Principal
Dr Randall Pointing

Lindy Murray
Deputy Principal

Carole Hall
Deputy Principal

Chris McNeilage
Head of Curriculum
Vision Statement
“Educating Our Future”

Motto
“Honesty and Endeavour”

Principal
Dr Randall Pointing

Deputy Principals
Ms Carole Hall
Dip.T, B.Eds
Ms Lindy Murray
Diploma of Teaching, QUT

Head of Curriculum
Chris McNeilage
Diploma of Teaching, Grad Dip Teacher Librarianship

School Phone 55 691 555  Fax 55 691 500

Tuckshop 55303961
Bookshop 55227846
Outside School Hours Care 55 252 617

Email
admin@merrimacss.eq.edu.au
Web
www.merrimacss.eq.edu.au
Postal Address
2 Boowaggan Road, MERRIMAC, QLD 4226

SCHOOL HISTORY
Merrimac State School enjoys a picturesque rural setting just as it did when it first opened in 1917. From its humble beginnings as a one teacher school, Merrimac has grown to a school with approximately 850 students. The original school building remains as an historical reminder of the early 20th Century. As the school has grown so has the surrounding neighbourhood. Merrimac has a mix of buildings replicating the changing designs of schools over the last 30 years. Merrimac's rural beginning has been sustained within a country atmosphere, characterised by trees, open space, gardens and the Federation Walkway, all of which provide a haven for a range of wildlife.

Today, Merrimac takes great pride in its location, surrounded by international Golf Courses, Resorts, Hillview House (Aged Care Facility) and Braeside Wedding Chapel.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
Merrimac’s education philosophy stems from both its School Motto “Honesty and Endeavour” and its Vision Statement “Educating Our Future”. Merrimac offers a stimulating Early Childhood Program from Prep to Year 3. As a general guide classes in this area have 25 children or less. In the middle and upper primary section, classes generally have 28 children or less.
Broad curriculum experiences are provided through full time specialist teachers in the Library, Physical Education, Music, Languages other than English (LOTE), Special Needs and Learning Support. Part time teachers also provide programs for Strings, Woodwind, Brass and Percussion.

The school has the services of a Guidance Officer 3 days per week, an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher and visits from a range of Advisory Visiting Teachers who support students in the areas of physical, visual, intellectual and hearing impairment along with a regular service from a Speech/Language Pathologist.

Other areas of emphasis include the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, our School Literacy and Numeracy Programs, Assessment and Reporting, the continued development of our Environmental Program, the review of our Behaviour Management Policy and the extended use of computers throughout the school. Japanese Language is taught to Years 4, 5, 6 and 7.

**PRINCIPAL’S WELCOME**

Welcome to Merrimac State School. Choosing a school for your child is an important decision. Given that all schools are different and all students are unique, it is important that much care and consideration be given when choosing a school. Merrimac State School has an Administration Team committed to making the transition to a new school as smooth as possible. All team members understand the challenges the first day in a new school can present for both students and parents.

Staff share the same important job as parents - to support, educate and train young Australians: to be equipped with the skills necessary to contribute effectively to society.

Communication is critical if education is to be effective. For this reason we encourage you to raise issues or concerns with class teachers or a member of the Administration Team. Where possible we request that you schedule an appointment to ensure sufficient time is made available to meet with you.

We welcome your feedback in relation to our enrolment process and trust that your association with our school provides both you and your family with many happy memories, along with the skills, motivation and confidence to continue pursuing life long learning.

Randall Pointing – Principal

**SCHOOL HOLIDAYS**

The Queensland State School holidays for 2014 are as follows:

- **School commences:** 28 January 2014
- **Easter Vacation:** 7 April – 21 April 2014
- **Winter Vacation:** 30 June – 11 July 2014
- **Spring Vacation:** 22 September – 7 October 2014
- **School Ends:** 12 December 2014

**PUPIL FREE DAYS**

The proposed pupil free days for 2014 are:

- 23 & 24 January and Monday 20 October 2014. *Note there is also a gazetted Show Holiday on August 29th.*

Outside School Hours care is available for all school holidays and pupil free days, closed on public holidays.
**ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

Please extend us the courtesy of writing a short note, or emailing or phoning to explain why a child has been absent from school. When a child is to be absent from school for three or more days, the school must be notified in writing. This is an Education Queensland requirement.

**ACCIDENTS/ILLNESSES**

When your child is enrolled at our school, we will request information on our Enrolment Form so that we are able to act, as far as possible, in accordance with your wishes should the necessity arise.

It is our School Policy that if a child is seriously injured and requires hospital or casualty attention, we will call the ambulance first and the home second. If the injury is not urgent, we contact the parent at home or at work and if required then contact the ambulance.

If a child becomes ill at school we will make every effort to contact you at home or at work so that your child can be taken home. It is very important that we have up-to-date information on telephone numbers, father’s work, mother’s work and a local contact phone number of a friend, relative or neighbour in the case of a serious emergency. Please advise us if any of these numbers change so that we can keep our records up-to-date.

Neither the School nor Education Queensland carry Accident Insurance for children. Adherence to school rules and the use of common sense will do much to keep accidents to a minimum.

**ASSESSMENT OF PUPIL’S PROGRESS AND REPORTING**

It is now customary for teachers to undertake continuous assessment throughout the semester. As such end of semester testing is not as extensive as it used to be.

The timeline for reporting to parents is listed below. Parent/teacher interviews will be held at the end of Terms 1 and 3. These interviews will be complemented with student folios. It is recommended that all parents take the opportunity of attending the planned parent/teacher interviews. Written Report Cards will be sent home at the end of Terms 2 and 4. Exact dates of parent/teacher interviews and written report cards will be provided early in the school year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>End of Term 1</th>
<th>Yr P-7</th>
<th>Folios and Parent Teacher Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>End of Term 2</td>
<td>Yr P-7</td>
<td>Report Cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Term 3</td>
<td>Yrs P-7</td>
<td>Folios and parent Teacher Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Term 4</td>
<td>Yr P-7</td>
<td>Report Cards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Years Three, Five and Seven, all children take part in a National Testing Program. Parents are given further information on all these forms of evaluation and testing and receive feedback on their children’s progress.
BICYCLE ENCLOSURE
A bicycle enclosure has been provided by the school’s P&C Association to assist with the security of bicycles. It is recommended that bicycles are also securely chained to the bicycle racks. Please note that the school cannot be held responsible for any theft of bicycles. Scooters are to be locked in this enclosure.

BOOKLISTS
At the end of each year, the school will issue a list of basic requirements for the following year. The school bookshop sells book kits for each year level or separate books as required. It is expected that parents will also purchase items, as they need replacing, throughout the year.

BOOKSHOP
The school bookshop is administered by a sub-committee of the P&C. All student requirements (books and uniforms) are available each Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8.00am to 9.00am. The Bookshop is a valuable source of funds for our school. Your patronage is appreciated. The Bookshop phone number is 55227846. Online ordering is available through Flexischools. www.flexischools.com.au click on “Register Now”.

BUILDING FUND
The P&C Association requests a yearly Building Fund Levy of $10.00 per child or $20.00 per family. This levy is fully tax deductible. Merrimac State School is raising funds to further enhance our wireless capability throughout the school and to support our ongoing air conditioning maintenance.

Teachers and children may from time to time also participate in other fundraising activities to raise money for specific activities, eg: Year 7 Graduation.

BUSES
The school is serviced by Surfside Buslines. Please phone this company for further information regarding routes, stops or fares. For details regarding Bus Passes please contact Surfside Buslines on 55716555. Primary students residing more than 3.2 kilometres from the nearest State School will generally be regarded as eligible for free travel. The holding of a free bus pass is a privilege not a right. Children who abuse that privilege by misbehaviour whilst travelling can expect to have their pass confiscated - hence they will have to pay full fare.

Details regarding school bus assistance for lower income families can be obtained by phoning the Department of Transport on 132 380.

CAR PARKS
Our school has been provided with three car park facilities on Boowaggan Road. Please observe all rules when using the car park. No parking is allowed in the bus bay area in Gooding Drive. The staff car park is not available to the public.
COMPULSORY SCHOOL
In Queensland, the law requires parents to ensure their school aged child is enrolled at school, and attends school for educational programs on every school day. Compulsory school age starts when a child is 6 years of age, and finishes when the child turns 16 years of age or completes Year 10 whichever is sooner. Refer to the Education General Provisions Act 2006 (s176). Where a child of compulsory school age does not attend school, and there is no reasonable excuse for their non-attendance parents could be prosecuted for an offence and be liable to a fine of up to $450 for the first offence, and up to $900 for further offences.

DENTAL CLINIC
Qld Health provides the School Dental Service, offering treatment to students from age 4 through to completion of Year 10. Medical History/Consent forms are issued and must be completed and returned before an examination can be conducted. After the examination parents/guardians will receive a statement of treatment needs which must be signed prior to treatment commencing. The team providing this service consists of a Dentist, School Dental Therapists and Dental Assistants.

Dental Therapists working under the direction of a Dentist will carry out most of the Dental Procedures. Routine regular services are provided on the school grounds in a mobile Dental Clinic. For Emergency appointments please phone 1300 300 850 or for enquiries only phone 0432 462458.

EARLY DEPARTURES
Parents must present themselves at the office to collect students early. The Early Departure book must be completed for our records.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES
The following procedures relate to an evacuation in the event of an outbreak of fire (or explosion) at Merrimac State School. After a fire has been reported and immediately it becomes apparent that assistance is needed:

The teacher is to immediately commence evacuation procedures and advise the ‘office’ so the FIRE ALARM may be sounded. If this is not possible, the person having discovered the fire will arrange to give the alarm! (Any fire must be reported IMMEDIATELY to the Principal/Deputy Principal)

Ascertain that all children are present (check withdrawal rooms). All teachers will then lead their classes to the extremities of the playground, away from the fire and away from buildings. If doors are blocked, exit through windows. Do not use the central walkway to the oval unless it is absolutely necessary.

The following staff will undertake the following duties:
❖ All class teachers or persons in charge of class groups will lead their children to safety. Teachers are to take their class roll with them if it is possible to safely retrieve it.
❖ The Administrative Assistants will check the Administration Block for children. The Teacher/Librarian and/or Library Aides, if on duty, will check the library and take children from the library.
❖ Staff on duty will check the toilet blocks.
❖ Tuckshop helpers are to check the covered play area and escort any ‘stray’ children by the nearest safe route to the oval to meet their teachers.
- The Principal/Deputy Principal will phone the Fire Brigade, Ambulance etc immediately after the alarm has been given to receive their instructions. In case of the Principal/Deputy Principal being prevented from acting, the teacher-in-charge of the school will assume responsibility to see that the buildings are cleared and the appropriate authorities are notified.

After all children are safely away from the danger - staff and children are to assemble on the oval, provided this can be done safely. Teachers will then check (with the help of the class roll, if possible) that the full complement of students are present.

**THE ALARM IS GIVEN BY CONTINUOUS SOUNING OF AN EVACUATION SIGNAL**

Should any circumstances arise that make an observance of the above rules impossible or impracticable - teachers must then use their own discretion and keep in mind that **THE SAFETY OF THE CHILDREN IS ALWAYS THE FIRST CONCERN**. It is advisable to ensure all doorways are unlocked and free of obstructions at all times.

**ENROLMENT PROCEDURE - FOR 2014 SCHOOL YEAR**

**Prep Year**

To be eligible to attend Prep 2014 a child must be born between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2009. Application packages are available from our school office. Further information on Prep is located in the "Prep Year" section located in this booklet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birth date:</th>
<th>Eligible for Prep Year in:</th>
<th>Eligible for Year 1 in:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child born 1 Jul 2008 to 30 June 2009</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child born 1 Jul 2009 to 30 June 2010</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An orientation day will be held during October for parents of our incoming Prep Students. Birth Certificate is a requirement of Education Qld and must be presented at the time of enrolment.

**EXCURSIONS**

There may be day excursions organised by the various classes during the school year. Consent forms are sent home with children for each excursion. Costs are to be met by parents. It is school policy that all children taking part in excursions must wear the correct school uniform. Children not attired correctly will not be permitted to attend the excursion and will have excursion money refunded. This policy is supported by the school's P & C Association. Years 4 and 6 have a three-day camp during the year. Parents are notified well in advance of these events and monthly payments can be made to offset costs.

**FINANCE**

The finance window, located in the administration building, operates every Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 8.00am and 9.30am. Methods of payment are cash, cheque (made payable to Merrimac state school) EFTPOS, Credit Card, and Credit Card by phone. All excursion/activity payments should be made at the finance window by the due dates.
**HATS/HAIR**
To help promote health and safety, children with hair length on or below shoulders must wear it tied with appropriate hairbands or scrunchies. These are available from the bookshop. Hats are compulsory.
Hats must be worn by all children in all outdoor activities including lunch/recess times. The royal blue cap/hat with school emblem is available from the bookshop.

**HOME/SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS**
We believe strongly in parent involvement and we invite you to develop a close link with the school. In this way parents can be kept informed of school developments and of the progress and welfare of their children. Any parents who feel concerned about any matter relating to their children at school should seek an appointment with the Teacher, Principal or Deputy Principal to discuss the problem. Unfortunately misunderstandings do occur, often because parents receive second hand information that is not accurate. We believe that teachers and parents need to work in partnership for the benefit of all children. Parents seeking an interview with teachers should make an appointment to see them either before or after school. However, should the parent consider the matter urgent or cannot see the teacher out of teaching time, he/she should call at the office first. In this way arrangements will be made if possible for the teacher's class to be supervised during the interview.

**HOMEWORK POLICY**
A teacher may set homework for a class or individual child in different subjects. The purpose of homework is to reinforce work which has been learnt at school and also to assist any children who may be experiencing any problems with their work. Homework may include spelling, reading, number facts, operations, research and writing up of Social Studies or Science.
Homework is not to be regarded as a disciplinary action but must be of value to the child and be related to the instruction of the day or week.
If a child experiences any difficulties with set homework after having attempted it, he/she should seek assistance from the teacher the following day before school commences.
The child should not spend excessive time on any work which he/she has had difficulty with.
If homework cannot be done, parents should send a note along to the classroom teacher.
Children should take time and care when doing homework. Homework should be presented in a neat and orderly manner.
Where possible, parents are encouraged to take an active interest in their child's homework, eg. hear reading and spelling, supervise project work and sign homework given by teachers.
Homework can be given every night, including Friday. Friday's homework can be done any time during the weekend.
Some teachers prefer homework to be done on a contract basis whereby the child is given a week's homework to be done at the child's own rate as long as it is completed by the end of the week.
No set homework will be given during the holidays.

The following times can be used as a guide for homework:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Homework Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>Generally no set homework in Term 1. From Term 2 some learning of sounds, related words and reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5-10 minutes (reading and sight words). Generally not more than 1 hour each week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>15-20 minutes (written and/or learning tasks). Generally not more than 1 hour each week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 &amp; 5</td>
<td>20-25 minutes (written and/or learning tasks). Generally not more than 2-3 hours each week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 &amp; 7</td>
<td>20-40 minutes (children in these grades should be developing study skills and should be competent in written and learning work). Generally not more than 3-4 hours each week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers will correct homework the next day or as soon as possible after it is handed in. Children throughout the school will be expected to complete home reading in addition to the set homework time. If parents are concerned about homework, they should feel free to discuss these matters with the teacher. Teachers will outline homework expectations early in the school year at the teacher/parent meeting in Term 1.

**INSURANCE INFORMATION**

Parents are advised that the Department of Education Training and the Arts does not have Personal Accident Insurance cover for students. Education Queensland has public liability cover for all approved school activities and provides compensation for students injured at school only when the Department is negligent. If this is not the case, then the cost associated with the injury are the responsibility of the parent or caregiver. It is a personal decision for parents as to the type and level of private insurance they arrange to cover students for any accidental injury that may occur.

**IMMUNISATION**

Children entering school should be immunised against childhood diseases, as they will be coming into contact with lots of other children and any infections can spread easily. Children starting school should have:
- one booster injection against Diphtheria and Tetanus
- one booster dose of polio vaccine by mouth (Sabin)
- an injection of measles vaccine

**INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Merrimac participates in a number of International activities including, Sister School Exchanges, enrolment of students on Visitor and Dependent Student visas, the hosting of International Study tours and one day Visitor Tours. The school provides teacher aide and/or specialised teacher support for students where English is a Second Language. Merrimac has a broad enrolment of students from countries including Bosnia, Canada, China, England, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Russia, Scotland and Zimbabwe. Currently students in Years 4-7 study Japanese as a language other than English (LOTE).

**INTERSCHOOL SPORT**

Our school is involved in Rugby League, Touch Football, Cricket, Soccer, Basketball and Netball. An upfront bulk fee is charged to cover the cost of transportation and sports levies. No child is permitted to play without the written consent of parents. Children in Years 5, 6 and 7 not involved in Interschool Sport will take part in other school based activities. Interschool sport may be supplemented throughout the year with some organised recreational sports.
Sports Uniforms Must Be Worn When Representing The School in Interschool Sports

JAPANESE SISTER SCHOOL
In 2001 Merrimac signed a Sister School Agreement with Katsuragi Elementary School in Japan. Merrimac has enjoyed a number of exchange activities including very successful Study Tours to Japan. Our Sister School Agreement provides for student exchanges every two years. Over the last few years over 200 students and teachers from Merrimac have participated in this exchange and Merrimac State School have welcomed a similar number of students and teachers from the Katsuragi school.

JEWELLERY
In the case of safety and practicality, jewellery is to be kept to a minimum. Boys and girls may wear a watch and plain studs or sleepers in their ears. Make-up and nail polish are not allowed. No other form of jewellery or adornment is to be worn, except for medical, cultural or religious purposes.

LATE ARRIVALS
Children arriving to school after 9.00am must go first to administration to be issued with a late slip.

LEAVING THE SCHOOL GROUNDS
After a child has arrived at school, he/she must not leave the school grounds before dismissal time (2.55pm) without permission from a member of staff. Permission will be granted only on the written request from the parent/guardian of the child, or in an emergency.

LIBRARY
The library serves as a lending and reference library for the whole school. Children are welcome to borrow books in class library time or during lunch hours. Book losses or damage are the responsibility of the parent to replace or repair. To protect books, all children should have a library bag in which to carry their books. Children are to be encouraged to borrow books, as reading is a key skill and the student who develops an early love of reading is invariably a capable student.

LOCKDOWN
A lockdown is a procedure for minimising risk to students from events or circumstances such as inclement weather, toxic or chemical spills, dangerous animals or intruders. A LOCKDOWN will be initiated with the playing of recognisable music.

If students are in the classroom they will move to the front of the classrooms, near the blackboard closest to the withdrawal room or to a position out of direct sight from windows. All windows and doors are to be locked and lights turned out. Students will remain in this position until advised that the lockdown has concluded.

If students are moving between classrooms they will move to the nearest classroom and observe the lockdown procedure as if they were in their own classroom.

If students are at morning tea or lunch during a lockdown they will return to their own classroom and observe the normal lockdown procedure. If in the event a danger exists in one or more buildings staff will be deployed to redirect students.

A LOCKDOWN will be terminated by an Emergency Evacuation or advised through the intercom, phone or paging system.

LOST OR UNCLAIMED PROPERTY
It is amazing the amount of unclaimed clothing and other items that accumulate at school. To reduce this problem, please ensure that items of clothing and footwear bear the owner’s name. Please re-mark items where the identification has faded.

Items unclaimed at the end of each term will be dispatched to a charity.
The Lost Property Box is located in the undercover area. Enquiries regarding lost property may be made at the office.

**MEDICATION DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

At times, it is necessary for children under Doctor's instructions to take medication during school hours. We are aware of this need and are willing to assist you in this situation. All medication is administered through the Office and a Medication Form has to be completed. This is necessary for the safety of the child. All medication must have a chemist label with the student's name and dosage.

**MORNING TEAS/LUNCHES**

The children eat their morning teas and lunches outside their classrooms. They remain in their class groups and are supervised by their class teachers during this time.

**MUSIC & INSTRUMENTAL PROGRAM**

Students at Merrimac State School attend a formal music lesson once a week with a Specialist Music Teacher where they explore both music and movement concepts. There is a choir program with both a Junior and Senior Choir. Students can join the choir from Year 2, after they have the grounding of their classroom music program. From Year 4, students can enter the Senior Choir where they learn more advance choral techniques.

Merrimac State School offers a comprehensive Instrumental Program. Children can nominate to enter the Strings Program from Year 3 where they may choose from violins, violas or cellos. From Year 5, students have the dexterity to learn larger instruments and can choose to enter our Band Program with woodwind, brass and percussion sections. Choirs, Ensembles and Bands perform for school and community events and enter local competitions and the Gold Coast Eisteddfod each year and the State Schools Fanfare every two years.

**NEWSLETTER**

The school newsletter is published every Thursday and distributed to the youngest child in each family. It is a vital link in the communication process between home and school. The current newsletter is also available on our website [www.merrimacss.eq.edu.au](http://www.merrimacss.eq.edu.au), or on the QSchools Smartphone App.

**OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE**

Outside school hours care is available for school children from 6.30am to 8.50am and 3.00pm to 5.45pm. Please contact the Outside School Hours Care Coordinator on 55252617 Monday to Friday for further details. It is essential that parents planning to use this facility book their child/children in advance. Vacation Care is available for all school holidays and pupil free days, excluding a one-week period between Christmas and New Year. Vacation care hours are 7.30 a.m. to 5.45 p.m. Monday to Friday. For more information please contact the Outside School Hours Care Coordinator on 55252617 Monday to Friday.

**PARADE/ASSEMBLIES**

Separate Lower School (Prep and Years 1-3) and Upper School (Years 4-7) parades are held weekly in the Performing Arts Centre. Whole school parades are held for special events. Details of days and times for parades will be provided early in the school year. A number of awards such as Student of The Week are presented each week. Parents are encouraged to attend school parades/assemblies.

**PARENT BODIES**

The Parents and Citizen's Association is an officially constituted body under the provision of the Education Act. The main aim of this Association is to work for the benefit of children at school. Membership is open to anyone interested in the school. The P & C Association has a number of sub-committees. These include the Tuckshop Committee, Outside School Hours Care Committee, International Committee and Bookshop Committee. Parents are invited to involve themselves in the activities of the Association.
We realise that you may not be able to attend all meetings, but we would like to see you sometimes.

Our Parents and Citizen’s Association meets on the second Monday of each month at 6.30pm in the Administration Block. The Tuckshop, Bookshop and Outside School Hours Care Committees hold meetings as required.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT**

It is our policy that children be active participants in physical education activities. A wide range of sports activities are offered. Should your child be unfit to join classes (eg. asthma, aftermath of operations etc.) please advise us by phone or by note. Sports in which the school is involved include: Rugby League, Cricket, Soccer, Basketball, Netball, Athletics, Tennis, Touch Football, Cross Country, and Swimming.

**PREP YEAR**

Prep classes follow the Queensland Early Years Curriculum and Australian Curriculum. It focuses on factors that help children be successful in school such as social and emotional competence, health and physical well being, early literacy and numeracy, active learning processes and positive attitudes to learning. Prep is full time. All students who meet the age requirements will be eligible to enrol. To be eligible in the prep year in 2014 a child must be born between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2009.

**QSchools Smartphone App**

Do you have the latest QSchools App for your Iphone or Android mobile telephone? It’s free and available to all our parents. Once you have the App, it will give you direct access to our school’s newsletter, calendar of events, important messages and special alerts. We will be using this App to notify parents of any special news and for occasions such as cancellation of sport or various activities due to the weather.

We would really like all parents to take advantage of this free App. It will be an important communication tool between our school and parents. The newsletter will always be available on the school’s website and by accessing the QSchools App. The App QSchools is available to the school community as a free download via the Apple iTunes store and Google Play.

**RECORDS**

When a child is enrolled at school, certain items of information are obtained and recorded. Should there be changes in these, we would appreciate you advising us. Please advise of changes to your home or work telephone contact number, address, doctor, family circumstances (eg. death, divorce, separation) and any other factor which may have an influence on your child’s behaviour or attitudes. Should a Court Order in relation to Custody be in place, it is critical that Administration be aware and that a current copy be held on file.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

R.E classes are conducted each week for Year 1-7 students. A number of religious education personnel of various denominations have cooperated in drawing up a common program. Children will stay together as a class, unless otherwise specified by the parent. Separate Roman Catholic classes and Bahai classes are undertaken.

**RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR PLAN FOR STUDENTS**

The Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students outlines the rights and responsibilities of students, staff and parents. It provides links with the National Values Statements and articulates an agreed Code of Conduct. The Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students outlines expectations, consequences and awards to support and encourage students to engage with their studies and their peers in a responsible and caring manner. Merrimac acknowledges the
National Values Statements and embeds these in all aspects of managing student behaviour. The values of RESPECT and INTEGRITY are considered all embracing values which guide daily interactions within the school. Student expectations have been developed from the National Values Statements. Full details can be obtained in our Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students brochure available at the school office.

Our school's Responsible Behaviour Plan is currently being reviewed in line with the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Program in which the school is involved.

**SCHOOL COUNCIL**

Our school has a formalised School Council made up of the Principal, P&C President, 3 elected P&C representatives and 3 elected school staff members. The role of the School Council is to assist in setting strategic goals and approving the Annual School Budget. One meeting is held each term and parents are kept informed of happenings through P&C meetings and the school newsletter.

**SCHOOL UNIFORMS**

Our school is a uniform school. All children are expected to wear their school uniform at all times. Uniforms are to be kept neat and tidy. Oversize or short uniforms are discouraged. A school hat and footwear are compulsory. Uniforms must be worn on all excursions and when representing the school in sporting or other interschool activities.

School uniforms are available from the School Bookshop. Children not in school uniform will be required to change into the uniform provided by the office or teacher aide. For the safety of our students, the school insists that all students be dressed in the correct school colours. This allows for easy identification of our students and also the quick identification of any intruders who may enter our school grounds. It is required that all children wear the school hat. The broad brimmed school hat is recommended.

**SCHOOL CHAPLAIN**

Steve Mead is our school chaplain. Steve is here 2 ½ days a week and is available to all students with emotional, ethical or spiritual needs. Parents can contact Steve via the office.
SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCHOOL ACCESS
All persons within the school grounds (other than students, staff recurring volunteers and parents) must report to the administration building to be issued with official school identification, which must be worn at all times. Persons found without identification must be referred to administration for supply of identification.

After-hours use of buildings and grounds
The school buildings and grounds are only to be used after hours by staff and groups or persons with written authority of the Principal. In all other cases it will be considered as trespass and persons found on grounds will be escorted off the grounds or handed to police. Passing through the school grounds as a means of short cut is not permitted.

SCHOOL TIMES
First Bell: 8.45am
School Commences: 8.50am
Morning Tea: 11.00am—11.30am
Lunch: 1:00pm - 1:40pm
School Finishes: 2.55pm

SPECIALIST TEACHERS
Although the school has specialists in Music, Physical Education, LOTE, Library Work and Special Education (Learning Support Teacher, Guidance Officer, Speech Therapist, Communication Teacher, English as a Second Language), class teachers are still closely involved in these aspects of education.

STUDENT BANKING
A school banking service is provided for pupils by the Commonwealth Savings Bank. Banking is conducted each Monday morning. For advice on how to open a school bank account, please contact the front office.

STUDENT HEALTH
The school sick bay is located in the Administration Building and caters for children feeling unwell through the day. If, in the opinion of the administrative staff, the child is uncomfortably sick, the parents/caregivers will be phoned to collect them.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP
For 2014, Student Leaders will be elected from the Year 6 & 7 students by pupils of Year 6 & 7 and the school staff. Junior and Senior Leaders will be elected for 2014. The Student Leaders represent the students at official functions and events and receive and welcome visitors.

SPORTS CAPTAINS
For Sports competition children are allocated to houses. One boy and one girl are chosen as captains of each house.
The houses are named after the pioneering families of the Merrimac area:

Davidson = Green
Birmingham = Yellow
Hamilton = Blue
Gooding = Red


**Class Captains**
A boy and girl class captain is elected each term in classes from Years 4 to 7. These children undertake various class responsibilities within their classes.

**Student Council**
Representatives from Years 6 & 7 are elected each term by the students and teachers to be part of our Student Council. The Student Council meets monthly and is involved in a number of school-based projects and activities.

**SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL**
As there is no direct supervision of children in the grounds before school (with the exception of children booked into Outside School Hours Care), Education Queensland assumes no responsibility for their care and protection during that time. It is considered that arrival at school before 8.30am is unnecessary. Certainly children should not be at school before 8.00am. Children arriving before 8.00am are to assemble outside the Administration Block. Children should depart as soon as possible after 3.00pm. They are supervised until 3.15pm in the carpark and until the last bus leaves the bus bay. Any children left at the school after 3.15pm are required to wait at the front of the school near the Administration Block. Children will not be allowed to play on the Boowaggan Park fort unless they have been picked up by their parents and then supervised at the park by their parents.

You are encouraged to make a casual booking with Outside School Hours Care for any emergent situation which may arise where parents are delayed from collecting children of an afternoon. (Children still at school after 3.30pm, whose parents have a casual booking, will be directed to Outside School Hours Care).

**SWIMMING**
Our school provides Learn to Swim and water safety lessons for all year levels in either Term 1 or Term 4. Students travel by bus to a local aquatic centre or beach location for their lessons. Swimming permission notes and more information are supplied at the start of each swimming term. Confirmation of swimming arrangements will be made early in 2014.

**TRANSFER OF STUDENTS**
If a child is going to leave the school, a transfer note is needed to be send to the next school they will attend, please provide the details of the new school to the office and this will be forwarded.

**TUCKSHOP**
Our Tuckshop is a vital service for the children and staff of our school. Our aim is to provide a well-balanced range of foods, while managing to raise a minimum of funds to assist in the P & C Association’s budgeting framework. The Tuckshop phone number is 55303961. Online ordering is available through Flexischools. [www.flexischools.com.au](http://www.flexischools.com.au) click on “Register Now”.

**Counter opening times:**
Monday to Friday    Little Lunch    11.00 a.m. - 11.25 a.m.
Monday to Friday    Big Lunch     1.10 pm - 1.40 pm    Yrs P-7
All little lunches and big lunches have to be pre-ordered. Orders are to be written on a paper bag with the child's name and class. Correct money if possible, is to be placed inside the bag. Orders are collected in the classroom and sent to the Tuckshop at 9am. Big lunch and little lunch orders are collected from the Tuckshop by class monitors and taken to the classroom. Paper bags supplied and written by tuckshop workers are charged at 5 cents each. Envelopes are not suitable.

After the ten minute eating time at Big Lunch, children may purchase ice blocks, chips, drinks etc. from the Tuckshop. A full price list will be sent out during the first term. Additional copies of the price list are available from the Tuckshop.

**Tuckshop Volunteer Helpers**

Parents or friends working on a roster system assist with Tuckshop operations. Helpers other than parents need to have a blue card. Newcomers to the school are invited to submit their names for inclusion on the roster. The Tuckshop is administered by a sub-committee of the P & C Association.

**Use of Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices**

Mobile phones are only permitted at school when left at the school office or in the care of the classroom teacher. Phone calls are not to be made or taken during the school day without the prior consent of the Principal. Any student who is permitted to use a mobile at school accepts to use the mobile phone in an appropriate manner.

Electronic devices such as Games Boys and I-Pods are not permitted at school unless for an approved curriculum activity. Devices brought to school without permission will be removed from students and parents/cares will be requested to collect from the school office.

**Voluntary Workers**

It is practice at Merrimac to invite parents and other interested adults to serve as voluntary aides with those teachers who desire this service. This is usually outlined at the Parent Teacher Evening early in the school year. All volunteers are requested to sign in and out at the office. It is also a legal requirement that all volunteers (other than parents) must have a blue card. There is no cost involved in obtaining a volunteer blue card. You can visit the blue card website for forms and more details.