



CENTENARY HEIGHTS STATE HIGH SCHOOL

Safety - Respect - Learning

1 November 2023

Dear Parents/Carers of our Year 7 students 2024

Thank you for choosing our school. We are very excited to welcome your child to high school and to welcome all parents/carers to our school. We have been very deliberate in the way we implement Year 7 and the structures we have in place are based on quality academic research as well as many lessons learned since the implementation of Year 7 into high schools in 2015.

One of the most important things is that you feel encouraged to be a part of our school community and that you feel confident to ask questions and have them answered promptly. If issues arise, feel free to make an appointment with your child's teachers. Our structures are designed to give you quality service – your best contact will be either of the two main teachers who work with your child's class.

We deliberately reduce the number of teachers allocated to each Year 7 class. They are two who will come to know your child very well – one of whom is your child's Pastoral Care teacher – and three or four others who will provide the necessary diversity in subject delivery that is reflective of the needs of young adolescents. The three Heads of Year 7, Ben Gott, Sandie Black and Justin Moore, will be your next port of call.

For your benefit, some points for your understanding re Safety, Respect and Learning at Centenary Heights:

- In an attempt to address the issue of sun safety, during Physical Education and Sport in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 students are required to wear a hat/cap. While sunscreen is available to all students from every staffroom and also from our main office, wearing the school hat is mandatory in 2024 for all Year 7s and 8s, as is wearing the school hat or a cap for all Year 9s and 10s during Sport and Physical Education lessons.
- **Students who ride a bicycle to and/or from school** are required to wear a helmet. In a case where that does not occur, a courtesy call will be made to parents/carers advising of a breach and seeking your assistance. If there were to be a further breach, the choice would be for the bike, on the day, to be kept in secure lockup at school pending pick up by yourself or for your child to cease riding to/from school for the remainder of the term.
- **Given the busy roads and shops in our close proximity**, the only points at which students are permitted to cross the road are at the lights at the corner of South and Ramsay Streets or the crossing on South Street. Each afternoon, we support our students by placing two Heads of Year to patrol the exits in South and Catto Streets and the Deputy Principals and myself oversee the roads around the school. Our students meet our expectation that the Southtown shop area is cleared of all of our students by 3.15pm each afternoon. Students understand and accept that they may purchase from the shops but may not sit or linger. The same expectation applies to before school.

If you wish to pick your child up from South Street after school, please do so on the school side of South Street. If after 3.15pm, your child is asked to wait at the South Street school pick-up area as opposed to the shop side, or at an agreed pick-up point in an outlying street. Southtown Shop Management specifically requests that parents do not park in their carpark area to collect their children.

Education Queensland International CRICOS Provider Number: 00608A

60 Ramsay Street Toowoomba Queensland 4350

Ph: (07) 4636 7500 **Email:** info@centheighshs.eq.edu.au **Web:** www.centheighshs.eq.edu.au

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- Please note that our students are not permitted, while in school uniform or any part of it, to linger in local parks before or after school. Our students are not permitted to change out of school uniform when departing the school.
- **The correct wearing of our school uniform** is mandatory. It allows me at all times to know who is in our school. This is paramount for your child's safety. All uniform items and any advice you may seek are available from our P&C Uniform Shop – Ph. 4636 7514. Please note that, in order to diffuse any confusion for parents, black formal shoes are to accompany our formal uniform. They are required to be lace up and with substantial impervious uppers – sports shoes must not be worn with the formal uniform. Students commonly choose to wear the school socks (designed by our students in 2019) or may wear plain white – no branding. The first school occasion where your child will require formal uniform is the first day of the school year – Monday 22 January 2024 and then again when school photographs are taken. Other occasions are Awards Ceremonies, Gold Level Ceremony, and the two mandatory formal uniform days per term to name a few. All required dates for wearing of our formal uniform are on our website. It is a requirement that your child starts his/her enrolment at Centenary Heights with both a sports and formal uniform.
- **Facial piercing is not acceptable.** Should a newly enrolled student have a pre-existing facial piercing a compromise is made in support of the student and parent/carer in that a clear retainer is required to be worn at all times. If a clear retainer is not able to be worn due to health concerns the piercing is to be removed. In the case of a student who is able to wear a clear retainer but chooses not to he/she will be directed to the main office to sign the piercing in and receive a clear retainer. The cost will be billed to the student's account. The piercing is not permitted to be covered.
- **Tuesday afternoons in Period 4, all Year 7 and 8 students have Sport.** Sport is a crucial component of our curriculum offerings and participation is mandatory. I ask that any personal appointment not be made during this time as I discourage students to sign out from school during mandated curriculum time unless there is an extraordinary circumstance. We actively promote the benefits of physical activity amongst our youth. To this end our junior school students will, on our Tuesday afternoons, be taught the skills related to a range of sports. This program will be based on a social sport model that involves participating in various rotations. Participation by all is mandatory. For any student who may be long term ill or injured, attendance is still required where feasible and, in lieu of participation, a support task to a team is allocated.
- **Re Homework:** Homework is a reality in secondary school. I urge you to support your child with a definite time each afternoon/evening where your child sits, checks his/her homework diary and commits to completing homework tasks. There will not be a time where "I have no homework" is acceptable. Your child's personal Student Assessment Planner is accessible through your membership to QParents from the beginning of Semester 1 and the next version at the beginning of Semester 2. Our recommended amount of time for each school night is 45 minutes and students are strongly encouraged to do some extra reading on top of this. A further explanation of "What is Homework" is attached to this letter.
- **As with all State Schools we are a Smart Choices school.** This means a student may not bring 'red food' items onto the premises eg soft drink, hot chips, lollies etc.

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- From the start of 2024, mobile phones are banned in all Queensland state schools. If students bring their mobile phone to school, they are to be turned off and securely stored in each student's locker for the entirety of the school day. Further advice about smart watches and other devices identified in the ban will be released by the State Government.
- As you join the parent/carer community of our school I ask for your understanding with regard to **the relaying of messages from yourselves to your child**. Our office staff are not in a position to make ready contact with all classes in the secondary school as classes are quite transient, and so I have requested of them that they only relay messages of a genuinely urgent nature. It is better practice to devise a communication strategy with your child in the event that office staff are unable to get the requested message to your child. If there is a need our office staff will action that and appropriate sign out processes will be followed. Again, these protocols are strictly enforced.
- **In the event your child falls ill during a school day** – he/she may access our Sick Bay (located in our school main office). This is a triage option for no longer the 30 minutes while office staff assess whether the student is able to return to class or whether the parent is phoned to collect the child given the state of unwellness. In the event of office staff calling a parent, I ask that you collect your child within the hour so as to allow access to sick bay by other students in need. If office staff are not able to reach you, they will call the emergency contact to attend.
- **Teacher Contact**
Should you wish to meet/speak with a teacher please make an appointment through the front office. I do not permit staff to take appointments that have not been prescheduled as it has the potential to cause them to be late to class. Similarly, please be sure to sign in through the front office and attach a visitor tag – this is a legal requirement. It is imperative that you do not go straight to buildings without following process including making a prior appointment.
- **Communication**
In the case of a family where parents have shared access – both parents are welcome to join QParents, where report cards and assessment planners are accessible. I trust that parents communicate well with each other in regard to their child and so, in the interests of staff time, communication by phone and/or email is conducted with just one nominated parent. Similarly, parents are welcome to attend parent/teacher/student interviews together however we do not conduct more than one such interview.
- **Report Cards**
Year 7 students are issued with four (4) Report Cards throughout the year and there will be three (3) opportunities for parent/teacher/student meetings with the first meeting being an informal Meet & Greet Evening on Thursday 8 February 2024. The first report will be in the form of a progress report (Week 8) and there will be a report card accessible at the end of each term of study through your membership to QParents.

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- **Parent/Carer access to our school by car**

Our school will have in excess of 1750 students on site at any one time. We have over 240 staff. Our size means, for the safety of all, we do not have any student pick-up or drop-off in our school at any time, nor capacity for parents/carers to park on school grounds. The Toowoomba Regional Council has street car parking for our parents/carers as an alternative. The only exception to this is for parents/carers who have a child with a verified disability (ie who is supported by our Diverse Learners Program) and who have permission from the school to access the school grounds. Given we have boom gates in operation at our school (gate is lowered at 7.15am each weekday morning and lifted at 3.30pm), along with your permit, you will have been issued with a swipe card for access. Replacement, should you lose the card, is a \$7.00 cost.

- **It is a requirement for every student in Years 7 - 12 to bring a laptop to school every day** and we encourage families to select and purchase a laptop from within the specifications contained in the BYOD booklet in the enrolment pack to bring to school. This laptop will be for the student's personal use and is considered as his/her primary device. With this primary device we will continue to support students by diagnosing IT issues and consulting with families if further action is required.

- **Have you considered bus transport for your child?**

Buses are recognised in Australia as the safest form of road transport, and you can rest assured that Bus Queensland's drivers are well trained to deliver your child safely to school. Bus Queensland details can be found on the website below or email schools@busqld.com.au

<https://www.busqld.com.au/school/>

Bus Queensland recommends contact be made as soon as possible.

Thank you for your understanding and the cooperation of all Centenary Heights State High School parents/carers. I look forward to you and your child becoming part of that culture.

Look forward to meeting you.

Darren Cook
Principal

cc: Deputy Principals
Heads of Department
Heads of Year
Assistant Heads of Year