Welcome from our Principal

I am so proud of our students and their many varied and wonderful achievements. Everyday the students of our school learn, work and play in harmony to create the vibrant, creative and highly-focused learning culture that establishes Buckley Park College as an outstanding, truly successful and proud Victorian State College.

At Buckley Park College we have worked together to capture an important message in our school motto “Build Your Wings”. Implicit in these three simple, yet powerful words is the principle on which our school is based: that each and every student can and will learn, they will succeed and they will flourish with positivity.

Our school is challenging, inclusive and caring. Each of our students will develop, learn and grow intellectually, physically and emotionally during their time here with us. Once they’re truly ready to leave the security of this environment and fly off into the world, they do this safe in the knowledge that, whatever their unique pathway, they will be ready to face the challenges of an ever-changing, complex and daunting world.

Students are at the centre of all that we do, say, plan and decide. We are committed to knowing our students as unique individuals and to working in close partnership with their families.

We are committed to providing a rigorous, student-centred, engaging curriculum and a broad range of extra-curricular opportunities. We are committed to seeking out, listening to and acting on the voice of our students.

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the Buckley Park College community; our outstanding local school.

Nathan Chisholm
Principal
CURIOS, DILIGENT & AMBITIOUS

Our students’ outstanding results

At Buckley Park College, students are motivated to do well. They want to achieve and they have aspirations beyond the school. They are curious, diligent and ambitious. Enabling their success is the culture of learning that fills every aspect and every corner of our school. Our expectations are high, our curriculum is challenging and our students’ academic results are consistently outstanding.

When students transition out of our school, each unique pathway is acknowledged and celebrated. Most of our students complete their VCE with excellent ATAR scores and enrol in their university courses of choice; others successfully complete VCAL and pursue more vocational pathways; some will attend TAFE or begin full-time work. Our commitment to the individual success of all students is absolute and we’re proud of them every year.

Teachers make the difference

The single most important factor in determining successful student learning outcomes is the quality of our teachers. There is compelling, robust, international research that has identified the characteristics of high performing schools. Central to these findings is the role of teachers.

The Buckley Park College Instructional Framework is our common language of learning, collaboratively developed by the community. Our Framework is based on well-researched high-yield instructional strategies described in depth in Classroom Instruction That Works (Marzano et al) and Visible Learning (John Hattie).

We value our teachers and are committed to their professional growth. Teachers collaborate closely in their focused Student Learning Teams and participate in regular opportunities to reflect on their classroom practice by seeking, giving and receiving feedback with their peers.

We have a guaranteed, clearly articulated and well-sequence curriculum; embedded in which is a variety of formative and summative assessments. We continue to invest strategically in our profession, understanding that our students deserve and need the highest-skilled teachers possible.

At Buckley Park College, we believe that high-quality teachers do indeed make the difference.

RESULTS

- Outstanding VCE results, well above the State mean
- Significant percentage of students each year with VCE study scores of 40 and above
- Median VCE study score consistently in the range 31-32
- All Year 7 and Year 9 NAPLAN results in Literacy and Numeracy well above the State mean
- Student retention from Year 7 – 12 above the State
- Top 10 schools in Victoria impacting positively on local neighbourhood property prices

Source: The Domain 2016 School Zones Report, The Age
Our positive school culture

Our College values are: Responsibility, Trust, Creativity, Respect, Acceptance, Honesty and Determination. These values were planned in collaboration with our community and each of us is expected to embrace their spirit and meaning. We notice students acting in a responsible manner; we comment on respectful relationships; it matters that we’re determined, honest, accepting, creative and trustworthy. We use this language and we use it positively.

At Buckley Park College, we have embraced the principles of Positive Psychology, which when it is adopted as a school improvement framework is known as Positive Education. Fundamentally, Positive Education is an approach which focuses on the strengths that each of us already has and a belief that we can nourish them further. We know that each of our students brings something wonderful and different to their time with us, each with their own unique strengths.

The culture of a school can be difficult to define; but you know it when you feel it, when you experience it. We warmly invite you to visit our school and to experience our positive culture. We know you’ll feel it too.

Connections

Each student at our school is a part of a Connections class. During this time, Connections teachers work with students to build strong relationships, to reflect on our values and to actively promote and teach the skills and importance of genuine wellbeing. We believe that when students feel positive and well, that they’ll also do well in their studies.

Your child’s Connections teacher will be a significant relationship for them, and for you, particularly during the transition period of Grade 6 – Year 7. We encourage you to communicate with us as often as is required.

At Buckley Park College, we believe that being a school which values, esteems and actively teaches positivity, and the skills of wellbeing, is so important. We fully embrace the international research that supports this view. Students across our school will be encouraged to learn about what it is to be truly well; they’ll be challenged to think about what makes them really happy and they’ll be supported to reflect on how best to handle situations which make them sad, and when times are tough. This is about building the resilience of our young people, so vital to making their way in a complex world.
Student voice and leadership

Our students have the opportunity to develop their skills as leaders. Leadership is a skill and responsibility that can be taught and nurtured in young people. At our school there are many ways for students to lead. Whether it be as a Class Captain in the Middle Years sub-school, a Student Representative Council (SRC) member, a House Captain, a participant in a focus group, a peer-support leader or as School Captain, students across all year levels have the chance to provide leadership to their peers and the community, local and global.

Almost all decisions that are made at our school will be influenced in a real way by the voice of our students. We believe this to be a vital element of ensuring our students’ school is the best place it can possibly be, for them.

Centre for Young Writers

The Centre for Young Writers is the hub for our school-wide focus on fostering a love of writing in students. We know the development of excellent writing skills is a significant contributor to improvement in student learning outcomes across all subject areas. Every subject requires writing proficiency and at Buckley Park College, we’re committed to providing our students with the very best writing learning opportunities, in class and in the co-curricular program.

Our students write, edit and produce a magazine - The Buckley Buzz, several times a year; the College hosts an annual two-day writing festival and our Principal leads the Principal’s Writing Competition each year.

Supportive relationships are the key

Along with an unerring focus on students’ learning growth and improved results, we prioritise strategies and structures to foster positive relationships too, because it matters. In order to know students well as learners, and as unique young people, we work from the belief that “relationships are the key”. It’s a strategic focus of our school to build programs and structures which have at their core a belief in the power of “student voice and choice”.

Our Student Engagement and Wellbeing team includes: Connections teachers, Student Engagement Leaders at each year level, Student Wellbeing leader, Youth Counsellors, Students with Special Needs Leaders, Integration Aides and Careers/Post-Compulsory Pathways leaders.

Students are welcomed into one of our four Houses when they join our community; Graves, Hoffman, Buckley or Croft. The tradition of our Houses are woven into many and varied aspects of student life at Buckley Park.
The Stages of Learning

At Buckley Park College we plan for the different learning and social needs of students at the different stages of their learning experience. The Victorian Curriculum continuum moves from a focus on ‘breath’ through to a more refined, individual focus on ‘pathways’ - so too student life here at our school.

Students in the Middle Years (7-9) undertake a balanced, rigorous and structured curriculum which covers all of the learning Domain areas, the element of student choice increasing each year. Students in the Later Years (10-12) will plan a personalised learning program within some guiding parameters. Each sub-school is overseen by an Assistant Principal, supported by a range of teacher and student leaders.

Curriculum

Our students are provided with a rich and broad curriculum, enabling them to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. Our curriculum is planned in alignment with the Standards and requirements of the Victorian Curriculum, VCAL and the VCE. At all times we work from the big question: What is most powerful for our students to learn?

The learning Domain areas are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Humanities
- Health and Physical Education
- Languages
- Arts
- Technologies

The learner capabilities are:

- Creative and critical thinking
- Inter-cultural understanding
- Ethical understanding
- Personal and social learning

Languages

At Buckley Park College, both German and Japanese are offered for study, from Year 7 – Year 12. The study of a Language is compulsory in the Middle Years (7-9) and then becomes a choice for students as they approach their VCE. The study of a language is encouraged and the value of learning a second language is strongly held principle. As well as their in-class program, students have access to many varied cultural activities, extremely popular and engaging German and Japanese Clubs, sister-school partnerships and highly regarded international study tours.

Extension and Enrichment

SEAL (Select Entry Academic Learning Program)

At Buckley Park College, every student will be challenged, at their level, to achieve their very best. In all classrooms, we cater to a wide variety of student academic abilities and teachers are expected to work with students at precisely, where they are at, not simply where they should be.

The Select Entry Accelerated Learning Program (SEAL) is for students with exceptional academic ability. Our SEAL program allows students to progress through their secondary education in either five or six years by providing exceptional, challenging learning experiences that are more tailored to the needs of gifted learners, typically working at 1-2 years above the expected level.

There is a greater emphasis on higher order thinking and independent learning and research. Course content will be compacted so that a normal Year 7-10 program is covered more quickly, without omitting anything.

Students who wish to apply for the SEAL program will be required to participate in a selection process: an application, followed by a formal entrance examination and then an interview.

S.T.E.M. - Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

The study of S.T.E.M. subjects is strongly encouraged and supported across our school. We know that, coupled with a balanced curriculum, these are vital skills for 21st Century learners and for the workplaces of the future. All students will study Mathematics and Science subjects through to Year 10. All students will learn across Domains in a technology-rich environment. All students in the Later Years have access to IT, all levels of Mathematics and all key Science disciplines. Biology, Chemistry, Psychology and Physics.
Learning: anywhere, anytime

Students must be prepared for the demands of a complex, technology-diverse world. At our school, students will be provided with many opportunities to engage with the digital world around them. All students bring a computer of their choice (BYOD) to school so that they can access the digital learning environment anytime, anywhere. They’ll use technology to communicate, collaborate, research, and present. In classes, teachers and students work side-by-side, both at their tables, and in digital collaborative spaces.

Compass is our online management and communication system between families, students, and staff. Student attendance, assessment, reporting, excursion information, and teacher-parent communication happens through Compass. Students and parents are provided with a unique log on code and you’ll then have constant real-time information on an app on your smartphone.

Our school community is strengthened by our vibrant and dynamic, studio, visual and performing arts programs that encompass performance, theory and stage production in a student-driven, highly creative setting.

Through our Drama program, students are encouraged to refine their craft, explore aspects of acting, dance, and musical theatre and unlock their creativity both in the classroom and beyond. Through our Music program, students are provided with learning opportunities in class, in small-group instrumental tuition and in one of the various ensembles and bands.

The annual school production, art show and music concert highlight the immense talent of our students in painting, sculpting, photography, acting, musicianship, singing and dancing as well as lighting, costume and backstage support. Each year our talented Music students present concerts at school, in the community and on tour. In Drama, students compete in the House Theatre Festival, entirely planned, written, directed and performed by students from Year 7 to 12.
Sporting opportunities

Students have every opportunity to participate in a high-level, inclusive and challenging sporting culture. We participate in all inter-school sports activities, often reaching the final stages of competitions. We have a reputation for being competitive and driven: fair and sportsmanlike. We have a long record of excellence at a school, local and State level.

The tradition of our Houses is important to the pride of being a Buckley Park student, and our College athletics and swimming carnivals are one of the many highly-anticipated annual House events.

Camping & outdoor education

Students across our school have access to a variety of camp and travel experiences. From our transition support camp, as students are supported into Year 7, to our international study tours of Germany and Japan, there are camps and trips across the College. Middle Years (7-9) camps are considered an expectation for all students, as they’re a vital component of what we do together each year. From Anglesea to Alice Springs, from Bacchus Marsh to Bavaria, our camps and outdoor education program is a feature of student life at Buckley Park College.

International students

Buckley Park College is accredited to enrol international students. Warm and productive relationships continue to thrive with students and families from many different countries. Our international students are closely supported throughout their time at our school and home stays are arranged while students are studying in Australia. The international students program contributes positively to our participation in a highly global and mobile society.