

FAHAN
SCHOOL



Middle School

2012

Middle School Handbook

For Years 7 and 8
2012

INTRODUCTION

Dear Students and Parents

This Handbook contains the information you need to make your way through the Middle School at Fahan.

If what you want to know isn't here, then please ask!

Parents please note - the Handbook is addressed to the students, but we'd like you to read it too!

We hope this Handbook helps you to enjoy your Middle School years.

Yours sincerely,



Sharon Johns
Middle School
Coordinator

Kathy Foster
Deputy Principal



Tony Freeman
Principal

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WHAT IS A MIDDLE SCHOOL ANYWAY?

You are a special person.

You are a person who is living in a world that is changing fast. You need to develop many skills to live, learn and work efficiently, flexibly and happily in it.

Also, you are not the same person you were in the Junior School and you do not need to be treated like a primary school child. You are also not the same as a student in Year 10 and so you do not need to be taught in the same way as someone a lot closer to leaving school.

You are in the middle - different, unique!

You are growing up very fast physically (look at yourself in a mirror, and compare how you look now with a photo of how you looked only a year ago!).

During this fast-growing two years you will probably want to:

- spend lots of your time socialising with your friends
- have fun
- experiment with things (but be safe at the same time)
- learn about and do the things that interest you

You are also probably concerned about:

- yourself
- other people
- your future
- the world you live in

Well, the Middle School is simply timetabling the school day so that those things that you want can happen. It is also a way to ensure that you get the chance to understand and come to grips with the things that you are concerned about. And, it is also a way of organising each day so that the skills that the professionals (the teachers) think you need in a fast changing world can be learned.

You'll be working hard! But you have fantastic teachers to help you.

You'll have a Tutor who is also one of the teachers who is with you the most so you will get to know each other well. This teacher is committed to making sure that you are happy and supported and will give you practical assistance and moral support when you need and/or ask for it!

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS

TUTORS

- Mrs Sharon Johns:** Coordinator of Middle School, Tutor of 7J, Teacher of English, SOSE in both Year 7J and 8C and Drama for 7J and 7C
- Mrs Rowena Conacher:** Tutor of 7C, Teacher of Mathematics to 7C and 8T and Science to all Year 7 classes
- Mrs Meg Lawson:** Tutor of 8L, Teacher of English and SOSE in 7C and 8L
- Miss Belinda Tyrrell:** Tutor of 8T, Teacher of Science in Year 8

TEACHERS

- Mr Robert Owens:** PE of 7C
- Mrs Emily Hogan:** Health & Physical Education of 7C and 7J
- Ms Alex Pitt:** Art Years 7 & 8
- Mr Gary Gooley:** Teacher of 7J and 8L Maths
- Miss Holly Lutzow:** French & ESL Years 7 and 8
- Ms Jane Hamilton-Foster:** Drama Year 8
- Mrs Annie Tremayne:** Music Years 7 & 8
- Mrs Emma Crawford:** Library Years 7 & 8

THE CURRICULUM

The Middle School will follow the National Curriculum from the start of 2012. The Australian Curriculum sets out the core knowledge, understanding, skills and general capabilities important for all Australian students. The Australian Curriculum describes the learning entitlement of students as a foundation for their future learning, growth and active participation in the Australian community. It makes clear what all young Australians should learn as they progress through schooling. It is the foundation for high quality teaching to meet the needs of all Australian students.

HERE'S THE OVERVIEW:

MINI-COURSES

A mini-course is a six-week course. Over the year you do two mini-courses. You choose them from a list of options. The mini-courses come in the categories of Academic, Life Skills, Recreational and Fine Arts.

The idea of the mini-courses is to widen the options of what you can learn at school. In the mini-course you will be with students from Years 6, 7 and 8, and you are together because of a similar interest. (The Year 6's are introduced to life in the Middle School by taking part in the mini-courses).

The group will be smaller than your usual class group and your teacher could be a regular teacher or someone from the community who has expertise in what you have chosen.

The mini-courses will commence in Term 2.

SUBJECT DISCIPLINES

(listed in alphabetical order)

Art

Your understanding of artistic ideas is expressed through your own work and through the study of other artists. You will view exhibitions and artists' works and learn to discuss what you are seeing using terminology that is associated with Art.

However, most of the time you will be involved with the making of your own art and this is then put on display. You will be encouraged to work with a broad range of materials and techniques in painting, drawing, print making, sculpture, photography and digital and graphic design. You will develop your ideas from a wide range of sources.

Drama

In Drama you will experience a variety of activities such as improvisations, story building/telling, movement, characterisation and vocal work that are designed to stimulate the creative process and provide an environment for the learning of dramatic skills. You will develop and understanding of what makes a contributing group members.

Your skills will be developed through a variety of individual and group activities that will help you work towards performing in front of an audience.

English

While all subjects develop your literacy skills this is the major focus of English.

During English you will experience a variety of genres - short stories, picture books, novels, magazines, newspapers, journals, cartoons, poems, story boards, movies, documentaries, comedy, drama, news reports - you get the picture?

One of your English lessons is called Readers' Cup. This is usually held in the library and both your English teacher and Mrs Crawford will work with you during this time. Readers' Cup occurs during Term 2.

You will be encouraged to think laterally and to express yourself accurately and creatively. You will be offered opportunities to develop and refine your speaking, listening and analytical skills and you will use technology to develop and publish texts and to access, interpret, evaluate and utilise information.

Health & Physical Education

The content of HPE is varied and includes units dealing with resilience, lifestyle choices, head injuries, alcohol use, smoking, self-awareness, growth and development, relationships and communication.

A wide range of physical and recreational activities are introduced and experienced.

You will be assessed on how you identify, evaluate, analyse and implement your actions and make your choices. The objective is that these actions and choices will impact positively on your own, your group's and the community's health. Inherent in this process is the encouragement to develop an awareness of risk and the likely consequences of particular behaviour.

History and Geography

History provides a study of the Ancient World from the time of the earliest human communities up to the Middle Ages. Geography focuses on the use of water and how landscapes influence the way people live.

Information Technology

I.T. is not taught as a separate subject in the Middle School. Information communications technologies are incorporated into the Middle School Curriculum wherever appropriate.

You will experience a range of technologies including computers, digital cameras, multimedia software applications and video.

IT facilities include two computer laboratories, classroom computers and laptop computers all connected with the school wireless network.

Languages other than English (French and Japanese)

Through these courses you will learn to understand current spoken languages. Various tools such as tapes, videos and the computer software will assist you in achieving this goal. You will learn to communicate effectively in written form by composing letters, postcards, poems or emails. In addition, you will be encouraged to develop further an awareness of cultures and during the year you will be taken through a typical cycle of customs and celebrations.

Mathematics

In Mathematics you will continue to develop your mathematical skills. Through a sequential learning program you will improve your basic skills in order to solve the mathematical problems you encounter in your daily life and prepare you for Maths courses in the senior school and for life beyond school. Your teachers also hope to intrigue and challenge you. You will have the opportunity to enter Maths competitions and challenges.

Music

In Music Ensemble classes you will learn, and/or continue to learn, to play a musical instrument. You will be taught some solo pieces on the instrument of your choice but the main emphasis will be to learn how to perform and interact musically with other players in an ensemble or band.

Music classes will include practical instrument work, ensemble playing, music knowledge studies which covers aural, notation and musicianship skills, and work with music technology in the form of music computer software and recording equipment.

You may also choose to be involved in school performances through choirs, vocal groups and small instrument ensembles.

Instruments you may choose to learn include: guitar (classical); guitar (electric and electric bass); piano or keyboard; voice; drums and percussion; saxophone (alto and tenor); trumpet and trombone; flute; oboe; clarinet; bassoon; violin, viola, cello and double bass.

Science

Science studies will introduce you to the disciplines of Science through practical activities which will encourage you to develop a lively interest in natural phenomena and a caring concern for your environment.

You will develop skills such as observing, predicting, recognising patterns, defining problems, measuring, classifying, comparing, questioning, planning, experimenting, assessing, correlating, concluding and communicating.

The science course will provide you with a sound basic knowledge, which will help you to gain an understanding of your environment and your place within it. In particular, you will investigate those aspects of Science that most affect your life and most interest you. For example we will cover such areas as matter, energy, life, time, space, change and relationships.

THE LIBRARY

Question: What is the most important room in a school?

Answer: The Library

Question: Why?

Answer: It's the information house

Question: So, what do I need to learn?

Answers and more questions: To become a quick and efficient finder of information - what you need, when you need it. What's good and reliable information? What isn't? Is everything I need on the Internet? What else might be a good source of information?

How do I save forests and learn to make good notes rather than just press the print button or the photocopy switch? What's the best way to turn all this information I have found into something that shows I really understand it?

Other things the library can help you with:

Learn the secrets of the library web page and be astounded at what you find! Find out how you can use the State Library from your own home! Discover that knowledge is powerful - become powerful - learn to use the library properly.

Read. Read. Read. The more you read the better you get at it. Proven fact - the better you get at reading the more your own writing and spelling improves.

ASSESSMENT, PORTFOLIOS AND REPORTS

Assessment is the springboard for how we teach you and what we teach you. You are encouraged to assess your own progress and your teachers are continuously assessing.

For example, we:

- ask you questions during lessons
- give you written tests
- 'mark' your assignments
- observe you - see how you work independently and in groups

At the end of Term One and Term Three we report formally to your parents. We do this to:

- meet the school's responsibilities in being accountable to your parents by keeping them informed of your development and progress
- provide them with accurate and relevant information so that they may participate in your school education

In Parent/Teacher interviews we have a discussion based on your **Portfolio**. You are also given the option to attend the Parent/Teacher Interview in Term One.

Your parents are also invited to meet your teacher informally whenever they wish or need to. Parents can also communicate with us through your Diary.

Your Portfolio is a very important plastic-sleeved folder in which reports to your parents and samples of your work are kept. The work samples are evidences of what you have achieved. As the year progresses it will also contain syllabus statements, certificates, and photographs - a thorough record of your life in the Middle School.

You have three kinds of reports: A Personal Best Report, an Inter-Disciplinary Negotiated Curriculum Report and a Report for each Subject.

The Personal Best Report concerns the aspects of your organisation, participation and attitude that promote learning and the development of social responsibility. All of your teachers assess you collaboratively!

We assess how competent you are at:

- formulating questions
- collecting, organising, analysing information and drawing conclusions
- communicating ideas and information
- planning, organising and undertaking activities
- working with others and in teams
- thinking – inquiring and reflecting
- solving problems
- using technology, resources and techniques

Each **Subject Report** has a **specific set of criteria**.

SPORT

Fahan offers you a wide range of sporting opportunities – softball, tennis, rowing, swimming, water polo, badminton, hockey, netball, soccer, athletics, touch football and basketball.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

How about trying – debating, public speaking, Tournament of Minds, community service, writing competitions, Maths and Science competitions, singing in a Choir, learning a musical instrument through private tuition? There are probably even more! Ask! Choose your activities wisely – do not over commit yourself!

HOMEWORK

We'd like to encourage you to spend between 45 minutes and an hour on homework daily. You have a homework timetable so that you don't get it all on one night!

Here's some advice about doing your homework:

- Remember - the reason for homework is to help you get an education for life! (It's not to please your parents or your teachers, or to keep you out of trouble!)
- Choose the right spot to do it in - no distractions.
- Have a good light over your left shoulder.
- Try to do homework at the same time each day - gets you into a good study habit!
- If you need to - ask your parents or someone to help - and then really listen to them. They might explain differently from your teachers, but that doesn't matter - there's always more than one way to learn something.
- Actually enjoy doing your homework - it gives you the chance to learn something at completely your own pace - and it gives you some peace and privacy!
- Really work hard and honestly for an hour and then quit and do your own thing!

In other words - work efficiently. If your homework is not finished after that hour, ask your parents to write a note in your diary. We don't want you to overwork to the point homework becomes stressful.

ASSEMBLIES

There will sometimes be a Principal's Assembly at 1pm on a Tuesday to which you must wear your blazer. There will also be several Middle School Assemblies each term on dates to be arranged.

CALENDAR AND SCHOOL DIARY

Keep the **term calendar** in a place at home so that you can refer to it easily. It's a good idea to highlight the events that concern you.

The **diary** should travel to and from school with you daily. It's used mainly to record your homework and remind you of special events coming up.

It is the means of communication between your parents and teachers too - it's an open access planner for you, for home and for school - so keep it neat and clean and don't lose it! Teachers and parents are also asked to sign it each week!

PIGEON HOLE IN CLASSROOM (YEAR 7 ONLY)

You have a pigeonhole in the classroom. In it you are to keep the following books: dictionary, Maths Quest, Atlas and Maths exercise book. Your pencil case may also be kept here. All other books are to be kept in your locker!

LOCKERS AND LOCKER ROOM

You get a locker! It has a combination lock to go with it and this lock is charged to your parents' account - so keep the locker locked and don't lose the lock or forget the combination! However, still don't keep money in it.

No graffiti or stickers outside or inside the locker! If you wish, you may sticky tape your timetable on the inside.

It helps if the locker is kept tidy!

SCHOOL SHOP AND BOOK ROOM

You (and your parents) will need to check the timetable on the door of the shop for the opening times.

TELEPHONE

In the case of an emergency, calls can be made through the front office.

If you must bring a mobile phone to school, it must stay in your locker during the day. **You can not use your mobile phone during the school day.**

LOST PROPERTY

Your lost property can be reclaimed for 20 cents and the money collected goes to charity! There is occasionally an 'amnesty' time! The teacher in charge of lost property is Dr Verma and she can be found in the Science Lab.

BIG/LITTLE SISTERS

The purpose of the Big/Little Sisters programme is for each student to get to know other students from different year groups. You will have some organised fun activities with your Big and Little Sisters and can also meet with them on an informal basis. This means that you meet people you would not normally come into contact with. – Who are they? What are their names? What do they do in other year levels? The students from the younger grades love the opportunity to be with the older students like you. You also get to know a ‘sister’ in Year 11 or 12 who can help you if you ever need it.

MEDICAL DRUGS

We will not administer analgesics or medication of any kind unless parent request and permission has been given in writing. Any medication must be administered through the front office.

Any student found in possession of any drugs at school other than what has been mentioned above may be suspended. Further offences may lead to cancellation of enrolment.

SMOKING

Fahan is a smoke free campus.

ALCOHOL

Except with the express approval of the Principal or the Fahan School Board, no alcohol is to be consumed at school functions where students are present.

POLICY ON MEDICATION AND PRESCRIBED AND NON-PRESCRIBED SUBSTANCES

Please note that Fahan has a full Policy on Medication and Prescribed and Non-Prescribed Substances and this has been sent to your parents and is also available on the Fahan website.

POLICY ON BULLYING

Please note that Fahan has a full Policy on Bullying and this has been sent to your parents.

The Middle School is a school environment, which is structured, to be safe, comfortable and have an atmosphere of co-operation and where bullying of any kind is not expected or accepted.

However, your teachers know that bullying occurs when there are concerns with self esteem, friendships, family, school change, puberty, body growth and shape, sexuality, fitting in at school, teasing and appearance.

To prevent bullying (and to help the target and the perpetrator if it does occur) you have a Class Teacher/Tutor and a teacher of HPE who will listen to your concerns and help you to solve problems. In lessons they will also give you an understanding of social competencies in the context of bullying prevention and friendships (in other words, assist you to recognise bullying and stop the bullying from happening)!

Troubleshooting

Fahan School's pamphlet 'An Open Communication Process' has been sent to your parents.

If you have a concern:

- which is personal (such as a bullying problem or if you are feeling sick) - see your Tutor. If she does not feel the right person for your needs then go to Mrs Johns.
- to do with a particular subject - go to the Subject Teacher or your Tutor

A few Rules

- Be in your home classroom by 8.25am
- Inside - walk; don't run!
- The Year 8 classrooms are not thoroughfares. Year 7 students may walk through only when there are no classes in them.
- If you need to bring money or valuables to school they must be left at the front Office for safekeeping. Your school accepts no responsibility for lost money or other valuables.
- You have to go outside during recess and at lunch time unless it is raining.
- You are NOT permitted to be in a computer lab or use a classroom computer unless you are under teacher supervision.
- You are not permitted to take a mobile phone into the classroom.
- During recess and lunch breaks - classrooms, computer labs and libraries are closed. However, when there are study times these facilities are available and supervised by a teacher.
- When outside in Terms 1 and 3 - wear a hat. Be sun smart!
- Signing the book in the front office: You may not leave the school grounds during school hours without special permission. However, if you must leave (for example, if you have a dental appointment) then you must sign the book and sign in again when you return. (This keeps you safe and school administration happy). You must also sign this book if you are late to school.
- No eating – in the classroom at lunch time unless it is raining; no eating in the street, in shops or on public transport when you are in your school uniform.
- Name all your personal property - this includes all items of clothing!
- Wear your uniform with pride!
- Enjoy being in the Middle School!

UNIFORM GUIDELINES

It is important that all students feel comfortable in the School uniform and wear it with pride. The following guidelines will ensure that each of our students is wearing the correct and appropriate uniform for all School associated events.

1. When wearing the summer uniform, students may opt not to wear their blazer. However, each student is **required** to own a School blazer at all times (the exception is for students in Kindergarten – Year 1).
2. During summer girls must always arrive and depart Fahan wearing their boater hat. This is the requirement whether students are travelling by bus, walking or being dropped off in the School car park. This is also a requirement if girls are in the city, or other public area, and they are wearing their school uniform.
3. During summer, students in Years 11 and 12 **only** may opt to wear the white, short-sleeve shirt with the navy orange/stone stripe skirt or summer dress.
4. The wearing of sport or ankle socks with the formal uniform is not permitted at any time. Students must wear white push down socks.
5. The jumper is not to be worn to or from School, or outside of the School grounds without a blazer.
6. When wearing the winter uniform, students **must arrive and depart Fahan wearing their blazer**. The jumper may be worn underneath. This is also the requirement when students are in public including when they are in the city after school.
7. The winter shirt does not have to be tucked in to the skirt while at school. However, when travelling to and from school, when wearing the uniform in public or at the Principal's Assembly it is required that students wear their blazer over their shirt.
8. It is compulsory for students in Years 7 – 12 to wear navy stockings with their winter uniform. Students in Years 1 – 6 may opt to wear either navy stockings or navy, knee length socks
9. In the Junior School the PE uniform may only be worn to School on the days that students have specialist PE lessons.
10. The guidelines for the wearing of the sports uniform for Senior and Middle School students are as follows:
 - a. If a student has a PE lesson in Periods 6 or 7 they may go home in sports uniform (see item f below).
 - b. If a student has PE on any day AND a sports training at lunch time or after school she may wear sports uniform to school (see item f below).
 - c. If a student has PE in Periods 1 or 2, she may come to school in sports uniform but must change into formal uniform at recess time.
 - d. Formal uniform must be worn to Principal's Assembly (fortnightly) irrespective of how many sporting commitments a student has on that day.

- e. Sports uniform worn to and from school must be neat (eg. Shirts MUST be tucked in)
 - f. If sport uniform is being worn in town, tracksuit bottom MUST be worn with the polo shirt and/or spray jacket or rugby top.
11. Both the summer dress and the winter skirt must be worn at mid knee length and no shorter.
 12. School shoes must be brown, lace-up shoes. However, students in Years 1 and 2 may wear brown, buckle-up shoes and Kindergarten and Prep students should wear sport shoes.
 13. **No jewellery**, except for a watch and one small ear-stud (not any other form of earring) in each earlobe can be worn with the school uniform.
 14. **Makeup and nailpolish are not permitted** to be worn at school or when wearing the Fahan School uniform at any time including when students are outside of the School grounds.
 15. Hair should be of natural colour and must be tied back, if hair is shoulder length or longer, whenever a student is wearing the School uniform. Students may wear ribbons of school colours only in their hair.

Uniform Requirements

Standard (Summer and Winter) Years 1-12

Blazer	Navy with logo (Year 2 onwards)
Jumper	Navy/Orange V Neck
Shoes	Brown standard lace-up with sensible heel
Hair Accessories	Navy, orange or white ribbons
School Bag	Backpack, navy with logo

Summer Years 1 – 12

Dress	Navy with orange/stone stripe – mid knee length (optional Years 11 – 12 ONLY)
Skirt	Navy with orange/stone stripe – mid knee length (ONLY YEARS 11 – 12)
Shirt	White – short sleeve (ONLY YEARS 11 – 12)
Hat	Cream broad brimmed had with navy and orange grosgrain band.
Socks	White push down socks

Winter Years 1 – 12

Skirt	Navy with orange/stone stripe – mid knee length (tunic style for Years 1 – 2)
Shirt	Long sleeve open-neck shirt with orange and navy fine checks
Skivvy	White long sleeve with logo (Years 1-2 compulsory)
Socks	Navy knee length for Years 1 – 6 ONLY (navy stockings optional)
Stockings	Navy (Compulsory 7 – 12)

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Small School, Big Future