



S M Y L

SMYL Community College Handbook

Information for students and families

February 2016

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From the Principal

Thank you for choosing to continue your schooling at SMYL Community College.

At this school we believe that all young people can learn to create lives that are happy and useful.

We use the design principles of Big Picture Education to enable our students to develop a sense of connection to the College, to develop and demonstrate a range of skills, to demonstrate independence and responsibility and to experience generosity.

These words will develop a lot more meaning for you as you spend time at the College and immerse yourself in the learning program. There are four principles that guide the way in which we do things in our school community; respect, participation, learning and safe and legal. You will hear a lot more about these and they are described on the following pages.

We believe that it is really important that we treat you with respect and that you in turn treat yourself, others and the school with respect.

We want you to ‘notice yourself’; that is, to uncover your interests, qualities and talents. Furthermore we want you leave here uncommonly well prepared for your life beyond school. We want you have a portfolio that demonstrates your learning, e.g. VET certificates and perhaps the West Australian Certificate of Education and we want you to have a clear sense of what you want to do beyond school with a list of contacts to help you to get there.

By choosing to come to SMYL Community College you have chosen to enter into a three way partnership between yourselves, the staff at the College and your parents/guardians. The staff are here for you. We want you to succeed but we cannot do it alone. You need to be prepared to work with us and to ask your family for their involvement and support as well.

We do not want you to collude with the low expectations that you may have had of yourself in the past or that others may have of you. You can make a success of your life and I look forward to working with you towards *happiness and usefulness*.

Jo Bednall, Principal, SMYL Community College

Our College Principles

The College has four Principles. These are what make our College community work and provides each student the opportunity to learn and grow in a supportive environment.

Respect

Everyone has a right to their own beliefs, opinions and feelings. Our College is based on respect for others and the understanding that we can gain respect through our own actions. Developing self-respect allows us to be a unique person with talents and skills who can contribute to the lives of others – as well as to our College community.

Participation

To be a part of the College Community, we need to be *present*. This means always having a go as well as allowing others to have a go. When we join SMYL Community College, we make an agreement to attend classes, engage in electives and weekly excursions as well as participate in work experience and training programs.

SMYL
Community
College
Principles

Learning

There is something exciting and special about learning new knowledge, skills and abilities – as well as about ourselves! Learning gives us a sense of purpose, allows personal growth and helps us contribute to the lives of others. Our community needs all of us to be willing to learn and grow.

Safe & Legal

Everyone has the right to feel safe and valued at SMYL Community College. To make this possible, our College has strict rules of being drug and alcohol free and free from violence. This is everyone's responsibility and helps to build a community where differences and conflicts can be resolved with respect.

THE ORGANISATION OF SMYL CC

1. Organisation of students

- The College enrolls approximately 30 students in each of years 10, 11 and 12 from the start of the year and in 2016 is planning to add year 9 students in semester 2.
- In each year group students are divided into classes of 15. Each class is called an Advisory Class.
- Each Advisory Class has an Advisory Teacher who takes primary responsibility for the care and learning of the student.
- Each year group has at least one Education Assistant who also supports the learning of the students.
- There is a team of specialists called the Advisory Support Team, led by the Coordinator of Student Support, who helps students with vocational and workplace training along with personal and counselling support.

2. Term Dates for 2016

- These are published on the College's website www.smylcollege.wa.edu.au
- The first day for **new** students in 2016 is Monday, February 1
- All other students start on Tuesday, February 2.

3. Timetable for 2016

8:30 am	Breakfast (provided free of charge)
9:00am	Advisory Session 1
10:30am	Recess (snack available for 50c)
10:45 am	Advisory Session 2
12:15 pm	Lunch (food available for a gold coin donation)
12:45pm	Advisory Session 3
2:30 pm	Students finish

Advisory Session 1 will nearly always be in the classroom but Sessions 2 and 3 will be more flexible. Most weeks all students will be involved in at least one off site excursion often linked to their involvement in Bushranger Cadets and leadership certificate. Opportunities to experience arts, technology, sports and service activities will also be made available in sessions 2 and 3.

4. High sugar and energy drinks are not allowed in the College, these include Coca Cola and Pepsi of all varieties.

5. Bus Services

One of the College buses picks students up from The Hub in Kwinana each morning at about 8:15 and drops them off in the afternoon around 3:00pm. Another bus picks up from the Rockingham Train Station at 8:25 am and drops off at around 2:45pm.

6. Attendance

Parents/carers are asked to contact the College (9550 9400) by 9am if their child is not attending that day. A medical certificate is required for absences of three or more consecutive days. Our students are legally required by the State Government to attend school – every day.

Students will need to sign in/out if arriving or leaving outside normal times. Parental permission is required for students to leave the College.

7. Medical Information and Emergency Contacts

The College requires current medical details and contact numbers at all times.

8. Medication

Students are not permitted to carry medication with them. Medications must be handed to the office and a consent form is required if the medication is to be administered during the day. Sick students will be sent home following contact with parents. Paracetamol tablets can only be given with written approval.

9. Payment of school fees

The annual school fee is \$235. Parents will be invoiced early in the school year and are asked to settle their account as soon as possible. Information about the Secondary Assistance Scheme is available from the College.

10. Court Orders

If there is a court order or parent order, a copy must be supplied to the College. The College cannot accept verbal agreements concerning residence or contact of children.



LEARNING AND TEACHING AT SMYL CC

SMYL CC believes that all young people have the capacity to become happy and useful members of society.

When students leave the College it is our hope that they will have real choices for their futures based on their strong understanding of what they enjoy and of their skills and personal qualities. Our aim is that they will have documents that demonstrate real learning and a well developed plan for their first step beyond school.

As a registered non-government school in Western Australia, SMYL CC follows the guidelines of the Schools Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA). Courses are based on the Australian Curriculum and on the West Australian Certificate of Education, although students may take up additional learning opportunities, especially in workplaces and community based organisations.

Staff are aware that there are many reasons why students have chosen to leave their high schools and join SMYL CC. As a condition of enrolment students commit to participating fully and to making a full effort to learn, however, teachers know that “more of the same” will not be successful. Accordingly the College has looked for new ways to present the courses and to engage students in real learning. That new way is *Big Picture Education*.

What is Big Picture Education?

Big Picture Education (BPE) is how the teachers at SMYL CC deliver the curriculum. In other words it is how they design the learning experiences for the students to enable them to learn and to give themselves choices for their future beyond school.

But BPE is more than that. It is also a philosophy of *one student at a time ... in a community of learners* and it runs through all aspects of a student’s experience at SMYL CC.

As students progress through the school they will have many different learning experiences and BPE puts their interests at the heart of their learning. They will plan their learning to explore their interests and to prepare for their futures and then they will map that learning to the Australian Curriculum or WACE courses.

Through BPE design, students will learn with their advisory teacher in class and with mentors in the community. Parents and families are also an important part of BPE design. They are involved with the students as they develop their Personalised Learning Plans and they attend exhibitions and events during which the students demonstrate their learning.

There is much more to explain about the BPE design and about how students will learn. More information can be found on the website of BPE Australia, www.bigpicture.org.au, but most importantly the design will become clear as students immerse themselves in learning with their advisory teachers.

SMYL CC STUDENT AGREEMENT

When students choose to enrol at SMYL Community College they agree to:

Demonstrate Respect

- Everyone has a right to their own beliefs, opinions and feelings and students at SMYL CC are prepared to consider the rights and views of others, eg students
 - support other students
 - stand up against put-downs, gossip and bullying
 - resolve conflicts without using violence
 - use appropriate language
 - use earphones when playing music that is likely to offend others
 - help other students to stay safe
 - avoid talking about alcohol, drug use and violence in ways that may encourage others to take these risks
 - consider the rights of others to be smoke free
 - follow the College's dress code
- Students and staff have the right to work in an environment that is safe, attractive and functional, i.e. students look after the College's:
 - buildings
 - furniture, equipment and vehicles

Participate

Students at SMYL CC know that to be successful at school they need to:

- attend school on all or most school days
- remain at school for the entire school day
- join into all aspects of the program at school, eg electives, excursions, advisory activities, work experience and training programs





Make a full effort to learn

Students know that they are attending school to learn and so they

- come to school ready to learn, i.e.
 - on-time
 - healthy
 - willing and able to focus
- remain in the classroom when required
- follow instructions from their teachers
- seek help and advice when necessary
- participate positively in class discussions
- work positively with others

Be safe and legal

Everyone has the right to feel safe and valued at SMYL CC, e.g. students

- follow the user agreements for mobile phones, computers and other IT
- follow workplace safety and health guidelines
- behave safely in College vehicles
- come to school and all school activities free from the influence of alcohol or other drugs
- attend school and all school activities without bringing alcohol, other drugs or weapons

Students understand that there will be consequences if they do not adhere to this agreement. The consequence will depend on the seriousness of the breach and the way in which the student responds when corrected.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students are asked to be aware that they need to dress safely and respectfully as is appropriate in any workplace. This means that:

- all students should dress in a modest manner
- footwear should be sensible and safe, especially for outdoor activities
- clothing should not display racist or sexist images or slogans
- instructions must be followed for specific activities, eg long pants for K9 Rescue.

The College provides each student with a College polo shirt and a winter jumper and it is the College's preference that these are worn on a regular basis.

Students are asked to wear the College shirt to all offsite electives and excursions.

The College has a clothes library and this is developing all the time. Students are welcome to borrow clothes from the library if they need a specific item that they do not own themselves.

MOBILE PHONES

Students may have their mobile phones with them whilst at SMYL CC; however, the College takes no responsibility for damage or loss to the device.

Respect

1. Students with mobile phones may not engage in
 - personal attacks or menace or harass another person
 - post private information about another person
 - taking/sending photos or objectionable images
2. Students do not use vulgar, derogatory or obscene language whilst using a mobile phone
3. Students respect the privacy of other people before using in-phone cameras and ask for permission before they take some-one's picture

Participation

Mobile phones must not distract students from learning or participation during the school day and accordingly mobile phones are not used at assemblies or in meetings or when the teacher requires them to be put away.

Learning

Mobile phones can help students to learn, however, they must not be used in a way that distracts themselves or others from learning.

Safe and legal

It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person.

USE OF THE INTERNET AND ICT AT SMYL CC

1. The internet is a vital tool for learning at the College and also for the administration of the College. Students must be aware that they may only use the internet for educational purposes. Recreational use of the internet eg for games or downloading music or movies is only acceptable with the permission of a staff member.
2. Students also need to be aware that downloading files such as music, videos, games and other programs may infringe the Copyright Act 1998 and that anyone who infringes copyright may be personally liable under this law. Accordingly, students may only download such files with the permission of a staff member.
3. Whilst at school students do not
 - Access or attempt to access inappropriate, age restricted or objectionable material
 - Download, save or distribute such material by copying, storing, publishing, printing or showing it to other people
 - Make any attempt to get around or bypass security, monitoring and filtering that is in place at school.
4. If inappropriate material is accessed accidentally, the student
 - does not show others
 - turns off the screen or minimises the window
 - immediately reports the incident to a staff member.
5. These rules also apply to any privately owned ICT equipment/device (such as a laptop, mobile phone, USB drive) that is brought to school or a school-related activity. Any images or material on such equipment/devices must be appropriate to the school environment.
6. Students do not connect any device (such as a USB drive, camera or phone) to, or attempt to run any software on, school ICT without a staff member's permission. This includes all wireless technologies.
7. Students ask a staff member's permission before giving out any personal information (including photos) online about themselves or any other person. They also obtain permission from any other person involved. Personal information includes name, address, email address, phone numbers and photos.
8. Students respect all ICT systems in use at the school and treat all ICT equipment/devices with care. Families may be charged for repair costs associated with malicious or avoidable damage.

9. The College will monitor traffic and material sent and received using the school's ICT network and will also audit its computer network, internet access facilities, computers and other school ICT equipment/devices.

The consequences of not adhering to this cyber use policy will depend on the seriousness of the breach ranging from a formal warning to suspension and exclusion. If illegal material or activities are involved, it may be necessary for the school to inform the police.

GOOD STANDING

Students require Good Standing to participate in many College Activities.

If students maintain their commitment to the SMYL Community College Student Agreement then they will retain their Good Standing. This means that Good Standing depends on students following the four College Principles of *respect, participation, learning, safe and legal*.

If students do not demonstrate some part of these principles and if they do not respond positively to a request to modify their behaviour, they will receive a formal warning. This means that a message will be sent home and a record will be made in their file on the school data base.

Three formal warnings in a month will mean that the student will lose their Good Standing. Parents/guardians will be contacted and asked to meet with the student and their Advisory teacher to establish a behaviour management plan that will apply for a minimum of a week.

Participation in “good standing activities” also depends on the student maintaining a high level of attendance in the weeks before the activity.

Some breaches of the College Principles result in suspension, either in-school or out-of-school. Suspension results in an automatic loss of Good Standing. If a student is suspended, parents/guardians will be asked to come in for a meeting with the student, the Advisory Teacher and possibly the Principal, to establish a behaviour management plan that will apply for a minimum of two weeks.

For a small number of students part of their behaviour management plan will be a requirement for them to access specialised counselling services as a condition of their ongoing Good Standing. This is particularly the case for students who have not worked within the principle of being “safe and legal” and have become involved in violence or drugs and alcohol. At times enrolment at the College will depend upon a student engaging with such specialised support.

Students will regain their Good Standing by satisfying their Advisory Teacher that they have followed their behaviour management plan and then meeting with the College Principal to recommit to the SMYL CC Student Agreement.



REWARDS

There are a variety of ways in which students at SMYL CC are acknowledged for being respectful, participating, learning and remaining safe and legal

1. Good Standing excursions are held twice a term.
2. Good Standing events, are held from time to time e.g. camp, Graduation.
3. There is a weekly raffle draw based on raffle tickets that staff have awarded during the week. The prize is normally a shopping voucher. Students are only eligible if they are in assembly on the day of the draw unless their absence is explained, eg they are at TAFE or a work placement.
4. At the end of each term, a significant prize is awarded, for example an iPad mini. Students are eligible based on the number of raffle tickets they have accumulated during the term and on the judgement of the staff. More minor prizes may also be awarded to recognise students who have made a positive contribution during the term.
5. At the end of the year the significant achievements of students graduating from year 12 are acknowledged with certificates and occasionally with monetary awards. In other year groups significant achievements are acknowledged with certificates.
6. Some teachers also run a reward program within their class but that varies from teacher to teacher and from class to class.

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION

The SMYL Community College Student Agreement outlines the behavior that is expected of College students.

The consequences of breaking this agreement depend upon the seriousness of the breach **AND** on the ways in which students respond to being spoken to about their unacceptable behavior.

Students whose behavior places themselves or others at risk are very likely to face either internal or external suspension.

Students who do not accept responsibility for their behavior or who become verbally or physically abusive when spoken to about their behavior, will always face a much stronger consequence than those who accept responsibility for their behavior and comply with requests to modify it.

Internal suspension is likely to be for a limited time, e.g. up to two days and will involve the student working in isolation at the school. Students will immediately lose their Good Standing and parents/guardians will be contacted to be part of establishing a behavior contract that the student must meet to regain their Good Standing.

External suspension will often be for longer than a few days and a student will only be readmitted after his/her parent/guardian have met with the Advisory Teacher and College Principal or Advisory Support Coordinator. This also amounts to a loss of Good Standing and the student will have to meet the conditions of a behavior contract to regain their Good Standing privileges.

An important part of the Agreement that the student signs with the College is that they will not come to school under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. It is often difficult to judge with absolute certainty that the student is not drug free and the final decision rests with the College Principal. When staff agree that a student is unfit for school an immediate suspension will result and the student will not be readmitted until their parent/guardian has met with their Advisory Teacher and a member of the Advisory Support Team. In almost all cases the student will need to agree to drug and alcohol counseling before they will be readmitted to the College.

If the Principal and staff judge that a student's behaviour has reached the point where their ongoing presence in the College is causing undue harm or distress to other students or staff, the Principal will ask the Director of the College to permanently exclude the student from the College and to terminate their enrolment. Re-enrolment may be considered at a later date if the student has taken responsibility for their behavior and can demonstrate that they will become a positive member of the College Community.

CARING FOR STUDENTS SMYL CC

Staff at SMYL CC know that students will only learn effectively when they are feeling safe and cared for. Accordingly all staff strive to form positive relationships with students and very frequently this includes listening to their stories and problems.

Whilst a student's Advisory Teacher is the person who takes overall responsibility for his/her care and learning, students should feel confident that they can approach any member of the College staff and be listened to and supported in a respectful, positive manner.

Students should also be confident that their privacy and confidentiality will always be taken very seriously by the staff. However, students must also be aware that there may be times when a staff member believes that, in order to provide an adequate level of care to the student, they need to share some or all of what they have been told with another staff member or with a parent, care giver or outside agency.

In almost every case the staff member will ask the student's permission to do this. However, students also need to be aware that the school has a legal obligation to contact government agencies if they form a reasonable belief that a young person has been, or is being, abused or neglected.

Overall, staff are here to listen to students, to support them, to advocate for their interests and to help them to find solutions to the issues they may be facing. Staff work as a team to do this with each having different personalities, skills and responsibilities.

Students and their families can be confident that there is always some-one at SMYL CC who will listen to them and who will do their best to work with them towards a positive outcome.

