

St Margaret's Berwick Grammar

VIRTUTE ET LABORE
1926

Handbook 2027

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Child safe information and a full list of School policies can be found on the School's website.

WELCOME

Dear Families,

Welcome to St Margaret's Berwick Grammar. We feel privileged that you have chosen our school to educate your child and we look forward to sharing this journey with you.

We are committed to growing good people and aim to ensure that every student not only achieves their academic best but that they are also prepared for life in a rapidly changing global context.

We aspire to instill a sense of leadership in every child so that they have the confidence to have a voice and to do the right thing for the betterment of the world.

We seek to provide a holistic, character-based education which we deliver through the lens of our school values: Courage, Character, Curiosity and Respect and our 4As of Academics, Athleticism, Artistry and Adventure.

This booklet contains some vital information about our school, our programs and we hope it will assist you to settle in.

If at any time you require further information, please contact your child's classroom teacher (Junior School), Head of House (Senior Schools), who will be happy to assist you.

Yours sincerely,

Annette C. Rome.

Dr Annette Rome
Principal



'Our aspiration is to grow and develop great young people so that they become globally responsible leaders, who are ready to seize and create opportunities.'

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

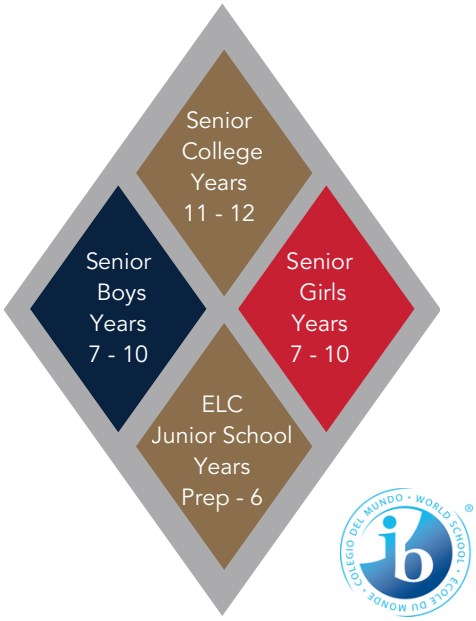
St Margaret's Berwick Grammar is a non-denominational school set across two campuses in Berwick (Gloucester Avenue) and Officer (Tivendale Road).

Diamond Model

The School operates a Diamond Education Model which offers the the best of all education models. It combines co-education in our International Baccalaurate Primary Years Program through ELC and Junior School.

Single gender education operates on dedicated campuses in Senior School, with girls (Years 7 to 10) at the Berwick Campus and boys (Years 7 to 10) at the Officer Campus with cross campus socio-emotional learning opportunities occurring throughout e.g. House events, debating, performing arts and camps.

In the VCE years we offer a Senior College experience. This allows the school to offer a wide range of VCE subjects, while also preparing students for the next step in their life.



We are committed to single gender education in Years 7 - 10 because it is well documented that girls and boys learn differently. Evidence suggests that co-educational settings are limited in their capacity to accommodate the large differences in cognitive, social and developmental growth rates of girls and boys between the ages of 12 and 16.

While students receive the majority of their learning in a single gender environment in Years 7 - 10, we do provide many opportunities for the students to participate in joint activities and events together that foster socio-emotional learning.

Diversity is respected in all contexts and difference is embraced as a means of enriching experience, broadening understanding and extending friendship.



School Values

We support all members of our community to live with the values, personal integrity, wellbeing, and aspiration towards high performance that will enable them to flourish within a rapidly changing, globally connected world.

Courage
to do the right thing

Curiosity
to know and learn

Character
to be one's best self

Respect
to live wisely and compassionately with others and the planet

Vision

Strive to be our best, now and in the future, for the enrichment of all and the planet.

Purpose

Growing good people in an intellectually rich, supportive and stimulating environment so that they are ready for life.

Graduate Statement

We want our young people to achieve their best potential and flourish in a rapidly changing, globally connected society. We want them:

- to pursue excellence in all endeavours
- to find their strengths and grow in their voice and agency
- to lead their own learning as curious and informed citizens
- to live with values, personal integrity, wellbeing and a disposition toward high performance enabling them to plot their course.

Excellence, Growth and Belonging

To grow great people we need to educate the heart as much as the mind.

As an open entry, non-selective school we aim to engage and reach every student to ensure that they have a strong sense of belonging to our community; that they are regularly challenged to ensure their personal growth and that they strive for excellence in everything that they do.

Excellence
We challenge our students to achieve their best potential and pursue excellence in all endeavours within a high-quality and balanced educational experience.

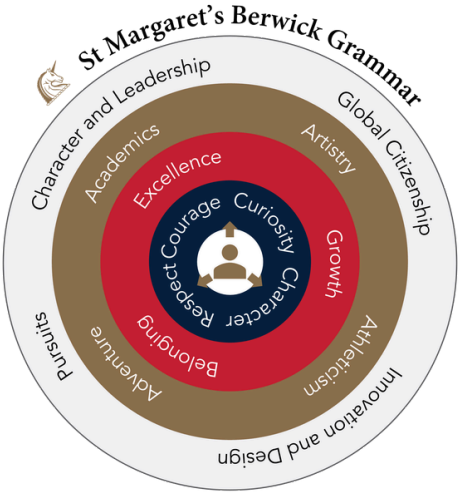
Growth
We inspire our learners to find their strengths and grow in their voice and agency through a scope and sequence of opportunity, choice and challenge, appropriate to their age and stage.

Belonging
The essence of an education at SMBG is the strength that comes from belonging and connection with something larger than one's self. Our aim is to ensure all community members feel safe, valued, nurtured and connected, with a strong sense of belonging to place and people, so you always feel welcome.

4 As

- We deliver Excellence, Growth and Belonging through the lenses of our 4 As: Academics, Artistry, Athleticism and Adventure, to provide a holistic education that ensures every student finds and explores their passion which we strive to develop and nurture.

- The nature of education and curiosity means that no A stands on its own but is intrinsically linked with the others. Leadership is not only found walking on the trails of the high country, but can equally be found in the performing arts, the debating team, the sports field or the nuances of global citizenship.



Curriculum

Junior School Curriculum

Our Junior School is a fully authorised International Baccalaureate (IB) World School. which provides providing the framework of the Primary Years Programme (PYP) from Pre-Prep to Year 6. The Victorian and Australian Curriculum is used for our core programs.

This program works to develop the whole child and build within them a passion for learning. The 21st century requires thinking citizens who can evaluate new learning as it becomes available, while recognising the connections in their knowledge in order to make informed decisions and take responsible action. Students need to be able to ask good questions and find and evaluate the answers.

Our programs extend from the Early Learning Centre through to Year 6 and cover all areas of the curriculum. The philosophy of the PYP, as it directly affects the child, is expressed in a series of desired attributes and traits that characterise 'international-mindedness'. IB learners strive to be inquirers, thinkers, communicators, risk-takers, knowledgeable, principled, open-minded, caring, balanced and reflective.

As an International Baccalaureate World PYP School we encourage our students to develop and display the following personal attributes and attitudes that work towards developing international-mindedness.

IB PYP Learner Profile

Inquirers	We are curious; we research with purpose; we enjoy learning.
Knowledgeable	We explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance.
Thinkers	We use thinking skills creatively to make sound decisions and to solve problems.
Communicators	We express ideas and information confidently and creatively.
Principled	We have a sound grasp of the principles of moral reasoning, and a sense of fairness and justice.
Open-minded	We listen to and value the opinions, ideas and beliefs of others.
Caring	We show sensitivity towards the needs and feelings of others. We have a sense of personal commitment to action and service.
Risk-takers	We approach unfamiliar situations without anxiety and have the independence to explore new roles, ideas and strategies.
Balanced	We understand the importance of being physical as well as working the mind.
Reflective	We give thoughtful consideration to what we learn and how we learn.

Senior School Curriculum

Our Senior School program offers a tailored academic experience that champions student passions and promotes curiosity, independence, and lifelong learning. Our classes are tailored in size to foster strong, trusting relationships between teachers and students, creating an environment focused on personal growth and continuous improvement. Students excel across academics, the arts, adventure, and athletics - celebrating diversity in interests, skills, and backgrounds.

Years 7–10: The Middle Years

In our unique diamond model, students in Years 7–10 learn in single-gender classes - girls at the Berwick Campus and boys at the Officer Campus. Our curriculum is both practical and purposeful, offering a strong academic foundation while being thoughtfully tailored to support the developmental and educational strengths of each cohort.

Years 7 and 8 focus on building knowledge and skills across disciplines, while nurturing collaboration, communication, and critical thinking.

Years 9 and 10 offer challenge, choice, and flexibility through core subjects, electives, and accelerated options. Students explore their strengths and interests, preparing for VCE and beyond.

Our elective program provides rich, experiential learning opportunities, designed to engage and inspire students while offering breadth and academic rigour. Course counselling is supported by our Careers, Wellbeing, and Academic teams to guide students in making informed and meaningful choices.

Odyssey Program: Leadership and Character Development

The Odyssey Program for Years 9 & 10 fosters leadership, ethical thinking, enterprise skills, and active citizenship. Through experiential learning, camps, and project-based activities, students develop essential competencies for life and learning. Key components include, exam skills workshops, the Duke of Edinburgh program, mock interviews, work experience, first aid certificate and the Morrisby profile which helps match skills and aptitudes to subject and career options. Students are taught to embrace 'Front Foot Learning'—a proactive and balanced approach to academic and personal growth that empowers them to take ownership of their learning journey.

Years 11 and 12: Senior College and VCE

The Senior College supports students in Years 11 and 12 as they undertake their VCE studies. With a focus on academic excellence, our weekly Senior College Seminars provide practical study strategies and foster leadership and future readiness. These sessions help students develop metacognitive skills and prepare for life beyond school.

Our Senior College culture is built on mutual respect, personal bests, and active involvement. Programs are thoughtfully designed to build confidence, deepen understanding, and ensure students are well-prepared—academically, socially, and personally.

The School's Founding

Miss Dora Gipson founded St Margaret's School in Toorak with eighteen girls in 1926. The school grew quickly, first as a day school and later as a day and boarding school. By 1931 it had spread to three locations including Mayfield Avenue, Stonnington and Berwick.

Miss Gipson provided a sound and rounded education for her charges, but also instilled in her pupils a great sense of duty. Her astute leadership saw the school survive very difficult times during the Second World War and its aftermath, with Berwick enduring as the sole campus. She retired in 1947 after 21 years of dedicated service.

Throughout its long and rich history, the principals have guided St Margaret's Berwick Grammar through enormous changes in the second half of the 20th century. They have all contributed to the development of a strong school community where individual students are valued.

School Principals

Miss Dora Gipson	1926 - 1947
Mrs Hilda Strugnell	1948
Miss Elizabeth Woodyatt	1949 - 1964
Miss Ruth Maguire	1964 - 1978
Mrs Joan Butler	1979 - 1986
Miss Virginia Henry	1987 - 2000
Dr Helen McDonald	2001 - 2011
Mrs Paula Anderson	2011 - 2012
Mr Doug Bailey	2012 - 2016
Ms Carole Reed	2016
Dr Annette Rome	2017 - 2026
Mr Simon Shepherd	2027 -





The school's logo and badge containing a unicorn and the motto, 'Virtute et Labore', was derived from the crest of the Cunningham family of Northern Ireland that belonged to Miss Gipson's maternal grandmother. This original depiction of the fictitious character profiled the unicorn to the left, with one eye on the past and one eye on the future. The Latin motto, 'Virtute et Labore' is written across the bottom of the unicorn. 'Virtute et Labore' was translated by students at the time as 'be good and work hard'.

In order to accommodate the opening of Berwick Grammar School in 2009, a school dedicated to the education of young men, the logo was changed to reflect the school's equal provision of education for girls and boys. The logo featured two unicorns; the unicorn to the left was female and the unicorn on the right male.

In 2021 the school changed its name and logo with the specific purpose of bringing the school together as one school and one community with a single student journey from ELC to Year 12.

The unicorn continues to have one eye on the past, valuing the history, traditions and achievements and one on the future providing a contemporary education that positions our students for success on the world stage, in a rapidly changing world.

THE SCHOOL DAY

Junior School

- The Junior School day begins at 8.30 am, however students should be on campus by 8.20 am to ensure a smooth start to the school day. Students that need to be at school before 8.20 am are able to join the schools Before School Care program which incurs a cost as charged by the external provider. Further information is available through the School's website.
- The day is split into 6 learning periods and includes morning recess and lunch.
- There is a fortnightly Junior School Assembly or House session.
- Students are dismissed at 3.00 pm. Students who have not been collected by 3.15 pm will be sent to the After School Care program which incurs a cost as charged by the external provider. Further information is available through the School's website.
- Please note that students should not arrive before 8.00 am, except at timetabled sports practices or early morning training sessions, as supervision is not available before that time.





Senior Schools

- The Senior School day begins with a Mentor session at 8.30 am, however, students should be on campus by 8.20 am to ensure a smooth start to the school day.
- The day is split into 7 learning periods interspersed with either a whole school assembly, House or Empowering/Growing Good Men sessions.
- Students are dismissed at the conclusion of Period 7 at 3.00 pm.
- The Library on the Senior Girls Campus remains open until 5.00 pm when the campus closes.
- The Library on the Senior Boys Campus remains open until 4.25 pm (Mon-Thurs) when the campus closes.
- The boys are welcome to travel to the Senior Girls Campus to make use of the library between 3.00 pm and 5.00 pm.
- Please note that students should not arrive before 8.00 am, except at timetabled sports practices or early morning training sessions, as supervision is not available before that time.



School Attendance

In the event of absence, parents are requested to advise the school via Nexus or by phone on 03 9703 8111 by 9.00 am. Families will receive a SMS notification for absence if we have not been notified prior. The school expects that students will have a minimum 90% attendance rate.

Expectations

The expectation of the school is that students will undertake all aspects of the school program, abide by the Responsible Behaviour Policy and attend major school events unless otherwise instructed.

Appointments

We understand that from time-to-time parents need to schedule medical and dental appointments for students and that these may fall within school hours. Parents are asked to email appointment times to their:

- Junior School Reception junioroffice@smbg.vic.edu.au
- Senior School Mentor or Head of House

Advice should be provided to the School at least 24 hours ahead of the planned appointment. Wherever possible, appointments should be made outside school hours.

Extended Absence

The school is committed to providing a comprehensive curricular program. Early departure and extended absence can have a negative impact on student learning.

Advance notice is required, in writing, for Junior students to the Head of Junior School and for Senior students to the Head of Students or Head of House, if a student will be absent from school for any extended length of time.

Illness

If a child is ill, they should be kept at home until well again. When a student is away, parents are required to advise the school via Nexus or by phone on 03 9703 8111, by 9.00 am on the morning of the absence.

First Aid is available at each campus to care for any child who falls ill or is injured during school hours. Depending on the nature of the illness/injury parents may be notified and if necessary asked to arrange for a pick up. Students are not permitted to call or text parents themselves during school hours.

It is, therefore, vitally important if any of the details supplied on the Family and Student Information forms change, that parents notify the school immediately either in writing or via Nexus. This includes any change of address, phone numbers and most importantly any medical updates.

Medication required on a regular basis or to be administered is to be kept in the Sick Bay and dispensed as required. Parents/guardians can obtain an Authorisation to Distribute Personal Medication to Students Form from Nexus or Student Office prior to providing the medication to Student Office.

Where permission has been provided, the School will administer paracetamol. The School will not not administer any other medication without an authorisation.

Late to School and Early Departures

Students arriving late to school, after 8.30 am, are required to sign in. Administration Staff/Teachers / Mentors / Head of House may follow up repeated late arrivals by contacting parents.

Parents are required to sign students out if they need to leave school prior to dismissal time. Parents must provide prior notification to their child's Student Office. The sign in and out stations are in the following locations:

- Junior School Office
- Senior Girls Student Office
- Senior Boys Reception



Assemblies

All students attend a regular formal Junior School, Senior Girls or Senior Boys assembly during term. Special assemblies occur throughout the year and these dates are published in Newsletters or via the Nexus calendar



Before and After School Care Pre-Prep to Year 6

The school works with an external company who provides our Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) program which is available for Pre-Prep to Year 6 students. This service is located in the 'Old Riding Stables' in the Junior School. TheirCare is the school's current provider.

All families that wish to use the OSHC program must complete a registration form prior to the child attending. More information regarding the program can be obtained from Nexus or the school's website www.stmargarets.vic.edu.au/junior/before-and-aftercare.

Before and After Care Years 7 to 12

Supervised study in the Libraries is available for the Senior students from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm in the Senior Library at the Berwick Campus, and from 8.30 am to 4.25 pm at the Officer Campus.

Excursions

The school will notify parents of any scheduled activities, and parents will be required to access and consent to all student excursions/activities via Nexus.

Food

Students can either bring a packed lunch and snacks to the School or purchase items from Lunchbox, the School's cafeteria (see page 17). St Margaret's Berwick Grammar follows the Government guidelines and encourages the eating of healthy and nutritious foods to supporting student wellbeing and growth.

Lockers

Senior students are provided with an approved combination padlock for their locker. They are of sturdy construction and if well cared for should last your child throughout their senior years. If a student misplaces the padlock, replacement locks are available for $15 from the relevant campus Student Office. Laptops and other valuables should be stored in lockers when not in use.

Messages

Students will be advised of messages or items received by their Student Office via email upon receipt or via their classroom teacher or Office Staff in Junior School.

School Books

A booklist for each year level, from Year 7 onwards, can be found on the school website under Admissions or on Nexus. All books required by students are available from Campion.

Digital Devices

All students enrolled from Prep through Year 12 will be issued a school-provided digital device to support their learning.

- Prep to Year 6 students will receive an iPad
- Year 7 to 12 students will be provided with a laptop

Each device is pre-configured with the required educational applications and includes both warranty and accidental damage protection. Devices are subject to a standard renewal cycle of three to four years, ensuring access to up-to-date technology. In the event of student withdrawal or when a device reaches the end of its designated term, the device and all accompanying accessories must be returned to the school in good condition. Students enrolling throughout the year will receive the same type of device allocated to their respective year level.

Visitors to the School

Parents are asked to go to the relevant Reception area and sign in if they wish to access the school during school hours. Upon arrival please report to one of the following locations:

- Junior School Office.
- Senior Girls Reception.
- Senior Boys Reception.

TRANSPORT

Bicycle Riders

Provision will be made for those students wishing to cycle to school. The law requires all bicycle riders to wear a Standard Association of Australia approved bicycle helmet.

Conveyance Allowance

Parents may be able to claim an allowance from the State Government if the Senior Boys Campus is their nearest single-sex, non-denominational school. Should you require further information about the Conveyance Allowance, please contact the school using the following email buses@smbg.vic.edu.au.

Public Transport

St Margaret's Berwick Grammar is well serviced by both private and MET buses, suburban and V-Line trains. Our bus schedule is designed to help you choose the most convenient transport for your child. The Bus Timetable and Schedule of Fees is be available from Nexus or your Student Office.

From 1 January 2026, students under the age of 18 years old will have access to free public transport in Victoria. They will need "Youth Myki card". To find out more visit www.ptv.vic.gov.au.





In the morning, campus transfer services depart St Margaret's Place at the Berwick Campus to the Senior Boys Campus in Officer and in the afternoon the transfer services depart the Boys Campus in Officer and return to St Margaret's Place. These services connect with buses as listed on the bus timetable. Officer Railway Station is 1.5 kilometres from Senior Boys Campus, approximately a 15-minute walk. Students may catch MET services here to connect with V-line trains.

School Bus Services

The School offers a range of bus services and routes. Information and applications to use the buses are available via Nexus.

Bus routes are not static but are constantly evolving with demand, based on where families live and who wants to use the services. If you feel that you would like to use the bus but find that the current routes do not meet your needs, please drop us a line so we can look at future routes.

If you have questions, feedback or are interested in our bus services, please email buses@smbg.vic.edu.au.

Morning and Afternoon Inter Campus Buses

All families who apply to use the SMBG1 Campus Transfer service must submit a Private Bus Conveyance Allowance application at the time of completing the Charter Bus Application Form. The funds received from the Department of Education will be retained by the school to provide this service at 'no charge'. Further information to apply for this service can be found in the bus information on Nexus.

Cross Campus Buses

The School runs cross campus buses through out the day so that Senior School students can attend classes appropriately.

School Grounds Access for the Berwick Campus

To assist with student safety, parents are not permitted to drive into the school grounds from Gloucester Avenue. Parents should note that there is no thoroughfare from St Margaret's Place to Gloucester Avenue. The only exceptions for parents using Gloucester Avenue entry is in the case of a disability, injury or illness.

St Margaret's Place car park should be used for all 'drop offs' and 'pick-ups'. St Margaret's Place car park (enter from Melville Park Drive) provides car parking for parents who wish to collect their child from the classroom; this area has staff supervising students and the traffic flow.

Students Driving to School

Any student holding a provisional driving licence, who intends to drive to school, either on a regular basis or occasionally must comply with the school policy and is required to complete the Parent Permission and Student Agreement form. The permission form outlines school policy and can be obtained from the school's website. The form must be completed and validated by the relevant Head of Students before the student is authorised to drive to and from school.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Cafeteria - "The Lunchbox"

Each campus has its own cafeteria, named "The Lunchbox", which offers healthy lunches and snacks. A comprehensive price list of items is available via Nexus. The Lunchbox at Berwick Campus is open from 8.00 am to 2.30 pm each day and at Officer Campus from 8.00 am to 1.30 pm each day.

Junior School Lunchbox orders should be made online using the Flexischools App (available via the Apple Store or Google Play Store). Details of the program can be found on Nexus (Search for Lunchbox).

Parents are welcome to use The Lunchbox at the Berwick Campus until 10.30 am each school day and must sign in upon arrival.



Libraries

Students may borrow resources from any of the each libraries. Our libraries include wonderful print collections supported by audio visual and digital resources. The teacher-librarians and support staff warmly welcome students to their campus libraries.

- The Junior School Inquiry Centre (Library) is open Monday to Friday between 8.30 am and 3.00 pm.
- Senior Berwick Library is open Monday to Friday between 8.00 am and 5.00 pm.
- Senior Officer Library is open Monday to Friday between 8.30 am and 4.25 pm.

Uniform

Noone Imagewear, located in Beaconsfield and Officer, is the supplier of all new St Margaret's Berwick Grammar uniforms. The uniform policy can be found on the school website and Nexus.

The Second-Hand Uniform Shop is run by our Parents' and Friends' Association volunteers is located at the Berwick Campus. The shop sells quality second-hand uniform for all students and parents are warmly invited to visit. The shop is primarily open during term time and hours can be obtained from Nexus and the school's website www.stmargarets.vic.edu.au/admissions.

Full uniform information can be found in the separate uniform brochure.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Fees

School fees are set each year by the School Council. The council is mindful of the demands on family finances and every effort is made to keep any increase to a minimum; however, the pursuit of excellence will continue to be a priority of the school. With this in mind, the council is continually reviewing the school's facilities and programs. Full details of the school fees are available on the school website www.stmargarets.vic.edu.au/admissions

Termination of Enrolment

If a student is withdrawing from the school, a full term's notice must be given in writing to the Principal. If this is not adhered to, a full term's fees will be payable in lieu of notice. It is necessary to specify these conditions to ensure the school can operate as efficiently as possible. In all cases, we anticipate that families experiencing financial difficulties should discuss their situation with the Director of Business Operations as soon as possible. Early notice enables all parties to plan for the future more clearly.

Payment Queries

If you have any questions or concerns regarding fee payments, please do not hesitate to contact the Finance Team on (03) 9703 8111 or via email at accrec@smbg.vic.edu.au.

Edstart

The School works with Edstart, one of Australia's leading education payment providers, who help thousands of Australian families manage their school fees and education costs. Edstart allows families to package education related expenses including fees, uniforms, textbooks and extra-curricular activities, which can then be paid for over 12 months. Payments can even be extended to up to five years after a child has completed their studies. To find out more, please visit the School's website under Admissions.

Scholarship Program

The School offers a variety of scholarship opportunities, information of which can be obtained from the school's website. Scholarship assessments are held annually and parents can register their interest online. Registration is available via the school website www.stmargarets.vic.edu.au/scholarships. Scholarship opportunities are available to current students as well as students who wish to join the school.

Bursaries

Our Bursary Scheme is means tested. It is designed to provide the broadest possible access to our school for families by understanding individual circumstance and offering limited places where there are no waiting lists. To find out more, please visit the School's website under Admissions.

PARENT GROUPS

Parent groups are vital to the success of our school and are an excellent way for parents to meet and share their skills with the school community. A variety of parent groups exist at both school campuses.

Parents' and Friends' Association

The St Margaret's Berwick Grammar Parents' and Friends' Association meets monthly and all parents are welcome to attend. Dates can be found in the calendar on Nexus. The Parents' and Friends' Association is responsible for coordinating school events and services such as the Movie Night, Year 10 Presentation Ball, Mothers' and Fathers' Day stalls, Sausage Sizzles and the Second-Hand Uniform Shop.

Equestrian Committee

The Equestrian Committee meets intermittently at St Margaret's Berwick Grammar. This group coordinates out of hours training sessions for various horse events along with hosting the St Margaret's Berwick Grammar Interschool Equestrian Event which takes place each year.

Friends of Performing Arts

Friends of Performing Arts (FOPA) is a group of volunteer parents who help with fundraising activities for the students involved in the performing arts. The volunteers assist the Drama and Music Department by providing refreshments at annual events and assisting with general activities.

Please contact your relevant Student Office if you would like further information or wish to join and assist with any of the parent groups.



Homework

Homework given at St Margaret's Berwick Grammar is regarded as a very important part of a student's learning process. Homework helps to reinforce concepts, and assist students to discover new ideas that can then be enhanced in the classroom. Often students can spend too much time on their homework when they do not need to, thereby not having time to achieve a sense of balance in their busy lives.

The following times are guides as to the amount of time a student at a particular year level should spend on homework.

For Junior Students reading is an important component of homework at all year levels. Other activities could include spelling, revision work such as times tables, Maths etc. The times listed below indicate the maximum expectation for each year level per night, including reading.

- Prep, 10 - 15 minutes
- Year 1, 20 minutes
- Year 2, 30 minutes
- Year 3, 30 minutes
- Year 4, 40 minutes
- Year 5, 50 minutes
- Year 6, 60 minutes

For Senior Students the following times are indicative and will vary in accordance with individual tasks and subject areas:

- Year 7 and 8 from 4+ hours per week
- Year 9 from 7+ hours per week
- Year 10 from 8+ hours per week
- VCE a minimum of 10+ hours per week

If parents or students have concerns regarding the type or length of homework, they should contact the relevant Teacher, Mentor, Learning Leader or Heads of House.

Student Wellbeing

Students thrive in a safe environment where they are known and feel a sense of belonging. Relationships forged between St Margaret's Berwick Grammar staff and students are characterised by mutual respect, trust and support all relevant policies, programs and processes, which form the basis of St Margaret's Berwick Grammar's House Program, are designed to facilitate this.

Every person involved in St Margaret's Berwick Grammar has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play to ensure that student wellbeing and the safety of our students is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

St Margaret's Berwick Grammar adopts a whole school approach and is committed to creating a safe and supportive school community which enables students to challenge themselves and strive to achieve their personal best in all areas of their academic, physical, social and emotional development. As such, St Margaret's Berwick Grammar has zero tolerance for child abuse.

St Margaret's Berwick Grammar is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention is paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or

linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability. Please visit the School's website www.stmargarets.vic.edu.au for further details and policies.

Counselling

The School has a counselling team comprising psychologists and a counsellor. They provide short-term counselling support within the School and can assist with referrals to community providers.

Using a whole-child, systemic approach, the team nurtures each student's wellbeing by supporting learning and development, promoting social-emotional health, and partnering with parents and teachers.

For queries, please contact your child's classroom teacher in the Junior School or their Head of House in the Senior School.

House System

The House system has a long and proud tradition at St Margaret's Berwick Grammar and is run across the School from Prep to Year 12. It provides students with opportunities to compete in a variety of activities and to forge strong and meaningful links with students in the different year levels. The three girls Houses are: Campbell, Cunningham and Gipson.

- Campbell House (blue) was named after the well regarded family whose eldest daughter was tutored by Miss Gipson. The Campbell family supported Miss Gipson in establishing St Margaret's School in its early years. The House colour is blue with a blue dragon as the Campbell mascot.

- Cunningham House (red) was named after the Gipson family forebears. The Cunningham clan has a unicorn as its crest and the motto 'Virtute et Labore'. Both the unicorn and the motto were adopted by St Margaret's Berwick Grammar during its establishment. The House colour is red with a phoenix as the Cunningham mascot.

- Gipson House (gold) was named after the founding Headmistress, Miss Dora Gipson. Miss Gipson had a vision of creating a 'castle in the air' for students to excel in their education. Miss Gipson was Headmistress from 1926 to 1947 and was made the first Life Governor of the School. The House colour is gold with a griffin as the Gipson mascot.

The boys Houses have been named after the three School Council members whose hard work and dedication made the establishment of the Senior Boys Campus a reality. All three have devoted their respective expertise in Law, Education and Finance to the school, giving freely of their time in a voluntary capacity. As such they are great examples of Servant Leadership to others and the community. The three boys Houses are:

- Battye House (blue) is named after Mr Philip Battye, past President of School Council. The Battye emblem is a bulldog.

- Forsyth House (gold) is named after Ms Anita Forsyth, Life Governor, past President of School Council. The Forsyth emblem is a falcon.

- Richards House (red) is named after Mr George Richards, Life Governor, past Deputy President of School Council. The Richards emblem is a rhino.

Junior School students use both the Senior Girls and Boys House names e.g. Cunningham Richards

Sun Smart ™ Policy and Procedure

The Sun Smart Policy has been developed to encourage our students and staff attending school and related activities to protect themselves from skin damage by the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun.

The School aims to:
- Promote increased awareness about the prevention of skin cancer.
- Reinforce Sun Smart™ behaviours through newsletters, parent meetings, Physical Education classes and the Personal and Social Education program.
- Ensure the Sun Smart™ Policy is reflected in the planning of all outdoor events such as camps, excursions and sporting events.

It is expected that students will:
- Wear an approved school hat when outdoors, usually during recess, lunch time and PE/sport activities. This is particularly important during Term 1 and 4.
- Apply at least SPF 15 broad spectrum sunscreen before all outdoor activity and regularly re-apply (sunscreen is available from Student Office or the First Aid area).
- Wear sunglasses when outdoors (recommended).
- The Policy is relevant throughout the whole school year, however there is particular emphasis upon behaviours as promoted by Sun Smart™ (Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide) during Term 1 and 4.
- Slip on sun-protective clothing that covers as much skin as possible.
- Slop on SPF30 or higher sunscreen – make sure it is broad spectrum and water resistant.
- Slap on a hat that protects your face, head, neck and ears.
- Seek shade.
- Slide on sunglasses – make sure they meet Australian Standards.

Outdoor Education/Study Tours

Commencing in Year 3 through to Year 11 students participate in Outdoor Education/Study Tours during the school year.

Outdoor Education and Study Tours are an integral and compulsory part of the curriculum at St Margaret's Berwick Grammar. These activities provide each student with a variety of valuable educational experiences and controlled challenges, which are otherwise difficult to accomplish within a city and school environment.

While at each year level the specific aims of each program vary, the sequential nature of the program equips students with the ability to achieve success through experiential learning.

Educational benefits common to every St Margaret's Berwick Grammar program include:

- learning through experience
- developing an awareness and appreciation of other places and of the natural world
- becoming more independent, emotionally resilient and better able to respond to challenges
- participating in teamwork activities

- building and consolidating positive relationships with other students and staff members
- showing respect for self, others and the environment.

In the instance that a student is unable to attend, the relevant Head of House must be contacted directly. In some instances, the Head of School, Vice Principal and/or School Principal may request a meeting to discuss the intended absence. Where a student is sick, a medical certificate is required for an exemption to be provided.

COMMUNICATION

Nexus (nexus.smbg.vic.edu.au)

Nexus is the school's communication and information hub, providing you access to a range of services and tools. All parents and guardians are encouraged to create an account.

Log on details for Nexus are provided to all new parents by the IT Department. If you need assistance please email ICTServices@smbg.vic.edu.au.

You can access Nexus via the 'footers' section on the school's website by selecting 'Intranet' and selecting 'Nexus'.

School Publications

Parents are kept informed about excursions, sporting events, curriculum activities, dates and other school events through Nexus.

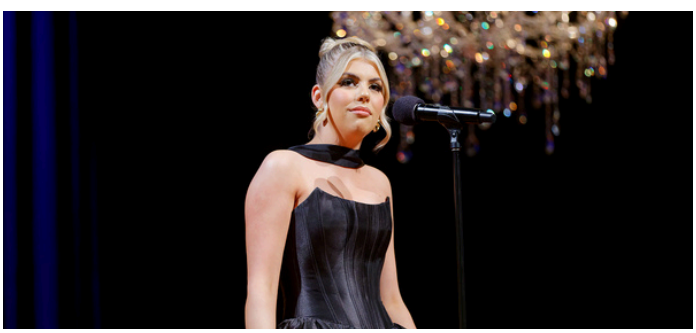
Our school magazine is published at the end of the year and informs the school community of achievements, events and learning activities.

Our Annual Report is published each year on the school website and provides a statistical review of our school's performance, including NAPLAN, VCE and subject offerings.









School Year Calendar

Semester dates
The following dates form the 2027 school year at St Margaret's Berwick Grammar.

Semester 1
Term 1: Monday 1 February to Thursday 25 March
Term 2: Monday 12 April to Friday 18 June

Semester 2
Term 3: Wednesday 14 July to Friday 17 September
Term 4: Monday 4 October to Wednesday 8 December

Schools Days are 8.30 am - 3.00 pm Monday to Friday

Principal: 2026 - Dr Annette Rome
2027 - Mr Simon Shepherd

Vice Principal: Ms Meg Fortington
Head of Junior School: Ms Louise Sayar
Head of Senior School: Mr David Bennett and Mrs Jacqueline Atkins

Berwick Campus	Officer Campus	Postal Address
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