



Yea High School YEAR 8 Handbook



Information for students and families regarding the Year 8 program

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Dear Student and Family,

Welcome to Year 8

This year is themed My Learning: it's all about you and understanding how you learn best. At Yea High School, we believe education is most effective when families are involved, when students are empowered and when relationships are strong between the student, family, school and community. With this in mind, Year 8 is inspired by the Big Picture model of education.

Big Picture Schools believe that true learning takes place when:

- A student is an active participant in the learning process
- A student's learning is personalised and
- A student's learning is blended with real life experiences and challenges.

In Year 8 at Yea High School, students are involved in a blend of Big Picture inspired education through Advisories, Passion Projects and Gateway, whilst maintaining core subjects such as English, Maths, Science, Humanities, Physical Education, Art, Graphics and Food Technology. Please see the relevant sections of this handbook for more information.

The Year 8 Eight

In 2008, students at Yea High School participated in a forum to discuss and establish the school's core values. The student body determined that **TRUST**, **ACCEPTANCE** and **RESPECT** are our school's core values, and curriculum, policy and the day-to-day operation of the school have been aligned with these values. These are reinforced at the start of their school year by their Advisors.

In addition, in 2010, Year 8 students discussed and determined the **Year 8 Eight**: The eight most important rights and responsibilities of students, staff, families and community members involved in learning in the second year of High School. These are:



There is an expectation at Yea High School that these rights and responsibilities are accepted, respected and followed.

On the following pages you will find information to help you understand and navigate Year 8 learning at Yea High School. This information has been organised according to our Design Principles; Relationships, Relevance and Rigour. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact the school on (03) 5797 2007.

We hope you will find this handbook a useful tool in supporting you throughout this year.



Diane Miller



Fiona Boyle

Relationships

Advisory System

The structure of the education model at Yea High School centres on an Advisory system. This year level has two Advisors – Fiona Boyle 8A and Diane Miller 8B who act as mentors looking after their learning plans, wellbeing, attendance and day to day needs. Each Advisor is responsible for between 12 and 16 students.

The aim of this approach is to foster an intensive approach to learning supported by more individual attention from the Teacher Advisor.

A key element of the Advisory approach is to facilitate the Passion Projects that form the bulk of the students learning and skill development over the year. The Passion Project is designed to encourage learning in depth in an area of specific interest to each student.

Family Engagement

Yea High School depends upon the active and interested involvement of families in the learning of our students. As such we encourage families to be part of the development of the students in all aspects of their life.

A key element here is support at home for the learning goals and plans that students develop over the year.

In practical terms this involves regular meaningful contact between advisors and families, by a variety of means, to discuss progress and learning plans. Family involvement in the development and exhibition of the Passion Projects is a key part of this engagement.

Relevance

At Yea High School, we aim to make curriculum as relevant to students' interests and learning needs. Students have a wide variety of subjects that are undertaken in Junior School, as well as many extra curricular activities in which students can choose to participate. They also have the opportunity to acquire new skills whilst exploring their passions and interests through Advisory lessons.

Passion Projects

We believe that education should be about one student at time, and students are better engaged when they are learning through their passions and interests. With this in mind, in Advisory, students are asked to complete two Passion Projects, develop their own Learning Plans and exhibit their work twice this year. These requirements are compulsory and form part of the successful completion of Gateway in Year 8 and support their transition into Year 9.

The Advisory Passion Projects are all about individual interest, however, they also need to be relevant to schoolwork, incorporating applied subject areas and responding to their Learning Goals.

For example, in 2017: Johnny Hamilton completed his Passion Project on bee keeping whilst Cassey Wilshire looked at horse health.

- Johnny's specialised area of bee keeping incorporated Maths: how much honey a single bee makes in a year. Media: Video of Johnny extracting honey from a bee hive. Woodwork/Metalwork: creating and wiring a bee box. Communication: explaining the bee suit and tools. English: a poem on a bee. Science: the biology of a bee and its sting. Home Economics: making honey joys. Textiles: knitting a bee beanie.
- Cassey's Passion Project was on horse health: English: Informative essay on horse health. Science: Comparative experiment on different horse wormers and what works best for different farming locations. Physical Education: Video of Cassey doing a workout with her horse. Metalwork: Steel model of a ribcage was made. Media: Pamphlet to horse owners on what is required to keep their horse healthy.

Subject Areas

Students in Year 8 participate in:

- English
- Humanities
- Textiles
- Physical Education
- Science
- Mathematics
- Information Technology
- Woodwork
- Art
- Home Economics
- Music
- Graphics

Extra-curricular Activities

Outside of lessons students have the opportunity to participate in:

- Music lessons
- Swimming Sports
- Athletic sports
- School sports teams: basketball, netball, hockey, table tennis, football, squash, badminton, tennis, golf, cricket, lawn bowls, softball/baseball & volleyball
- Cross country
- Strive Reading Challenge
- Mission to Mars (VSSEC)
- Genetic (GTAC special events)
- Various Excursions and Incursions

Rigour

We believe that it is vitally important that learning is rigorous; this means that there is depth in what we learn and do, accountability for the learning process, strong expectations for all students, and a commitment to strong and meaningful assessment and reporting practices. In Year 8 we ask students to pass through a Gateway into Year 9 and the Big Picture process.

Over the page you will find information outlining the expectations and requirements for Gateway at Year 8. If students do not adequately complete elements of the Gateway process, they will be asked to repeat the task until satisfactory completion is achieved.

Assessment, Learning Plans and Exhibitions

Students will be regularly assessed throughout the year in all subjects, and reported on four times per year. In addition, students will also develop and maintain learning plans. Learning Plan meetings take place at least twice per year whereby students, their families and advisor sit down to discuss individual learning goals, needs and aspirations. These plans are maintained and reviewed in Advisory each week.

Students are also expected to complete two satisfactory exhibitions in Year 8. They must revisit their Learning Plan and discuss what they have achieved or must continue to work on. They must present their Passion Project using more than one form of communication, must explain the process of their Passion Project and how they might go about it differently next time. These exhibitions are expected to take approximately 20 minutes each and are completed in front of family, peers and invited guests.

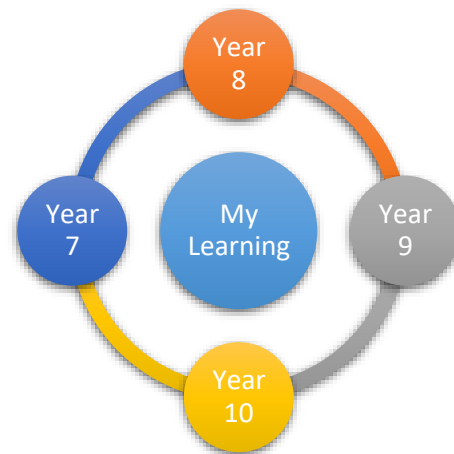


Big Picture Expectations: Gateway Year 8

These are general expectations for students at Yea High School – A Big Picture inspired school. Every student learns and grows at his or her own pace – the important thing is for students show growth in each area shown below. It is up to the advisor and Year 8 advisory team to define and refine these expectations based on the needs of each student.

During Year 8 students are expected to:

- Complete an *individual* Learning Plan that is focused on what they are interested in and how they learn.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the concept of learning goals as they apply to their Passion Project and Whole School Improvement Goals.
- Devise and complete at least two individual Passion Projects.
- Meet regularly with their teacher advisor to discuss project progress in order to reflect on gaps on their learning and address them.
- Build a portfolio of work online and save hard copies in their folder.
- Participate in one pre-exhibition presentation evening during Semester 1.
- Exhibit their Passion Project work publicly twice a year to an audience of parents/guardians, peers, guests and Teacher Advisors.
- To make links with their Passion Project and the whole school curriculum.



Year 8 students are expected to adhere to the Year 8 Eight:

Rights:

- To be ourselves
- To feel safe
- To learn
- To be treated fairly

Responsibilities:

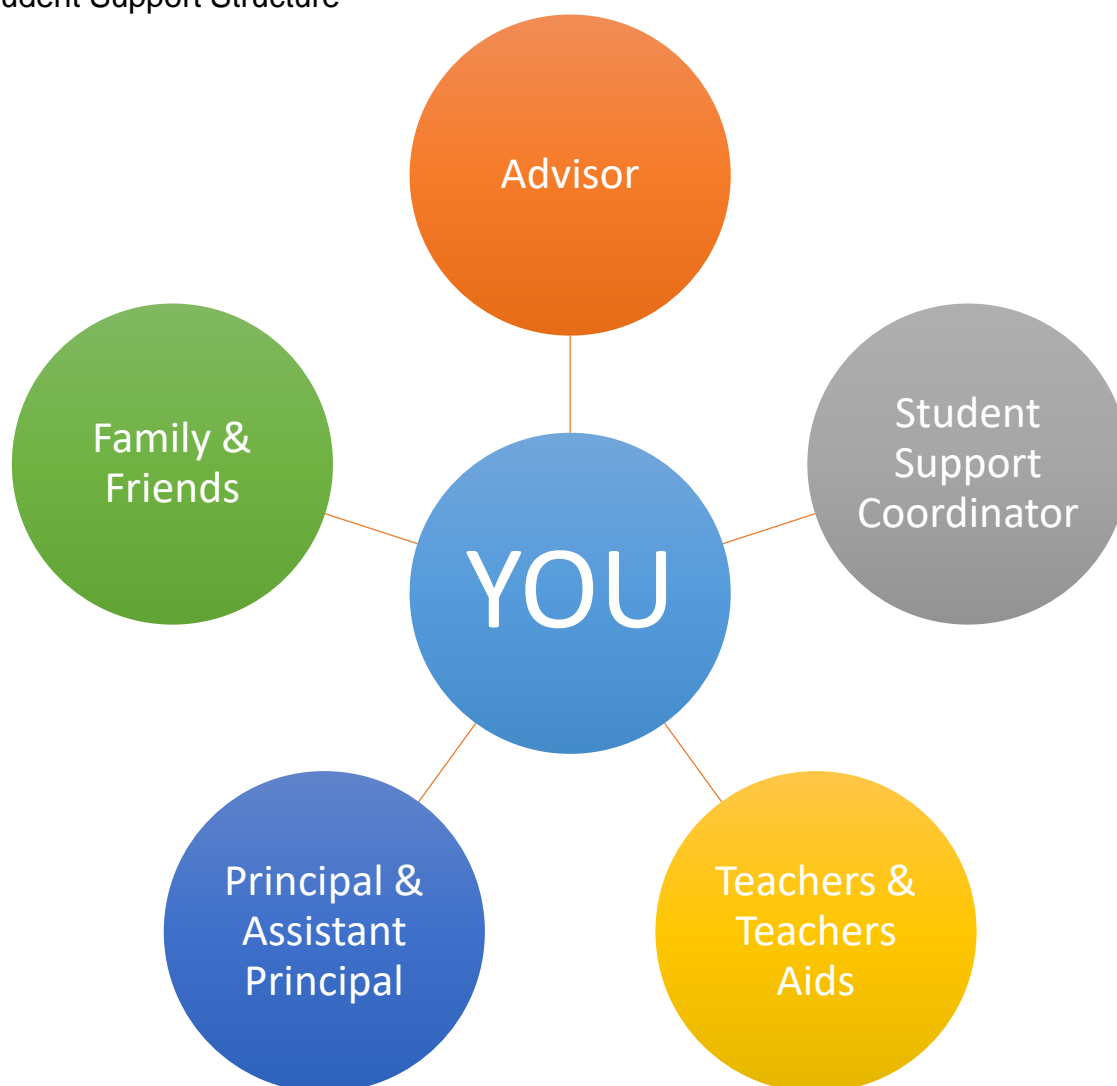
- To listen to others
- To attend class and work/participate
- To accept and look after each other
- To be honest

Other

Support Staff

Students are assigned an Advisory in which they belong. They have an Advisor to turn to if they need advice, support or questions answered. This is the student and family's first contact at the school. If necessary, your Advisor can help you access other support available such as psychologists, counsellors, the school nurse, occupational therapists or youth workers. We have many programs to also support students involving music, art and sport, as well as breakfast club in the mornings. If further care is required, we can help in the referral process. The diagram below outlines our support structure:

Student Support Structure



Camp

The Year 8 annual camp is a Coastal Camp to Mt Eliza. It is a great opportunity for students to learn new skills, step out of their comfort zone and hopefully discover a new interest or passion.

Above all, it is fantastic fun.

The camp involves three half days of adventure activities: sailing, snorkeling, kayaking, initiative games, volleyball, a trip to Mornington and night activities at Dromana Safety Beach. The main purpose of the camp is to allow students to challenge and extend themselves by attempting activities that they would not normally have an opportunity to undertake. We encourage a spirit of teamwork and cooperation across the group. Professional tuition is provided and safety measures in place for all beach activities. A camp booklet will set out various requirements directed at these goals. Closer to the time of the camp we will provide an information pack with details of times, location, equipment list, medical/permission forms, etc.



Leadership

As part of our commitment to the development of all students to the maximum level of their ability Yea High School encourages them to adopt leadership roles in a variety of areas.

The formal manifestation of this is the election of student leaders at each Year level along with involvement in the various activities that support the aims of Yea High School.

On a less formal but none the less important level all students are urged to take responsibility for their own learning and the learning of their fellows by demonstrating a mature approach both to their studies and academic performance along with their general social development and relationships within the school.



Our 2018 Year 8 Leaders

Need more information??

We hope that this handout serves a starting point for your understanding of the Year 8 program at Yea High School. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms Diane Miller (Year7/8 Head Advisor) on 57972207 or via the website yeahs.vic.edu.au.