



Friday February 10, 2023 Issue No. 1

## PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Dear Mount Rowan School Community,

**WELCOME BACK TO THE 2023 SCHOOL YEAR and**

**Welcome to the many new families and student who have joined us this year**

The year has begun well with a steady pace, it began with setting goals and getting to know students and the school again as Individual Learning Plan meetings were held on the first two days of school. Thank-you to the many parents and guardians who could join their child/ren for the important ILP meetings. We find this is a great way to start the school year.

This year we have welcomed 154 year 7 students who have been allocated into 7 year 7 classes. We welcomed many new staff to our school also:

**Jennifer Bates:** English and Humanities

**Mitch Bond:** Maths

**Rebecca Brennan:** Maths

**Claire Cosgriff:** Tutor and Numeracy

**Sophie Doddrell:** Humanities

**Debby Dymock:** English

**Adele Echter:** Art

**Letecia Frost:** English, Humanities and Drama

**Quimby Masters:** Humanities

**Grace McHoul:** Maths and Science

**Troy McLean:** PE and Health (returning)

**Joel Neal:** Maths and PE

**Lydia Nicoll:** EAL/English an Another Language

**Jessica Rainsford:** English and Explore

**Damian Smurthwaite:** Science

**Jo Venner:** English and Literacy

**Kim Warfe:** Science

**Katrina Pace:** Assistant Principal and Maths

**Paul Fletcher:** First Aid

**Suzie Wren:** Learning Support

We have certainly noticed the extra increase of students in our school yard, there is approximately an increase of 90 extra students across the school. This has had a roll-on effect to increasing our areas for yard duty and supervision. Four more classrooms have been delivered as portables and are already well utilised.

**School Council nominations will open in week 3, beginning Monday February 13<sup>th</sup>.**

Information regarding the timeline for nominations will be shared via a Compass message. Further information and fact sheets will be shared in the same Compass message.

There are multiple places open for nomination in 2023 across different categories:

Parent: 3

Community: 2

Student: 2

Department of Education employee: 3

### **School council elections – information for parents**

#### **What is a school council and what does it do?**

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally constituted bodies that are given powers to set the broad direction of a school, in accordance with Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils, and the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. In doing this, a school council may directly influence the quality of education for students.

#### **Who is on the school council?**

There are several possible categories of membership:

**A mandated elected parent member category** – more than one-third of the total members must be from this category according to Ministerial Order 1280. Department employees can be parent members at their child's school providing that they are not engaged in work at the school.



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## **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Cont'd)**

**A mandated elected school employee member category** – members of this category make up no more than one-third of membership. The principal of the school is automatically one of these members.

**An optional community member category** – members are co-opted by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experience. Department employees are not eligible to be community members.

**A mandated elected student member category, two positions.**

Generally, the term of office for all members is two years. The term of office of half the members expires each year, creating vacancies for the annual school council elections.

### Why is parent membership so important?

Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills and a range of experiences and knowledge that can help inform and shape the direction of the school.

Those parents who become active on a school council find their involvement satisfying and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

**Thank-you for choosing Mount Rowan SC as your Childs school**, whether you are new to our school community or have returned this year. I appreciate your support of our school as we work together to provide a well rounded education and supports for your Child/ren.

Sports Carnivals, camps and work experience are all happening this term and are beginning in week 3 with the Swimming Carnival at Eureka Swimming Pool. Please stay informed via Compass messages. If you need support with accessing Compass, please call our front office on 5336 7804 and you will be given the advice and guidance you need.

**Take care and please stay in touch.**

**Ms Seona Murnane  
Principal**



## **PRIVACY REMINDER**

### **Annual privacy reminder for our school community**

Our school collects, uses, discloses and stores student and parent personal information for standard school functions or where permitted by law, as stated in the [Schools' Privacy Policy](#).

Please take time to read our school's collection notice, found on our website <https://mountrowan.net.au/>

We ask parents to also review the [guidance we provide](#) on how we use [Microsoft 365](#) safely at the school and what parents can do to further protect their child's information. If after reviewing the guidance, you have any questions or concerns regarding your child using Microsoft 365, please contact the school.

For more information about privacy, refer to: [Schools' Privacy Policy – information for parents](#). This information is also available in ten community languages:

- |           |            |           |            |              |
|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|--------------|
| - Amharic | - Arabic   | - Dari    | - Gujarati | - Mandarin   |
| - Somali  | - Sudanese | - Turkish | - Urdu     | - Vietnamese |

## **ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL REPORT**

What a busy start to the school Year! Well done to all students, parents and guardians who attended the interviews at the beginning of the school year. It is a great way to begin the school year with setting goals, getting organised and ensuring that you are ready to start learning in your classes.

### **Heads of House Leaders in 2023**

This year we have two new staff members joining as Heads of House. We welcome Dylan Harberger who is Gnarr House leader and Nikki Allen who is Gong Gong House leader. They will be joining Callan Novinec (Burrumbeet House leader) and Belinda Melvin (Yarrowee) House leader. If you have any concerns with your child and their schooling, please make contact with your relevant Head of House.



Belinda Melvin



Callan Novinec



Dylan Harberger



Nikki Allen

### **School Uniform**

At present we have a number of students out of uniform with either incorrect socks / shoes or wearing their Sport uniform when they don't even have sport. Over the next two weeks, the Heads of House will be making phone calls home to discuss these uniform items and may be issuing After School Detentions to students who are in the incorrect uniform without a note explaining it from a parent/guardian. Please speak with your child/ren about this and support them to be in the correct school uniform ready to attend school. If you have any questions in regard to this, please feel free to contact me on 5336 7804.

### **Communication with home**

Over the past week, we have had a small number of students either messaging or calling their parents/guardians to discuss feeling unwell or struggling at school. We need to ensure that all contact made with home is either via the First Aid room, front office or by a member of staff like a Head of House. With a member of staff contacting home, it doesn't create any confusion when parents/guardians turn up to the office to collect or speak with their child. If your child does make contact with you, please suggest to them to speak with their Head of House, a member of the Wellbeing Team or Paul in First Aid.

### **Before and After School**

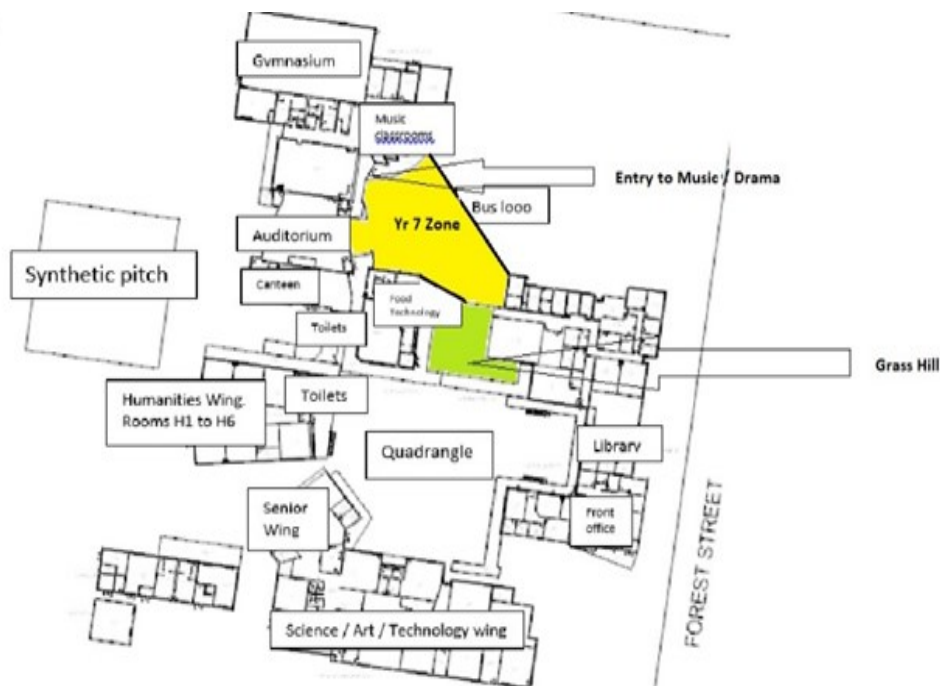
We are noticing that there are a number of students arriving at school very early and also hanging around school well after 3.15pm. Just a reminder that staff are not on supervision until 8.30am each morning, so if your child is getting to school prior to this time, they are unsupervised. If your child walks home from school each day, please encourage them to promptly walk home as we are noticing a large number of students waiting with Bus travellers. This makes supervision difficult for the bus duty staff member.

Bus travellers need to also ensure that they are waiting for their buses on the grass area or seating near Gym/Music. Friday is the only day bus travelling students can go to the shop, but they must speak with staff member on duty prior to leaving.

## ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL REPORT (Cont'd)

### Year 7 Zone/Space

With the Year 7 students settling into secondary school, we have created a zone / space where only Year 7 students are allowed to be in at recess and lunch breaks. This space allows Year 7 students to feel safe where there are no students from other year levels. Please discuss with your child and encourage them to use this space if they are feeling overwhelmed at school during break times. Below is a map of the area to discuss.



**Nick Stephen**  
Assistant Principal



## CALENDAR

Monday 13 February	Swimming Carnival
Wednesday 15 February	School Council Meeting
Monday 20-21 February	Year 12 Camp
Wednesday 22 February	School Photos
Friday 24 February	Pupil Free Day ??
Monday 27-29 February	Year 7 Camp—ABC
Wednesday 29 Feb-3 March	Year 7 Camp—DEFG

## WELLBEING TEAM

### Real Parent Advice + Therapy Dog, Ferg

Returning to school can be difficult when your teen refuses to go. Like every school, we’ve had a number of families over the past few years really struggle with school refusal so I thought who better to ask for advice than a parent and student who overcame it.

For privacy reasons we’re sharing these suggestions anonymously but below is some advice from a Mount Rowan parent and student who overcame regular school refusal in 2022

School Refusal Tips	
The parent’s advice:	The student’s advice:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Stick it out.</b> At times it took 45min waiting in the car but I had to reassure them that time doesn’t matter, it can take as long as it takes but you’re going in eventually.</li> <li>2. <b>Friends help.</b> Walking in together made them feel less noticeable and lonely and it distracted them from their anxiety.</li> <li>3. Find a <b>good teacher</b> that is firm but friendly and whose judgement your child respects.</li> <li>4. Check around <b>specific reasons</b> for not wanting to attend school. E.g. Not knowing where the bathrooms are, feeling confused about the schedule, being bullied, etc.</li> </ol> <p>This parent’s child developed their own <b>gym routine</b> in the morning that they even maintain during school holidays (impressive, I know). They eventually found that exercising first thing in the morning helped them have a great day.</p>	<p>This student described the key factor for them attending school well as being about “getting into school” – making friends, participating in lunchtime activities and taking time to understand how Mount Rowan works. They now have a small group of friends and feel like they belong here.</p>

I hope this first-hand advice really helps. If YOU as a parent have any suggestions on wellbeing-related advice that we can share in our school newsletter, please give us a call.

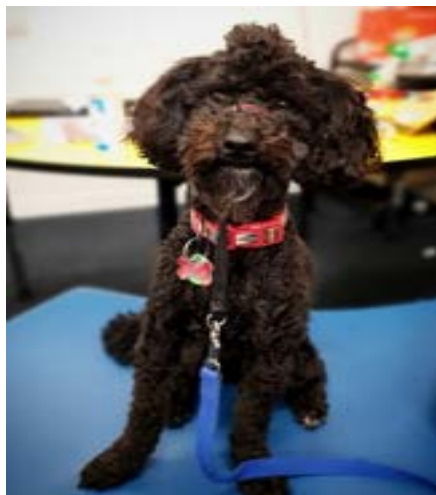
Anna, Bel and Gab, Wellbeing Team

## Fergus

Hi, I’m Fergus and I work here at Mount Rowan Secondary College with Anna Harber in the Wellbeing team on Thursdays and Fridays.

I trained as a Therapy Dog at Lead the Way Institute in Melbourne and we work with students one on one or sometimes in groups. Science, and experience, tell us that having a positive interaction with an animal, and getting the “naw” feelings helps people’s moods. Sometimes I help students when they are upset or sad, and sometimes when they are agitated or angry.

I am a miniature poodle, so don’t leave hair around, and most people aren’t allergic to me.



Anna, Bel and Gab, Wellbeing Team



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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **CONVEYANCE ALLOWANCE**

To be eligible for the conveyance allowance a student must reside 4.8km or more from the school they attend. This distance is measured as the shortest practicable route from the student's residence to the school.

The conveyance allowance is a contribution towards transport costs and is not intended to cover the full cost of transporting children to and from school.

The conveyance allowance may be available to students attending government schools and:

- travelling by public transport
- whose nearest school is not serviced by a free school bus provided under the School Bus Program

If you catch a school Bus a PTV form will need to be completed and paid for at a railway station. A Conveyance application form will need to be completed and returned to the school office. You will need to provide your receipt and MYKI card for copying and retention. This does not apply to the Country Bus system. Please contact the school office on 5336 7804 for any further information.

### **CANTEEN VOLUNTEERS**

Canteen duty is voluntary and one day per month and commences in March.

Volunteers must have a current Working With Children Check and be double vaccinated for COVID 19. Hours of Work - 10:00am – 2:00pm. Please contact the school office to complete a form for canteen duty.

### **STUDENT ABSENCES**

If your student will be absent from school for any reason, please call the office on 5336 7804 and leave a message on the message system before 9.00 am.

### **FIRST AIDE/MEDICATION**

If your child needs medication whilst at school, please call into the office to collect a Medication Authority Form for completion and return to First Aide together with the required medication.

### **STUDENT ENROLMENT INFORMATION**

Student Enrolment Information forms were included in the packs handed out at the recent interviews at the beginning of the year.

Please make any necessary alteration to this form and return to the college office so that student records can be updated.

### **SECOND HAND BOOKS/UNIFORMS**

Our Second Hand Uniform Shop is in need of clean uniforms in good condition. These can be dropped into the office for sale in our Second Hand Uniform shop.

The following texts can also be sold:

Year 11 and 12—Black Diggers (Playlab Play), Crucible Play in Four Acts, The Dressmaker, Insight The Crucible-Dressmaker

Year 7 to 10—Coraline-graphic Novel, Crow country, The Outsiders, MacBeth (No fear), Of Mice and Men

## CAREERS

### A REMINDER...

All 2023 Year 10 students are scheduled to complete a week of Work Experience in **Term 1 2023** between **Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> and Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> March**. This is a compulsory part of the Year 10 curriculum and is an invaluable opportunity for students to access work places that they would not usually be able to work in until leaving school or completing further studies. Most employers students are able to contact directly to organise their Work Experience. However, **STUDENTS MUST NOT CONTACT THE BASE HOSPITAL, SOVEREIGN HILL OR THE CITY OF BALLARAT DIRECTLY.**

Appropriate **Work Experience Arrangement Forms** were distributed to students during the Work Experience preparation day last term; if you were absent, please see Sharon Hope or Janine Schilling ASAP to collect your pack.

The **Work Experience Booklet**, outlining a step-by-step guide to Work Experience for students, and families was published in Compass at the end of 2022.

Students were expected to be organised for this experience by their return to school in 2023...we only have a few weeks of term before our Work Experience week will be here!

Students can access their account at the **MRSC Careers Website** <https://careers.mountrowan.net.au/> and their **Morrisby Profile** <https://www.morrisby.com/> as a starting point to help with this process. Any questions, please let us know.

We look forward to working with our students and families in preparation for this exciting opportunity.



Sharon Hope – Careers Practitioner  
[Sharon.hope@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:Sharon.hope@education.vic.gov.au)



Janine Schilling  
[Janine.schilling@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:Janine.schilling@education.vic.gov.au)

## CAREERS



### **Swim and Survival Academy are hiring! – Year 10 and 11 students**

Are you looking for a rewarding job that you will fall in love with? Are you interested in working with children? Are you interested in a job where your work mates will become your best mates? Are you looking for a job that pays above award wages? SSA are currently looking specifically for people who are able to work:

Weekday afternoons between 3.30pm – 7.30pm  
Saturday mornings between 8.00am – 11.45am

Applicants will need to be available to work a minimum of 3 shifts per week.

No experience required, we train our best applicants to become outstanding swim teachers

Once fully qualified, staff are paid at above award wages of \$32 per hour regardless of their age

Some qualities that we look for in our SSA team members are:

- A sense of fun
- A love for working with children
- Patience
- Approachable
- Ambitious
- Eager to learn and become the best they can be
- Respectful
- Open to feedback (continual learning)

To join our team, please bring your resume into 403 Dowling Street Wendouree or email it to [info@ssacademy.com.au](mailto:info@ssacademy.com.au) by Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February.