



Middle School Handbook



St Francis Xavier College

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College Executive



College Principal

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Middle School contacts

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Year 7 Pastoral Advisor	TBC
Year 8 Coordinator	Christopher Beerworth
Year 8 Pastoral Advisor	TBC
Middle School Humanities Coordinator	Teresa Patterson
Middle School STEM Coordinator	Samuel Beattie

Staff can be emailed directly using Compass.

Alternatively, the format for email addresses is `firstname.surname@sfx.act.edu.au`

Our philosophy

The education principles that underpin the Middle School Program aim to provide students with a smooth transition to high school. The curriculum is developed using an interdisciplinary approach by integrating the core subjects: English, Social Science (History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship, Economics and Business) and Religious Education into Humanities and Mathematics, Science, Engineering Concepts and Integrated Technology into STEM. Teachers work collaboratively to plan units of work applying an inquiry-based approach to learning, enriched by high impact teaching strategies and explicit teaching. This approach to teaching and learning creates a rich and cohesive learning environment which enables students to understand the connections between subjects and their relevance in the world.

The Middle School core subjects are taught by two teachers; this builds strong pastoral relationships between the teacher and students, minimises repetition and maximises teaching time thus giving teachers more knowledge of each student's abilities and learning needs.

Middle School teachers are dedicated to promoting a positive learning experience. We believe in working as a cohesive, supportive team where team teaching is encouraged, as is innovation in the design of our teaching and learning practices. We endeavour to meet the students 'where they are,' determining how to best support them in achieving faith development and academic growth. Every student and every teacher can embrace a fresh start each day. We believe that positive relationships and a growth mindset are integral to the success of our students, and to a motivated staff team. We use cooperative learning structures to create safe and engaging learning spaces for our students. We provide opportunities to develop and express the talents and creativity of both teachers and students and integrate the use of technology as a teaching tool throughout all our teaching and learning programs.

Middle School

Middle School at St Francis Xavier College consists of Years 7 and 8. In Year 7 your classes are organised to make the transition from Primary to Secondary school as easy as possible. The way your classes are organised in Year 8 changes a little to prepare you more for High School (Years 9 and 10).

What subjects will I be studying?

Year 7 Core subjects	Year 8 Core subjects
Physical Education and Health	Physical Education and Health
Humanities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious Education • English • Geography • History 	Humanities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious Education • English • History • Civics and Citizenship • Economics and Business
STEM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics • Science • Engineering Concepts • Integrated Technology 	STEM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics • Science • Engineering Concepts • Integrated Technology
Plus 1 language* over both years	
1 Asian or 1 Romance language	
* or Essentials – An intensive literacy and numeracy class focused on improving core skills through the study of culture. Students cannot elect to join Essentials—the College will contact students directly with an invitation. Students in Essentials do not take part in a language elective.	
Plus 1 semester of each over both years	
Design and Technologies	
Digital Technology	
Performing Arts	
Visual Arts	

How will my classes be organised?

In Year 7, you will have 2 core teachers, one for Humanities and one for STEM. These classes are made up of the same students for both classes. This gives you the opportunity to get to know your classmates well. In Year 8, you will have a new Humanities and STEM class and teacher and, your STEM class will contain different students to your Humanities class.

When do I get to participate in electives?

During Year 7 and 8 you will participate in each of the electives for 1 Semester each. These will be allocated to you each semester. In Term 3 Year 8 you will be able to select electives for Year 9.

Technology and BYOD

In the Middle School, we have a [Bring Your Own Device \(BYOD\) system](#) in place. After both you and your parents/carers have completed the **Digital BYOD Agreement**, you will be provided network logins to access the SFX Student Network, including Wi-Fi and access to CANVAS, Compass, Google Suite and Microsoft 365. You will be taught how to use these programs and applications in your Humanities and STEM classes. More information about our BYOD Program is available on our website.

Every student will be able to access their Microsoft 365 account from home. This Microsoft 365 account gives all students access to Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel etc. on any computer. It is important to always have your device charged as students are not able to charge their devices at school.

Mobile phones: these are to be kept in lockers. They should at no point be seen around the College unless you are paying for something at the canteen. Students can check their phones at recess and lunch at their lockers only. Parents are required to call the Student Office if they need to contact their child during the day.

General ICT use

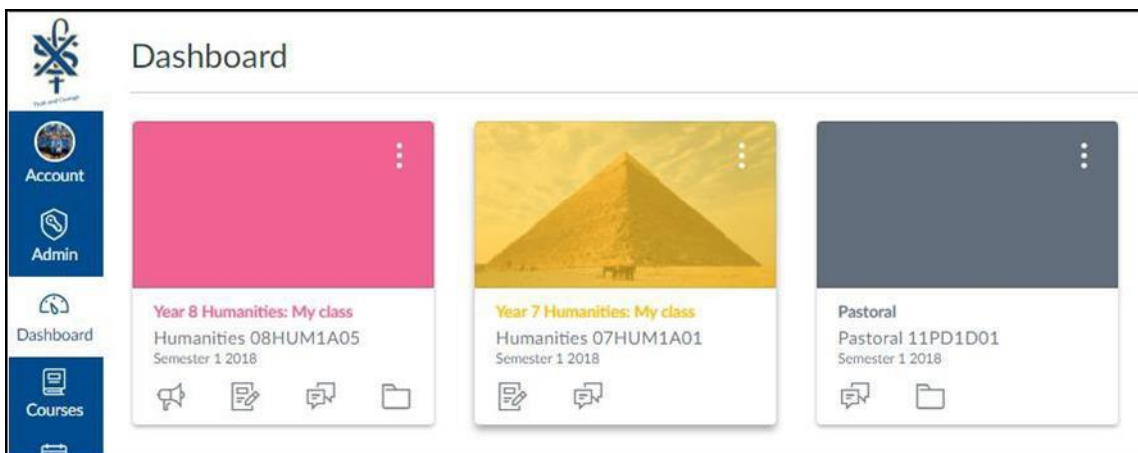
The three main rules at the college are Be Kind, Be Responsible and Be Respectful. Teachers will explicitly teach the expectations of technology use to their classes. Whilst the technology we have access to in Middle School is a wonderful tool for learning, if rules around social media or photography etc. are broken, devices may have apps deleted by their teacher, Studies Coordinator or Year Coordinator. Devices can also be confiscated if necessary, so we encourage all students to respect the rules so that they always have access to their device.

Refer to the Student Acceptable Use of Computer Facilities and Networks Policy on our [website](#).

CANVAS

CANVAS is the digital platform used across all subject areas at SFX. It is where you will locate your unit outlines, letters and announcements from classroom teachers, resources, assessment, feedback and so much more. Students will be required to upload most assignments to CANVAS via their device. Parents and students will be able to access CANVAS to review assignment and test results, along with comments and grades. Students will be taught how to access and upload to CANVAS, in their classes.

These images are screenshots of a typical student dashboard in Canvas and Subject Homepage.



Assessment and reporting

What is a unit outline and what are they used for?

At the beginning of each semester for each subject, a detailed Unit Outline will be saved into each of your classes on CANVAS. It will include:

- Curriculum information
- Assessment requirements
- Due dates

Helpful tip: use Microsoft Outlook to keep a track of your assessment.

When do I get my reports and what will they look like?

At the end of each semester (Term 2 and Term 4) you will receive a comprehensive report that indicates your overall academic results, as well as a review of your approaches to learning (eg: is organised for class, meets deadlines.) If you have shown outstanding achievement or effort, you may also receive a merit certificate with your report.

Formal reports do not contain comments. Instead, teachers provide ongoing feedback to students and parents through Canvas, for each assignment.

Reports are emailed to families.

When are parent/teacher interviews?

Parents can book interviews online accessed via a login that will be emailed shortly before the interview dates. Parent/teacher interviews are in early Term 2 and late Term 3. Of course, your parents can contact your teacher by phone or email at any time if they have questions or concerns. To email your teacher contact them in Compass or email them using their firstname.lastname@sfx.act.edu.au

Homework and assignments

What is homework?

Homework could include working on assignments, reading a novel, completing class work that you did not have time to finish at school, revising class work or studying for a test.

Most assignments will not need to be worked on at home in Humanities and STEM in Year 7 as class time can be allocated. Occasionally you will be asked to complete one aspect of an assignment, and this will be noted on the front page of the assignment itself. In Year 8, you will be expected to complete a little more of your assignments at home, in preparation for Year 9 assessment tasks.

In STEM, students will have homework. Each week there will be tasks set on Mathspace which can be accessed via your device. These tasks provide practise of the concepts taught that week in class. At some points in Year 7 and 8 you may be required to revise for in class tests at home.

All students are encouraged to regularly read.

Study skills: How can I stay on top of my homework?

- Start early and avoid late night sessions.
- Be sure you know what you have to do before you leave school. If you are at all uncertain, talk to your teacher until you know what is required.
- Complete the work that you least like first to get it out of the way.
- Make sure work for the next day is complete.
- Plan how you will use your time: do not give too much time to any one subject. Make sure you leave time for long projects.
- Aim to finish extended assignments well within the set deadlines in order to give yourself time to cover unexpected difficulties.
- Don't forget that homework includes revising for tests, organising notes, wider reading, as well as assignment tasks.

Handing in Assignments

Assignments will mostly be submitted online, on Canvas, though some tasks will be created and submitted in hardcopy. The assignment itself (available on Canvas) will state how you need to submit your work. Each time an assignment is started, your teacher will explicitly work through it with the class and will explain how the task will be submitted/ published. If you are ever feeling unsure, your teacher will be happy to answer your questions.

What happens if I am absent on the due date?

If you are absent when an assignment is due, you need to hand your assignment to your teacher the first lesson you see them, if the assignment is required to be submitted in hardcopy. Most assignments will be submitted digitally, so unless you have an extension, it will still need to be uploaded/ submitted to CANVAS by the due date

What will happen if I hand in my assignment late?

If you are struggling to complete an assignment or homework on time due to illness or other circumstances you could ask your teacher for an extension, before the due date. There are no grade penalties for work submitted late in Middle School, however, your teacher will contact your parents and arrange for you to complete the task at home with a new due date. Alternatively, your teacher may ask you to work in the Middle School at lunch to support you in getting your task completed.

Whilst teachers will endeavour to provide flexibility, support and opportunities for completing assignments, parents of students who fail to submit a task on time will be notified by phone or email. If the task is not submitted at all, the student will receive non submission grade for that task.

What do I do if I'm not happy with my grade?

If you feel that a mark or grade given by a teacher for a piece of work or a complete semester's work is unfair, then you should take the following steps:

1. You should approach the teacher concerned and enquire why that mark/grade has been awarded.
2. If, after speaking to the classroom teacher, you still feel that the assessment is unfair, you should speak to the Studies Coordinator for that subject and ask for a review of the assessment item.

How do I know what grade I received for my assignment?

All assignments will be available to parents and students on Canvas. Each assignment has an assessment rubric which goes with it. This is used to explicitly explain to students' what aspects they are being marked on. Comments and/or teacher's annotations on student work will be found on Canvas once marked, along with the rubric and a grade result for the task. Students should take time to carefully look at the rubric and the comments from their teachers, as this will guide them on what they did well and what they still need to be working on.

Referencing my research

What is plagiarism?

- Plagiarism means to pretend that ideas or language of other people are your own. Plagiarism is stealing and is a very serious offence. In order to avoid plagiarism, you need to reference your sources carefully.
- You must reference when:
- Quoting the exact words of another writer.
- Paraphrasing - putting the work of another writer into your own words.
- Summarising - using ideas or material directly based on the work of another writer.

Examples of plagiarism could include, but are not limited to:

- Submitting all or part of another person's work with or without that person's knowledge.
- Submitting all or part of a paper from a source text (e.g. a book, the Internet, a newspaper article) without proper acknowledgement.
- Copying part of another person's work from a source text, supplying proper acknowledgement, but leaving out quotation marks.
- Submitting materials that paraphrase or summarise another person's work or ideas without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Using computer programs such as Quillbot to modify work.

What will happen if I plagiarise?

The consequences for failing to follow the plagiarism policy will be decided by the classroom teacher for minor offences. Serious offences will be discussed with the Studies Coordinator. Therefore, depending on the seriousness of the plagiarism, consequences could consist of:

- a warning
- lunch detention
- resubmission of the task
- counselling from staff in the Resource Centre on correct referencing

- receiving an E grade for the task.

How can I avoid plagiarism?

Reference all of the sources you have used for your research in a bibliography. You are encouraged to use the Online Referencing Generator when compiling your bibliography. You will learn how to write a bibliography during your lessons.

Bibliographies

How should my bibliography be set out?

When you take notes from another source, it is a good idea to write down the details at that time. This makes it easier to complete the bibliography at the end of the assignment. If you are working on your laptop, you can even bookmark websites or make copies of the website URLs, pasting them into a document for later. The Resource Centre page on Canvas has a number of helpful options which can support you as you create bibliographies. This includes the Referencing Generator, which you will be shown in a Resource Centre lesson, and can save a short cut to, on your laptop. A bibliography should be located at the end of your assignment and should look like the relevant parts of this example:

Bibliography	
BOOKS	
Brown, K. (ed) 2004. <i>The World at Work</i> , Oxford University Press, London. Reynolds, H. 2000. <i>Black Pioneers</i> , Penguin, Victoria.	
Woodford, J. (1996). 'The Meaning of Science', in Morris, P(ed) 1999 <i>Science for Beginners</i> , Pitman	
ARTICLES	
Belgium, <i>The World Book Encyclopedia</i> 1992 vol.4, World Book Inc, Chicago.	
Oaten, C 2006, 'Open Your House to the Sun', <i>Herald Sun</i> , 6 September, p. 31.	
AUDIO VISUAL	
<i>Great Singers</i> , 2005, CD, SBS Marketing, Sydney.	
<i>Adolescence Today</i> , 1989, Video cassette, ABC Four Corners, Sydney.	
ELECTRONIC SOURCES	

Florence Nightingale Museum Trust, 1999, <i>Florence Nightingale Museum Website</i> , viewed 10 July 2004, http://www.florence-nightingale.co.uk/	
OTHERS	
Personal – interviews, or correspondence	
Australian Taxation Office , 1999, Personal communication, College Street, Belconnen, ACT. King, J 1997, Personal communication, Ipima Street, Braddon, ACT.	
Pamphlets / brochures	
<i>The Young Socialist</i> , 1991, Social Reform Group, Sydney, NSW.	

SFX uses APA version 7 as the bibliographic style for work in Years 7 - 12

Resource Centre

What can I use the Resource Centre for?

The Teacher Librarians will run Orientation Sessions to help you learn the location of all the resources and equipment that you will need for your school work.

Each student can borrow a maximum of four books at a time. There is a very large fiction section, with a range of popular authors and books. The Resource Centre also have a collection of e-readers called KOBO's, which include a large range of popular titles. The comfortable couches are a pleasant place to sit and read silently, out of class hours.

The Resource Centre runs various activities and special events. Every week there is a quiz for all students to enter, Reading Café for keen readers, Comic Book Club and Manga Club. Students are welcome to apply for a Resource Centre Student Assistant job that sees them volunteer their lunchtime once a fortnight. The Resource Centre is open until 4pm Monday to Thursday where students can get assistance from the Teacher Librarians. On Wednesdays, Math teachers are available to assist with Math homework and assignments.

When can I use it?

The Resource Centre is open to all students at the following times:

- 8.00am to 8.20am daily.
- 1.25pm to 1.50pm daily.
- 2.55pm to 4.00pm Monday to Thursday.

The school rules apply in the Resource Centre as they do in the rest of the school. We also ask that students leave food and drink outside the area to help preserve our resources. There is an expectation that school computers are used for school-based work and that games are not played on them.

The Resource Centre is a fun place to be if you treat people and resources responsibly, respectfully and safely.

Extra-curricular activities

At SFX there are many different activities you are welcome to become involved in. These will be advertised through Pastoral notices and displayed on pin boards around the College. These include Maker Space in the Resource Centre, Games Club, Green Team (Sustainability, gardening etc), various sporting teams, plus much more. These are not specifically organised through the Middle School department but are available to students across a number of different year levels.

Pastoral Care

One of the best things about belonging to the SFX Community is that there are lots of people willing to help with the little, and sometimes bigger, problems. Whether it is a difficulty related to your Maths homework or a concern about a peer being bullied, someone can help you.

The following people are available at school to support you:

Pastoral Leader

A pastoral leader is a student's mentor. The role of the Pastoral Leader is to:

- Monitor attendance, conduct, appearance, homework and progress
- Counsel (advise/motivate) students regarding program choices, progress and general welfare
- If necessary, consult subject teachers on individual student progress, conduct and welfare
- Communicate with home regarding student programs, performance, welfare, problems, etc
- Advise Year Coordinator regarding problems and special circumstances with respect to individual students.

Year Coordinator

The Year Coordinator oversees the entire year group. It is their job to develop positive morale in the teachers and students in the year level and to foster and maintain genuine Pastoral Care of all the students. Students can drop by to see the Year Coordinator outside of class time or with the permission of their class teacher.

Pastoral Advisors

Pastoral advisors support specific Year Coordinators and their cohorts, across many areas. These are detailed in the 'Year Coordinator' section.

Assistant Principal Student Wellbeing

The Assistant Principal for Student Wellbeing is responsible for all student Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management in the school. It is the role of the Assistant Principal to ensure that all students are safe, happy and productive. Students can drop by to see the Assistant Principal outside of class time or with the permission of their class teacher.

Counsellors

The counsellors provide a confidential counselling service to all students in the school. Both counsellors are registered psychologists. Students may make an appointment with the counsellor by writing a note

requesting an appointment and putting it in the mailbox which is on the door of the counsellors' office, dropping by at recess or lunchtime if the counsellor is free, or asking your Pastoral Leader, Year Coordinator or parent to make an appointment for you.

Subject teachers

Subject teachers are always willing to give you extra help with any aspect of what is being covered in class. If you are having trouble understanding the concepts, tackling assignments, meeting deadlines, issues with other students or needing an extra challenge please speak to them so that they can help. It is important to ask for help as soon as you feel you need it, rather than waiting until you feel overwhelmed or begin to fall behind.

Inclusive Education

The Inclusive Education department has teachers and learning support assistants that will be able to help you if you are having trouble keeping up with the academic demands of Years 7 and 8. Often it is just a matter of getting you started on an assignment or helping you to revise for a test. Visit the team in the Inclusive Education staffroom if you need extra assistance.

Middle School Coordinators (STEM & Humanities)

Each subject has a Subject Coordinator (Studies Co) who is responsible for the curriculum and well-being of students in their subject area. The Middle School Coordinators have a special responsibility for the learning needs of students in the Middle School. Students are always welcome to approach the Middle School Coordinators if they have concerns about a subject. Issues such as extensions for assignments or your assessment are just a couple of the things that they may be able to help you with. The Middle School Coordinators are located in the Middle School Staffroom on the first floor in the Middle School building.

Where should I go if?

I lose something?

The Student Office is the home of all the lost property.

I'm late to school?

Every student who is late to school needs to report to the Student Office to check in/swipe in using their student card. They will receive a late note to show to their teacher and to then take home to be signed by their parent or guardian and returned to school as proof of parental permission.

I need to print something?

There are computers with printers in the Resource Centre, Hub or you could ask your teacher if you could use the printer in the Middle School building. Students can print from their devices, in black and white. Colour printing must be sent to a teacher for printing.

I get hurt?

Sick Bay is located in the Student Office.

I forget to bring my lunch?

Talk to your Pastoral Leader or Year Coordinator.

I have a question about my subjects or electives?

Talk to your teacher first and they will refer you to the Studies Coordinator or Assistant Principal Teaching and Learning.

I have a green slip?

You need to report to a teacher on playground duty within two days of receiving the green slip.

I need a quiet place to pray or meditate?

The chapel is available to students for silent personal prayer, reflection and meditation. Please speak to the Pastoral Minister or Religious Education Coordinator if you wish to use the chapel. Mass is celebrated in the chapel at lunchtime several times a year. We also have quiet rooms that can be accessed by first talking with a Year Coordinator.

I want to buy some food?

The canteen is open at lunch and recess and is available for all students. You can buy a range of delicious food from the canteen

If I have a useful suggestion?

If you have a suggestion that you think will benefit the school community see your student representative (SRC).



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