



HUNTER RIVER HIGH SCHOOL

YEAR 7

PARENT/CARERS HANDBOOK



RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY EXCELLENCE



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Welcome to Hunter River High School

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

I am very pleased to welcome all our new students and their families to the community of Hunter River High School and continue the school's commitment to providing a caring learning environment fostering academic excellence. Quality relationships are developed between staff, students, and the community through our values of Respect, Responsibility and Excellence. Every student has the opportunity to become confident, creative and resilient lifelong learners.

Hunter River High School is a comprehensive, co-educational secondary school situated on the land of the Worimi people and is on the Hunter River at Heatherbrae, just south of Raymond Terrace. Our name reflects the geographically widespread, diverse communities this school serves. Some of these townships are 30km apart. Approximately 85% of students travel to and from school each day by bus.

Hunter River High School has approximately 900 students, 20% of whom identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Teaching staff enhance learning experiences through a variety of programs/strategies including: Write it Right, Read it Right, Count it Right, Teach it Right, Gili Watha Bindji, Deadly Maths, LOFT Intervention, Macqlit, Mentoring, Targeted Wellbeing, Peer Mentoring, and Student Representative Council, improving academic success and opportunities for all students. The school provides specialist support for students with the following disabilities: Mild Intellectual; Autism; Multi-categorical; behavioural; and emotional disturbances. In 2024, the school underwent a significant building program and from 2025 students will benefit from a number of improvements - new support classrooms, gymnasium, administration building, wellbeing space, as well as updated art spaces.

The school offers a varied curriculum, which includes strong academic programs, a wide range of Vocational Education and Training (VET) opportunities and a significant number of wellbeing programs. As a comprehensive high school, we offer a variety of pathways to students including: a traditional academic pathway; one with a combination of VET and traditional subjects: or a vocational pathway. Our school is a Trade School in Metal & Engineering and has a federally funded Trade Training Centre with improved facilities in Metal, Construction and Technology. We have a productive Agricultural Farm with a focus on sheep, cattle, and aquaponics. An industrial kitchen allows students to study Hospitality in an industry standard facility, and our Hairdressing Salon provides experience in the hair and beauty employment area. The Studio (Dance) and music facilities offer a professional space for students to refine their skills with highly trained teachers.

Hunter River High School was named as a P-TECH Pilot school in 2016. At its core, the P-TECH model being delivered is about collaboration – a partnership between education, industry, and community – but it is a partnership with a clear purpose: to provide an industry supported pathway for young people to strengthen their employment prospects. The P-TECH mission is to develop and support pathways to post-school education that lead to careers in Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering and Aviation fields.

Our school operates under the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) Framework and teaches expectations focusing on our values: Respect, Responsibility and Excellence. Once again, welcome to Hunter River High School. I am sure you will find our school one where you will develop quality relationships, whilst gaining a quality education.



Mrs Sue Xenos
Principal



YEAR 7 SUPPORT STAFF 2026



Principal
Mrs Sue Xenos



**Deputy Principal
Inclusion and Support**
Mrs Jane Fuller



Deputy Principal
Mr Steven Friend
Years 7 and 10



Year 7 Year Advisor
Mr Tyler Gallienne

TERM DATES 2026

Term 1:

Tuesday 27 January to Friday 30 January - School Development Days, no students at school
Monday 2 February - First day of Term 1 all students
Thursday 2 April - Final day of Term 1

Term 2:

Monday 20 April and Tuesday 21 April - School Development Days, no students at school
Wednesday 22 April - First day of Term 2 all students
Friday 3 July - Final day of Term 2

Term 3:

Monday 20 July - School Development Day, no students at school
Tuesday 21 July - First day of Term 3 all students
Friday 25 September - Final day of Term 3

Term 4:

Monday 11 October - School Development Day, no students at school
Tuesday 12 October - First day of Term 4 all students
Thursday 17 December - Final day of Term 4 staff and students.

The school will notify families of any further changes to the term dates.



School Bus Travel (OPAL Card)

If your child will be catching the bus to school, we encourage you to apply for their OPAL Card before the end of the year to ensure it arrives in time. School bus travel is coordinated by Transport NSW through the OPAL Card system, and all students using Transport NSW school buses must have a valid school travel pass. Under the School Student Transport Scheme (SSTS), eligible students may receive free or subsidised travel between home and school. To apply, simply complete the online application at the Transport NSW website. Once submitted, the application will be sent electronically to the school for approval, and the OPAL Card will then be mailed to the address provided.

Students must carry their OPAL Card with them every day when travelling to and from school. They are required to tap on when entering the bus and tap off when leaving. If they forget to tap on or off, the card may show an error and become temporarily disabled. Should this occur, parents will need to contact Transport NSW directly, as the school is unable to reactivate OPAL Cards.

For more information or to complete an application, please visit the Transport NSW school student travel page <https://transportnsw.info/tickets-fares/eligibility-concessions/school-student-travel>



BUS TIMETABLES

Busways, Hunter Valley Buses (CDC NSW), and Port Stephens Buses are the school bus operators that run our school's bus services. To find your child's school bus timetable, visit the operator's website using the links below:

Travel from Great Lakes Region - [Busways](#)

Travel from Lemon Tree Passage, Tanilba Bay, Salt Ash, Williamstown, Grahamstown – [Hunter Valley Buses \(CDC NSW\)](#)

Travel from Fingal Bay through to Bobs Farm and Salt Ash – [Port Stephens Coaches](#)



ORDER FROM OUR CANTEEN

Lunch orders can be placed at the canteen from 8:30am to 9am. Payment options include cash or card.

Grab and Go options are also available every day of the week before school and during break. Students have a variety of hot food, sandwiches, fruit and drinks to choose from without pre-ordering.

If your child has a special request for their lunch (eg. no sauce on their burger) please place an order.

Mobile phones are banned in all NSW public schools. This means students cannot use their phones to make payments at the canteen. Please ensure your child brings a physical card to pay for their food, or pre-order via **Flexischools**, which we highly recommend for convenience.

If a student needs to purchase from the canteen and has forgotten their card, they should see the Head Teacher Wellbeing, or one of the Deputy Principals for assistance.

ONLINE ORDERS

Hunter River High School offers an easy online ordering and payment option using the [Flexischools App](#).



Plan and use Flexischools to order lunch saving you time and hassle during the busy school mornings. Cut-off time for online breakfast orders is 8am and 9am for lunch orders. Flexischools offers plenty of great features designed to save you time, like automatic topping up of your wallet.

Please ensure you tell your child if you have ordered them lunch via Flexischools.



What Happens During the Day

IN THE MORNING

- If you ride a bike or scooter to school, you should leave it in the bike racks at Block X.
- Please bring a chain and lock to make sure your property is safe.
- Leave your bike or scooter and move to the playground area.
- Bikes, scooters, or skateboards are not to be ridden on school grounds.
- If you travel by bus - move straight to the playground when you arrive.
- Turn your mobile phone off or on silent and place in your school bag.

AT THE END OF THE DAY

- If you catch a bus, move quickly to the bus bay.
- If you rode to school, collect your bike, or scooter from the racks and leave via the pedestrian gate at the staff carpark.
- Bikes, scooters, or skateboards are not to be ridden on school grounds.

EARLY LEAVERS

If you intend for your child to leave school early on any day (for example a doctor's appointment), they are required to provide a note signed by a parent/carer including their full name, year group, time, compelling reason and/or evidence of an appointment.

Students must place their early leavers note in the early leavers box in Admin X by 9am.

BELL TIMES

We have five periods each day, and the timetable is spread over two weeks.

- School starts with Roll Call each day at 9.00 am and finishes at 3.20 pm.
- Alternate bell times are used when we have an Assembly or Year Meetings.

EARLY FRIDAY

School concludes at 1.50pm every Friday. This will provide valuable professional learning time for staff to work on School Strategic Directions. Supervision is available at school until 3:20pm. Students who are not remaining at school will leave school between 1.50pm and 2.05pm.

If you **DO NOT wish for your child to leave school at 1.50pm**, please return the completed form to Admin X at your earliest convenience, indicating you would like them to stay until 3.20pm on Fridays.

Please contact the school for a copy or students can collect a printed copy of this letter from Admin X.

Regular Day Bell Times	
Roll Call	9:00 - 9:10
Period 1	9:10 - 10:12
Period 2	10:12 - 11:14
Break 1	11:14 - 11:44
Period 3	11:44 - 12:46
Period 4	12:46 - 1:48
Break 2	1:48 - 2:18
Period 5	2:18 - 3:20

Outside Assembly Bell Times	
Usually Monday Morning	
Roll Call	9:00 - 9:07
Assembly	9:07 - 9:20
Period 1	9:20 - 10:20
Period 2	10:20 - 11:20
Break 1	11:20 - 11:50
Period 3	11:50 - 12:50
Period 4	12:50 - 1:50
Break 2	1:50 - 2:20
Period 5	2:20 - 3:20

Alternate Bell Times	
Examples: Formal Assembly / Year Meeting / Whole School Activity	
Roll Call	9:00 - 9:07
Assembly	9:07 - 9:45
Period 1	9:45 - 10:40
Period 2	10:40 - 11:35
Break 1	11:35 - 12:05
Period 3	12:05 - 1:00
Period 4	1:00 - 1:55
Break 2	1:55 - 2:25
Period 5	2:25 - 3:20



Mobile Phone Policy

The Department of Education requires that all mobile devices are switched off as students enter the school grounds. Students should disconnect headphones, earbuds and smart watches, and place all mobile devices securely in their school bag. Devices must not be visible in pockets or on their person during the school day.

If a mobile device is seen or heard by staff, it will be confiscated and stored securely until the end of the school day. Parents and carers will be notified if this occurs. These expectations help ensure a safe, focused learning environment for all students.

Breaches

Below is a list of potential student breaches. Each of these breaches will result in the student's mobile device/s being confiscated by school staff and stored securely until the end of the school day.

1. Using their mobile device/s during school hours
2. Smart watches are allowed but used only as a watch (no phone functions)
3. Other devices (including iPads) used like mobile phones such as texting, using social media, listening to music, etc

1st Warning – Recorded on Sentral

- Teacher logs as Serious Behaviour for Concern in SENTRAL
- Teacher sends student to DP*
- DP holds restorative conversation and documents breach on SENTRAL
- Parents informed
- Mobile device/s confiscated, DP stores device/s securely until the end of the day
- Student returned to class with note
- Mobile device/s collected at the end of the school day

2nd Warning – Behaviour Contract

- Teacher logs as Serious Behaviour for Concern in SENTRAL
- Teacher sends student to DP*
- DP checks SENTRAL for previous warning
- DP documents second breach on SENTRAL
- Mobile device/s confiscated, DP stores device/s securely until the end of the day
- Student returned to class with note
- Mobile device/s collected at the end of the school day

3rd Warning – Formal Caution to Suspend

- Teacher logs as Serious Behaviour for Concern in SENTRAL
- Teacher sends student to DP*
- DP checks SENTRAL for previous warnings
- DP documents third breach on SENTRAL and issues Formal Caution to Suspend
- Mobile device/s confiscated, DP stores device/s securely until the end of the day
- Student returned to class with note
- Mobile device/s collected at the end of the school day

4th Warning – Suspension

- Teacher logs in SENTRAL
- Teacher sends student to DP
- DP checks SENTRAL for previous warnings
- DP documents fourth breach on SENTRAL and issues In-school suspension OR a suspension
- Mobile device/s confiscated, DP stores device/s securely until the end of the day
- Parents notified to collect student and phone from DP



Technology at HRHS

At Hunter River High School, we value the learning experiences and opportunities that technology can provide. The promotion of all forms of learning is core to our educational philosophy. We have a comprehensive range of technology facilities and resources for students and staff. We are at the forefront of modern technology with numerous well-equipped computer laboratories, interactive multi learning displays, and are well resourced to support a variety of curriculum areas.

Our well-resourced library has modern presentation facilities, computer learning spaces and a Senior Learning Area, with access to both Chromebooks and desktops for student use.



Chromebooks are provided for student use in all faculties. Additionally, each teaching staff member has been provided a laptop to deliver future focused learning.

Hunter River High School has a Technology Support Officer (TSO) on site Monday-Friday to support both staff and students with technology needs.

CANVAS

Canvas is a cloud-based Learning Management System (LMS). It is used by teachers to deliver content, set class activities, and connect with students in a digital learning environment. Students will be able to access assessment schedules, assessment tasks, lesson resources and teacher feedback to enhance their learning and stay up to date with work that might have been missed due to absences.

MICROSOFT 365

All NSW Department of Education Students have access to the free installation of Microsoft Office 365. This includes the full Office Software on 5 laptops or desktops, and 5 mobile devices, such as phones and tablets across all platforms. Students will receive more information on installing these programs upon enrolment.

GOOGLE WORKSPACE

Google Workspace is a collection of cloud computing, productivity and collaboration tools, software and products. All students have access to Google drive as a cloud-based storage system as well as applications including Google Classroom, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, Sites, Blogger, Chat, Meet and Currents. Students will be using a variety of these tools as part of their learning to complete in class activities and assessment tasks.

SENTRAL PARENT PORTAL

Parents can track their child's attendance, commendations, message teachers, view newsletters, timetables, daily notices, parent teacher interview bookings and download reports. Students have their own Student Portal where they can view their timetable, commendations, and daily notices. Sentral can be accessed via the website sentral.com.au/parents or the App.



HRHS Library

Hunter River High School Library is located at the top of 'E' Block

The Hunter River High School Hub promotes 'A SAFE, WELCOMING AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT'.

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP:

Librarian: Heidi Mansfield (Relieving)
Opening hours: Before School: 8.30 AM – 9.00 AM
Breaks 1 & 2: Every day



WHAT IS IN THE LIBRARY?

- We have qualified library staff to assist students with research and information search skills, and technology needs.
- The library contains a variety of resources that cater to the information and recreational needs of the school community. These include collections of fiction, graphic novels, non-fiction, manga, magazines, educational games, and puzzles. Students can also access our online collection through the library's management system called OLIVER.
- The librarian can assist in the printing of assignments.
- There are thirty computers which provide access to student files and the internet; these are available to students during both breaks.





HOW DO I USE THE LIBRARY?

- Students can visit the library before school and during breaks for study, schoolwork, quiet reading, library club and computer use. Students do not require a library card to borrow books.
- Students should use the library system, OLIVER, from the home page of their student portal to search, reserve and review library resources.
- OLIVER can be accessed on any device on a 24/7 basis at school or at home.
- Books can be borrowed for a period of two weeks. Books are to be returned by the due date to allow others to borrow them.
- If you have not finished with the book, you can renew it yourself on OLIVER.

HOW MANY BOOKS CAN I BORROW?

Borrowing limits are: Years 7-10: five books
 Years 11 & 12: seven books

Please return all books through the return slot at the circulation desk.

WHAT IF I FORGET MY BOOKS?

- If you forget your books, you will receive an overdue notice.
- If the books are not then returned, a letter will be sent to your parents and borrowing rights will be withdrawn until the matter has been finalised.
- If the books are lost, you will need to pay for their replacement.

THE LIBRARY COMPUTER GUIDELINES

- You must ALWAYS log on to computers in the following manner, otherwise you will not be able to save or print your work:
firstname.surname then Password.
- The library staff can assist you with using the computer software, Google Classroom, Office 365, printing and ideas for presentations.
- Computers may be used before school and during breaks for either schoolwork or playing games. Priority will be given to students doing schoolwork.
- Volume levels on computers must always be kept to mute or low levels.
- Only one person per computer and no spectators during breaks.

LIBRARY CLUBS

- Students can join any of the clubs which run in the library during break times.
- Regular clubs are Chess Club, Lego Masters, Anime Club.





Partners in Learning

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS: REPORTS & PARENT/TEACHER EVENINGS

At the beginning of the year students and parents of new students including Year 7, will be invited to an informal afternoon/evening to meet teachers and ask any questions related to high school. Parent/teacher meetings are held throughout the year, and reports are distributed in Term 2 and 4.

PARENTS & CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

Participating in P&C meetings is just one way of keeping abreast of on-going changes in schools and education.

Our meetings are held every 4th Tuesday of the month (during school terms) online via Teams at 7PM. The Teams link will be emailed to families.

A Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) is a group of community minded people, parents and citizens, who take on a more formal role to assist the school in providing:

- feedback on school policies and activities
- additional resources to be used to enhance student learning
- parents with opportunities to be involved in their child's education

The Principal also provides an update about our school. It is a great opportunity to discuss any of your concerns or ideas with the Principal, teachers and an interested group of parents.

We welcome all parents and friends to participate in school activities and meetings, and to keep informed of events and happenings in the school. Hope to see you soon at a function or meeting!

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (SRC)

Hunter River High School is fortunate to have a very active Student Representative Council (SRC) made up of student representatives from Years 7 - 12. SRC is more than just students "having a say" and "being heard", teachers and students working together taking shared action in all areas of school life. SRC provides authentic student leadership opportunities to work as a team, build positive relationships, contribute to the school community, use their voice responsibly, value the perspectives and opinions of others and participate in decision making. The SRC reports to the students, staff and community.

HRHS SRC work democratically to represent the student body in school decision-making and organise ways for students to actively participate in all areas of school life. All students are welcome to join and be a part of the SRC team.





School Contribution

Hunter River High School have two types of school contributions that support our students and help enhance their educational experience at our school.

1. Voluntary School Contributions

These contributions are used to improve the overall school environment and provide valuable resources that benefit all students. In the past, these funds have helped us purchase items such as a school bus, sporting and play equipment, and supported upgrades to our facilities. While voluntary, these contributions make a meaningful difference in what we can provide for our students.

2. Subject-Specific Contributions

These contributions are directly linked to specific subjects and are used to purchase materials that enhance learning experiences in those courses. This might include items like art supplies, ingredients for food technology, science experiment materials, or specialist equipment in practical subjects. These contributions help us ensure students have access to rich, hands-on learning that deepens their understanding and engagement.

During 2025, we introduced a flat rate subject contribution, which replaces the individual payments previously requested for each subject. Please note that while this flat rate covers the majority of subject needs, additional contributions may still be requested for subjects that involve major works (such as Visual Arts or Industrial Technology), or for excursions and other significant learning experiences.

The table below outlines the contributions.

Year	Voluntary	Subject
7	\$95	\$65
8	\$95	\$65
9	\$95	\$75
10	\$95	\$75
11	\$95	\$80
12	\$95	\$80

We greatly appreciate the support of families who are able to contribute. Every contribution, big or small, helps us continue to provide high-quality opportunities for all students. We also understand that managing school expenses can be challenging at times, so all contributions can be made through part payments spread across the year.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss contributions further, please don't hesitate to contact the school.



Emergency Procedures

EVACUATION

Three high pitched beeps - “**This is an evacuation: Please make your way to the field**”, is the signal for an emergency evacuation.

- When the signal sounds, students must cease work and prepare to evacuate with their teacher.
- Students are to be asked to pack personal belongings and bring them to the evacuation point, only if personal belongings are in the vicinity and **ONLY** if it is safe to do so. Students are to walk quickly with their teacher via the correct route and keep calm.
- Teachers are to instruct students to walk quickly, and orderly, via the correct route to the Evacuation Area at the covered Basketball Courts. They are to sit in their roll class lines (as per assembly) and stay until instructed otherwise.
- Rolls will be marked. You are to remain in your roll group until the emergency is over.

LOCKDOWN

Three low pitched beeps - “**Please remain indoors**”, is the signal for a lockdown.

If you are **INDOORS**:

- You are to remain in the room until the nature of the danger has been determined.
- Students are to sit on the floor away from windows and doors and remain quiet.
- All phones are to be turned off or put on silent.
- The ‘all clear’ will be given by three normal school bells as per those used for quad assemblies.
- Parents will be notified via Police if the lockdown extends past normal school hours.

If you are **OUTDOORS**:

- All students are to move to classrooms and/or available spaces immediately with teaching staff.
- Students in the bus bay (morning arrival) will be directed by the teacher on duty to remain where they are and await arrival of emergency services and will remain on buses where possible.
- Cease of threat will be indicated by three normal school assembly bells.
- After the danger has concluded, staff will mark the roll then all to proceed to the Quad or roll call rooms as directed.
- A school assembly will be held if deemed necessary.



Common Questions

What Do I Do If.....?

<p>I am late to school (You must have a good reason for being late)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you arrive during Roll Call - go straight to the Attendance room in G Block to get a late note. Then go to roll call. • If you arrive after Roll Call - go straight to Admin – Block X and advise administration staff, you are late and be signed in. You will be given a late note for class which will require a parent/guardian/carer signature and returned to roll call the following day. Parents/guardians/carers can also call the school or respond to the text message received.
<p>I feel sick at school OR am injured at school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you feel sick during class, obtain a note from your teacher to leave class. • Report to the student window at Admin X. • You will be registered into clinic and given First Aid if needed. • If you are too sick to return to class, your parent/guardian/carer will be contacted to take you home. • Students are not to contact parents/carers directly. • An ambulance will be called if required. If an ambulance is called due to sickness or injury at school, this is at no cost to you. • There is no medication, e.g Panadol available at school. If your child is required to take medication during the day, the student should inform staff.
<p>I lost my timetable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See your Year Advisor for a copy. • Write the timetable in your diary, Maths, English or Science book.
<p>I get lost</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask any teacher to help you. • Go to the Wellbeing Hub or Admin X and ask for help.
<p>I need to leave the school grounds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring a note from your parent/guardian/carer before 9am to Admin X and place in the 'early leavers' box. An 'Early Leavers Pass' must be collected by students from Admin X at break 1. • The 'Early Leavers Pass' must be carried by students and is needed to exit the classroom and the gate.
<p>I lost something at school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check to see if it was handed in at the Admin X. • If something valuable is lost or stolen tell the Deputy Principal in charge of your year group. • Do not bring valuables or large sums of money to school - you must be responsible for your own belongings.



<p>I am not in correct uniform</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring a note from home to explain the situation. • Take your note to the Wellbeing Hub to receive an Out of Uniform Pass. • Ensure you are in correct uniform the next day.
<p>I have someone being nasty to me</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is not okay. You have a right to feel safe and happy whilst at school. • Talk to your Year Advisor or one of your teachers. • If it continues report to your Year Advisor or Head Teacher Wellbeing.
<p>I am late for class</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are delayed in a previous class by a teacher, ask for a note with a reason for your lateness. • Give the note to your next teacher as soon as you get there. • Unacceptable lateness may result in disciplinary action.
<p>I want to go to the toilet during class</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put up your hand and ask your teacher. • Your teacher will allow you to go if it is an emergency. • A 'toilet pass' will be issued. • Report to the Wellbeing Hub for access. • Log your arrival and when you return to class. • Plan to visit the toilet during breaks.
<p>I forgot my lunch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the Head Teacher Wellbeing
<p>I cannot do sport/PE due to injury or illness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide your sport/PE teacher with a signed note from your parent/guardian/carer or doctor.

NOTE: STUDENTS WHO ARE REGULARLY LATE WITHOUT A GOOD REASON WILL BE INTERVIEWED BY THE HEAD TEACHER ADMINISTRATION OR YEAR ADVISOR.



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Education