



Richmond High School - In Focus

Thursday 18 May 2017

Newsletter 8, Volume 1

From the Foundation Principal



Now that the initial community confidence building and initial expressions of interest in enrolment has passed my mind has turned to recruitment.

Friday 12 May was the statewide deadline for parents to return the Application for year 7 Placement forms to the primary school the

student is currently enrolled in. Richmond High School is still able to accept other enrolment applications that do not sit within the year 6 to 7 transition process.

My rough recruitment plan is:

- Have an information night for prospective staff. I will be hiring 8 or so teachers each year for 6 years. So, there will be quite a few opportunities.
- In term 3 I will start with the recruitment of a Business Manager and then a Chinese Teacher (who will need to have a second subject). I think in the first years I will be looking for double subject offerings in great part.
- Once enrolment numbers are clear I will create a budget and workforce plan. I will then have a sense of my hiring options.
- I want a good age spread, some wise hands and heads and some graduate type teachers. I am not sure if I will have an Assistant Principal in 2018 or appoint one for 2019 – my thinking is firming up to one Assistant Principal now and a second in three years. It depends a bit on money.
- I want people who understand inner-suburban ethos and culture and have skills in balancing the complexities. I want people who understand contemporary schooling and are focussed on students. I am not so excited by buzz words and trends but I am great at creating a strong school culture and getting young people to feel positive and work hard. In terms of school pitch,
- I am looking to differentiate Richmond from other local inner suburban schools. I will speak about High Expectation and High Care, a school that puts into place good general programs with the right support for each child. I expect us to cater for all children, and also want to encourage highly able through teacher mentoring.
- Essentially, I am after people who love the profession they are in, watching children develop and grow and working as part of a team, collaborating and sharing. I want our school to create the next generation of leaders, staff will be supported to develop and cared for by me as well.

We will use the Department and Education and Training recruitment website. Potential applicants should sign up to this now if they are not in the public-

school system already. [Click here for Recruitment Online](#)

Last week I published my draft thinking on the uniform. It is essentially the document I have produced for the three uniform suppliers I have shortlisted to provide further details. They can't do any more work until we settle on brand and colours. Once the three companies quote this will be the first item of business of our Advisory Board.

I have valued the input into the uniform discussion through our Richmond High School Community Page. As I expected this has been one of the hardest to have. People are very passionate either way.

Our multiple connections with potential families tells us the largest number of parents want a uniform. The best start I can give this school is to reflect the majority community desire for a smart uniform, and implementation of it, that captures other parents concerns without people saying 'Richmond High School are a slack school with their uniform'. I will speak to our children so they feel better about having to 'wear' a uniform.

Each Victorian government school has a school council – in our case the advisory board - that decides on the uniform guidelines for the school – if the school will have a uniform, what the uniform will be and whether it will be compulsory to wear.

Parents should always know the school uniform requirements prior to enrolling your child in the school, this makes things easier later, so I am aiming to be transparent and consultative, particular in the implementation guidelines. Normally a child will be required to wear their school uniform during school hours, while travelling to and from school, and when they are engaged in school activities out of school hours.

School councils have the authority to develop and implement dress codes for their students as outlined in legislation relating to dress codes.

Schools work with their school communities in:

- developing and reviewing dress codes
- implementing and enforcing dress codes

All dress codes must meet:

- human rights and anti-discrimination requirements
- include an exemption process
- health and safety considerations
- requirements relating to uniform supply arrangements.

Assistance with uniforms and shoes

If a family is eligible, they can receive financial assistance to help meet the costs of their child's education, including uniforms and shoes.

This support is provided by not-for-profit organisation State Schools' Relief (SSR). <https://www.ssr.net.au>

In terms of building our understanding and rationale. My research tells me that there is little evidence either way to support or not support uniforms, it is not a researched field. In this country, we wear uniforms due to the British origins of our education system. The trend to dispense with uniforms in the 1970s did not widely catch on and many schools have returned to uniform – with some key exceptions. It can be seen as old fashioned, the Europeans don't do it, but there will literally be families who have a bias as pro uniform who will not come to our school without a uniform. There is Collingwood College and Fitzroy High School to cater for those who don't want a uniform.

As principal I think we should benchmark ourselves against our biggest competitor Melbourne Girls' College - I typed that with a smile on my face. And our uniforms will not be dissimilar.

Having watched Albert Park College closely, the uniform has been one key to their success in terms of community perceptions. They have a very strict approach.

Pros of school uniforms - comments

- Students experience less pressure in deciding what to wear each morning.
- Uniforms cost less overall.
- Student attendance improves.
- Encourages personal discipline.
- Students takes less time to get ready in the morning.
- Children are free to concentrate on lessons.
- Uniformity promotes a reduction of violence in schools.
- A decrease in peer pressure to wear trendier brands.
- Uniforms can be reused and recycled.
- School intruders are more easily identified in a school of uniformed children.

Cons of school uniforms - comments

- Uniforms detract from a child's individuality.
- Schools should be a place where diversity is celebrated.
- The cost of uniforms is prohibitive, especially when a family includes more than one school-aged child.
- An unfair additional cost to tax-payers sending their children to a public school.
- A financial burden to lower income families.
- Uniforms may lessen the child's comfort level while attending school.
- Enforcing rules about uniforms is difficult.

I thought these articles and ABC radio interview interesting.

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/central-sydney/school-uniform-pros-and-cons/news-story/cd111d0c459ffd4f53acd03d80b4ed9c>

<http://schooluniformsaustralia101.blogspot.com.au/2013/04/school-uniforms-australia-pros-and-cons.html>

http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2015/06/ras_20150616_1306.mp3

Enrolments 2018

We eagerly await all of the data from primary schools to be collated and come to me through the regional office. I have no real idea of numbers, but as soon as I have some reliable data I will share it with you. Richmond High School children will receive school notification in the normal cycle. Some of my planning depends on numbers now, particularly around teachers.

Priority order of placement at Richmond High School

Where there are insufficient places at a school for all students who seek entry, students are enrolled in the following priority order:

1. Students for whom the school is the designated neighbourhood school.
2. Students with a sibling at the same permanent address who are attending the school at the same time (in 2019 for us).
3. Where the regional director has restricted the enrolment, students who reside nearest the school.
4. Students seeking enrolment on specific curriculum grounds
5. All other students in order of closeness of their home to the school.
6. In exceptional circumstances, compassionate grounds.

Next week I aim to speak more about my approach to technology in the school, the Bring Your Own Device approach and how I see technology in education. I will also make comments, over time, how we can best manage technology in the lives of young people. Few parents of primary school age children have challenges managing devices or phones in the way parents of teenage children do.

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