

*...integrity and Christian character...*



*Gilson College*

MERNDA



# STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023



## *Gilson College*

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# INTRODUCTION

The Gilson College Handbook is a compilation of the most important facts, procedures and information about the operations of the College from a student/parent's perspective. The Handbook is a general guide for all students and parents of the College, both current and prospective. The document is not exhaustive, that would be impractical, but it contains what we feel is the most important information to give new members of the community assistance in familiarising themselves with the College, and current members an effective refresher.

As the information in this handbook forms part of the policies and procedures of the College it is recommended that the document be read and understood. If you have any suggestions or comments regarding the content of the Handbook please pass them onto the office. That way we can continue to improve the document and make the transition of new members to the Gilson College Community easier. Thank you for your support and have a great year.

Gilson College Leadership Team

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Welcome to the Gilson College student handbook. This document is your window into a vibrant, growing community, it was designed to give you a snapshot of a student's life at our College. It outlines the basic information most people ask about and the details they need, to better understand our community.

I believe that what you find in these pages will highlight the benefits of joining our community.

We are an inclusive community that supports the diversity of people who come together within a Christian context to grow and learn together. Your children will have the opportunity to develop life-time friendships, mix with people whose culture is different from your own and to develop interests and career options that you never could have imagined.

Each student has the potential to bring their enthusiasm and creativity into our college and add to the positive ethos that is a part of our campus. We are privileged to live in one of the great places of the world and Gilson College seeks to give your child an advantage that will help them make the world a better place.

I look forward to meeting you in person and getting to know you and your family better.

God bless,

Raelene Delvin  
B.Ed. (Primary), M.Ed. (Leadership and Administration)  
PRINCIPAL



## ABOUT THE COLLEGE

**Gilson College** is a Christian co-educational day-college which is owned and operated by Adventist Schools Victoria, a subsidiary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and governed by an elected Council of Management. The College is part of the second largest private system of education in the world which has a history of excellence for over 120 years.

### HISTORY

Gilson College traces its beginnings to the mid-1970s when a primary school was established in the suburb of Pascoe Vale. At the end of 1987 the Pascoe Vale School was transferred to the current Taylors Road site in Melbourne's outer west. Originally known as the Keilor School, its name was officially changed in 1992 to Gilson College. William J. Gilson (1896-1974), a teacher, musician and educational leader with a love and passion for Christian Education, is honoured by the College bearing his name. His significant contribution to the work of Christian Education is recognized, and Gilson College seeks to continue this excellence in service to the community.

In 2012 the College acquired Acacia College in Mernda, which became the Mernda campus of Gilson College, and is the site of the growth of Gilson in the northern corridor. Both campuses share a common purpose and objectives, common policies and procedures and have some common events. Some specialist staff are also shared between both campuses and leadership and teachers from both campuses plan together on a regular basis.

The Mernda Campus was purchased with part funds from the sale of Ironbark Christian School, which was situated a short distance away in Yarrambat and owned by the Seventh day Adventist church. Ironbark Christian School was nestled amongst leafy trees and lush gardens on the corner of Pioneer & Ironbark Roads. It boasted a program that endeavoured to celebrate individuality while providing unique opportunities for excellence in learning through the academics, outdoors, horticulture and horsemanship in a Christian environment.

In 2010, Ironbark Christian school announced that it would be closing because Adventist Schools Victoria had found the school was not suitable for future growth due to environmental overlays of the land. The site was sold and Adventist Schools Victoria went in search of suitable land in the Northern region to establish a F-12 school. Their search eventually led them to Mernda.

### THE COLLEGE CREST



As a member of the worldwide Adventist Education System, the Gilson College crest has the Seventh-day Adventist Schools initials emblazoned across the shield. The Latin phrase translates to "Nothing without God" and encapsulates the view that God is an integral part of our lives. The laurel garland on the sides is synonymous with the prize of achievement.

The book and the torch indicate the academic dimension and the pursuit of excellence we endeavour to have students adopt as an integral aspect of their daily lives.

## THE RELIGIOUS PROFILE OF THE COLLEGE

Gilson College was established to assist parents in the raising of Christian young people. There are a variety of Christian denominations represented and these include Adventist, Baptist, Roman Catholic, Coptic, Orthodox, Pentecostal, Anglican, and Uniting Church. This diversity is seen as being a strength of the College and encourages students to share their ideas and beliefs about God and to



ask questions.

In addition to these variations of the Christian faith a range of other religious traditions are also represented. We have students who are Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist and many others. Despite these differences, all students at Gilson College demonstrate the love, respect and dignity that have become hallmarks of our community. All students are expected to

engage in the religious activities of the College and contribute to the spiritual character of the community.

## THE CULTURAL PROFILE OF THE COLLEGE

Gilson College has a rich variety of cultures. Australian and South Pacific, Indian, African, and a variety of European backgrounds make up the bulk of the cultural components. This multi-cultural mix is another of the strengths of Gilson. Each culture brings something special and exciting to the community and adds its unique characteristics to the Western context that underpins our College.

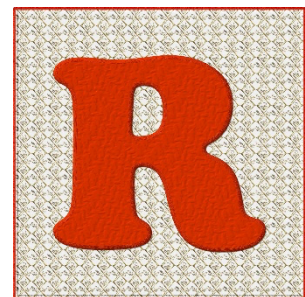
## THE COLLEGE PURPOSE

Our purpose is, through excellence in education, to develop people of integrity and Christian character.

## COLLEGE VALUES

Our core values are those adopted by Adventist Schools Australia for all Adventist Schools. The nine values based upon 1 Corinthians 13 are: Excellence, Compassion, Humility, Respect, Integrity, Justice, Discernment, Responsibility and Hope. These are bound together through Love and Service.

The College has adopted four key values as fundamental to the success of the interactions taking place here. These are Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and being a Learner. You will see these four values displayed prominently around the campus. They underpin everything we do at the College.



## COLLEGE OBJECTIVES

1. **Spiritual - To foster and promote:**
  1. An acceptance of Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour.
  2. A commitment to a consistent Christian lifestyle.

3. A desire to serve God and the community.
  4. Active participation in the mission of the Christian Church.
  5. Jesus Christ as the solution to human problems.
2. **Academic - To foster and promote:**
6. A commitment to excellence through diligent effort.
  7. An appreciation of knowledge and truth in harmony with God's Word.
  8. Powers of discrimination to select the best and avoid the questionable.
  9. The ability to think logically and critically.
  10. Academic excellence and pleasure in learning.
3. **Social - To foster and promote:**
11. Self-worth as a basis for healthy interpersonal relationships.
  12. The development of self-control and self-discipline.
  13. Acceptance of others and a concern for their welfare.
  14. Responsible citizenship and leadership.
  15. Habits of courtesy, decorum and graciousness.
4. **Physical - To foster and promote:**
16. Principles of healthy living through nutrition, exercise, water, sunshine, rest.
  17. A temperate life and an abstinence from those habits harmful to health.
  18. Teamwork and fair play.
5. **Vocational - To foster and promote:**
19. A commitment to service for others as the most fulfilling of life's expectations.
  20. Skills that can be used to spread the Gospel of Christ and His soon return.
  21. The dignity of labour and a sense of pride in a job well done.
  22. The importance of setting and achieving worthwhile personal goals.
  23. The Objectives of the College.

## THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY

At Gilson College we understand the importance of the democratic tradition upon which this great nation is built. The programs and teaching in our College support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy. This includes a commitment to:

- Elected government
- The rule of law
- Equal rights for all before the law
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of speech and association

- The values of openness and tolerance

Our adherence to the principles and practice of Australian democracy means:

- we believe in democratically elected governments that are accountable to the people
- we believe no person is above the law and that all should respect and obey the rule of law
- we believe that irrespective of race, culture, gender or religion, all people are equal before the law
- we believe in freedom of religion and the right of the individual and community to teach, practice, worship and observe their religion and for this to be freely exercised in public or private
- we believe in freedom of speech and also acknowledge a responsibility to treat others with courtesy, dignity and respect
- we believe in openness and tolerance so that all our actions are guided by honesty, integrity and Christian character.

We endeavour to instil in our students an appreciation for our democratic traditions, a love Australia and its complete history and a willingness to support those traditions by being positively contributing citizens, both at school and beyond.



# SPIRITUAL NURTURE AND WELLBEING

As our crest suggests, spiritual development is the underlying focus of everything that we do at Gilson College. Biblical values influence policy and practise to a large degree and a holistic view of personal growth, including the spiritual component, directs our educational processes. In addition to this we look to address the physical and emotional components of an individual's life to ensure their overall wellbeing.

## SPIRITUAL CULTURE

The spiritual culture of Gilson College is a combination of the words, actions and programs of students and staff revolving around God. As a Seventh-day Adventist Christian school Gilson College aims to provide for the spiritual development of both students and staff through regular worships and prayer, Chapels and less regular spiritually focused events such as Festival of Faith (FOF). Biblical studies classes and the embedding of Adventist Special Character (ASC) throughout the curriculum ensures that all are touched by God's spirit whilst at the College.



### Morning Worships

Each day at Gilson College starts with a time devoted to prayer and worship. The staff meet together for worship every morning and students also begin each day with this devotional time – each one encouraged to contribute their own requests to and thoughts about God. Each day staff also pray for a number of College community families – when it's your turn you will have the opportunity for particular prayer requests.

### Weekly Chapels and FOFs

All students are involved in a weekly Chapel – which is a time of worship, prayer, singing and sharing. A special guest often visits to share knowledge or experience and student participation is encouraged. Primary Chapel takes place from after lunch on Friday, Secondary Chapel takes place P5 (1:30) on Monday.

The Festival of Faith (FOF) is an opportunity for the entire College to focus on spirituality. With a week-long program of music, prayer and scriptural sharing, God is brought to our focus and decisions are made for Jesus. There are usually two of these each year: one conducted by a visiting speaker, the other hosted by students and chaplains.

### Chaplains

Chaplains are employed at the College primarily to provide for the spiritual nurture of staff and students, but are also heavily invested in the emotional well-being of all associated with the College. As such, they are available to discuss issues with members of the College community. Some of our chaplains are qualified counsellors but all are able to refer issues to more appropriate agencies.

While at school the chaplains are involved in organising chapels, visiting classes, conducting Bible studies, counselling staff or students and contacting families. We encourage chaplain involvement in classes and welcome their input into the educational program to further the spiritual goals of the College.

## Church

Mernda Adventist Community Church is an on-campus church that meets on Saturday (Sabbath) mornings. We meet at 10:30 am in the Acacia Room. The membership is made up of staff, student and community families and anyone is welcome to attend. The program includes singing, prayer, Bible study and sharing time.



## Combined Schools Day of Worship (CSDW)

The CSDW is a day when all the Seventh-day Adventist Schools around Victoria come together to share music, testimonies, prayer and worship together. It usually takes place during Term Three with one day for Primary schools and another day for Secondary.

## Wellbeing Department

The Wellbeing team at Gilson College is committed to ensuring that all individual students cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing are met. The team work collaboratively with students, teachers and families to address the wellbeing of students, by implementing proactive strategies to achieve positive outcomes and academic success.

The Counsellor works with students from Foundation to Year 12, who are experiencing challenges either at home and at School. The purpose of the Counsellor is to work with students through difficult times to help them develop a strong level of personal and social wellbeing.

The counsellor offers support via:

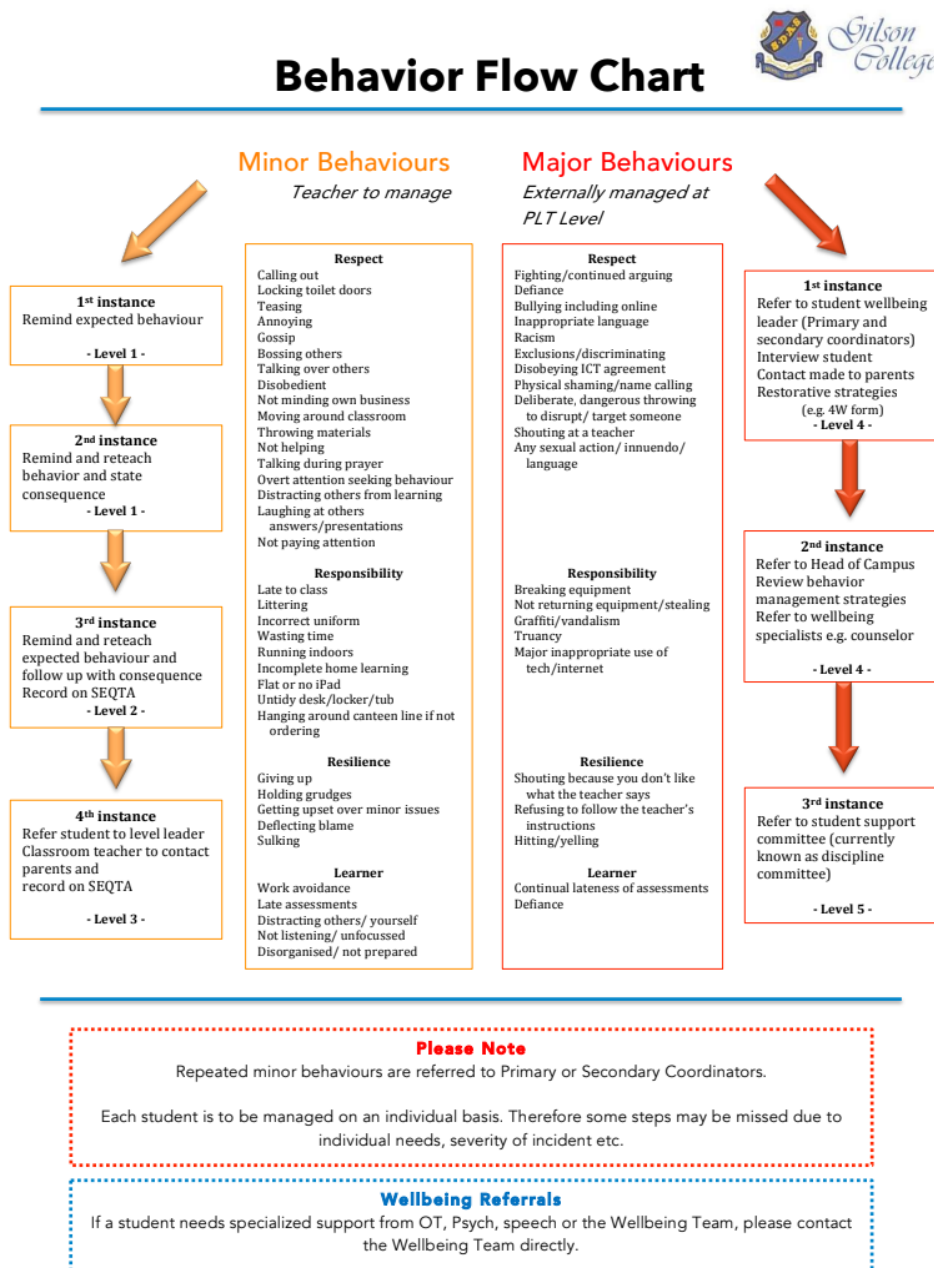
- Short term, solution focussed counselling therapy,
- Providing individual sessions, classroom lessons or in-group sessions.
- Focussing on areas: social skills, friendships, resolving conflicts, developing self-confidence & responsibility, self-esteem, dealing with grief & loss, dealing with bullying, stress management, family relationships, developing a growth-mindset, mindfulness & coping skills, positive communication, self-regulation and many more.





## BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM - PB4L

PB4L stands for Positive Behaviour for Learning. The numeral four is used to highlight the importance of addressing all four areas of learning and development: Mental, Social, Physical and Spiritual. At Gilson College we foster a culture where respectful, responsible and resilient behavior promotes excellence in a Christian environment. Expected behaviours that are explicitly taught and encouraged are displayed in the matrix under the headings of our focus values: Respect, Responsibility and Resilience.



This behaviour management program focuses on identifying and acknowledging positive behaviours to reinforce and encourage them. Should students have difficulty in maintaining the expected behaviours, consequences will be used to address these issues to encourage students to learn from their mistakes. Teachers will address these incidents as they arise and keep parents

informed. Should there be ongoing issues the table below summarises the levels and processes that are worked through.

General day-to-day discipline is the responsibility of the classroom teachers who will endeavour to keep parents informed of issues as they arise.

| PRIMARY PB4L MATRIX                 |  |   |   |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| LOCATION                            | RESPECT  | RESPONSIBILITY  | RESILIENCE  | LEARNER  |
|                                     | I am <b>RESPECTFUL</b> when...   | I am <b>RESPONSIBLE</b> when...   | I am <b>RESILIENT</b> when...   | I am <b>A LEARNER</b> when...  |
| <b>Always and Everywhere</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I stay out of others personal space</li> <li>I listen carefully and follows instructions</li> <li>I use kind and positive words, and keep my hands and feet to myself</li> <li>I am inclusive of others inside and outside of the classroom.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I am on time and ready to learn</li> <li>I use technology appropriately</li> <li>I look after my uniform and personal items</li> <li>I plug my laptop into the correct place</li> <li>I use my daily planner</li> <li>I wear the correct uniform</li> <li>I am organised with my personal belongings</li> <li>I keep my book tub neat and tidy</li> <li>I eat my healthy lunchbox options first</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can solve small problems by myself or with my friends before coming to the teacher.</li> <li>I can forgive others and let go of past issues, to move on positively.</li> <li>I can show empathy to others by remembering that we all make mistakes.</li> <li>I try to make new friends and include others in my activities.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I am proud of my work and can complete my tasks to the best of my abilities.</li> <li>I can concentrate and focus on my tasks.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Learning Corridor</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I walk in the Learning Corridor</li> <li>I use a soft voice in the Learning Corridor</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I put my bag down neatly in front of my classroom</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I line up and patiently wait for my teacher</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I leave my area free of clutter and mess such as worksheets/games</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Canteen, Sick Bay, Reception</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I wait in line quietly and keep my hands to myself</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I spend my canteen money appropriately</li> <li>I use my manners</li> <li>I only go to sick bay when sent by a staff member</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When I ask the teacher for help before going to the sick bay.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I only leave the class when it is important so that I have more time for learning.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Outside Area</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I take turns</li> <li>I play fair</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I put my jacket back in my bag</li> <li>I use the sports equipment correctly</li> <li>I return the sports equipment to the appropriate place</li> <li>I place all my rubbish in the bin</li> <li>I put my lunch box away at the end of lunch</li> </ul>  |   |  |
| <b>Bus</b>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I wait in line respectfully and keep my hands to myself</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I remain seated on the bus</li> <li>I keep my seatbelt on when travelling on the bus</li> <li>I keep the bus clean and tidy</li> <li>I use my manners</li> </ul>   |   |  |
| <b>Toilet</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I consider other people's privacy when using the toilets</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I wash my hands after using the toilet</li> <li>I flush the toilet after I have used it</li> <li>I use the toilets at break times</li> <li>I put toilet paper in the toilet</li> <li>I report any mess I see</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I wait for my breaks at Recess and Lunch to use the bathroom.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I only leave the class when I need to go to the toilet so that I have more time for learning.</li> </ul>                                  |
| <b>Home</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I share space and equipment</li> <li>I play appropriate games and be fair</li> <li>I use good manners and kind words</li> <li>I am friendly and helpful</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I complete my home learning in a timely manner</li> <li>I do my part to arrive at school on time</li> <li>I fill out my student planner and have it signed</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I prioritise to complete <u>all</u> of my homework tasks.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I complete my homework so that I can practise what I have learnt at school.</li> </ul>  |



## Secondary PB4L Matrix

Always and Everywhere



| Being <b>Respectful</b><br>means I will...   | Being <b>Responsible</b><br>means I will...   | Being <b>Resilient</b><br>means I will...   | Being a <b>Learner</b><br>means I will...  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>Be an <b>attentive</b> listener when others are speaking.</p> <p>Always say <b>'please'</b>, <b>'thank you'</b> and make <b>eye contact</b> with others.</p> <p><b>Accept all contributions</b> peers make during learning.</p> <p>Use <b>positive language</b> with others.</p> <p>Move around the school in a <b>safe</b> and <b>calm</b> manner.</p> <p>Be <b>inclusive</b> and <b>empathetic</b>.</p> <p><b>Offer assistance</b> to others.</p> <p><b>Show reverence</b> during chapel and prayer times.</p> <p>Line up <b>quietly</b>.</p> | <p>Bring the <b>appropriate resources</b> to class.</p> <p><b>Complete all learning</b> without reminders.</p> <p>Always carry my <b>diary</b> and use it effectively.</p> <p>Model <b>appropriate behaviours</b> that will influence others positively.</p> <p><b>Take care of</b> my own, others and the school's <b>resources</b> and <b>facilities</b>.</p> <p>Use <b>IT devices</b> for their intended purposes and at the required time.</p> <p>Be <b>punctual</b>.</p> <p>Keep my <b>locker organised</b> and tidy.</p> <p>Keep my <b>phone</b> in my locker.</p> <p>I will wear my <b>uniform correctly</b> and with pride.</p> | <p><b>Persevere</b> through challenges and focus on the task at hand.</p> <p>Find ways to <b>solve problems</b>.</p> <p><b>Resolve conflict</b> in a restorative way.</p> <p>Use my <b>initiative</b> and be resourceful.</p> <p><b>Accept feedback</b> as an opportunity to improve myself and my learning.</p> <p>Confidently <b>contribute</b> in <b>class discussions</b>.</p> <p>Show <b>humility</b> when I win and <b>acceptance</b> when I lose.</p> <p>Accept that mistakes happen and <b>forgive</b> myself and others.</p> | <p><b>Apply feedback</b> to improve my learning.</p> <p>Create a <b>study timetable</b> to enable effective <b>revision habits</b>.</p> <p>Create a <b>home learning area</b> free from distractions.</p> <p><b>Think deeply</b> about concepts taught.</p> <p><b>Seek feedback</b>.</p> <p>Create <b>healthy habits</b> to support my learning.</p> |



## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

By its very nature an emergency is something that is unexpected but we can minimise the harm caused by emergencies when they occur by establishing clear policies and procedures. The document covering all emergency occurrences is the College's Critical Incident Management (CIM) Plan. This details what to do before, during and after a range of critical incidents.

All classrooms contain an Emergency Action Plan which outlines the procedures to follow in case of an emergency. These are clearly marked and ensure that everyone can be informed of what to do in an emergency.

### Emergency Drills

The College runs a number of emergency drills during the year to ensure all students and teachers are aware of procedures, and to keep up with regulations. The main drills are either lockdowns (all personnel lock themselves inside their rooms) or evacuations (all personnel evacuate the classrooms). Whilst these may be traumatic events for younger students, teachers address these concerns prior to drills.



### Sickness and Injury

Both campuses of the College have sickbays which are adjacent to the main office area. Students may be sent there when they are unwell. Office staff are qualified in the administering of medication if necessary but parental permission is required before this can be done. In some cases parents will be called to collect their sick child if they are able. If a situation arises off campus where medication may be required, a call to the office is generally made.

All staff have current qualifications for First Aid, CPR, anaphylaxis and asthma management to ensure that these emergencies can be addressed if required.

Whenever a student is involved in an incident (anything from fighting to a fall in the playground) an incident report must be completed. This is a legal requirement. These forms are usually completed by the teacher who witnessed the incident (usually the teacher on duty or class teacher) and are kept on file.

## PHYSICAL HEALTH

Students are encouraged to develop positive physical habits including regular exercise, healthy eating and effective sleep patterns. Exercise is provided inside and outside the curriculum through physical education including swimming, team and individual sports and regular sporting competitions, but students are encouraged to develop personal habits of exercise. Healthy eating habits are encouraged through the canteen menu and College policy relating to foods we offer outside the canteen. Although sleep habits are outside the direct influence of the College students are encouraged to develop an effective sleep pattern – which includes avoiding late nights.

## SUN PROTECTION

The sun has its benefits and its dangers and the College policy on student sun protection reflects this dual nature. Students are expected to wear hats when in the sun during the summer terms, that is, Terms 1 and 4, to avoid excess exposure to the sun. During Terms 2 and 3, the winter terms, when sun exposure is not an issue but Vitamin D deficiency is, students are encouraged to spend plenty of time in the sun.

## THE FOOD POLICY

The Food Policy of Gilson College is based upon Biblical principles of health and the specifics of the Seventh-day Adventist Health Message. This involves not only the use of healthy foods but also the avoidance of unhealthy foods. As such all food provided by Gilson College and associated to Gilson College will be wholly vegetarian and provide a healthy alternative to students.

This includes food provided by the College canteens, food that is arranged on camps or excursions and any food that is associated with College events or fundraising. The Primary schools also have a “Fruit and Veg Only” Rule for recess time. This is to encourage students (and parents) to develop better health habits.

Although encouraging healthy eating at home, the Gilson Food Policy does not prevent students from bringing foods of their choice to school for their own consumption.



## THE CANTEEN

Developing healthy eating habits is an important part of a child’s education. It is for this reasons that the Gilson College Canteen was established to provide healthy meals and snacks to staff and students (and it does that well). In keeping with scientific research and the Adventist church’s own health focus our canteen is wholly vegetarian, avoids excessive sugar and salt and offers wholesome food at a reasonable cost.

Primary students order their lunches in their classrooms each morning before classes begin. Secondary Students may order their lunches at Reception in the morning or may purchase at snacks and drinks at recess and lunch times. Canteen menus are published each term or are available on the website. The canteen operates Tuesday, Thursday and Friday during recess and lunch time.

## ATTENDANCE

It is expected that all students will attend school punctually on every school day, unless medical reasons prohibit this. It is also expected that students will remain on campus, and attend scheduled classes unless parents or teacher permission has been granted.

### Assemblies

Both schools have assemblies for the purpose of roll-marking, awards and/or announcements.

The Primary Assembly takes place in the Primary Corridor and Secondary assembly takes place in the Acacia Room. Both take place on Monday morning at 8:45 am. All other days, students go directly to classrooms/homerooms.

### Absences and Lateness

If a student is absent from school it is marked on the morning roll and recorded in the Office. Each morning office staff contact the family of each absent student to verify the absence and remind them that an absence note is to be provided.

If a child is late to school they must report directly to the Office where they sign-in and receive a late slip. They then proceed immediately to class where they pass on the late slip to the class

teacher. Students who are consistently late will be brought to the attention of the College administration.

Once on campus students are not permitted to leave campus until the end of the day, or without parental consent at any time. This includes senior secondary students who are expected to remain on campus even if they do not have formal classes.

If leaving class, students are provided with the appropriate tag or notation in the diary before leaving the classroom.

## BREAKS

Students have two breaks during each day: Recess, which is mid-morning and lasts about 15-20 minutes; and lunch time, which lasts about an hour. These breaks allow students to have any drink or toilet breaks as needed and undertake any physical exercise, which is encouraged.

The Primary school has a “No Junk – Fruit and Veg Only” rule for recess time which encourages positive eating habits.



## SUPERVISION

Playground supervision of students is provided by teachers from 8:20am - 3:45pm Monday - Friday. Students are discouraged from arriving before this time in the mornings.

After 3:45pm Primary students (at both campuses) who are still waiting for pick-up are escorted to OSHC where they can be collected by parents (there is a cost for this service). Secondary students are expected to attend Study Centre (Monday - Thursday) if they stay after school. After Study Centre secondary students are also escorted to OSHC where they can wait, with supervision, for parents.

## SECURITY

The security of the College is the responsibility of all members of the College community. Effective security ranges from ensuring valuables are secure to approaching strangers on campus. The following are some important guidelines to remember:

- Valuable possessions should be stored in the Office if brought to school;
- Visitors must check in with the Office upon arrival – do not go directly to a classroom;
- Question anyone you do not recognise (without a Gilson College Visitors Tag) on campus;
- Report any suspicious activity to the Office;

## LOST PROPERTY

Items of clothing, stationery, etc. that are found on campus will be taken to the Office. Items which are labelled will be available for collection, but items which are not labelled will be returned to the uniform shop for disposal – this usually means recycling or reselling. To avoid losing important items all clothing and possessions should be labelled clearly. Sewn-on tags are preferable on clothing because hand-written labels can fade over multiple washes.

# STUDENTS AND THEIR LEARNING

## LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

As expressed in the Gilson College Purpose Statement we have a focus on excellence in education. In practical terms this means that we have high academic expectations of our students and expect them and their parents to share these expectations.

Our Learning and Teaching Policy has a particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy across all learning areas, as success in these will transfer to other areas.

### Assessment and Reporting

At Gilson College we see assessment as an ongoing process designed to keep the student, their parents and the teacher informed about the learning progress of the student. All students are assessed according to Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) and Australian Curriculum standards (F-Year 10) or Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)/Vocational Major (VM)/Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) outcomes (Year 11-12) with feedback in the form of comments on student work, phone calls/emails home or notes in planners, formal written reports twice each semester and Parent-Teacher Nights twice each year.

In the Secondary School all students are expected to participate in examinations at the end of each semester. Starting small in the middle school these events lead up to the major external exams at the end of Year 12.

### Homework and Study

All students are expected to complete some work and study at home. This starts at age-appropriate levels and gradually builds up to the rigorous expectations of the VCE. The table below outlines the basic time commitments expected at each level per night:

|                      |           |                  |            |
|----------------------|-----------|------------------|------------|
| <b>Foundation -1</b> | 10-15 min | <b>Years 7-8</b> | 1-1½ hours |
| <b>Year 2</b>        | 20-30 min | <b>Year 9-10</b> | 1½-2 hours |
| <b>Years 3-4</b>     | 30-45 min | <b>VCE</b>       | 2½-3 hours |
| <b>Years 5-6</b>     | 45-60 min |                  |            |

It is strongly recommended that parents be involved in their child's homework routine as much as possible. Students who have parental involvement and guidance are far more successful and able to manage the stresses of academic life. Note, this does not mean parent's 'doing' the homework, but providing guidance and support.

### Learning support

Gilson College provides learning support in a number of ways. Within the classroom all teachers differentiate for student abilities and knowledge. This can be in the form of Individual Learning Plans (ILP) or simply providing extra challenges to stretch advanced learners.

In the Primary School at both campuses all classes have access to teacher aides who are able to assist with the differentiation of student learning and learning support staff to provide specialised guidance for special needs students. This is gradually expanding into the Secondary School.



If you suspect that your child may require some extra support, talk to your child's teacher. This may include some professional testing at an extra cost.

### Reading and Viewing Standards

As a Christian College, Gilson has important standards regarding the choice of reading material for students. Of course we want our students to be avid readers but their choice of reading material must reflect the Biblical values that are foundational to the College.

With this in mind we discourage our students from bringing reading material which has excessive or unnecessary violence, sexuality, spiritualism, horror or anything which may negatively impact the moral development of our children.

We also commit to these standards by ensuring that any reading or viewing material provided by the College will adhere to these principles.

### Plagiarism and Cheating

Integrity is one of the core values of Gilson College and we expect integrity as a part of the academic program. This includes not accepting cheating or plagiarism from students. Cheating is students seeking an unfair advantage during assessments. This includes taking unauthorised notes or materials into exams or gaining unauthorised assistance from another person. Plagiarism is using the work of somebody else without appropriate acknowledgement. This includes work from other students, books or websites and other sources. Students who are involved in such dishonest behaviour will face disciplinary action.

## CURRICULUM

The Curriculum of Gilson College up to Year 10 is based upon VELS and the Australian Curriculum with a Biblical Studies component provided by the Adventist Schools Australia (ASA) Encounter curriculum. The senior years are based upon the VCE/VET curriculum with a Biblical Studies component provided through the VCE course Religion and Society.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Learning Areas F-10</b>             | Biblical Studies, English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities, The Arts, Information & Communication Technology (ICT)*, Health & Physical Education, Sport, Design & Technology*, LOTE - French*, Careers. |
| <b>Compulsory VCE Subjects</b>         | English, Religion and Society.   |
| <b>Non-compulsory VCE Blocks</b><br>** | <b>Mathematics:</b> Maths Methods/General Maths/ Foundation Maths<br><br><b>Business:</b> Accounting   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <b>Arts:</b> Art Making and exhibiting<br><b>Science:</b> Chemistry/Physics/Biology/Psychology/Physical Education/ Health and Human Development |
| <b>Extra options #</b>  | Any VCE course offered by the Virtual School Victoria (VSV).  |
| * may be optional in Years 9 and 10.<br>** VCE courses are offered subject to student numbers and staffing availability.<br># Some extra costs may be involved. |   |

The curriculum is designed to provide the widest possible range of studies whilst still achieving the standards set by the government. As students progress towards the final years of study the curriculum becomes more specialised and they are able to focus on desired paths of learning. Guidance is provided to enable these choices to be made effectively.

## EOTC

Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) is the College's designation for all learning that takes place outside of the classroom context, including excursions and camps. We believe that learning is much more than simply academic knowledge – it must also involve experiences, activities, sights and sounds that enhance and enliven classroom-provided knowledge.

In addition to EOTC activities with an academic focus the College also plans a number of outings with an 'extra academic' focus. This includes activities that build student resilience, self-confidence and social development. We also sometimes do things just because they are fun – don't underestimate its educational power!

|                 |                                  |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>F-Year 4</b> | No overnight events              |
| <b>Year 5</b>   | Sovereign Hill, Ballarat         |
| <b>Year 6</b>   | Canberra                         |
| <b>Year 7</b>   | Adventure Camp, Halls Gap        |
| <b>Year 8</b>   | Camping, Wilson's Promontory     |
| <b>Year 9</b>   | A range of camping/hiking Camps  |
| <b>Year 10</b>  | Service Camp                     |
| <b>Year 11</b>  | Avondale College/Gold Coast Trip |



|         |                              |
|---------|------------------------------|
| Year 12 | 'Schoolies Alternative' Camp |
|---------|------------------------------|

All EOTC events, including each of the annual camps listed above, are carefully planned and supervised to ensure that student safety is never compromised while educational aims are met.

## D.E.A.R TIME (DROP EVERYTHING AND READ)

We value reading at Gilson College and recognise its importance in all aspects of positive development. D.E.A.R Time is an established 15-minute portion of each day in the Secondary school during which all students and staff read. It takes place after lunch and is not connected to any particular class but is an opportunity for all to indulge in some quality reading.

There is an expectation that all students will bring a physical book (not digital) to read during this time and that the entire reading time will be spent in silent reading. The preference is that students choose their own books – either bringing one from home or borrowing from the library. These sessions add up to more than an hour of reading each week and have a very positive impact on the overall education of young minds.



## STUDENT APPEARANCE

An important aspect of Gilson's focus on excellence involves student appearance. We expect our students to look presentable all the time because we know that if they look good they will behave better and feel better about themselves.

### School Uniforms

#### Uniform for Primary Students

##### Compulsory items for all students

1. Black polishable leather lace-up shoes (Velcro or buckle black leather shoes are permitted for Foundation students only).
2. A uniform hat when outside in T1 & 4.
3. A zip-up uniform jacket.
4. A tie in winter.

##### Optional items for all students

5. A uniform jumper (to be worn only under jacket or parka).

|        | Regular Uniform for Girls  | Regular Uniform for Boys  |
|--------|--|---|
| Summer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A uniform dress that covers the knees.</li> <li>• Navy or black bike shorts are recommended.</li> <li>• Plain white socks that cover the ankle.</li> <li>• Plain navy, black or white hair ties.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plain blue uniform shirt.</li> <li>• Grey trousers or dress shorts.</li> <li>• Plain grey socks that cover the ankle.</li> </ul> (NOTE: boys' summer and winter uniforms are the same) |
| Winter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A uniform pinafore.</li> <li>• A plain white blouse/shirt.</li> <li>• Plain navy tights or socks that cover the ankle.</li> <li>• Plain navy, black or white hair ties.</li> </ul>                          |   |
| Sport  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A uniform tracksuit only.</li> <li>• A uniform polo shirt only.</li> </ul>  |   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniform shorts/skorts.</li> <li>• Plain white socks that cover the ankle.</li> <li>• Runners with cushioned soles.</li> <li>• When swimming a one-piece bathing suit.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniform shorts.</li> <li>• Plain white socks that cover the ankle.</li> <li>• Runners with cushioned soles.</li> <li>• When swimming board shorts.</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

### General Notes

6. Uniform items are those with the Gilson College crest or 'G' on them or use the approved pattern/style.
7. Plain items are those that have no designs or logos excepting the Gilson 'G'.
8. All shirts/blouses must be tucked-in to skirts or trousers/shorts, not folded or rolled.
9. Only plain white singlets/t-shirts are to be worn beneath school shirts/blouses.
10. Hoodies are not to be worn under uniform items.



## Uniform for Secondary Students

### Compulsory items for all students

1. Black polishable, leather lace-up shoes.
2. A uniform blazer (not necessary to wear on campus in hot weather).
3. A uniform hat when outside in T1 & 4.
4. A tie (winter only for girls).

### Optional items for all students

5. A navy-blue jumper (to be worn under blazer only).
6. Uniform scarf.

|        | Regular Uniform for Girls  | Regular Uniform for Boys   |
|--------|--|--|
| Summer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A uniform dress that covers the knees.</li> <li>• Plain white socks that cover the ankle.</li> <li>• Plain navy, black or white hair ties.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A white uniform shirt.</li> <li>• Plain grey socks that cover the ankle.</li> </ul>   |
| Winter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A white uniform blouse/shirt.</li> <li>• A uniform skirt that covers the knees.</li> <li>• Plain navy socks that cover the ankle.</li> <li>• Plain navy tights or socks that cover the ankle.</li> <li>• Plain navy, black or white hair ties.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A white uniform shirt.</li> <li>• Grey uniform trousers or dress shorts.</li> <li>• Plain grey socks that cover the ankle.</li> </ul>   |
| Sport  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A uniform tracksuit only.</li> <li>• A uniform polo shirt only.</li> <li>• Uniform shorts/skorts.</li> <li>• Plain white socks that cover the ankle.</li> <li>• Runners with cushioned soles.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A uniform tracksuit only.</li> <li>• A uniform polo shirt only.</li> <li>• Uniform shorts.</li> <li>• Plain white socks that cover the ankle.</li> <li>• Runners with cushioned soles.</li> </ul> |



|  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| • When swimming: a one-piece bathing suit. | • When swimming: board shorts. |
|--|--------------------------------|

### General Notes

- Uniform items are those with the Gilson College crest or 'G' on them or use the approved pattern/style.
- Plain items are those that have no designs or logos excepting the Gilson 'G'.
- All shirts/blouses must be tucked-in to skirts or trousers/shorts, not folded or rolled.
- Only plain white singlets/t-shirts are to be worn beneath school shirts/blouses.
- Hoodies are not to be worn under uniform items.



### Student Appearance Guidelines for all students

#### General

- Personal hygiene is to be maintained, including daily washing, oral care and deodorant (for older students or as needed).
- The condition of uniforms should be clean and well-maintained (no rips, tears, fraying).

#### Hair

- Hair for girls should be neat with natural colours. It is to be tied or pinned away from face (tied when working near machinery).
- Hair for boys should be a neat, conservative cut with natural colours, no longer than collar, and not protruding onto the face.
- All hair accessories for girls should be plain navy, black or white. Boys should not need hair accessories.
- Facial hair is not permitted.

#### Jewellery and adornment

- For girls only one silver or gold stud in each ear lobe. For boys no ear adornment. For both no other body piercings.
- For girls skin care products/make-up are to be applied to appear natural, that is no extremes or colour or shade (for example, dark red cheeks, black lips or green eye lids).
- Nails must be clean and short. Coloured nail polish and false nails are not permitted.

#### Casual days

- No low-cut (showing shoulders/chest) or high-cut (showing midriff) tops.
- No singlet or 'spaghetti' tops.
- No brief shorts or dresses (higher than one hand's width above the knee).
- No tight-fitting pants, leggings or 'jeggings'.
- No obscene, offensive, rude or inappropriate words or pictures on clothing.
- Hats are still an expected part of the uniform during summer terms.
- All shoes are to be covered and appropriate for a school setting. The rules for wearing shoes in the Gym still apply.

17. The College regulations regarding jewellery and adornment, hair, nails, make-up, etc. still apply.
18. See *Casual Clothes Day Policy* for more information.

### Bags

In addition to these items all students are expected to carry their academic items in the College backpack and their sports items in the College sports bag.

**Students who have come to school in breach of College appearance guidelines may be sent home until compliance is achieved.**

### Uniform Exemptions

Gilson College recognises that there may be cases when student do not wish to meet the student appearance expectations. Reasons may include religious, ethnic or cultural background, health condition or economic hardship. In these cases, an exemption must be sought.

The Principal is responsible for managing and conducting the exemption process in relation to the Student Appearance policy. If an exemption is sought, a request should be made to the Principal in writing setting out the grounds for the exemption, any relevant evidence and the modification to the Student Appearance policy that is requested. The Principal will consider the request and seek to come to an agreement that is acceptable to all parties. Such an agreement may include:

- An agreed modification of the dress requirements rather than a complete exemption,
- Setting conditions under which the exemption will be allowed,

Exceptions are not guaranteed and are made on an individual basis, they do not negate the rules and expectation for others.

## STUDENT ORGANISATION

Organisation is one of the vital life skills that our students will learn at Gilson College. All students are provided with a student planner which they can use to record important homework, study and appointment information. Gilson planners also contain a range of helpful topics involving life,



learning and study which students should examine on a regular basis. Planners are a simple method of communication between home and school, are an important part of each student's equipment and should be taken to each class or room and referred to daily.

Another aspect of organisation which is important at Gilson College is the storage and transport of equipment. Equipment for the secondary students can be stored in lockers on campus, for which they are provided a combination lock. All students are expected to use a College backpack to transport their equipment and

possessions to and from school. With forethought equipment can be organised to allow for maximum effectiveness with minimum weight – there should be few occasions when students are carrying all of their books at once.

When preparing for classes in the Secondary school students need only carry the materials for the next two classes – during the break they will have the opportunity to collect the materials for the two classes after the break.

## THE EXTRA-CURRICULUM

A part of Gilson College's purpose is excellence in education, which is not confined only to academic areas, but includes extra-curricular areas such as cultural and sporting pursuits.

### Cultural program

The College is in the process of expanding its cultural program to ensure students get more than just academic knowledge. Depending on the campus, this program currently includes a brass band/ensemble, Primary and Secondary choirs, debating and chess. These opportunities will develop as interests and skills grow.

### Sport Program

Physical exercise is an important aspect of the education we offer at Gilson College and sport is an integral part of the program. The sport is divided into external and internal competitions and students have some choice of sports throughout the year.

The internal competition involves the Houses competing with each other and a tally of scores being kept throughout the year. A calendar of competitions is formed at the start of each year and the winning house announced on or near Awards Night. Shields are kept which record the winning Primary and Secondary house each year. Houses are consistent across both schools although there are separate competitions.

The external competition involves Gilson College students competing against students from other schools. This is done for a range of sports in both Primary and Secondary schools. There is generally some disruption to the usual program before and during these events but the competition has a positive influence on the students.

Students play sport on the courts and the oval. A gymnasium is planned for the future.

NOTE: Student attendance at extra-curricular events (such as sports) may be conditional upon their behaviour and academic performance.



## THE L4L PROGRAM

Adolescence can be a particularly troublesome time for many families. It's a time when hormone overload, the search for identity and independence issues can fill an adolescent's life with chaos, confusion and loss. At Gilson College the Learning 4 Life (L4L) Program, which centres on Year 9, has been developed using worldwide research and evidence to provide a means for students to find direction and security.



The L4L Program is structured differently to the traditional school program and utilising 'experiential education' and EOTC to create avenues for students to develop confidence in themselves and others.

A significant part of the year is spent outside of the classroom where vital life skills are learned and developed. It provides a framework upon which future success is built.

Much of the equipment that is utilised during experiential education is provided by the College but students are encouraged to purchase some items. Purchase guidance is provided by teachers. Feel free to talk to the Year 9 Level Leader for more information.

## AFTER HOURS CARE

### Outside School Hours Care

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) is the program established to provide care for children of parents whose work commitments prevent them from keeping 'normal' hours. OSHC operates, in the College Gymnasium at Taylors Hill (6:45am and 6:15pm) and in the Acacia Room at Mernda (7:00am and 6:00pm). Taylors Hill also operates programs during school holidays.

The OSHC program is mainly, but not exclusively, for Primary-aged students. OSHC staff are trained and qualified and ensure that healthy activities, food and entertainment are provided when appropriate. OSHC payments are not included in College fees and separate arrangements must be made.



### Study Club

The Gilson Study Club was established to ensure that secondary students have a place where learning can be supervised after school. The Study Club is housed in the Library, supervised by teaching staff and operates from the end of school to 5pm on Monday to Thursday.

Students are supervised in Study Club while they are waiting to be picked up by their parents, or they are sent to the Study Club by teachers when they have not completed their homework or assignments. Study Club is not a place for afternoon social gatherings and students who are not there to work will be asked to focus or make their way home.

## RESTRICTED ITEMS

At Gilson College we know that technology is an important part of life and can have a vital educational benefit, while also sometimes providing a distraction to educational outcomes. With this in mind there are a number of items which are restricted on Campus and certain College events.

Mobile phones are a part of life but may be a disruptive force on campus. Students are asked not to bring them to school, or at least turn them off when they arrive each morning. If a phone is seen in use by a student while on campus during school time it will be confiscated and will need to be collected by a parent from the Office.



A telephone is available for student use at reception during break times if needed.



MP3 players, headphones or wireless earbuds (such as Air Pods) can not only be disruptive but may also antisocial. Just like mobile phones, if they are seen in use during school time they will be confiscated. Cameras are another valuable item that can be abused in a school setting. Students should not bring their cameras to school unless arrangements have been made with their teacher. If these items are confiscated by teachers they will be kept at the Office until collected by parents.

Each of these items is restricted on campus and during school trips off campus, including camps. In some circumstances, such as during long bus trips or when operating away from teachers, students may be permitted to use MP3 players or mobile phones but these occasions will be clearly announced and monitored.

In addition to these items of technology the College also restricts the use of skateboards and related items. Students may use these when travelling to school but not while on campus. For safety, students seen using these items without helmets will have them confiscated.

## STUDENT LEADERS

Developing leadership in our young people is an important part of the College purpose. A Student Representative Council (SRC) made up of students taking leadership roles to ensure that students have a voice in the College. Each SRC (Both campuses – Primary and Secondary) is chosen annually based on votes of students and teachers.



Captains and Vice-Captains lead the SRC and in the Secondary school prefects are also chosen from amongst the senior students. Student leaders perform a variety of tasks in the school including taking worships, assisting teachers, leading out at assemblies and helping out during events.

Student leaders are given the opportunity to further develop their leadership skills by attending leadership seminars or training.

## REGISTRATION AND DEREGISTRATION

Registration is the administrative beginning of the year with the requirement for necessary paperwork, organisation and payments to be made. Much, if not all, of this can be achieved online – which simplifies the process for everyone. Only attendance at the Uniform Shop requires parents to visit the campus and appointments can be made for this before classes start.

Deregistration takes place at the end of the school year for Secondary students who will not be returning the following year, this is usually during one allocated day. Students use this opportunity to return textbooks and equipment that have been issued. The condition of these items is assessed and any lost or damaged items are charged to the family account. Students who leave before the end of the year are required to deregister and return all items rented from the College before accounts can be finalised.



# Deregistration Process

## Inform the School

Inform Admin of your intention to deregister by phone, email or in person. Gilson College Mernda requires 1 term's notice before withdrawal. Late withdrawal fees apply if sufficient notice is not given.



## Deregistration Form

Admin will provide you with a deregistration form to fill in and return.



## Exit Interview

Admin will organise a brief interview for you with the Principal by phone or in person.



## Last Day

On your student's last day of school, they should:

- Collect all personal belongings
- Return all borrowed books to the library
- Clean out desk, locker, etc.
- Purchase or return laptop (Y10-12)



## Seqta Engage Account Closed

Your Seqta Engage account will be closed after your student has left. Make sure to download their school reports before this date.



## Outstanding Fees

The Bursar will follow up with you regarding any outstanding fees.

# TEACHERS AND THEIR PRACTICE

## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

All teachers at Gilson College are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) which has comprehensive professional standards for teachers based upon the areas of Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement. These standards form the basis of professional appraisals for all teachers. For more information about these standards visit the VIT at [www.vit.vic.edu.au](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au)

Adventist Schools Victoria (ASV), the organisation responsible for administering the educational system to which Gilson College belongs, also has a comprehensive system of teacher accreditation and assessment which makes all teachers at Gilson accountable. Each teacher at Gilson College is also expected to uphold a code of ethics which includes exemplary professional conduct and spiritual leadership. For more information about this system speak to any teacher.



## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Gilson College has developed a Professional Learning Culture (PLC) which means that learning does not only take place with students in the classroom – teachers are also expected to be learners. The Objectives of the College encourage everyone to become life-long learners.

All teachers are involved in professional learning ranging from professional discussions in weekly staff meetings, seminars and training arranged by specialist organisations, to an annual conference where teachers within the ASV system come together for networking and learning. Most teachers are also involved in action research (focused on an aspect of improving their own teaching) or formal study to further their qualifications.

## CASUAL RELIEF TEACHERS (CRT)

Casual Relief Teachers (CRTs) are temporary teachers who are hired by Gilson College to cover the absence of a regular teacher. Teacher absences may be due to a range of reasons, including: illness, professional learning, personal reasons and excursions or camps. When a teacher is absent they provide the appropriate work for their classes which are then covered by the CRT.

CRTs at Gilson College undergo a stringent interview and assessment process and are subject to the same expectations as regular teachers. All CRTs are also required to be registered with the VIT.





# SCHOOL COMMUNITY

## ENROLMENTS

### Intake Levels

There are two main entry points at the College. The main intakes are at Foundation and Year 7, while admission to other non-intake levels is dependent on vacancies becoming available.

### Enquiry and Application

The enrolment process varies slightly for the different entry levels, but each application goes through a number of stages (outlined below).

Obtaining and submitting an application (with the \$200 fee) is usually the first step in the enrolment process and is not a guarantee of admission. There is significant demand for places, and so each application is assessed to ensure that the College is a suitable fit for the needs of the student. The main entry points are Foundation and Year 7 and so families are asked to indicate the proposed calendar year as well as the school year of entry for their child.

Applications are prioritised based on several criteria, including family connection to Gilson College, active involvement with a supporting Seventh-day Adventist church, a satisfactory readiness assessment (Foundation), the maintenance of a relatively even gender balance, academic record, the student's interests and activities outside of school, the date of application, and the numbers on the waiting list. Transfers from sister schools located within the state, interstate or overseas will also be considered.

### SELECTION

Submitted applications are assessed against a range of criteria including those listed above, and then students may be invited to attend an interview with the Principal or Head of Campus. Applicants will be invited to complete an independently designed standardised general achievement test. This is a thoroughly researched and nationally normed assessment instrument and provides a multifaceted estimate of students' level of general academic ability and aptitude. It should be noted that this test is used to inform the committee regarding student needs, it is not an entrance test.

### OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE

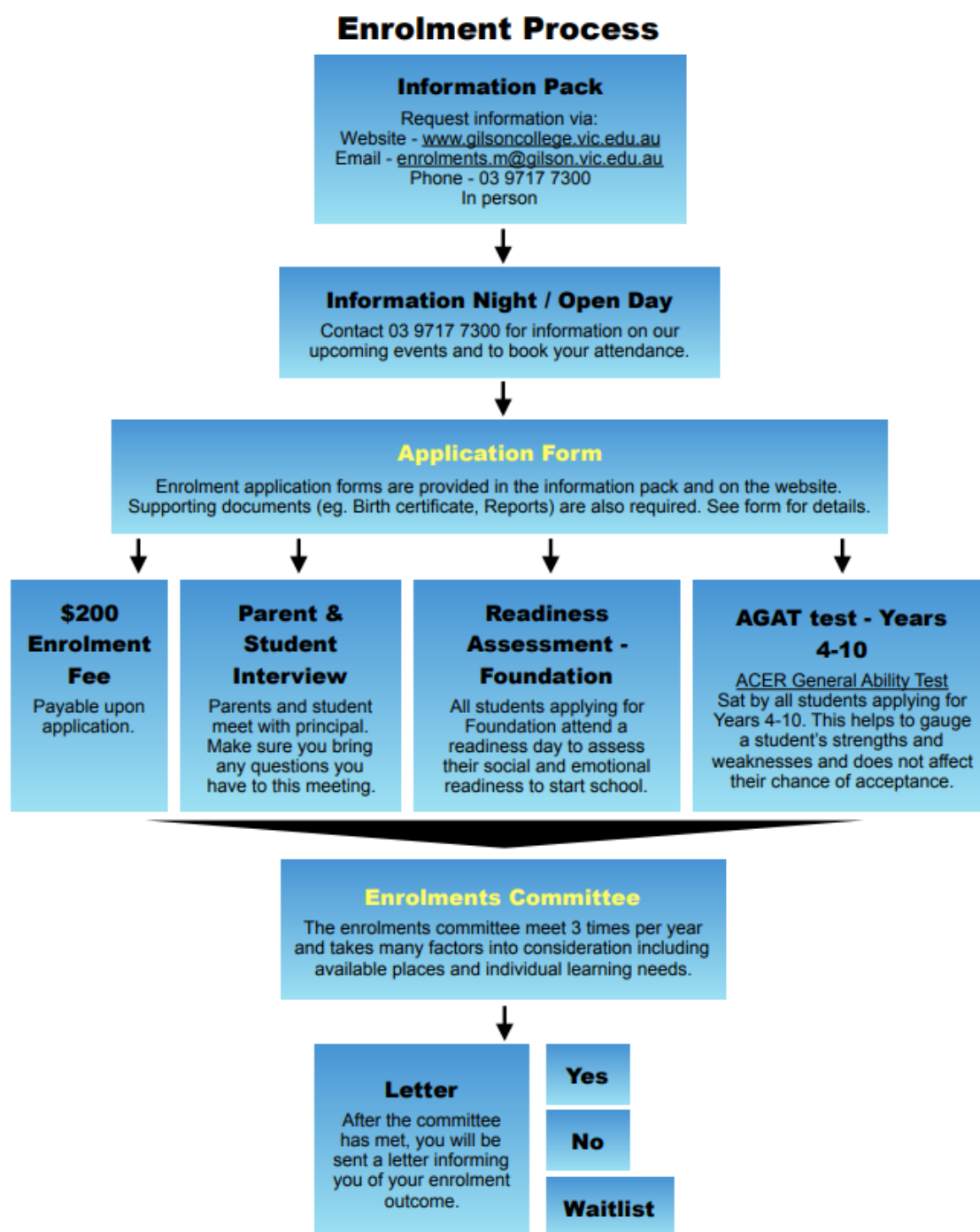
For the main intake levels, Foundation and Year 7, a first round of offers will be made in June. A second and third round of offers take place in August and November respectively. Offers to successful applicants must be accepted within 14 days. Wait-listed applicants will remain on the waiting list in case vacancies become available. Applicants may choose to withdraw their application and be removed from the waiting list.

### CONFIRMATION AND COMMENCEMENT

In the year before commencement, future students will be asked to confirm their intention to start. Each campus offers orientation activities to welcome students to our College community.

## CLASS SIZES

Class sizes may vary across the year levels according to the identified educational needs of the cohort. An apparent vacancy does not guarantee an offer of a place.



**Foundation** is the largest intake at Gilson College, with the main objective to achieve an even gender balance. At the time an offer is made (first, second or third round), parents are asked to confirm acceptance of the place by part payment of a term's fees. If the child does not receive a place at this time, parents are notified and asked if they would like to remain on the waiting list.

As part of the admissions process, students are assessed for readiness in early May. In some instances an additional year of Kinder may be recommended and parents invited to try again for the following year.

**Year 7** is a second major point of intake, however these places are limited. Applicants are asked to submit copies of their latest school reports and details of co-curricular activities and hobbies. Following the interview, all applications are assessed by the enrolments committee. There are three rounds of offers May, August and November.

At the time an offer is made, parents are asked to confirm acceptance of the place by part payment of a term's fees. If the child does not receive a place at this time, parents are notified and students may remain on the waiting list.

Admission at **other year levels** is dependent upon a place becoming available and the educational needs assessment of the existing cohort of students. Applicants at the top of the waiting list may be asked to submit the most recent school reports and to attend an interview with the relevant Head of Campus or the Principal. If an offer is made, parents are asked to confirm acceptance of the place within 10 days by payment of a term's fees in advance.



## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Gilson College gains its financial resources for operation from:

- Tuition and Service fees.
- Commonwealth and State Government grants.
- Funds raised by allocations to each Adventist Church within the area served by the College.
- Funds provided by the Victorian Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

**Please check the Handbook Supplement or the website for current financial details.**

### Application Fee

Upon applying for a place within Gilson College a \$200 Application Fee is payable before the application can be processed. This fee is non-refundable.

### Prompt Payment Discount

A discount applies on full fee paying accounts which are paid promptly. The original invoice for full fee paying accounts will revert to the standard full fee after the due date. Call the College for more information.

### Outstanding Fee Accounts

The financial viability of the College is largely dependent on the faithful and regular financial support of parents who avail themselves of the services the College provides.

The Committee of Management has further determined that if fees are outstanding and a satisfactory arrangement for payment has not been entered into, that reports and other College documentation may be withheld until accounts have been finalised.

Fee accounts that extend beyond the College guidelines may result in education privileges being withdrawn and accounts placed in the hands of a collection agency.

### Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

Education Maintenance Allowance is provided by the government to assist low income families. The allowance will be paid in two instalments and to be eligible you must be a parent or guardian of a primary or secondary student up to the age of 16 and:

- a) hold a current Centrelink Pension Concession or Health Care Card or
- b) hold a Veterans Affairs (TPI) Pensioner Card or
- c) be a Foster Parent on the first day of Term 1 for the first instalment and on the first day of Term 3 for the second instalment.

### Bus Co-operative

Gilson College operates a Bus Co-operative (currently at Taylors Hill and being developed at Mernda) to assist families with the transportation of their children to the College. Information regarding this service is available from the College Office. It is important that parents ensure all Bus Co-operative Contributions are made promptly to be assured of the continuation of service.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Gilson College is approved by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) to be on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS). This means we are able enrol Full-Fee-Paying-Overseas-Students (FFPOS) – these are students who live overseas and are here for educational purposes only.



International students are not eligible to receive Commonwealth and state grants, therefore costs related to educating overseas students are higher. For further information regarding international students and their conditions of enrolment contact the College.

## COMMUNICATION

A positive relationship between teachers and parents is vital to the success of the educational program at Gilson College. This is primarily achieved through effective communication. Teachers are encouraged to maintain regular communication with parents, via:

- Phone calls,
- Emails,
- Text messages,
- Prearranged appointments,



These contacts may be to report on behaviour or academic issues or successes, to provide information on upcoming events or to simply provide feedback. Parents are also encouraged to contact teachers to ask questions or provide clarification or information on school-related issues.

At the end of each week a newsletter is produced. This provides information about what has been happening at Gilson over the past week, upcoming events and any other items of interest to the College community. A quick read by both parents and students will ensure that they are up-to-date with College life.



The Gilson College website ([www.gilson.vic.edu.au](http://www.gilson.vic.edu.au)) is another source of information on Gilson College. Comprehensive and up-to-date, the website provides enough information to keep the community aware of the most important events on the College calendar. Some documents can also be downloaded from the website, including forms and policies.

The use of social networking is also improving the level of communication within the Gilson College community. For professional ethics reasons staff are not permitted to 'friend' students or parents but there are plenty of opportunities for students and parents within the community to interact – the Parents and Friends Facebook page is one example.

### Conflict Resolution

When an issue arises with a teacher or another student (and there is bound to be some issues in an environment with hundreds of other people!) it is important to address the issue quickly and directly.

**It is important to go directly to the teacher concerned (rather than talking about the issue with others)** – the issue may be the result of miscommunication. In most cases the issue can be easily fixed and the teacher will appreciate the feedback, remembering, of course, that feedback goes both ways.

If the issue cannot be resolved at a personal level there are a number of avenues which can be followed. Consult with the person at the next stage of the hierarchy for a resolution:

1. Teacher
2. Level Leader
3. Head of School
4. Principal
5. Conference Education Director



Avoid going "directly to the top" without speaking to the teacher concerned. The office staff will be able to assist you in reaching the right person.

We encourage parents to communicate with teachers but not during learning times (8:30-3:45), unless an appointment has been made.





## SEQTA

SEQTA is the educational management software that is used at Gilson College. It is an online system that covers attendance, wellbeing, timetables, assessments, feedback, communication and class programming.

Students use SEQTA to check their class timetables, monitor, submit and receive feedback for assessments, and communicate with teachers and other students.

Teachers use SEQTA to mark class rolls, assign, mark and provide feedback on student work, plan and manage class programs, communicate with students and parents, and complete academic reports.

Parents can use SEQTA to communicate with teachers, view academic reports and keep in touch with current and upcoming events. Information about how to create your account, log-in and use SEQTA will be provided during orientation.

## PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Parent-Teacher Interviews are another way of ensuring that the communication between teachers and parents are effective. Parent-Teacher Interviews generally occur at the beginning of Terms 2 and 3 when assessments and reports have been completed for the previous term. You will be notified of specific dates at the beginning of each year.

An online booking system is in place to ensure that teachers are able to see as many families as possible.

## INFORMATION SESSIONS

There are a number of information sessions held for parents throughout the year. These range from sessions for families to the College, to sessions providing details of upcoming camps, to general sessions about study habits, healthy cooking or a host of other topics designed to help students and parents. Some of these sessions take place in the evenings, others during the day. Some of them may even provide PEP hours.

## SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

Professional school photos are arranged as a service to parents once a year. This takes place on Photo Day, usually during Term Two. A wide variety of prints are available but parents are not obliged to buy any photographs. Arrangements can be made for family and group photos if desired.



# LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

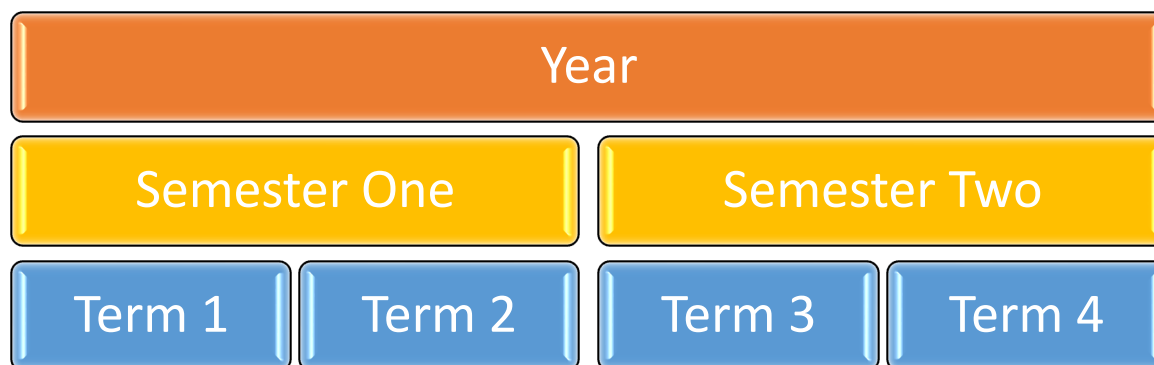
## THE COLLEGE STRUCTURE

Gilson College operates within the auspices of Adventist Schools Victoria (ASV) under the umbrella of Independent Schools Victoria (ISV). The College Council and the Principal oversee the management of the College – on both campuses; the Heads of Schools manage the day-to-day processes of each school with assistance from Level Leaders and Heads of Departments; and teachers are directly responsible for student learning.

## THE YEAR STRUCTURE

Each academic year lasts approximately 40 weeks and is divided into two semesters of 20 weeks each, which are, in turn, divided into two terms of approximately 10 weeks each.

Between each term a two-week holiday provides opportunity for a rest and recharge (including some study), with six weeks holiday at the end of each year.



Detailed reports are completed at the end of each semester with less detailed Interim Reports completed at the end of Terms One, and Term Three for Secondary only. In the Secondary School academic exams may take place at the end of each semester and Awards Nights highlight student achievements at the end of the year, with an emphasis on Year 12.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

College operations are defined through a range of policies and procedures which make College operations more effective and efficient.

The College is regularly writing, reviewing and updating policies to ensure the College is compliant with legislation and changing circumstances. Policies cover all aspects of College operations and are reviewed on a regular basis and ensure that College rules and expectations are consistent and fair.

Copies or explanation of policies are available upon request and suggestions for improvement or the development of additional policies are welcome.

## THE QUALITY ADVENTIST SCHOOLS FRAMEWORK

Here at Gilson College we believe the main purpose of our team is to ensure that we provide teachers with all they need to produce excellent outcomes for their students. This is why as part of the Adventist Schools Australia network we engage in the Quality Adventist Schools Framework. We believe that Adventist schools are God's schools. As part of the Adventist network we believe that Gilson College is God's school.

The purpose of the Quality Adventist Schools (QAS) Framework is to fulfil this mandate. By creating 'a thriving Christ-centred learning community' we will provide a place whereby every student will find meaning and purpose in their life. Through this journey of school improvement, our aim is to:

- Build a culture of improvement and excellence.
- Provide a structure for school organisation, management and direction.
- Create opportunities for 'Professional Conversations'.
- Focus on improving student outcomes.
- Describe excellence and share best practice ideas.
- Empower school leadership.
- Give opportunities to celebrate progress and achievement.
- Be evidence based to inform the school improvement plan.
- Identify school's resourcing needs.
- Create evidence of meeting legislative requirements.

The Framework is designed to provide the College leadership with key questions in each of the priority areas, distinct goals to achieve and practical processes to implement in reaching towards the goals. Each year the framework will be evaluated, successes and failures analysed, and goals re-established for the following year.





# INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

## INTEGRATION OF ICT (E-LEARNING)

Computing is an integral part of teaching and learning and it is taken seriously at Gilson College. Significant investment has gone into the development of Specialised ICT labs and classroom technology and more investment is being made into providing students with access to mobile computing technology and equipping teaching staff with the capacity to integrate ICT into all areas of learning.

Technology is a tool to be utilised in the learning process and the more skilled the students (and staff) are in using technology to aid their own learning the more effective they will be. The integration of ICT into all teaching areas provides a more effective context for learning than a stand-alone ICT subject. ICT specialists work with students and teachers to ensure that technology is used in new and innovative ways but still with the focus on student learning.

The majority of computers used at Gilson College are of Apple manufacture, ranging from desktops to laptops and tablets, but there is also a range of other interactive technologies. Students have access to the entire range of technology offered at the College and are provided with a laptop to use for their own study upon the commencement of the VCE.



## THE ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

Computers have made life and work much more effective and efficient but they also create the potential for damage to individuals and organisations. With this in mind all students are expected to agree to the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) of the College. This policy outlines the acceptable use of computers, software and hardware which maximises results whilst minimising less positive outcomes.

At the beginning of each year students are asked to read and agree to this policy, and sign the agreement form which is then filed. Student use of technology at Gilson College is monitored and uses in breach of the AUP will usually result in a reduction of access to technology privileges, and may be referred to the Discipline Committee for further action.

The use of unauthorised software or authorised software in unauthorised ways (such as listening to music during times allocated for study) also constitutes a breach of the AUP. Breach of the AUP may result in the restriction of network privileges, deletion of programs or apps, or the confiscation of the device. Details of this will be discussed with students in more detail.

## THE PRIVACY POLICY

Personal information is collected and stored at Gilson College. This information is used for the primary purpose of education or other related purposes as reasonably expected. The staff at the College will only disclose personal information, including sensitive information, when it is authorised or required by the government. This confidentiality includes sharing student information

with the student or parents/guardians of the student only. For more information refer to the Gilson College Privacy Policy.

## USE OF IMAGES POLICY

Gilson College's Use of Images Policy is based upon government legislation and covers the collection and use of personal information. This includes photographs, digital images and video. The Act allows for the use of images in the ordinary educational activities of the College, including: College identification cards, class or team photographs, and College yearbooks. Uses which will require consent include: publication in public newspapers or magazines, publication on websites, use in marketing material. Images of staff and students will be stored with due care to privacy



principles. Access to images is limited to authorised individuals and used only for authorised College purposes.

All students will be provided with a Use of Student Images Consent Form upon enrolment. This is a once-only consent which covers the use of images and personal information for the term of their enrolment at Gilson College. The form is completed by parents before enrolment can be finalised.

Where College events are recorded (video and/or audio) by parents the principles of this policy must be followed. This

means individuals should not be identifiable without consent. A copy of the Policy can be collected from the Office.

## DATA SECURITY

Gilson College's has comprehensive data security policies and procedures in place to ensure that student and family information is stored and communicated safely. To ensure that these safeguards are effective each individual must do their part to keep our data secure. This includes:

- Using a strong password to secure technology - ideally a password utilising a mixture of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers and symbols, that does not make sense, of at least 16 digits.
- Using a different password for each device, site or app.
- Not sharing your passwords with anyone.
- Ensuring your devices are updated regularly.
- Backing up personal data regularly.
- Ignoring suspicious emails, posts, links, etc. to avoid malware.



# ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES

## THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The Mernda campus is situated on approximately 13 hectares containing an administrative building, a primary and a secondary complex. Completion of current developments and further expansion is planned.

Students are encouraged to spend time outdoors, which is an important part of the learning process. To facilitate this significant 'green' areas are being developed around both campuses.

## THE LIBRARY

The College has a growing student library on each campus. As a resource centre for Gilson College the library provides:

- Books and periodicals to support the academic and recreational reading programmes of the students and staff,
- Advisory services to assist library users make efficient use of the library facilities,
- Areas for study, reading and quiet group work.

The loan period for books is 1-4 books, per student, for up to two weeks. Loans may be extended by a further two weeks provided the book in question is not in demand by other users. A student with an overdue book is unable to borrow further books until the overdue book is returned and a fine paid.



The student presents their books for borrowing (using an ID card at Taylors Hill or a thumb print at Mernda) then the librarian or teacher checks out the books. Students with overdue books are reminded personally, with overdue notices and in homeroom announcements. The replacement value of any lost books will be charged to parent accounts.

The College library is used for both private study and classroom reading and research purposes. Senior students are able to go to the library for private study whenever their timetable allows.

The library is to be used for study or reading at all times – it is not a place for social networking. Students who fail to use the library as expected may face disciplinary measures.

## TEXTBOOKS - SECONDARY

Gilson College provides all textbooks used in classes. Most textbooks are purchased by the College and rented by the students. The rental fees are included in school fees. Most books are issued to the students during the first week of classes. This may also include digital resources.

As the College owns the textbooks, it is important that students show care in their textbook use. At the end of the year textbook loss or damage is recorded and compensation charges made to parent accounts. This keeps students accountable.

## BUSES

The College operates a bus service, but numbers are limited and waiting lists are long. There is a cost involved and payments must be prompt for students to remain on the list. If you would like information regarding this service contact the College.

## MUSIC TUITION

Individual/group tuition is available for a range of instruments including piano, guitar, woodwind and percussion. Whittlesea Music provides this tuition to students. Visit [www.whittleseamusic.com.au](http://www.whittleseamusic.com.au) for further information.

## DRIVING AND PARKING ON CAMPUS

With a growing College community, the number of cars on campus is also increasing.

The College has designated parking available for staff, students, visitors and any parents who visit the campus outside of daily drop-off and pick-up times (8:20-9:00am and 3:00-3:45pm). For longer periods there is parking on the western and eastern sides of the Taylors Hill campus or the eastern side of the Mernda campus.

During drop-off and pick-up times parents are asked to avoid adding to local congestion if possible. Options include parking off-campus (for example at the nearby park at Taylors Hill) and walking to the College or simply leaving the car at home and walking with your children if you live nearby. If you cannot avoid entering the campus during these times it is vital that respect and patience is displayed towards other drivers, pedestrians and staff.



**All drivers on campus are expected to adhere to 15 kph speed limits, parking signs and generally drive in a way that maintains a safe environment for all pedestrians and other drivers.**

## BREAKAGES AND DAMAGE

We expect students to care for the environment, buildings and resources of the College. The cost of breakages and damage caused by irresponsible, careless or malicious behaviour will be charged to the parent or guardian of the student involved, in addition to any disciplinary actions to be borne by the student. The cost of accidental damage may be borne by the College.

Ideally, we expect all students to treat the environment, buildings and resources of the College as if it was their own.

**If there are any omissions or inaccuracies in this handbook, or you simply wish to comment, please contact the College. Your feedback would be appreciated.**

# APPENDICES

## FAQS

1. How do I go about enrolling my child? First, contact the College to ask for an Information Pack and make an appointment to see the Admissions Co-ordinator.
2. Do you have any places available for my child's year level? That depends of the year level – there may be waiting lists for some levels. You will have to call the College to ask.
3. Do we have a bus service? Yes, but demand is high. Refer to the website for details.
4. Which area does the bus go to and where is the closest pick up and drop off? The buses service most of the surrounding suburbs and usually stop at the corner nearest to your home.
5. Can I put my child on the waiting list? No, you must undergo the enrolment process before being placed on a waiting list.
6. When are the open days? Gilson College has no open days but school tours can be arranged by appointment and Public Information Nights occur in March and August.
7. What are the school fees? Refer to the Handbook Supplement for details.
8. If we have more than one child, is there a family discount? Yes. Refer to the Handbook Supplement for details.
9. Can I have a school tour? Yes, school tours can be arranged by appointment.
10. What subjects do we offer? Refer to the Students and their Learning section of the handbook.
11. At what age can we start enrolling my child? No earlier than 3 years.
12. Does my child have to do religion as a subject? Yes, Religion (or Biblical Studies) is compulsory from Foundation to Year 12.
13. How many students in a class? Class sizes are variable according to the individual needs of the students in that class.
14. Is the \$200 enrolment fee refundable? Only if the applicant is NOT accepted.
15. When does the Enrolment Committee meet? During May, September and November.
16. Does my child have to sit for a test? Yes, the Acer General Ability Test (AGAT) for Years Four and above.
17. Can I get the results? No, they are confidential.
18. Is Gilson College zoned? No.
19. What are the criteria for my child to be accepted, especially a Foundation child? Criteria may include age appropriateness, socialisation, emotional development and academic aptitude, sibling of an existing student, or child of a former student.
20. My child turns 5 the day after the cut-off date (currently 30th April), can I still enrol them for that year? No, the child would start the following year.
21. Does Gilson College offer any scholarships? Yes. See the website for information.

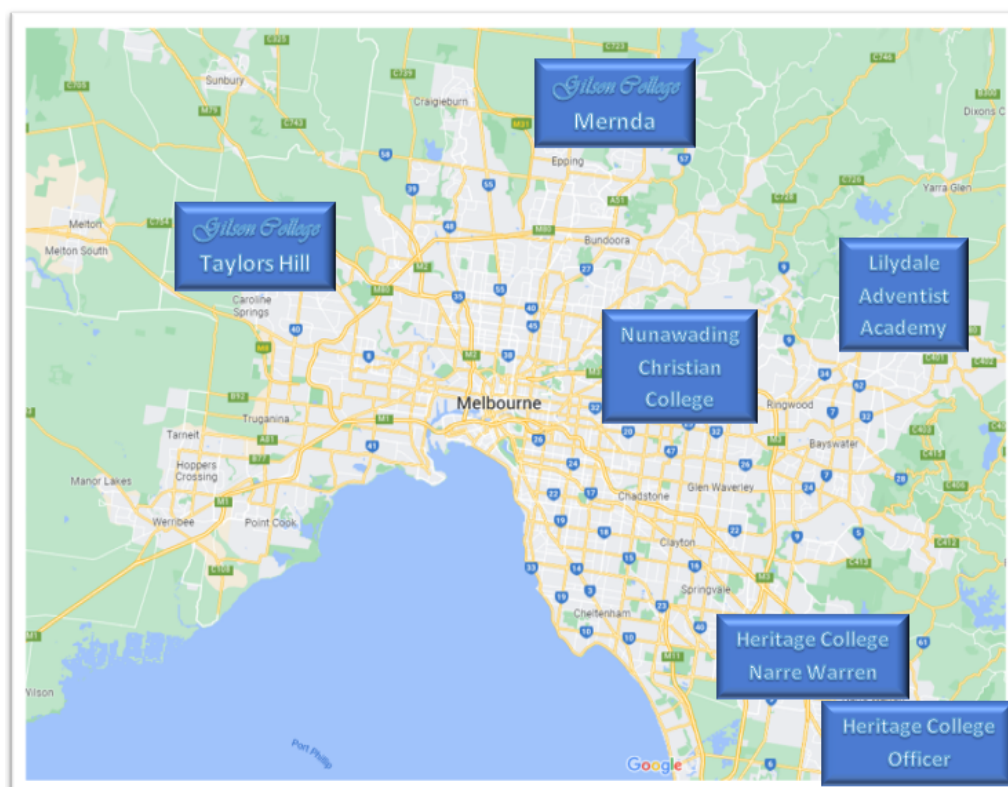
22. When does my child sit for the scholarship test? Usually in May.
23. Is there a fee to be paid for the scholarship test and how much is it? Yes, around \$80.
24. If my child is given the scholarship, what is the value of the scholarship? See the website for information.
25. Can I get a discount on school fees because I have a Health Care card or I am on a pension? No, but you may be eligible for the government's Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

## MAP

Gilson College has two campuses. The Mernda campus is situated on Melbourne's northern metropolitan fringe. The Taylors Hill campus is situated on the edge of the Western Metropolitan region of Melbourne. Both campuses serve communities in growing areas of Melbourne.

The following map identifies where both campuses can be found, in addition to other SDA schools in the Melbourne area.

NOTE: this map is to be used as a guide only and may not be spatially accurate.



## GLOSSARY

- **ASA** = Adventist Schools Australia
- **ASC** = Adventist Special Character
- **ASV** = Adventist Schools Victoria
- **AUP** = Acceptable Use Policy
- **CIM** = Critical Incident Management



- **EOTC** = Education Outside of The Classroom
- **ICT** = Information and Communication Technology
- **LA** = Learning Areas
- **L4L** = Learning 4 Life
- **OSHC** = Out of School Hours Care
- **PL** = Professional Learning
- **FOF** = Festival of Faith
- **SRC** = Student Representative Council
- **VCE** = Victorian Certificate of Education
- **WHS** = Workplace Health and Safety

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| <p>This version of the Student Handbook was completed Jan 2023</p> |
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