing survey (Tell Them From Me)

Comprehensive website information exists around bullying, dedicated staff to support engagement, behaviour choices and relationships.

### RESPONSIBILITY | PARENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Connecting parents and caregivers to their child's high school experience is important. We recognise parents like to know who is teaching their child, what is happening in the classroom and school community, how they can help their child and how they can be involved with school life. Our website, OneSchool, newsletter and Facebook page are very informative sites. These places both advertise and celebrate student achievement and school news and events. Junior secondary school activities will feature in these places. Specific events serve to introduce parents to our school; such as Open Day & Merrimac by Moonlight. The P & C Association is the formal Parents group who volunteer their time to guide the school's development. Members meet monthly with the Principal.

### COOPERATION | LOCAL DECISION MAKING

The direction provided by students, parents, staff and the wider school community is valued. At this school we gather and act on information received which will further our school's philosophy and values. We do this by inviting participation in one or a number of school forums; parent information nights, P & C Association meetings, Local Consultative Committee, surveys for a specific purpose and student feedback. These opportunities are advertised on our school website and in the newsletter.

## BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE

Merrimac offers a BYOD Program - 'Bring Your Own Device'. This program permits students to bring their own device, within specifications, to school to support and further their education. Personal laptops can now access into school and Education Queensland networks where previously this has not been allowed. This makes working between home and school seamless for students.

The BYOD program has been designed to assist parents make informed choices on the appropriate technology to buy and supply for their child, while considering functionality, budget and family choice.

Please read the section containing the BYOD information.

## SCHOOL SPORT

### SPORTING HOUSE SYSTEM

The House system at Merrimac comprises of four Houses. In junior school, students are allocated to one of four houses:



Ngunun Dingoes  
(White)



Mibunn Eagles  
(Yellow)



Bowai Sharks  
(Blue)



Pigin Turtles  
(Red)

Several times each year the Houses compete in events – swimming carnival, cross country, Art, Dance, Robotics, Debating, chess and many more. Points are awarded for sporting success and house participation. The Phoenix Trophy is awarded at the end of each year.

## SPORT

This is organised on an Interschool District basis, and the Oceanic District comprises multiple High Schools across the region. Students are selected to represent the school based on their performance at school carnivals and events. The Sports Co-ordinator advertises the dates of trials well in advance for students to organise transport arrangements. Swimming, Cross Country and Track & Field have their own representative carnivals for selection purposes. All students will select a sport for the "GC6" sport competition where the schools compete across 6 whole days over the year. There is a fee for sport to cover bus, umpires/referees, venue, hire & equipment.

## JUNIOR HPE

As part of Merrimac SHS's Health and Physical Education junior secondary work programs, students study and participate in swimming activities in the school's 25m pool. These activities are compulsory components of the program and help establish lifelong physical activity behaviours and develop student's water safety and survival skills. HPE staff hold current CPR and first aid qualifications. They have competence in delivering safe learning activities and undertaking appropriate rescue procedures. Suitably qualified staff will supervise all activities. All students are encouraged to wear a rash vest to minimise sun exposure and sunscreen is provided by the school for all students.

Additionally, students participate in lessons teaching the correct technique of Javelin and Discus during a unit of study on Athletics. The focus of these lessons are for students to demonstrate proper technique in a safe



and controlled environment, and to prepare students for participation at the school Athletics carnival and subsequent competitions.

Other activities requiring your consent can include:

*High jump*

*Weight training*

All Aquatic Activities including but not limited to:

- Swimming – (Pool, Ocean and River)
- Boating
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Stand up paddle boarding

## INSURANCE COVER IN SCHOOL SPORT

Parents are advised that the Department does not have Personal Accident Insurance cover for students. Physical education, particularly contact sports, carries inherent risks of injury. It is a personal decision for parents as to the type and level of private insurance they arrange to cover students for any accidental injury that may occur.

## SUMMIT HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS AND STEAM ACADEMY

At Merrimac we recognise the learning needs of gifted and high potential students who are capable of working at a significantly faster pace and in greater depth than their age peers. The Summit Program comprises high performance classes in academic and high performing sport.

### STEAM ACADEMY

The STEAM Academy is designed for those students who require extension experiences within and beyond the classroom. The program is devised to assist participants to excel in STEAM programs and they are also exposed to skills such as critical thinking. Positions in this class are highly sought after and are available via application only.

### ACADEMIC SUMMIT

Academic Summit studies seek to maximize the deep learning opportunities for students and accelerate their learning. Students will be supported and encouraged to participate in a variety of extra-curricular challenges to test their skills against their peers and gain experience in applying their knowledge and skills in new and different settings. Learning experiences will continually promote leadership, self-confidence, problem solving and build student character. Future success and reaching one's academic potential is for students to seize. This program will give academically talented students every opportunity to push beyond perceived boundaries and reach their summit. Students are streamed into courses that offer extension curriculum.

### SPORT SUMMIT & SPECIALIST SPORT

This subject seeks to develop students' inherent physical abilities through a range of extension learning activities. Summit Sport provides students with learning experiences in, about and through physical activity. Teaching and learning experiences are designed to provide students with a total 'sports education', not only in terms of physical skill enhancement, but also in terms of mental skills, communication skills, goal setting, knowledge of their body and fitness.

Students engaged in the High-Performance Sport program are encouraged to maximise their physical performance potential and can be experts & athletes in their specialised field.

Students selected for this course will cover a wide range of topics including personalised fitness training, physical attribute development, sports nutrition, mental skills training, media skills, injury management and fitness testing. Students are given assistance to pursue their chosen sport as well as being expected to be





involved in all interschool sport competitions. Entry to this program is via application and students will undergo a selection process for this subject via video.

## DANCE SUMMIT

This program has been designed for students who have a passion for Dance and want to develop their talents and skills. Our creative environment offers dancers an opportunity to pursue their interests with other likeminded students. By providing access to industry standard equipment and resources, and unlimited opportunities to excel in their chosen field, Summit Dance students are extended well beyond the standard curriculum and are exposed to new styles and opportunities. Many extension opportunities are provided in the Program including workshops with professional artists, theatre trips and school tours, eisteddfods and competitions. Positions are offered based on a successful audition and portfolio.

## MUSIC SUMMIT

Music Summit is an inspiring program for young people with a demonstrated passion and commitment to Music. It is well documented through neuroimaging that the study of music improves cognitive development and is one of the few activities that stimulates both sides of the brain. Students selected for the Music Excellence Summit will be given the opportunity and expert tutelage needed to excel in music performance, composition and the applications of music in society. In addition to these traditional approaches, students will also gain an insight into audio production techniques both in a studio a live setting. Music is a language that communicates meaning across a variety of forums including; movies, cartoons, advertising, video games to name a few. The music excellence program allows students to be creative, innovative and work as part of a team; these core skills are highly valued across a huge number of applications.

## TRIPLE THREAT

The Selective Entry Triple Threat Summit Program engages students is a dynamic course that focuses on practical activities relating to the musical theatre industry, consequently allowing students to develop a strong technical foundation across a broad spectrum of performance genres and styles.

This production course prepares students for industry opportunities as they are trained in the three discipline areas of dance, drama and singing. Students are challenged and motivated to extend their skills in these three performance areas as they learn to work as an ensemble creating and directing various musical theatre performances throughout the course. They will learn the technical craft of backstage and production skills also with an emphasis on developing their industry awareness and professionalism.

Across the three-year course, students study a variety of genres of musical theatre ranging from modern adaptations to traditional styles. The Triple Threat Summit students will be offered workshops with renowned choreographers and directors throughout their course of study and will have the opportunity to travel and see live productions in action.

## CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

### INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Our Instrumental Music program is very active and an important extra-curricular program within the school community. If students have been members of the Instrumental Music program in primary school, we encourage them to continue at high school. Several of our instrumental teachers also teach in our feeder primary schools, providing a strong connection for those students involved. The Instrumental Music program is classed as a specialist program and therefore students may apply via the school's enrolment process.

The program provides small group tuition for brass, wind, string and percussion instruments. Students participating in the program are also members of the various school ensembles, which perform at a variety of competitions, concerts, school events and community functions. Although the school provides access to



some larger instruments, most students are expected to have their own instrument (e.g. violin, flute, and trumpet).

## RUGBY

Merrimac is proud to offer both codes of the game to its students. Trainings take place weekly and the school enters tournaments in both league and union throughout the year. Students gain skills and knowledge in areas of the games as well as fitness training. We are also able to provide coaching and refereeing opportunities to students who wish to take this pathway within the game. Merrimac has a proud rugby background and has been a leading school within the region for several years. We are proud that our students are then able to take the next step to representative rugby.

## SCHOOL EXCURSIONS AND CAMPS

In 2023, students will be invited to attend separate day camps, one for Year 7 and another for Year 8 and Year 9 students.



## DAILY ROUTINES

We take seriously our duty of care to provide a safe and orderly learning environment and workplace. Students are required to observe these well-established routines. Students earn the privileges of the senior school by demonstrating behaviour consistent with the school's values and behaviour management code. We expect older students to model acceptable behaviour and conduct for all students. Some school routines differ slightly between junior and senior school e.g. senior school bell times, mobile phone use, wearing of school hat. We expect all students to act within the law at all times.

## ATTENDANCE

Parents should aim to for junior students to arrive about 20 minutes before the start of school bell at 8.55am. The school day ends at 3.00pm. Junior students arriving by car or walking may access V Block easily from the back gate in Volante Street.

Schooling is compulsory for all students until they reach 16 years of age. Between the ages of 16 and 17 years, school leavers must be either working more than 25 hours per week or be enrolled in a certified training course. Special dispensation may be granted to students who wish to pursue alternative studies prior to the completion of their compulsory schooling.

Parents of school age children are obliged by law to ensure that their children are enrolled in school and that they attend every school day unless there is a legitimate reason. Parents are discouraged from taking children from school during term time for vacations or extended absences. An application for exemption from school must be made for any absence longer than ten days.

Students must attend school during their timetabled classes and can be excused for the following reasons only – sickness, temporary or permanent infirmity, unavoidable cause (e.g. death in family) or fear of infection with disease.

Students are not permitted to engage in paid employment during school hours unless special dispensation has been granted by the Principal, or they are studying with a Traineeship/Apprenticeship or with an Employer. It is unlawful for employers to engage students when they should be at school.

## BELLS

### 2023 Bell and Lesson Times

Bell	8.55
Period 1	9.00 - 10.10
Transition	10.10 – 10.15
Period 2	10.15 - 11.25
Morning Tea	11.25 - 12.05
Bell	12.00
Period 3	12.05 - 1.15
Lunch	1.15 - 1.45
Bell	1.40
Period 4	1.45 – 2.55



## ACCESS TO SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND CLASSROOMS

Students should only be on school grounds during school hours (Monday to Friday) or for school activities. Access to classrooms or school facilities is possible when a teacher is supervising or assumes responsibility for students.

Parents and visitors are asked to make the office the first point of contact during school hours.

## STUDENT MOBILE PHONES

Students are not to use mobile phones during the school day. There is a strict policy of no phone use in learning times.

Any student found using a mobile phone in class will be asked to hand their phone into the HUB. If a mobile is confiscated for a third time the student's parent/guardian will be contacted to collect the mobile from the school. If a student has to access their phone before/ after school it must be switched off and stored securely throughout the day. Students who refuse to respect this rule will be dealt with in accordance with the Schools Code of Conduct.

The school makes available, at no cost, a phone in the office that students may use to contact parents/guardians. Office staff will make every effort to contact students to deliver messages that cannot wait until the end of the school day. Parents should allow reasonable timelines for this to occur.

At no time is it appropriate to use any device, such as a mobile phone, to take photographs, videos, footage, images or to make unwanted contact with other people, in or out of school time, including staff, students & facilities.

## CANCELLATION OF ENROLMENT

Students who turn 16 or are enrolled in Year 11 or 12 need to commit fully to their senior program of learning. Students who fail to participate in the program of instruction risk their enrolment being cancelled. The cancellation process provides parents and students with the opportunity to respond before any decision is made and every effort is taken to ensure students complete their elected course of study. Students have undertaken, in their senior agreement, to actively be involved in their learning.

## STUDENT ID CARDS

Each student is supplied with a photo ID Card (which is issued upon payment of school fees). At the start of the year these are produced by the school photographers and become available about week 6. Enrolments after this time are photographed in the Office and the card printed at the school. ID cards are used frequently within the school for attendance, borrowing and identification. Senior students are also able to use this card in the community as required. There is a replacement cost for lost cards.

## PARENT REQUESTS FOR STUDENTS TO LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY

Student reports to The Student Hub before 9.00am with a note from parent/guardian. Student will be given a "Request to Leave" Pass. This will clearly show the time the student is permitted to leave class. Student provides this "Request to Leave" Pass to the appropriate teacher. The student comes to Student Hub and obtains a "Leave Pass". The time of leaving school is recorded. Student must be collected from The Student Hub by a parent/guardian.



## LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students will not be permitted to leave the school grounds at any time during the school day unless prior written permission has been sought by parents (see above), a Leave Pass issued and the student is collected from The Student Hub by a parent/guardian.

A Leave Pass must be shown by each student, if asked, at the shopping centre, on public transport etc. Parents are asked to arrange appointments outside of school time, minimising interference with the student's academic, sporting and extra-curricular activities.

## LATE ARRIVALS

All students who arrive after the 8.55am bell must report directly to the Student Hub and present their student ID card to the Attendance Officer to be marked present on the roll.

## PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFYING ILLNESS AND LATENESS

Parents are requested to reply by text to our message by including child's name, reason and date of absence e.g. Mary Jones sick 2/4/21. The school is unable to reply to your text messages. If absence is without your knowledge please contact the Office on 5595 8666 for this to be followed up.

Parents may prefer to telephone the school, email or send a written note delivered by your child to the Student Hub, to notify absence because of illness etc. Parents may use the Compass Portal to notify of absences.

A medical certificate is required for prolonged absence through illness and for all students absent during examination periods, on any days when assessment is due. If your child has a contagious disease e.g. chicken pox, measles, conjunctivitis etc. please contact your doctor for a medical certificate and requirements for length of absence required by the Department of Education.

## DELIVERIES FOR STUDENTS SENT TO SCHOOL

1. Students will not be able to accept deliveries over the fence or at school entrances during the school day, as all these areas are out of bounds.
2. If necessary for students to receive a delivery then it must be via the school's Administration office.
3. Deliveries from parents, or pre-arranged deliveries will be received at the Administration Office and given to the student.
4. All other deliveries will be refused.

## EMERGENCY ALARMS

The school has very clear and practised emergency procedures in place in the event of evacuation or lockdown. Practice drills are performed on a regular basis. A courtesy text message is sent to parents to coincide with practice drills and in a timely fashion for emergency responses.

Please be assured that your child will be well cared for in the event of an emergency. Your patience in allowing the school to manage this process without interruption will enable a fast and safe resolution. Communication will be made as soon as possible in all situations. Parents are requested not to collect their children from school during emergency situations as staff members are responsible and accountable for students in attendance.



## LOST PROPERTY

Students are responsible for all items they bring to school. Parents should supervise what is suitable for school. All personal property should be marked clearly with the owner's name. Named items are returned quickly to their owner. Students are discouraged from bringing valuables or large sums of money to school but money or valuables can be left at The Student Hub for safekeeping.

Lost property is stored in the Student Hub, and students should check there for any missing items. At the end of each term lost property is donated to charity. Uniform items are used in the Uniform pool.

## LOCKERS

Subject to availability, all students may hire a locker through the office at a minimal charge. Students are encouraged to leave books and sporting equipment in the lockers but are discouraged from bringing valuable personal belongings to school. The school cannot accept responsibility for goods stolen or lost.

## TRANSPORT

Students must behave safely responsibly when travelling to and from school. We expect that they will be courteous and considerate when travelling on public and school transport. Bus services to the school are provided by Kinetic or Springbrook Bus Line. Students may apply to Kinetic for discount bus passes. Information on bus times/services is on their website. <https://www.wearekinetic.com/>

Students may be driven to school and dropped off and collected outside the school grounds, ride bicycles (helmets must be worn), or walk. Students are not allowed to use **skateboards** or **scooters** as a means of transportation. Such items will be confiscated and stored at the Student Hub for collection after school.

If driving, parents are asked to be considerate of the volume of traffic and the number of students who will be around the school neighbourhood at drop off and pick up times. Please consider staggering times and where you are able to safely deliver/ collect your child. Please do not enter the school grounds as this endangers the safety of students and staff.

## TRANSPORT AND PARKING

### INTENT

The conduct of students while in uniform is a reflection on the school so it is imperative that general good manners on transport and road rules are observed by students either walking to and from school or using public or private transport.

### BUSES

Students are expected to maintain the highest behavioural standards on school buses and public transport. They must obey lawful instructions given by drivers in charge of buses. Unsatisfactory behaviour while on public transport may result in the bus company's refusal to carry a student.

A free bus pass can be applied for through Translink for those students who satisfy both of the following conditions:

- The **nearest** high school is **more** than 4.8 km from their residence.
- The students attend the high school nearest to their residence.
- For bus **5552 2700**
- For school enquiries or **131 230** for local enquiries
- **Springbrook Buses on 5533 5133**



## BICYCLES

Students using bicycles as a mode of transport to, from and during school will be expected to abide by general road rules as well as traffic regulations regarding the wearing of helmets. Provision is made at the school for the proper safe keeping of bicycles, which are left in the bicycle racks in the designated areas. To observe the safety of all, students must not ride their bicycles in the school grounds at any time. During the school day the bicycle racks are out-of-bounds to all students. Students are not to chain their bicycles to the external fences of the school. Students are encouraged to use locks to secure their bicycles.

## SKATEBOARDS AND SCOOTERS

Skateboards and scooters are not permitted on school grounds.

## PARKING

Student vehicles must be parked outside the school grounds. Parents should use the streets outside the school for dropping off and picking up students. The bus bay is to be kept free of vehicular traffic. Parking on site is a privilege given to staff and visitors, with safety of all personnel being the primary focus. Visitor parking bays are provided adjacent to the Administration Block. Permission to park on the school grounds is given on the understanding that **all pedestrians are to be given right of way at all times.**

Workplace Health and Safety Regulations prohibit the parking of vehicles within five metres of a building outside the designated parking areas. All vehicles must always be parked in designated and signed areas.

## USE OF PRIVATE VEHICLE

The following requirements are to be met by students driving to and from school:

- All students wishing to drive a private vehicle to and from school must hold a current Drivers Licence, and adhere to the Queensland Government, Department of Transport and Main Roads road rules and any licencing classes or conditions held by the licence holder.
- Parents must complete a Student Driver Agreement form. This information will be used if the school is required to identify the driver of a vehicle within the vicinity of the school grounds.
- Students are not to use their vehicle to travel to and from sport or other school activities unless prior written permission has been provided by the school.
- Student vehicles are not to be driven in the school grounds.
- Students cannot use their vehicle as a meeting place during the school day.
- The school accepts no responsibility for a student's vehicle or property stored in it.



## STUDENT DRIVER POLICY

### 1. OUR VALUES

Merrimac State High School is committed to fostering the three school values and has a strong belief that everyone has the right to be respected and the responsibility to respect themselves, others and property. It is expected that all members of the Merrimac community are reliable in their commitment to ensuring that their actions have only a positive influence on all.

### 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide the expectations to students who are licenced to drive a motor vehicle and choose to drive their vehicle to school. These expectations support the safety and wellbeing of students and staff and ensure that student drivers have the permission from their parent/carer to drive to school and who is permitted as a passenger in the vehicle.

### 3. PROCEDURE

- All students are to complete the *Notice of Intention to Drive to School – Student Driver Agreement* and provide parent/caregiver permission on an annual basis
- Student drivers must display the appropriate provisional driver plates (P plate) as required by the conditions of their Queensland Drivers Licence and comply with all QLD Transport driver's licence regulations
- Students are to park their vehicle in the council parking allotments in Dunlop Court. Parking of private vehicles is at the owner's risk and no liability will be accepted by the Department of Education or Queensland Government for any damage sustained to the private owner's vehicle whilst parked or driven
- Students are not permitted to access their vehicle during school hours without permission from the Principal or authorised staff person (Monday - Friday 9 am to 3 pm)
- Park and exit vehicle upon arrival at Merrimac SHS; do not loiter in vehicle before or after school
- Students drivers who wish to transport another student (including siblings) to and from school must supply written permission from their parent/carer and the parent/carer of each passenger. It is the student driver's responsibility to ensure all passengers have permission
- Students will not drive to or from school-organised activities without the express permission of the School Principal

At all times, student drivers and passengers must demonstrate behaviour consistent with the Merrimac State High School Student Code of Conduct, available on the school website. Unsafe usage of a motor vehicle is potentially a matter for the QLD Police Service (QPS). Inappropriate or unsafe usage of a motor vehicle may result in the removal of privilege and be referred to the QP.





## NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DRIVE TO SCHOOL

### STUDENT DRIVER AGREEMENT

<b>Student name</b>		<b>Family name</b>	
<b>EQ ID number</b>		<b>Year level</b>	
<b>Licence No.</b>		<b>Registration No./s</b>	
<b>Make of car/s</b>		<b>Colour/s</b>	

1. I agree to provide the Principal written permission from the parent/carer of the students who my son/daughter will transport as passengers in their vehicle to and from school. I understand this written permission also applies to siblings
2. I agree that my son/daughter will carry only the number passengers as there are seatbelts available in the vehicle
3. I agree that my son/daughter will seek permission from the Principal or an authorised staff person if they are required to access their vehicle during school hours
4. I agree that my son/daughter is not permitted to transport themselves or other students to off-campus school activities, for example excursions, sporting events
5. I agree that my son/daughter will park only in Dunlop Court on-street parking and understand that doing so is at my own risk and no liability will be accepted by the Department of Education or Queensland Government for any damages sustained to my vehicle whilst it is parked or driven
6. I have read and understood the Policy
7. I give permission for my young person to drive to school along with the sibling(s) and nominated passenger(s) below

<b>Student signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	/ /
<b>Parent/carer signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	/ /

#### To be completed by student passenger/s and parent/carer/s

Student passenger/s	Relationship to driver	Signature of the passenger's parent/carer	
Name			/ /
EQ ID			
Name			/ /
EQ ID			
Name			/ /
EQ ID			
Name			/ /
EQ ID			

<b>Principal signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	/ /
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## SCHOOL INFORMATION

### MAKING CONTACT

Effective communication is essential in building a strong partnership between home and school. We put into place our school values of respect, responsibility and reliability in communicating with you and very much appreciate your courtesy in return.

### EMAIL

Email contact is a reliable and often timely manner in which to connect with staff. Each teacher has a school email address which they check regularly. Teacher emails are available on the website. From their school email, teachers are able to contact individual students, the whole class or a group of students.

The generic [office@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:office@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au) is checked regularly and emails forwarded to the staff member best able to respond to the matter.

### WEBSITE

The website is an important source for school dates, information about school activities and details on how to access support. Excursion permission notes, school policies and the Newsletter are all readily available here [www.merrimacshs.eq.edu.au](http://www.merrimacshs.eq.edu.au)

### FACEBOOK

Like us on Facebook for regular updates about activities in our school.

### ONESCHOOL

One School is the 24/7 administration system for our school, and using their user name and log in, your child is able to access their personal timetable, school reports, SET plans and individual semester course planners.

### QPARENTS

24/7 Parent Portal. Access your child's student information online, including; report cards and assessment, timetables and class times, attendance records, invoice and payment details and much more. For Years 7, 8 and 9 school reports will be accessed through Q Parents only. Q Parents helpline call 137468.

### TEXT MESSAGING

This school uses text messages to inform a nominated parent about student absences after the morning roll mark. If your child is away with your permission please return a text, stating name, reason and date of absence e.g. Mary Jones sick 2/4/21. If they are absent without your knowledge please contact the office on 5595 8666.

Text messages are also sent from time to time to advise of important messages, emergency drills, to remind all families or year level families, of school events and approaching due deadlines.

### QLEARN

Is an online learning management system, where all student lessons are housed & delivered.

### COMPASS

Is an app & web-based communication system for the Merrimac State High School community. All parents & students are encouraged to download this app.



## TELEPHONE

- General Number: 5595 8666
- Uniform Shop: 5595 8625 *See website for Opening Hours.*
- Canteen: 5595 8656
- International: 5595 8612
- Homestay: 5595 8609
- Special Education Program: 5595 8621

## OFFICE HOURS

Our school office is open from 8.00 am to 4.00 pm. When visiting, please make the office your first point of contact with the school.

## PARENT NEWSLETTER

All communication is delivered via the Compass platform & website

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL

Parents and other interested community members are warmly welcomed and encouraged to become active members of the Merrimac Parents and Citizens (P&C) Association. The Association provides the forum to voice opinions and exercise the rights and responsibilities to support staff, students and other parents as we work together to create a centre for educational excellence. Increasingly, parents and citizens play an important role on various committees and in the management and development of all school activities.

***P&C Meetings are advised regularly each term.***

## COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

### PURPOSE

Merrimac State High School appreciates and acknowledges that parents, carers, students and community members have a right to raise concerns or queries.

We are committed to ensuring that all complaints are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner. Our aim with all complaints is to find a resolution. Therefore, when making a complaint - and in the best interest of complaint resolution the complainant should provide complete and factual information in a timely manner; deliver the complaint in a non-threatening and non-abusive manner and not make frivolous or vexatious complaints or include deliberately false or misleading information.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We treat everyone with respect, courtesy and fairness, and aim to act compatibly with human rights. Our responsibilities include:

- following the complaints management [framework](#), [policy](#) and [procedure](#) when managing complaints;
- resolving complaints promptly; and
- providing information about our processes, timeframes and any available review options.



## 1. DISCUSS THE COMPLAINT WITH THE CLASS TEACHER/HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

When a complaint relates to an issue concerning a school experience, an appointment should be made with the relevant teacher as soon as possible through the school administration. The complainant may invite a support person to participate in the process.

After discussion of the problem, both parent/carer and teacher should take steps to resolve the problem at this level. The teacher will make an electronic record of the complaint and outcome.

## 2. DISCUSS THE COMPLAINT WITH THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Where the teacher/Head of Department has been approached as above, but the issue remains unresolved, the Deputy Principal may be asked to participate in further discussion in an attempt to resolve the problem.

When a complaint is related to the school more generally, involving issues of school policy or its compliance or non-compliance, the complaint should be raised directly with the Deputy Principal or his/her delegate. For example, the principal may refer a complaint to a deputy principal or business services manager. The staff member will make an electronic record of complaints and work to resolve issues.

Complaints to the Deputy Principal may be lodged in person, by telephone, writing or via electronic format through [office@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:office@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au)

## 3. DISCUSS YOUR COMPLAINT WITH THE PRINCIPAL

The Principal will deal with complaints involving the Deputy Principal, matters so severe as to warrant the Principal's immediate attention, or when previous issues remain unresolved.

Complaints to the Principal may be lodged in person, by making an appointment, by telephone, writing or an email to [principal@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:principal@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au). You may expect a response within 48 hours. Providing an outcome

Once we finish examining the complaint, we will let the person who has made the complaint know the outcome and any available review options.

## REVIEW OPTIONS

If the person who has made the complaint is dissatisfied with the outcome or the way we handled their complaint, they can contact the [regional office](#) to ask for an internal review. A [Request for internal review form](#) should be completed and the request should be submitted within 28 days.

There is also an external review option (for example, the Queensland Ombudsman or Queensland Human Rights Commission), which becomes available once the department's complaints process has been exhausted.

## MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following resources contain additional information:

- Customer complaints management [framework](#), [policy](#) and [procedure](#)
- [Compliments, suggestions and customer complaints website](#)
- [Making a customer complaint: Information for parents and carers.](#)

## STUDENT DRESS CODE

### UNIFORM STANDARDS AND APPEARANCE

We endeavour to build positive relationships, value differences, encourage life-long learning and contribution to school, family and community. This is a shared responsibility between students, parents and school. To do this in relation to appearance, we have a school uniform, and when worn daily serves to connect students with our school and our community. Many of our young people are already in the work force and understand the need to observe the reasonable standards our school makes for uniform and appearance. It is understood that health and safety requirements are non-negotiable.

Parent and student support and monitoring for uniform appearance supports the work of Deans and staff in presenting our school with a well-dressed cohort. Prospective employers and members of the wider school community take notice of how well students are dressed in their uniform and often make judgements about employment or student involvement based on this visible presentation.

All uniform items, except shoes and pantyhose, are available readily from the Uniform Shop. Some sizes may require pre-ordering to ensure adequate supplies exist.

### RELIABILITY

At enrolment, parents and students signed to indicate they agreed to support the Uniform Policy of this school. It is important that you maintain this level of support for uniform for the entire enrolment period.

Students will be regularly reminded of their responsibility to comply with our uniform policy and parents will be notified if there is an ongoing problem. Students will be encouraged through positive reinforcement and polite reminders to wear the correct uniform. However, if this fails disciplinary consequences may be applied. Persistent failure to comply with the uniform policy will be dealt with as per the Code of Conduct Policy.

### UNIFORM FEATURES

**Shoes** All black leather or leather look (shoes must be polishable) lace up school shoes provides reasonable protection for students in classroom and learning activities. The chosen school shoe must provide adequate foot protection and be resistant to liquid spills to comply with Workplace Health and Safety guidelines. To satisfy our standards of appearance boots ankle, knee high, Doc Martens are inappropriate for school use. To satisfy our safety requirements mesh, canvas, or fabric shoes are unsuitable for school use. Coloured shoes or shoelaces are unacceptable.



**School Hats or Caps** (including Summit hats) are required to be worn by all students, when they are playing in the sun or involved in an activity requiring sun protection. Students are encouraged to apply sunscreen to increase sun protection. No other hats are allowed.

**Band Uniform** Students who represent the school in band events will wear black dress trousers, black socks, black dress shoes (supplied by student) to be worn with white shirt with emblem and vest (borrowed on an annual basis from the uniform Shop).

**Jewellery** No jewellery is to be worn, except for one watch, one pair of small sleepers or studs in the ear lobe only and small religious or cultural items on a long chain under the school uniform (not visible). No other jewellery or piercings are to be worn to school.

**Make Up** Visible make-up, eyelash extensions, false fingernails or coloured nail polish is not permitted.

**Hair** Must be clean, of a natural colour, and kept in a neat and tidy manner. Extreme hair styles are not permitted. These include mohawks, rat tails, shaved patterns or number one cuts plus colouring of hair. "Mullets" are not allowed if hair falls below the shoulder.

**Sports Summit and STEAM Academy Summit** students have designated shirts which are able to be worn only during competitions or that selected lesson.

Representative jackets such as Southcoast are not permitted.

**Dance Summit** students have a dance uniform to be worn at representative activities only.

## SCHOOL APPEARANCE

The following banned items are not part of the uniform and are not to be worn to school:

- Scarves, Beanies, Bandanas, Multi-coloured headbands
- Visible undershirts or visible slogans, logos, sleeves
- Hoodies, non-school jumpers or jackets
- Leggings, pleated netball skirts
- Visible tattoos, henna tattoos, piercing of any kind.

## SPORTS UNISEX UNIFORM – FOR SPORTS

SPORT TOP	Polo shirt with school emblem
SHORTS	Black rugby knit with school emblem
SOCKS	School socks
SHOES	Black leather type lace up sports shoe. No mesh or ankle high boots
JUMPER	School jumper with school emblem
JACKET	Bottle green with school emblem
TRACK PANTS	Bottle green with school emblem
HAT	MSSH bucket hat or cap

### Junior Sport Uniform



### Senior Sport Uniform



**Formal Uniform – is to be worn each day, including to all events and ceremonies.**

**Sport uniform is to only be worn only during sports periods or select Interschool Sport competition days. Black shoes and school socks are worn every day.**

## FORMAL UNIFORM

BLOUSE	Green blouse - Year 7, 8 (from 2024) & 9 (from 2025) White blouse with green piping on collar and sleeve - Year 10, 11 (from 2024) & 12 (from 2025)
SHIRT	Green short sleeved shirt (Year 7, 8 & 9) White short sleeved shirt (Year 10, 11 & 12)
SKIRT	Checked pleated skirt (worn at a length which is within 5cm of the top of the knee), knee length black pantyhose/tight
TROUSERS	Long black tailored pants (denim, active wear, stretch not allowed)
TIE	MSHS bottle green tie with blouse MSHS striped bottle green tie with shirt
SHORTS	Charcoal zip shorts
SOCKS	School socks
SHOES	Black leather type lace up school shoe No mesh or ankle high boots
JUMPER	Fleecy or knitted jumper with school emblem

### Junior Formal Uniform



### Senior Formal Uniform



### Acceptable School Shoes as per examples shown.



### Unacceptable School Shoes as per examples shown.





When students present in the incorrect uniform e.g. shoes/ socks/ shorts the procedure is as follows:

1. The students report to student hub with the incorrect uniform.
2. Students are offered a clean and sanitized uniform item and their corresponding items are stored for the day at school.
3. If shoes are needed, school shoes and socks are provided and the student's shoes are stored for the day at school. Students are to wear the school socks over their own to minimise any hygiene concerns.
4. At the end of the day, students report back to the student hub and exchange their school supplied shoes and or socks for those that they were wearing at the beginning of the day
5. All socks are then washed and sanitized, they are dried and made ready for the next day. The school's shoes are sprayed with an aerosol sanitizer.
6. A similar process is undertaken as above if the student is wearing a non- school uniform item of clothing (e.g. shorts, shirt or jumper).
7. Regular non-compliance with uniform policy is treated as a failure to comply with reasonable directions and will be treated according to Code of Conduct.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

When enrolling your student please complete all sections on the Enrolment Form thoroughly, and update details as circumstances change, especially medical requirements.

## CUSTODY MATTERS

Parents and guardians are asked to supply the school with relevant custody documents and details so that we are able to act according to any instructions made. Where no documentation is supplied parents/ guardians whose names appear on the Enrolment Form are able to access children and progress equally.

We are not able to supply any details regarding children enrolled at our school without the appropriate information provided at enrolment or at a subsequent interview with the Principal.

## INDEPENDENT STUDENTS

Any students living independently must notify the school office as soon as possible. Processes will be put in place to identify emergency contact details. Where necessary, the Guidance Officer will meet with the student to ensure appropriate welfare and wellbeing.

## FIRST AID AND ILLNESS

If a student becomes sick or is injured, all effort is made to quickly contact parents so students may be taken home.

As a safety precaution, sick or injured students must come to The Student Hub, so that they can be cared for while contact is organised by office staff. Students must not leave the school until collected from The Student Hub by a parent or emergency contact.

## STUDENTS REQUIRING MEDICATION

Parents must provide a note requesting the administering of prescription medication and a copy of the box or doctor's instructions. The student must hand the medication to office staff before school, and this will be registered and administered when they report back to the office. This includes over the counter medication.





## INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS AND ACCIDENT COVER FOR STUDENTS

The school does not carry insurance policies against loss of property or injury to students. This is a parental responsibility. Appropriate Health Cover is highly recommended; particularly for those participating in contact sports.

## GENERAL SAFETY

Education Queensland and Industrial Safety Regulations require all students in Science Laboratories, Industrial Technology & Design and Home Economics lessons to wear leather shoes with impervious (waterproof) upper layers at all times. To ensure their safety, students not complying will be excluded from the workshop areas until suitable footwear is worn.

## AMBULANCE

The Queensland Ambulance Service will be called to attend to serious injury or illness.

## SCHOOL DENTIST SERVICE

Queensland Health provides this service for students until the completion of Year 10. Consent Forms are returned prior to examination. After the examination parents receive a statement of treatment needs which must be signed prior to treatment commencing.

## IMMUNISATION

Qld Health visits the school on a regular basis offering opt-in immunisation service to students in Years 7 to 10. Parents are sent information and Consent Forms well in advance of these visits.

## HELPFUL LINKS FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE:

### **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

<https://merrimacshs.eq.edu.au/SupportAndResources/FormsAndDocuments/Documents/Policies/student-code-of-conduct.pdf>

### **ASSESSMENT POLICY**

<https://merrimacshs.eq.edu.au/SupportAndResources/FormsAndDocuments/Documents/Policies/assessment-policy.pdf#search=assessment%20policy>

### **STUDENT WELL-BEING**

<https://merrimacshs.eq.edu.au/support-and-resources/student-services-and-support-programs/student-wellbeing>



## HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

### STUDENT ORGANISER - COMPASS

Compass is an internet-based app system and is used to:

- Provide school information for students and parents
- As a way of organising homework, study time and important dates
- Assist communication between student, parents and teachers

#### **For Students:**

- Download app, check emails and communication daily
- Record all homework and assignment details
- Participate in Merrimac Minds Matter Program

#### **For Parents:**

- Check the Compass app regularly for homework and assignment updates
- Communicate with staff

#### **Teachers will:**

- Regularly email updates and requirements
- Use the app to communicate with parents regarding assessment and excursions

### HOMEWORK EXPECTATION

Homework can engage students in independent learning to complement work undertaken in class through:

- Revision and reflection to consolidate learning
- Application of knowledge and skills in new contexts
- Pursuit of knowledge individually and imaginatively
- Preparation for forthcoming classroom learning
- Study support for assessment

Homework provides students with opportunities to pattern behaviour for senior studies and lifelong learning beyond the classroom and to involve family members in their learning. The setting of homework takes into account the need for students to have a balanced lifestyle, including sufficient time for family, sport, culture, recreation, and possible part-time employment.

### REPORTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Information to parents is provided routinely four times each year. School reports will be accessed through Q Parents and are also emailed home. Q Parents Helpline (for help setting up) call 137 468.

Students are also able to access their latest report from One School, using their user name and password.

- Two progress reports at mid semester 1 (April) and mid semester 2 (September) (academic, behaviour and effort) for Years 7, 8, 9 and 10
- Two academic reports at the end of each semester (June and December) for Years 7,8,9 and 10
- Two progress reports interim Unit 1 and Unit 3 in Year 11 and progress reports interim Unit 4 in Year 12
- Two academic reports at the end of each Unit for units 1 and 2 for Year 11
- One academic report at the end of Unit 3 for Year 12.
- Parent/Teacher interviews are held in Terms 2 (face-to-face at school) and 3 (online). Parent scheduling and booking of appointments is done online via our school website.
- Specific requests for progress information, either academic or social, may be made to directly to the teacher, Head of Department or Dean. If you are unsure as to who is the correct person, make your initial inquiry to the office.

Report copies will be sent to non-Residential parents that have requested a copy on their students' enrolment forms.



## BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE PROGRAM - BYOD

The digital world is a reality and Information Technology (IT) devices are powerful means of differentiating and personalising a student’s education, as well as providing them with the technological skills for success in the 21st century.

As part of the BYOD Program, we require families to purchase an electronic device using the specifications below. This device will be for the student’s personal use and is considered their primary device. With this primary device we will continue to support students by diagnosing IT issues and consulting with families if further action is required. We make the following recommendations around device specifications as these meet the expectations the school requires of any IT devices that students bring to school.

### BYOD LAPTOP SPECIFICATION

Specification	Minimum	Desirable
Processor	Intel® Pentium® Processor AMD Athlon™ Processor Apple M1 / A10	Intel® Core™ Processor AMD Ryzen™ Processor Apple M1 / A12
Operating System	Windows 10 1709+ iOS 11+ MacOS 10.13+	
Battery life	8 hours+	
Wireless	802.11ac (Wi-Fi 5)	802.11ax (Wi-Fi 6)
Screen Size	9.7"+	
Storage	128GB+ SSD	
External Ports	3.5mm headphone jack	
Physical Keyboard	Yes	
Warranty	3 years	
Accidental Damage Protection	Yes	

#### Example Devices

- Apple Macbook Air / Macbook Pro
- Microsoft Surface Laptop / Surface Go / Surface Pro
- Acer TravelMate / Aspire / Swift / Spin
- HP x360 / Pavilion / Envy
- Dell Inspiron / Latitude
- Lenovo ThinkPad / IdeaPad
- Apple iPad/ iPad Air / iPad Pro

### CHOOSING YOUR DEVICE

We can understand and appreciate the uncertainties that may be associated with choosing the best device for your child. This documentation provides the minimum and desirable specifications that are required as well as examples of the majority of the popular brands that meet these specifications. **Android tablets and Chromebooks do not meet the minimum specifications and are not supported by the school.**

Unfortunately, we are unable to recommend one particular device over another due to our adherence to the “Public Sector Ethics Act 1994” where we have a “duty to provide advice which is objective, independent, apolitical and impartial”.

Should you have any specific questions in regards to a particular device please consult our IT staff and they will be happy to assist you. Kyle Davies can be contacted via email [kdavi397@eq.edu.au](mailto:kdavi397@eq.edu.au).



## SETTING UP YOUR DEVICE

### BYOXLINK

The Department of Education Bring Your Own (BYO) device solution “BYOxLink” enables students to use their privately owned devices to access school email, learning applications, printers and shared network drives at the school. As part of BYOxLink, the school’s wireless systems have been updated and Microsoft Intune; a mobile device management platform, has been introduced.

### MICROSOFT INTUNE

Enrolling your child’s device into Microsoft Intune will mean your child will be able to:

- access the school Wi-Fi network and have school email automatically set up and configured
- access the school’s learning applications and websites
- self-manage their personal device

### MICROSOFT OFFICE 365

As part of the Microsoft Student Advantage Program, all state school students are eligible to download free copies of Microsoft Office 365 to use on their personal home computers and mobile computer equipment.

### ADOBE CREATIVE CLOUD

Adobe Creative Cloud is a collection of desktop and mobile apps and services for photography, design, video, web, UX and more. Adobe licensing is provided as required via your student's class teacher.

It is strongly recommended that students install required software and enrol their device into Microsoft Intune at home using the home Wi-Fi internet connection. Additional information and instructions regarding software installation and how to enrol your device into Microsoft Intune can be found on the school website: <https://merrimacshs.eq.edu.au/curriculum/bring-your-own-device>

### BACKING UP

Technology can fail and can be lost or stolen so it is extremely important that students have a backup plan in case things go wrong.

Backing up is easy. Once set up, your data should be backing up automatically. Students need to check every once in a while, to make sure your backups actually work. There are two main types of backup solutions.

### LOCAL BACKUP

Every week, copy your most important files onto an external hard drive or memory stick. You may use Windows backup (or Time Machine, if you have a Mac) to do this automatically!

### OFFSITE BACKUP

This is another automatic backup or an external hard drive that’s stored at another location, such as a friend or family’s house. This protects your backup in case of theft, natural disaster or simple hardware failure.

### CARE OF DEVICE

It is the responsibility of families to keep their chosen IT device in good working order to ensure minimal disruption to learning. It is expected that students bring their IT device to school each day fully charged. Each device should be clearly labelled with the student’s name.

Students should take care to put their device to sleep when moving around, as failure to do so can damage the Hard Drive and potentially lose files. Choosing a device with a solid state drive(SSD) can alleviate some of these issues.

## CASE / CARRY BAG

A strong carry case is a great way to protect your device from accidental damage. Use a bag or case designed to hold a laptop with adequate padding.

## INSURANCE

Purchasing insurance is a personal choice. When purchasing your laptop please learn about your options to purchase accidental damage protection for your IT device. This covers your device with accidental damage on and off the school campus. Fire, theft and acts of God are usually not covered under these programs and we request you include it in your personal or home insurance. The insurance can be purchased with your computer vendor or any insurance company. All insurance claims must be settled between you and the insurance company.

## REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

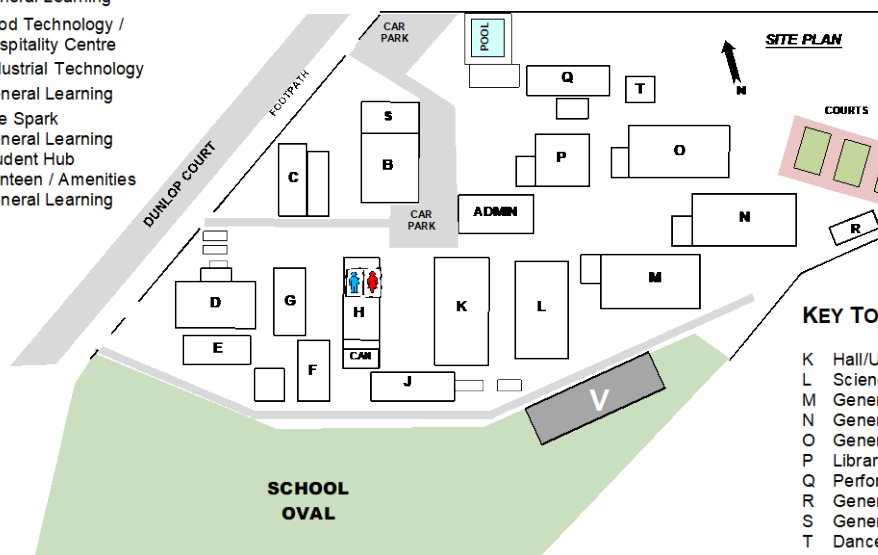
All maintenance for the IT device, operating system, software and/or apps purchased by the family are the responsibility of the family. Families may choose to install additional antivirus products on their devices at their discretion. Windows devices come pre-installed with Windows Defender which meets the requirements for connecting to the school network. Families should ensure quick maintenance turnaround for student devices. If a student laptop is in for repair for an extended period of time the school may have a loan laptop to support the student's ongoing learning.

## SCHOOL SUPPORT

Merrimac SHS IT Support staff are available to support students during break times each day at the IT Office in N Block. Students are advised to see the school IT staff who will attempt to diagnose the fault. If this is not able to be resolved by staff, they can recommend a course of action for repair (e.g. warranty claim, insurance claim etc.).

### KEY TO BLOCKS

- A Administration
- B General Learning
- C Food Technology / Hospitality Centre
- D Industrial Technology
- E General Learning
- F The Spark
- G General Learning
- H Student Hub
- H Canteen / Amenities
- J General Learning



### KEY TO BLOCKS

- K Hall/Uniform Shop
- L Science
- M General Learning
- N General Learning
- O General Learning
- P Library
- Q Performing Arts
- R General Learning
- S General Learning
- T Dance Studio
- V General Learning



## CONTACT INFORMATION

Postal address: PO Box 5610, Q Supercentre Qld, 4218  
Phone: (07) 5595 8666  
Email: [office@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:office@merrimacshs.eq.edu.au)  
Website: [www.merrimacshs.eq.edu.au](http://www.merrimacshs.eq.edu.au)  
Contact Person: Rachel Cutajar (Principal)

## ENDORSEMENT

Principal:	Rachel Cutajar
Principal Signature:	
Date:	13/02/2023
P & C President	
P & C President Signature	
Date:	13/02/2023