

# MERRIMAC STATE SCHOOL

## PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK



MERRIMAC SS

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM

CRICOS PROVIDER NUMBER 00608A



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## 1. PRINCIPAL WELCOME

As Principal of Merrimac State School, I extend a warm welcome as you join our friendly Merrimac community. Our school embraces students from a range of countries around the world and fosters a strong sense of belonging, respect, care and compassion. We actively promote the concept of responsible global citizenship. Our international program includes a sister-school relationship with biennial visits to Japan.

The school philosophy built around the school vision: “Educating our Future”, provides the firm foundation for everyone in our school community to pursue their goals and aspirations. Many of our students have come to Australia from overseas and have benefited by the experienced and supportive environment our school has to offer.

I trust that your time at Merrimac is rewarding and memorable and that your child makes many new friends; experiences a range of new learning opportunities and becomes both competent and confident in their use of the English language.

This handbook is provided to assist you and your family settle into our school. Should you have any concerns or need assistance please do not hesitate to contact our friendly and supportive administrative staff.

We look forward to working with your child’s education to develop them as a successful learner.

**Mrs Shannon Lusk**

## 2. SCHOOL DETAILS

2 Boowaggan Road

Merrimac Qld 4226

Office hours Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 3:30pm

Telephone: 07 5569 1555

Absence line: 07 5569 1555 Option 1

Administration Email: [admin@merrimacss.eq.edu.au](mailto:admin@merrimacss.eq.edu.au)

Website: [www.merrimacss.eq.edu.au](http://www.merrimacss.eq.edu.au)

Facebook (if applicable) <http://www.facebook.com/merrimacss>

## 3. ADMINISTRATION

Role	Name	Telephone/contact
<b>Principal</b>	Mrs Shannon Lusk	07 5569 1555
<b>Deputy Principal</b>	Miss Lindy Murray	07 5569 1555
	Mrs Brandi Anderson	07 5569 1555
<b>Heads of Curriculum</b>	Mrs Kellyanne Hall	07 5569 1555
	Mrs Rhonda Wakelin	07 5569 1555



<b>Financial matters</b>	Mrs Cathy Yeates	07 5569 1555
<b>Reception</b>	Mrs Kim Downing	07 5569 1555
<b>Administration Officer</b>	Mrs Jo Farrar	07 5569 1555
<b>Student attendance</b>	admin@merrimacss.eq.edu.au	07 5569 1555 Option 1
<b>Student well-being and support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speech pathologist</li> <li>• School Chaplain</li> <li>• Guidance Officer</li> </ul>	Mrs Carly Desfosses  Mrs Kim Roebig	07 5569 1555 07 5569 1555 07 569 1555

#### 4. SCHOOL VALUES

Merrimac's education philosophy stems from both its School Motto "Honesty and Endeavour" and our Vision Statement "Educating Our Future".

*'In the spirit of reconciliation Merrimac State School acknowledges the Traditional Custodian of the country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.'*

#### 5. INTERNATIONAL TEAM

The International Team are here to guide you with your studies and support you during your time at Merrimac State School.

<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>Coordinator Assistant</b>	<b>Guidance Officer</b>	<b>EAL/D Support</b>
Shannon Lusk	Mrs Jo Farrar	Mrs Kim Roebig	Mrs Lisa Nielsen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction</li> <li>• Class allocation</li> <li>• Curriculum</li> <li>• Reporting</li> <li>• Complaints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrolment</li> <li>• Inquiries</li> <li>• Extra Curricular Fees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and emotional support</li> <li>• Links to community support - referrals</li> <li>• Assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientation</li> <li>• Social and emotional support</li> <li>• English tuition</li> <li>• Peer support</li> </ul>

#### 6. EMERGENCY CONTACTS (DURING SCHOOL HOURS)



An emergency is a situation that may/ does affect your health, safety or welfare. In the event of an emergency during school hours please phone 07 5569 1555.

## 7. EMERGENCY CONTACTS (AFTER SCHOOL HOURS AND ON THE WEEKENDS)

Your safety is our number one priority. Because of this, we work with our partners to ensure you enjoy a safe and high-quality study experience. All Overseas students studying an international program at an accredited International Student Program (ISP) school can use our student support service called 1800 QSTUDY (1800 778 839).

The 1800QSTUDY service provides support your students, your authorised contacts and Education Queensland International (EQI) and responds to incidents that involve Overseas students outside school hours.

You can call 1800 QSTUDY before **9.00am** and after **3.00pm** on school days, and **24 hours a day** during weekends, public holidays and school vacations.

For more information on 1800 QStudy please go to the following link [1800QStudy](#)

### What is the free call 1800 QSTUDY? 1800 QSTUDY

1800 QSTUDY (+61 1800 778 839) is a free support phone service for Overseas students studying in state schools in Queensland. The service provides access to advice and assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This also includes an emergency after-hours service which manages incidents for Overseas students participating in the International Student Program, Exchanges and Study Tours.

### When should I use the 1800 QSTUDY service?

During school hours, school staff are your main point of contact.

But when school is closed and you would like to report an issue or you need urgent assistance, then phone free call 1800 QSTUDY.

At these times:

- Monday to Friday before 9am and after 3pm
- Any time on the weekends (Saturday and Sunday)
- Any time during school holidays and public holidays

## 8. CRITICAL OR LIFE-THREATENING SITUATIONS - DIAL TRIPLE ZERO (000)

A critical or life threatening situation includes:

- immediate danger
- physical or sexual assault
- serious injury or illness
- student threatened with violence
- there has been a death.

You can download the [Emergency+](#) application (app) from the Apple, Google and Microsoft app stores. The [Emergency+](#) app helps provide critical location to emergency services.



## 9. SCHOOL



## EMERGENCY AND LOCK DOWN PROCEDURE

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 raise 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 SOUNDING 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.

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 off. 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.

## 10. HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE SCHOOL

The main method of correspondence is via email. Parents receive regular emails from the school including fortnightly newsletters, invoices for excursions and events, class teacher emails regarding school work and classroom expectations. Absences can be emailed to [admin@merrimacss.eq.edu.au](mailto:admin@merrimacss.eq.edu.au) or phoned in on 5569 1555 Option 1.

## 11. ORIENTATION

The Merrimac State School Overseas Students Orientation has been designed to:

- support your student's wellbeing
- assist with orientation to the school
- help your student adjust to study in Australia
- support your student's academic success

### 0Daily Routine and Schedule for Prep – Year 6 Students

8.30am	Arrive at school (Students in Years 1-6)
8.45am	Prep students must be taken to their classroom
8.50am	Instruction commences
11.00am	First break – morning tea
11.10am	Playtime
11.30am	Instruction recommences
1.00pm	Second break – lunch
1.10pm	Playtime
1.45pm	Instruction recommences
2.55pm	Home time for all students (Prep students must be collected from their classroom)

### Orientation Program:

At the time of enrolment and prior to the student starting classes the student and parents will be interviewed by a member of the Leadership team where families and students can ask questions about their expected experience at Merrimac Primary.

### Orientation handouts

- School site map
- International Parent/Student Handbook
- Parent Information Book
- Booklist for Year level
- Tuckshop Menu
- Munch Monitor registration

instructions



- Uniform Shop Price List

The procedure for the first day of school is as follows:

1. Students are taken on a tour of the school, and are introduced to key personnel
2. Introduction to class teacher
3. Introduction to a class buddy

### Assemblies

Assemblies at Merrimac State School are held every second Wednesday in the Performing Arts Centre (PAC) usually commencing at 2.00pm as a Whole School. Parents are welcome unless health issue warnings are in place.

## 12. WHAT TO DO WHEN

- 12.1 **Late for school or class** – present to office for a late pass
- 12.2 **Leaving school during the day** – parent to contact the office for pass out
- 12.3 **Feeling sick or unwell** – advise teacher and report to office with sick bay referral
- 12.4 **Changing address or contact details** – contact school office immediately
- 12.5 **Lost property** – see lost property outside tuckshop or contact school office
- 12.6 **Toilet access during class time** – ask teacher for permission to leave class

## 13. ACCOMMODATION AND WELFARE

While studying, your student/s must live with you as the parent or Department of Home Affairs (DHA) approved guardian.

We will communicate with you, DHA approved guardian at least every six months (or sooner as required) all matters to do with your student's enrolment, schooling, welfare and accommodation matters. You can read more about EQI's Welfare and accommodation in the following documents:

- [Accommodation and welfare](#)
- [EQI Policy and procedures](#)
- [Standard terms and conditions](#)

The [EQI Change of welfare – subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#) states that as a parent or DHS approved guardian you must:

- comply with Enrolment agreement (including the [ISP standard terms and conditions \(PDF, 488KB\)](#))
- comply with [Student Guardian visa conditions](#) and consult with EQI in advance if intending to leave Australia, or at any time cannot provide accommodation or welfare during an overseas student's enrolment
- notify school staff of your residential address or changes to your residential address



as per the [ISP standard terms and conditions \(PDF, 488KB\)](#)

- seek written approval from EQI before changing an overseas student's welfare arrangements
- if leaving Australia (temporarily or permanently), provide evidence issued by EQI to the DHA showing appropriate arrangements for the overseas student's accommodation and welfare have been arranged.

## 14. CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock refers to the emotional and psychological reactions to an unfamiliar culture and environment.

For Overseas students, culture shock is often uncomfortable and disorienting. Although culture shock can be positive in some ways, it's important for students to understand what culture shock is, what causes it, and how to manage its effects.

Some of the signs of culture shock include:

- feeling isolated
- increasing frustration with your host country, the school and host family
- irregular sleep patterns
- spending a lot of time alone in your room
- you are easily upset and can't concentrate at school.

Culture shock can be described as consisting of at least one of four distinct phases: honeymoon, negotiation, adjustment and adaptation.

### 1. Honeymoon phase

The first stage of culture shock is usually positive. During the honeymoon phase the differences between the old and new culture are seen in a romantic light. For example, in moving to Australia to study, you might love the new food, the pace of life, and the locals' habits. During the first few weeks most students are fascinated by the new culture.

### 2. Frustration/ Distress phase

After some time (usually around three months, depending on the individual), differences between the old and new culture become apparent and you may feel uneasy. Excitement may eventually give way to unpleasant feelings of frustration as a person continues to experience unfavorable events that may feel strange. Language barriers, traffic safety and food differences may heighten the sense of disconnection from the surroundings.

During this phase students adjusting to a new culture may feel lonely and homesick because they are not yet used to the new environment and new people they are meeting.

### 3. Adjusting phase

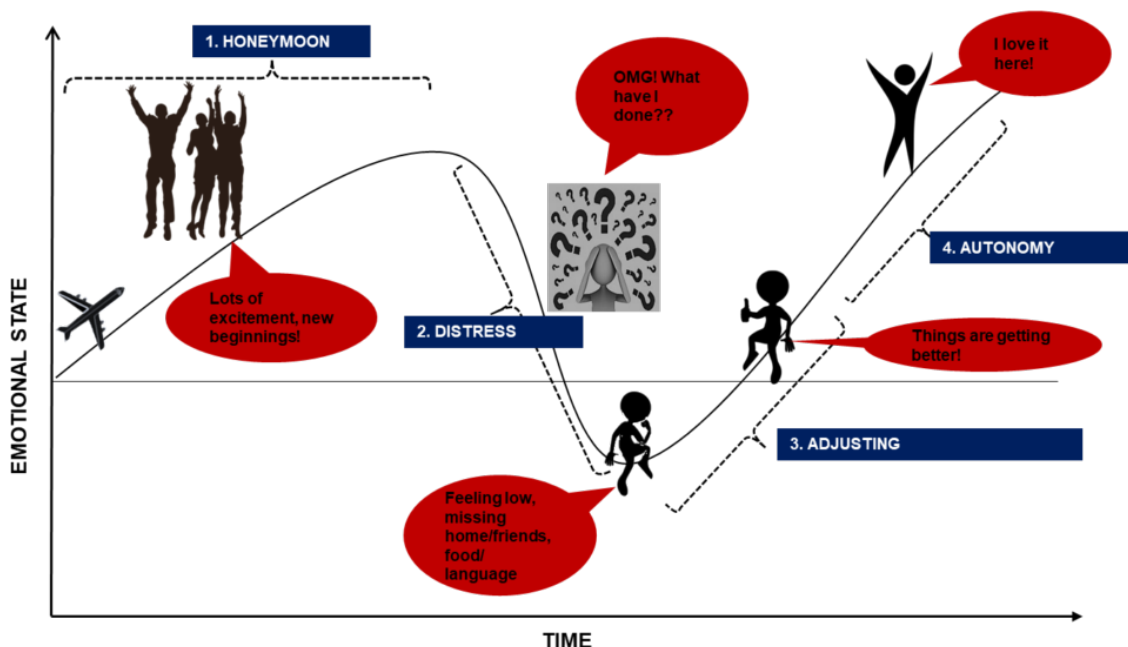
After some time (usually 6 to 12 months), a person grows accustomed to the new culture and develops routines. During this phase a person knows what to expect in most situations and the host country no longer feels very new. During this phase people develop problem-solving skills for dealing with the culture and begins to accept the culture's ways with a positive attitude. The



culture begins to make sense, and negative reactions and responses to the culture are reduced.

#### 4. Acceptance/ Autonomy phase

Individuals in the acceptance phase are able to participate fully and comfortably in the host culture. Mastery does not mean total conversion; people often keep many traits from their earlier culture, such as accents and languages.



If you think you are feeling culture shock, here are some things that you can do:

- Be patient with yourself as culture shock is a normal reaction to a changed environment.
- Talk about how you are feeling with your host family, friends or a member of the international team.
- Keep in contact with your loved ones back home.
- Socialise and make new friends.

It is important to remember the following:

- Culture shock is a perfectly normal part of the study abroad experience.
- It is important to remember that it will pass.
- Use the experience as an important learning opportunity, helping you to become versatile and adaptable to change. It will equip you with valuable life skills that are some of the greatest benefits of studying abroad.
- Step outside of your comfort zone, make new friends, and take full advantage of the once-in-a-lifetime experiences while you can.
- Once your study abroad experience is over, your family and friends will be ready and waiting to hear all about your adventures.

The international team are here to support you so that you meet your academic goals and have a wonderful study and homestay experience while at Merrimac State School.



## 15. CONTACT DETAILS

You must let your school know your residential address in Australia within seven days of arriving in Australia. You must also tell the school of any changes of residential address within seven days. Failure to do this may affect your student visa.

We also need your current telephone number and email contact details, as well as the contact details of your parent/s/legal custodians and emergency contact person/s. Any changes need to be given to us within seven days. Emergency contact must be local and contactable during the school day.

## 16. EQI STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Before you arrived in Australia you were provided with a copy of the [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#). The Standard Terms and Condition outline EQI policies that relate your responsibilities and rights and EQI's responsibilities and actions required to be taken during your course of study in Queensland.

If you have not read the Standard Terms and Conditions please do so. The Standard Terms and Conditions are available in the following languages:

- [Simplified Chinese](#)
- [German](#)
- [Italian](#)
- [Japanese](#)
- [Vietnamese](#)

## 17. VISA CONDITIONS

### Attendance

Merrimac State School's attendance policy aims to ensure students are actively engaged in school and attend every day to ensure optimal individual outcomes and student engagement. We have high expectations of student attendance. Once you have enrolled at Merrimac State School it is your responsibility to ensure that you are at school every day and that you arrive on time, ready to start class at 8.50am. A bell goes at 8.45am indicating move to your class.

You are expected to maintain 100% attendance unless you are sick. You should always tell the school if you cannot attend for all or part of the day.

In the event that you are going to be absent from school ask your homestay parent to notify the school on the day of the absence via the absentee line 5569 1555 Option 1 stating your name and class, the name of the person reporting the absence, the reason for the absence and the expected return date.

The school will record your attendance or absence every day. All absences are recorded on your school report. Electronic rolls will be marked every period. An SMS message will be sent to your homestay parents/carers of an unexplained full day absence.

It is a condition of your Sub-class 500 (schools) visa that you maintain satisfactory attendance during your period of study. Commonwealth law requires EQI to be proactive in notifying and counselling Overseas students who are at risk of failing to meet attendance



requirements. EQI is required by law to report Overseas students who have breached attendance requirements.

### ***Important information about attendance***

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| • Start and finish times                               | 8.50am – 2.55pm          |
| • Late arrival process                                 | Present to school office |
| • School absence telephone number                      | 5569 1555 Option 1       |
| • Early pickups present to office for departure ticket |                          |

### ***How attendance is recorded at Merrimac State School***

## **Absences**

Once enrolled at Merrimac State School it is your responsibility to ensure your child comes to school every day and that they arrive on time, ready to start by **8.50am**. If you need to collect your child during school hours, you must make contact in person, by phone or by note. Parents are not to collect children from classrooms without early departure slips from the office. If your child is late to school they must report to the school office to receive a late note. If they do not report to the school office you will receive an SMS text advising of your child is not in attendance. It is important to report to the office prior to going into class late to avoid parental concerns of unexplained absence when your child is in attendance but has been marked absent and not claimed a late note.

In the event that your child is absent from school:

- Call the School office on 5569 1555 Option 1 or email [admin@merrimacss.eq.edu.au](mailto:admin@merrimacss.eq.edu.au) and leave a brief message stating your name and relationship to child, the child's name and class, the reason for the absence and the expected return date

Should your child be absent for 5 consecutive days of illness, a medical certificate is required along with an explanation as to why they should not be reported for failure to meet course requirements in accordance with the National Code and the EQI International Student Application Terms and Conditions of Enrolment. International students are monitored separately for attendance and must meet visa requirements. If a student's attendance falls below 80% for a term, EQI may report the student to DIAC. If the student's attendance falls below 70%, EQI must report the student to DIAC for non-compliance of the student visa conditions.



## Full and part day absences

Table 1 – Absence codes for full or part day absence

Type of Absence	Code	Explanatory notes
Entire day	A	Student was absent entire day.
Early (No Penalty)	E	Student left early, but within the final two hours of scheduled schooling. This will not count as an afternoon/half day absence.  If the student left earlier than two hours prior to the end of the scheduled school day, this will count as an afternoon/half day absence (see “P” code).
Late (No Penalty)	L	Student arrived late, but within two hours of scheduled schooling. This will not count as a morning/half day absence.  If the student arrived after the first two hours of the scheduled school day, this will count as a morning/half day absence (see “M” code).
Morning	M	Student was absent for the morning. This will count as a half day absence.
Afternoon	P	Student was absent for the afternoon. This will count as a half day absence.

## At risk of failing to meet attendance requirements

In the [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#) and [the EQI Attendance – subclass 500 \(schools \) visa procedure](#) you are considered to be at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements if:

- you are absent for five consecutive days or more;
  - your attendance falls to 90% of your course contact hours in any [school term](#); or
  - if the school has concerns about your attendance record.
- 
- Your International Student Coordinator will require you to meet with them about your attendance record and provide evidence explaining your absences (such as medical certificates) if they are concerned.
  - If your attendance falls to 85% of your course contact hours in any term, we will give you and your parents/legal custodians and your Department of Home Affairs approved guardian (DHA approved guardian) a written warning.
  - **Unsatisfactory attendance**
  - If you do not attend at least 80% of your course contact hours, EQI will notify you in writing of their intention to report you to authorities for not achieving satisfactory attendance. EQI may exercise discretion not to report you if:



- you provide evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances explaining your absences;
- EQI are satisfied that, in all the circumstances, it is reasonable not to report you; and
- your attendance record is at least 70% (if your attendance falls below 70%, EQI is required to report you).
- If you receive a notice of EQI's intention to report you to authorities, you have the rights set out under the Appeals Policy section of the [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#).

You can read in more detail about your attendance requirements at:

- [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)
- [EQI Attendance – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#)
- [Managing student absences and enforcing attendance at state schools](#)

### Course progress

You must maintain satisfactory course progress for each study period as required in the EQI [International Student Programs Entry and course requirements standard](#) and the [EQI Course progress – subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedures](#). Maintaining satisfactory course progress is a condition of your student visa. If your course progress is not satisfactory, EQI report it to authorities and your student visa may be cancelled.

At Merrimac State School we provide written reports to you and your parents or legal custodians every semester as per the [P-12 curriculum assessment and reporting framework](#) available on the Queensland Department of Education website.

You must complete your course within the time set out in the Confirmation of Enrolment that EQI sent you.

EQI may extend the time to complete your course only if:

- there are compassionate or compelling circumstances;
- your course load is reduced because you are having difficulty making satisfactory course progress; or
- a deferral or suspension of study is approved (see the [Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy](#) section of the [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)).

Where there is an adjustment to course length you must contact the Department of Home Affairs to seek advice about any potential impacts on your visa, including the need to obtain a new visa.

### Unsatisfactory course progress

Merrimac State School will monitor your workload and your results to ensure you complete the course on time. We will also assist you if you are having difficulties. If you are at risk of not meeting course progress requirements, we will implement suitable intervention strategies with enough time for you to achieve satisfactory course progress.

### Formal intervention

If you are not making satisfactory course progress, the principal will give you and your parents or legal custodians a written warning. You will be required to meet with the principal to develop a plan to improve your performance.

If your next study period report indicates continuing unsatisfactory course progress, EQI will notify you in writing of our intention to report you to authorities for breaching the



requirement of your visa to achieve satisfactory course progress.

EQI may notify you earlier if, in their opinion, you will not be capable of meeting the course requirements. If you receive a notice of EQI's intention to report you to authorities, you have the rights set out under the **Appeals Policy** section of [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)

You can read in more detail about your attendance requirements at:

- [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Course progress – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#)

### Behaviour

Merrimac State School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and disciplined learning environment for students and staff, where students have opportunities to engage in quality learning experiences and acquire support of their lifelong wellbeing.

The Merrimac State School Responsible Behaviour Plan [Card System](#) is available on the school website. The Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students is designed to facilitate high standards of behaviour so that the learning and teaching in our school can be effective and students can participate positively within our school community.

[EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#) state that at school you must:

- participate actively at school;
- take responsibility for your own behaviour and learning;
- respect other members of the school community and the school environment and property;
- cooperate with staff and others in authority; and
- comply with Merrimac State School's rules – [Student Code of Conduct](#) and [School Wide Expectations](#)

At all times you must:

- comply with Australian laws and with the conditions of your student visa;
- not drink alcohol, smoke, misuse prescription medication or use illegal drugs;
- not do anything that endangers your safety or the safety of other people; and
- not do anything that may bring your school or the International Student Program into disrepute.

If your behaviour is unsatisfactory, EQI may cancel or suspend your enrolment. This may affect your student visa.

## 18. ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE OR DIALECT (EAL/D)

On enrolment EAL/D students are assessed in relation to their English language abilities in the areas of Listening Speaking, Reading and Writing.

The class teacher in consultation with the EAL/D teacher and associate principal will determine the most appropriate English support for individual EAL/D students based on the English competency:

- Individual



- Small Group
- In class
- Online

In primary school, particularly in the lower grade levels, the best English language support is immersion in the classroom and playground as students learn best when exposed to English in real life contexts.

## 19. STUDENT SERVICES AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Our school has the following study programs to support you in your studies:

### School Guidance Officer:

The Guidance Officer is able to assist with emotional and social issues related to settling into a new school. It can be challenging adjusting to new routines in a school where English is the main language. Referrals can be made to the Guidance Officer through the Special Needs Committee. To arrange a referral speak initially to the Deputy Principal.

### School Chaplain:

The School Chaplain provides a 'drop in service' where students can have an informal chat, share concerns, seek advice or simply take some time out. Referrals are not required to access this service. Parents are also very welcome to make use of the chaplaincy support service. The Chaplain also hosts a breakfast fitness program on Wednesday mornings before school throughout the year that helps new students to feel welcome.

### Support Teacher: Literacy and Numeracy:

As students settle into school, their specific learning needs become more apparent. In the event that a student experiences learning difficulties, some support may be available from the Support Teacher. However, this will vary from term to term and will usually be in class support in small groups.

### Support Services Flowchart

In the event of a student requiring support, the class teacher or Deputy Principal will coordinate support. When a concern is raised parents, teachers and relevant staff will meet to discuss and outline the process for obtaining support. The follow steps provide a guide as to the process.

1. Meeting with class teacher and/or Deputy Principal
2. Nature of support determined
3. Referral to Complex Case Management
4. Case discussed by team members
5. Support offered by one or a combination of the following support personnel:
  - Guidance Officer/psychologist [social and emotional support]
  - Speech Language Pathologist [communication support]
  - EAL/D teacher and/or teacher aide [access to learning support]
  - External agency such as psychologist, counsellor or physician
6. Referral documented
7. Parents/Guardians advised as to discussion and recommendations
8. Periodic review

## 20. ASSESSMENT



Merrimac State School will provide written school reports to parents each semester. Student academic progress, attendance rates and behaviour records will be regularly monitored by our International Student Coordinator to ensure compliance with the DIBC's requirements. Any issues will be raised in advance with parents. Student progress will be monitored, recorded and assessed by class teachers each term.

An intervention strategy will be implemented for any student who is at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements. Failure to meet mandatory course requirements constitutes a default and requires mandatory reporting by EQI.

## 21. LEGAL SERVICES

There are a variety of legal services in the community around our school. If you need to access legal services please see the International Student Coordinator.

[Legal Aid Queensland](http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au) can help with free advice about most personal legal problems including civil law problems such as consumer issues. You can contact Legal Aid Queensland at [www.legalaid.qld.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au) or call 1300 651 188 Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5:00pm.

For legal advice you can also contact a private solicitor or a [Community Legal Centre](#).

### Emergency and health services

If you have a medical emergency or need assistance with a medical matter you can call **1800 QSTUDY** (1800 778 839). You can also call your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) provider.

#### ***Overseas student Health Cover (OSHC)***

OSHC is insurance to assist Overseas students meet the costs of (Public) medical and hospital care that they may need while in Australia. OSHC will also pay limited benefits for pharmaceuticals and ambulance services.

Details and costs of policies, including what an OSHC policy will and won't cover, and any waiting periods that may apply to certain treatment types, can be obtained by contacting each insurer directly.

OSHC is considered adequate health insurance, however, if you find your OSHC policy does not cover you for everything you want, you can take out additional private health/travel insurance.

Your OSHC provider can help you with a range of medical advice. You **should** check with your OSHC provider website as the services and support provided can vary from provider to provider.

Common advice and support OSHC providers may provide include:

- medical assistance
- referral to a doctor for medical treatment
- getting access to an interpreting service
- counselling services
- referral to a legal service
- family and friends messaging services in the event of an emergency
- personal safety

OSHC providers in Australia

include:



Australian Health Management (ahm)	<a href="http://www.ahmoshc.com.au">www.ahmoshc.com.au</a>
Allianz	<a href="http://www.allianzassistancehealth.com.au">www.allianzassistancehealth.com.au</a>
BUPA Australia	<a href="http://www.bupa.com.au/health-insurance/oshc">www.bupa.com.au/health-insurance/oshc</a>
Medibank Private	<a href="http://www.medibank.com.au/overseas-health-insurance/oshc">www.medibank.com.au/overseas-health-insurance/oshc</a>
NIB Health Funds Limited	<a href="http://www.nib.com.au/overseas-students">www.nib.com.au/overseas-students</a>

## 22. MEDICAL MATTERS

### *Health information*

To help us support you, we need you as parent or DHA approved guardian to tell us everything we might need to know about your students' physical and mental health, including medical history, conditions and allergies.

We also need to know of any medications so we can organise anything your student might need and approve and monitor you're their support and general welfare arrangements as required by your student visa. This applies before you arrive in Australia and during your stay.

### *Visiting a doctor or dentist*

If your student needs to visit a doctor dentist you will need to make an appointment with the relevant medical professional.

### *Medication*

If your student needs to take medication while at school, a consent to administer medication form needs to be completed. An accompanying form regarding when to administer (ie Emergency, Regular or as needed) will also be completed by the parent/carer. All medication must have a pharmacy label and be handed in to administration. Your student will need to come to the office at the time the medication is required.

## 23. MEDICAL TREATMENT

If your student needs medical or other health care (other than routine care for minor illness or injury), we will use our best endeavours to contact your parents, legal custodians and homestay provider as soon as reasonably possible.

We may, as we think appropriate and in your best interests:

- provide or administer over-the-counter or prescribed medications; and
- administer first aid.

If we think you need treatment from a health care professional, we may authorise any medical and other professional treatment that we believe to be in your best interests. This includes hospital transfers, emergency procedures, and administering drugs and medications. To do



this, we may sign consents to medical and other health procedures on your behalf.

You must reimburse us for all costs associated with medical or other treatment that we authorise for you.

For further information please see the [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)

## 24. FEES

### Tuition

Tuition fees for EQI (CRICOS Provider Code: 00608A) cover:

- all curriculum schooling and teaching costs
- curriculum-related excursions

### Non-tuition fees

Some non-tuition fees may also apply for items such as school uniforms and non-curriculum activities.

Please check with your International Student Coordinator.

#### Overseas student Health Cover (OHSHC)

OSHC fees<sup>±</sup> are determined by the OSHC provider and are subject to change. For further information on OSHC, please refer to your OSHC provider.

More information regarding fees can be found at the following link:

- [Fees](#)

## 25. TRANSFER POLICY

You may apply to transfer your student between Queensland Government schools, a non-government school or another institution registered under Australian law to provide education to overseas students.

Additional tuition or other non-tuition fees may apply at the new school.

Before applying for a transfer, you should talk to your International Student Coordinator and consider any relevant enrolment deadlines at other schools.

For more detailed information please see the following documents.

- [International Student Programs Entry and course requirements standard](#)
- [Standard Terms and conditions](#)

## 26. COMPLAINTS

Before you lodge a customer complaint with the department, you are encouraged to contact your school to try to resolve your issue. If you have an issue with our course you should discuss this with your International Student



Coordinator.

If you have an issue relating to the International Student Coordinator or a decision they have made, you should discuss this with your school Principal. You can bring a support person to help you at any meeting.

Customer complaints are managed in accordance with the Department of Education's Customer [Complaints Management Framework](#), [EQI Complaints and appeals – subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#) and the [Standard Terms and Conditions](#).

You can make a formal complaint if you are dissatisfied about the service or action of a school, the department, its staff, or education agents with which EQI has arrangements to deliver your course-related service. EQI does not charge a fee for accessing the complaints process.

More detailed information can be found in the links provided above.

## 27. APPEALS

You can appeal a decision EQI makes (**Internal Appeal**):

- to report you to authorities (see the [Attendance – Subclass 500\(schools\) visa procedures](#) and [Course progress – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#);
- not to defer or suspend your enrolment, as requested by you – please see the [Enrolment – subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#).
- to suspend or cancel your enrolment, as initiated by us – please see the [Enrolment – subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#)
- to refuse your request for a transfer – please see [Transfer – Subclass 500 \(schools\) procedure](#); or
- as a result of your complaint to us – please see the [Complaints and appeals – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#).

EQI does not charge a fee for using the appeals process.

## 28. EXTERNAL APPEAL

If you are not satisfied with the decision, you can lodge a complaint (**External Appeal**) with the Queensland Ombudsman by email to [ombudsman@ombudsman.qld.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.qld.gov.au) or by post to Queensland Ombudsman, GPO Box 3314, and Brisbane Qld 4001 within 10 working days of receiving our decision.

EQI will comply with any decision the Ombudsman makes.

## 29. REFUND POLICY

### Your rights

If you do not complete your course, you may apply for a refund of some fees already paid by you (in certain circumstances). Some tuition and non-tuition fees charged by EQI are not refundable.

EQI will also pay any other refunds required by Australian law. If you demonstrate compassionate or compelling circumstances, EQI may agree to refund other



unspent fees at their discretion.

Refund requests for OSHC fees must be made to your Overseas student Health Insurance (OSHC) provider.

The right to make complaints and seek appeals of decisions and action under various processes, does not affect the rights of the student to take action under the *Australian Consumer Law* if the *Australian Consumer Law* applies.

More detail regarding refunds can be accessed at:

- [Standard Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Refund request form](#)

## 30. SCHOOL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### 30.1 School network and internet policy

Parents and students will sign a Merrimac Student Code of Conduct – Learning Technology declaration which is included in the Application for Student Enrolment Form agreeing to the terms listed on the agreement. Parents will also be provided with a Third Party Web Based Software and Service Providers/s information sheet and complete the consent form included with the document.

### 30.2 Mobile phones

Although students may bring mobile devices to school, they are required to remain at the school office between the hours of 8.50 am and 2.55 pm. Students have access to a managed internet service while at school negating the need to access content on a personal device. Where parent contact is necessary, all inquiries must be made through the school office where contact will be facilitated if deemed necessary. Given the school is unable to accept responsibility for any damage or loss, consider this matter very carefully before permitting students to take mobile devices items to school.

### 30.3 Uniform requirements

The uniform shop is located in the Main Undercover Area next to the Tuckshop

Current opening hours are Thursdays 8am – 11.30am and by appointment at other times. Ordering on Munch Monitor is available and items are delivered the next day in the class lunch basket.

Our uniform policy reinforces in students a pride in their own appearance, instils recognition of themselves as an integral part of the school community, and assists in developing pride in representing their school. The school colours are royal blue and white. The wearing of the school uniform is compulsory and is a collective responsibility (parents, students and staff). Students are required to wear correct school uniform every day unless there is a specific uniform free day. The uniform policy includes black or white enclosed shoes, school hat and royal blue jumper and track pants in cooler months.

## 31. TRANSPORT

The school is serviced by Kinetic Buslines.  
Please phone this company on 5552 2700  
for further information regarding routes,  
stops or fares.

## 32. SCHOOL



## LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Students have access to leadership activities. The student council is made up of elected representatives from all Year 4-6 classes along with our student leaders who are elected in their final year of school. The Student Council meets regularly to discuss special issues, raise concerns, seek solutions and determine fund raising initiatives for school and community projects.

Year 6 students also have the opportunity to be elected to lead one of four Sports houses:

<b>Birmingham (Yellow)</b>	<b>Davidson (Green)</b>	<b>Gooding (Red)</b>	<b>Hamilton (Blue)</b>
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Additional leadership roles are available in band, strings, choir, and playground pals. Elections for the various roles take place at the end of each academic year with official induction at a Leadership Ceremony at the start of each new school year.

## 33. SWIMMING

In Queensland, where water activities are part of our lifestyle, the safety of our children and families in and around the water is paramount. Water safety is a life skill which starts from the moment a child comes into contact with water through all stages to adult life.

Queensland state schools, in Prep to Year 6, are required to offer a water safety and swimming program. Participation in these programs by students is not compulsory. Parents can choose for their child not to participate. For more information please talk to your class teacher regarding swimming and water safety lesson for your child.

<https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/stages-of-schooling/water-safety-and-swimming>

### Beach safety

Queensland has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. However, they can be dangerous for people who are not used to the ocean. Understanding the ocean is very important – the more you know about how waves, wind and tides affect conditions in the water, the better able you are to keep yourself safe.

### Surf Life Saving Australia's 10 Surf Safety Hints

1. Always swim or surf at places patrolled by surf lifesavers or lifeguards.
2. Swim between the red and yellow flags. They mark the safest area to swim.
3. Always swim under supervision or with a friend.
4. Read and obey the signs.
5. Don't swim directly after a meal.
6. Don't swim under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
7. If you are unsure of surf conditions, ask a lifesaver or lifeguard.
8. Never run and dive into the water. Even if you have checked before, conditions can change.



9. If you get into trouble in the water, don't panic. Raise your arm for help, float and wait for assistance.
10. Float with a current or undertow. Stay calm. Don't try to swim against it. Signal for help and wait for assistance.

### Useful links

[Queensland Surf Lifesaving](#)

<https://beachsafe.org.au/> at this link you can download their Beach Safe app.



### Sun safe

Most of the sun's dangerous UV radiation (as much as 70%) occurs in the middle of the day, so if you are heading outside then you need to take particular care to seek shade, cover up, wear a hat and use sunscreen. Drink plenty of water in hot weather so as not to become dehydrated. Be sun safe by:

- avoid direct sun when possible
- drink plenty of water
- wear a long-sleeve shirt, wide brim hat and sunglasses
- regularly apply an SPF 30+ high protection sunscreen

## 34. ROAD SAFETY



Australian roads can be quite busy during peak time (mornings and afternoons are). It is important to take care when crossing roads, and always cross at intersections with traffic lights and/or pedestrian crossing zones. In Australia we drive on the left-hand side of the road and as such, you will need to **look right, look left, and then look right again before crossing.**

### 35. SCHOOL CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

Students at Merrimac Primary participate in excursions and incursion during the year with Years 4 and 5 students are invited to attend an annual school camp.

### 36. SCHOOL 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 can be reached by calling the office on 07 5569 1555. Tuckshop ordering is done via Munch Monitor online or by EFTPOS at the counter.

### 37. CLUBS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A variety of lunchtime clubs are scheduled during the school term. External providers conduct before and after school sports/activities regularly throughout the school year.

### 38. AFTER SCHOOL CARE

The Y are the provider of Outside School Hours Care at Merrimac State School. Outside school hours care is available for school children from 6.30am to 8.50am and 3.00pm to 6.00pm. Please contact the Outside School Hours Care Coordinator on 0438367390 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 6.30am to 6.00pm. Monday to Friday. For more information please contact the Outside School Hours Care Coordinator on 0438367390 Monday to Friday after 1.00pm.

### 39. SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS

Merrimac State School produces a School Newsletter each fortnight during school terms. The current and previous newsletters can be accessed from the school website at [www.merrimacss.eq.edu.au](http://www.merrimacss.eq.edu.au)

### 40. PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS

Parent teacher meetings are scheduled twice a year and can be arranged at other times by contacting the class teacher via email or phone call.

### 41. VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

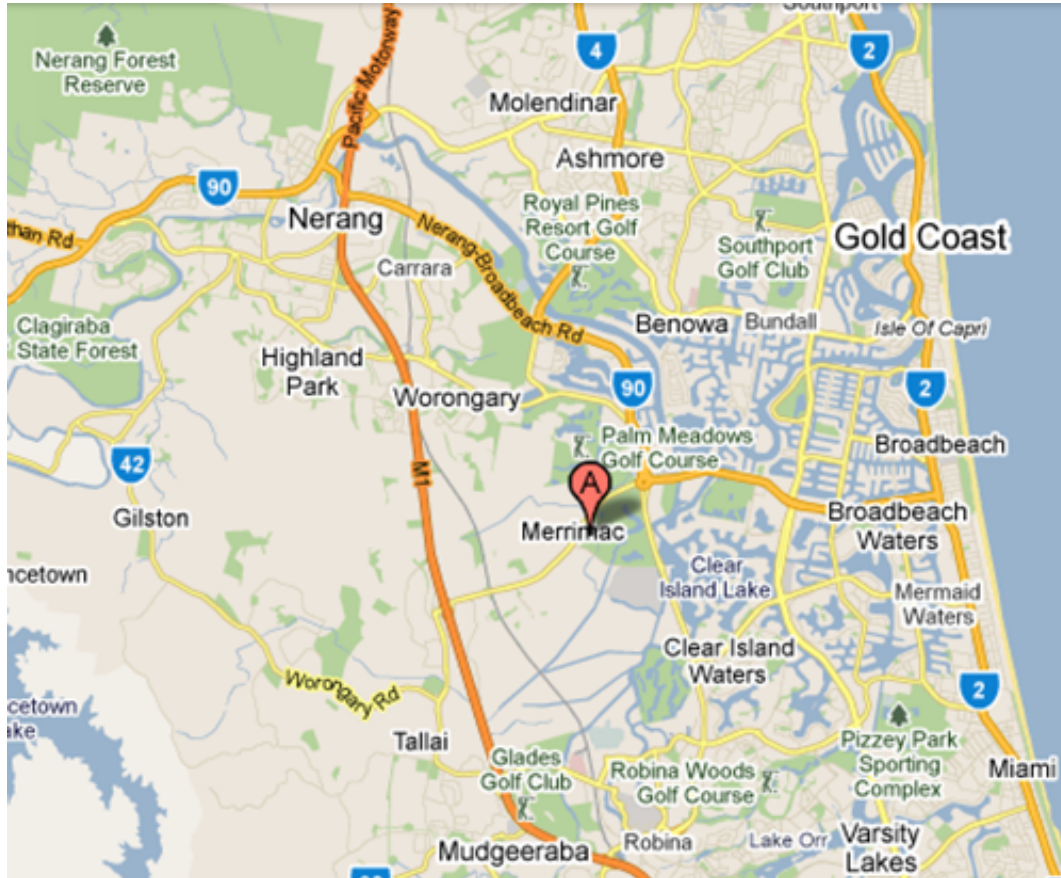
It is practice at Merrimac to invite parents to serve as voluntary aides with those teachers who desire this service. This is usually outlined at the Parents Teacher Evening early in the school year. All volunteers are requested to sign in and out at the office (excluding attendance at parades and other large school events)





## Location Maps of Queensland and City of Gold Coast





Helpful

Websites



Merrimac State School – International Parent and Student Handbook

The Queensland Department of Education trading as:

Education Queensland International (EQI) CRICOS Registration Number 00608A. \*Updated: July 2023\*

Gold Coast City Council:

<http://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au>

Robina Town Centre:

<http://www.robinatowncentre.com.au>

Queensland Health:

<http://www.health.qld.gov.au>

Queensland Ambulance:

<http://www.ambulance.qld.gov.au>

Lifeline:

<http://www.lifeline.org.au>

Gold Coast Taxis:

<http://www.gccabs.com.au>

Village Roadshow Theme Parks

<http://themeparks.com.au>

Currumbin Sanctuary:

<http://www.currumbinsanctuary.com.au>

Gold Coast Airport:

<http://goldcoastairport.com.au>

SonderSafe:

<https://www.sonder.io>

Kids Helpline:

<https://kidshelpline.com.au>

Study Gold Coast:

<https://www.studygoldcoast.org.au>

Multicultural Communities Council Gold Coast:

<https://www.mccgc.com.au>

Multicultural Families Organisation Inc:

<https://www.mfo.org.au/>

Gold Coast Chinese Club Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/GoldCoastChineseClubQld/>

Thai Community:

<http://www.watgc.com/tag/gold-coast-thai-community/>

Surfside Buslines:

<http://www.surfside.com.au>

Pacific Fair Shopping Centre:

<http://www.pacificfair.com.au>

Queensland Rail:

<http://www.queenslandrail.com.au>

Queensland Police:

<http://www.police.qld.gov.au>

Gold Coast Kids:

<http://www.goldcoastkids.com.au>

Fleays Wildlife Sanctuary:

<http://www.fleayswildlife.com.au>

Surf Lifesaving:

[sls.com.au](http://sls.com.au)

Brisbane International Airport:

<http://bne.com.au/>

Allianz Insurance:

<https://www.allianzcare.com.au/en.html>

1800 QStudy:

<https://eqi.com.au/forstudents/1800qstudy>

Translation Information Service (TIS):

<https://www.tisnational.gov.au/en>

The Japanese Society Gold Coast:

<https://jsgc.org.au>

Korean Society of Gold Coast

<https://www.gckoreansociety.com>

