

Huntingtower

Early Learning Centre
Parent Handbook

Updated 25.1.2024

Huntingtower School

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Business Details

ABN 23 004 231 654 Registered School No. 1267 CRICOS Provider No. 00145E



Introduction	4
Our Staff	∠
Philosophy	5
Aims & Objectives of Huntingtower ELC	5
Description of Service	Е
Fees	6
Hours of Operation & Availability	6
Day-to-Day	7
Attendance	
Updating Contact Details	8
Feedback	8
Toilet Training	8
Sun Smart	8
Toys	
Health & Wellbeing	10
Introduction	10
Prior History from Specialists	10
First Aid Facilities	10
Asthma	10
Anaphylaxis	1
Accidents	1
Medical Emergencies	1
Behaviour Guidance	1
Weekly & Daily Checklists	12
Clothing & Other Requirements	13

Food	14
Snacks & Lunches	14
Drinks	14
Nuts	14
Birthdays	14
Encouraging Independence	14
For Parents	. 15
Working with Children Check	15
Excursions & Incursions	15
Perceptual Motor Program	15
Observations of Student Development	15
Individual Child Portfolios	15
Parent Teacher Interviews	15
	•
mportant Information	
Privacy	
Using Personal Information	16
Securing Your Data	16
Code of Conduct	16
Volunteering at Huntingtower	17
Child Safety	17
Dunchauir Driva Entrance Dratacal	40
Dunsmuir Drive Entrance Protocol	.18
Campus Map	19
School Communications Quick-Reference	20



Our Staff

Huntingtower ELC employs qualified staff who meet the requirements under the Education & Care Services National Regulations (January 2012), and the centre adheres to the appropriate child staff ratios in accordance with Part 4.4 of those regulations.

Approved Provider

Huntingtower School Association

School Leadership

Mrs Shan Christensen - Principal

Ms Melanie Beal - Vice Principal - Secondary

Mrs Susan Swan - Vice Principal - Teaching & Learning

Ms Carly Major Gough - Head of Junior School

Mr Dean Owens - Head of Wellbeing & Learning Enrichment

Mrs Tania Parkyn - Director of Business Operations

Early Learning Staff

Mrs Sally Whitrod - Head of ELC

Ms Hadeema Halihinga - ELC Educator

Ms Kelly Eastham - ELC Educator

Ms Carly Major Gough - Head of Junior School



Philosophy

At Huntingtower, we see the Early Learning Centre (ELC) program as part of the early steps in a Huntingtower education. The philosophy of ELC is based upon the golden rule: 'To treat others as you would like to be treated.' We believe that every child reflects God's goodness, intelligence and love. We believe in the need for children to develop an understanding of respect for themselves and others.

Space, tranquillity and creative expression are vital elements in the development of a child. We acknowledge the uniqueness of each child and their family. We acknowledge, rejoice in and incorporate the inclusion, richness and diversity of our children and their families' cultures and beliefs within the Huntingtower community. We acknowledge the role of parents as their child's first teacher and the critical importance of children, parents and staff as partners in a learning community which promotes the learning, wellbeing, identity, education and development of all children.

We believe it is the role of educators to observe children's interactions, interpret them, plan, implement, reflect upon and modify our rich and diverse programs based upon children's interests, culture and wonderings.

We believe a child's potential is achieved when they have opportunities to learn through **play** to: imagine, create, problem solve, explore, discover and be challenged, experiment, initiate and model, express thoughts, feelings and ideas, reflect on experiences, wonder, practise and master skills, have meaningful experiences, interact, communicate, listen, contemplate and have fun.

Aims & Objectives of Huntingtower ELC

For Children

- To provide a fun-filled and stimulating learning environment for each individual child.
- To provide all children with a variety of group and individual experiences in order to nurture and stimulate each child through creative and imaginative play.
- To provide a secure and caring environment, respecting the individual needs and interests of every child, through which trust of initially unfamiliar faces and situations may be developed.
- To provide a stimulating and interactive program, encouraging the learning of a variety of skills that promote and develop positive behavioural attitudes, skills and self-esteem.
- To work within the guidelines of Approved Learning Frameworks – such as "Belonging, Being and Becoming": The Victorian Early Years Learning Development Framework for Australia, produced by the Department of Education and Training.

For Families

- To provide a warm friendly atmosphere of respect where parents and guardians feel comfortable and able to express their needs, queries, expectations and opinions.
- To provide an atmosphere of a shared commitment to the development of the child within a partnership situation between the home and the centre.
- To provide opportunities for families to become involved in various activities and events at Huntingtower ELC and within the overall Huntingtower community.



Description of Service

Huntingtower ELC is a registered and licensed Early Childhood facility for the care and education of Pre School age children.

It is governed by the Department of Education and Training and operates in accordance with the Children's Services Regulations. It is reviewed by the Department of Education and Training at regular intervals to ensure that it is operating within the guidelines and according to the standards set out in the Education & Care Services National Regulations (January 2012) (a copy of which is available in the ELC office).

Our centre was awarded an 'Excellent' rating in all 7 areas by National Quality Standards through ACECQA (Australian Children's Education Care Quality Authority) in 2021.

Fees

ELC fees are displayed on the ELC foyer notice board and are on the <u>Huntingtower Website</u>.

Hours of Operation & Availability

The ELC program operates at the following days and times:

4-Year-Old ELC (4 Days)

Monday to Thursday: 8:30am - 3:10pm

Important Note

Following the announced Government changes to Early Childhood education with increased hours required for 4 year old kindergarten. From 2024 Huntingtower will be offering an extended hours program for 4 year old ELC.

Following careful consideration and planning, the Board has made the decision to close the Huntingtower Early Learning Centre, effective from the end of the 2024 school year.



Attendance

Arrival Procedures

Parents are expected to complete the 'Daily Attendance' book as you arrive with your child. This is a requirement of the Department of Education and Training Regulations and is a legal document.

Please include all of the following:

- Child's name and exact time of arrival
- Name of person who will be collecting the child if it is someone other than the parent or guardian. (This person must be 18 years or over and nominated on your enrolment form).

Please ensure that your child greets staff appropriately at the beginning of each session. Let the staff know of any particular requirements and inform them of anything which you think may assist in making your child feel more comfortable or secure.

It is essential that you inform staff of any medical condition or particular needs of your child at the beginning of the session to discuss the child's management plan and risk assessment.

Collection Procedures – Security

Your child may only leave Huntingtower ELC with the following people;

- The parent or other family member (as recorded in the child's enrolment form)
- Someone other than those listed above **only** if the ELC staff have been notified. That is, the person's name has been recorded in the child's enrolment form or in the 'attendance book' **and** a parent of the child has informed the staff of the change in collection.

- Someone other than those listed above if the
 parent telephones during the session and lets
 the staff know whom to expect if you had an
 unavoidable and unanticipated reason for not being
 able to collect your child at the conclusion of the
 session). Identification will be required.
- If someone other than a parent or guardian will be collecting your child, fill in the appropriate column in the 'Attendance Book' in order to inform the staff whom to expect. Also, let the person who will be collecting your child know that his/ her identification will be asked for if he/she is not known to the ELC staff.
- It is a condition of enrolment that parents abide by policies and expectations which includes the prompt collection of children.

Running Late at the Conclusion of the Session?

Always notify Huntingtower ELC if you are running late.

If, after 10 minutes following the conclusion of a session your child has not been collected and no contact has been made, one of your emergency contacts (as listed on your child's enrolment form) will be asked to come and collect your child.

Absences

If your child is not attending for the day, please email absences@huntingtower.vic.edu.au and the group leader at swhitrod@huntingtower.vic.edu.au



Updating Contact Details

Please be aware that it is **essential** that contact details are updated when any changes occur. This includes addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses and any change of people who are nominated by you to collect your child. Please use the Parent Portal to update your details and advise your classroom teacher by email - swhitrod@huntingtower.vic.edu.au.

Feedback

If a parent has any queries, positive feedback or concerns about the care that their child is receiving, please make an appointment to discuss these concerns with the teacher. This should always be the first point of call.

After any appointment, if a parent then feels the need to express any concerns or suggestions on an aspect of Huntingtower ELC, please address these to the Huntingtower Head of Junior School and, either phone or email juniorschool@huntingtower.vic.edu.au to arrange for an appointment. If any matter remains unresolved an appointment with the Huntingtower Principal can be arranged by contacting the Principal's Executive Assistant by phone or email vschwab@huntingtower.vic.edu.au

If you wish to take a matter to the Department of Education and Early Childhood:

- Phone Children's Services Office on 1300 333 231 or Fax 03 8392 9333
- Email the Department nevr@education.vic.gov.au
- Write to: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Level 2, 295 Springvale Road, Glen Waverley, 3152

Toilet Training

Children entering ELC should be toilet trained, including wiping themselves after using the toilet. Please ensure that children have a spare set of named clothes including a spare pair of shoes and socks in the unlikely event of an accident.

Sun Smart

The implementation of this policy is compulsory in Terms 1 and 4 and encouraged at other times.

- Children must have wide brimmed, named hats which protect their face, neck and ears whenever playing outside.
- Staff will act as role models by wearing hats outside.
- All children need to bring their own roll-on sunscreen. This will be applied prior to outside play during terms 1 and 4 and on days when the UV rating is above 3.
- Please ensure the class teacher is aware of any allergies and that these details are included on medical information on the Parent Portal.



Toys

Apart from scheduled "Show and Tell" items, no personal toys should be brought by a child to Huntingtower ELC. Toys are easy to misplace amongst the many items and activities at ELC and are easily broken if not made of a hard wearing, durable material.

The program at Huntingtower ELC is a very carefully organised and supervised environment. Each activity is carefully selected according to individual observations of children and with an awareness of developmentally appropriate activities and experiences for the individual group of children. Be confident that it is a well-constructed and stimulating environment for your child.

In keeping with Huntingtower philosophy and the Golden Rule, children engage only in inclusive, peacemaking and peace-keeping activities. At Huntingtower, children are discouraged from engaging in any "weapons" or "fight/war" scenario games.

Children will be redirected into more peaceful activities on any such occasion. It is requested that costumes or toys which encourage or promote any form of non-peacekeeping games, are not worn or brought to Huntingtower ELC.



Introduction

Your child's health is of upmost importance.

Please keep your child at home if they are unwell. A child must not attend Huntingtower ELC if the child has vomited or has been running a temperature within 24 hours prior to the session. Medicine will ONLY be administered if it is prescribed by a doctor, is in its original container and the staff have been given written permission to do so by a parent or guardian and specific instructions have been given.

These written instructions include the name of the medication to be given, the time or times in which it must be given as well as the quantity or amount of medication to be administered. The Medication Book must be filled out specifying this information.

Please advise Huntingtower ELC if your child is suffering from any infectious conditions eg Chicken Pox, Measles or head lice. It is a Department of Human Services (DHS) requirement that all parents be notified of such an occurrence. Such notification will be placed on the noticeboard or beside the "Sign In Book and via HT Connect". Huntingtower ELC adheres to the DHS School Exclusion Table.DHS Infectious Diseases Regulations & School Exclusion Table: https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion/infections-childrens-centres

If your child appears unwell after he or she arrives at Huntingtower ELC, every attempt will be made to contact the child's parent(s) or guardian. In the meantime, the staff will ensure that your child is made as comfortable as possible and that he or she is kept under close observation. An entry will be made in the Accident/Injury/Illness Book and the person collecting the child will be required to sign this book.

Throughout the day the children are asked to wash their hands after toileting, before snack times and following messy activities. We request that the children wash their hands upon arrival and prior to departure.

Prior History from Specialists

Mutual sharing of information between family and school is essential. Specialists' reports or other information that you consider to be relevant should be discussed with staff. A private, confidential appointment is best for this purpose.

First Aid Facilities

All staff employed at Huntingtower ELC hold a current First Aid Certificate including Asthma Management and a license to administer an Epi-Pen. It is a condition of Licence that all staff members hold a current First Aid Certificate. A well-stocked and maintained First Aid Kit is located within the centre at all times.

Asthma

Parents with students who have asthma are required to have a current Asthma Management Plan prepared by their doctor. Parents of students with asthma will meet yearly with the Nominated Supervisor/Educational Leader to discuss your child's Asthma Management Plan.

Staff must be fully aware of your child's Asthma and/or Anaphylaxis Management Plan prior to the commencement of the school year. Please provide this information at your earliest convenience via the Parent Portal and ensure a copy of this management plan is given to your child's teacher.



Anaphylaxis

All staff are trained in the use of an Epi-pen and this is updated annually. Copies of the anaphylaxis action plan provided and signed by the child's medical practitioner must be available at school prior to the commencement of the school year. Parents are asked to provide **2 Epipens**, one to be kept in the child's room (this will be kept with the child at all times including specialist sessions) and one to be kept in the main office. Parents should check these at frequent intervals and replace as necessary.

A child may not stay at the centre without an Epipen if its use has been prescribed. The school cannot guarantee a nut free environment but urges all parents and guardians to respect the rights of these children to a safe and secure environment by following the nut policy (refer to Policy folder located in the ELC foyer).

Parents of students with anaphylaxis will meet yearly with the Nominated Supervisor/Educational Leader to discuss your child's Anaphylaxis Management Plan.

Accidents

If a child has an accident whilst he/she is at Huntingtower ELC a member of staff will complete a report on the incident and show the report to the person collecting the child. All staff members must have a current First Aid Certificate.

In the event of an accident causing injury that requires treatment, treatment will be sought in accordance with the parent's instructions on the child's enrolment form and the parent or emergency contact will be notified as soon as practical.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, first aid will be administered, and an ambulance will be called. Parents will also be contacted as soon as practically possible.

Parents of children with asthma and similar diagnosed conditions such as anaphylaxis must provide a current, signed management plan **from their GP** or specialist and ensure that this is updated regularly and also whenever medication or management strategies change. Changes need to be entered via the Parent Portal and the class teacher notified as soon as possible.

Behaviour Guidance

At Huntingtower ELC we support children to develop the skills of socialising with others in appropriate ways so everyone can feel safe and secure within the ELC environment. Focus is on the desired appropriate behaviour. Clear limits are set and children are redirected when necessary towards activities where they can maintain or display appropriate behaviour. They may be re-directed to quieter activities.

This policy is practised in order to provide for the safety, health, well-being and security of all in attendance. Children are encouraged to demonstrate and value a genuine care for and respect for the rights of others.

Parents please refer to the Huntingtower ELC 'Interactions with Children' Policy folder for further details regarding behaviour management and guidance. This is located in the ELC foyer.



Weekly Checklist

Please bring for the beginning of each week:

- a clearly named face washer with loop attached (or very small hand towel of similar size)
- a clearly named clean fabric art smock

Other Important Links

• Immunisations in Victoria

Daily Checklist

For every session, please bring a small bag containing:

- their **named** hat
- a full change of **named** clothes (including shoes and socks)
- two **named** food boxes: one snack and one lunch box
- a **named** water bottle

Website

The <u>School website</u> features school information, news, photos and videos.

Facebook & Instagram

Follow Huntingtower on <u>Facebook</u> and <u>Instagram</u> to stay up to date with the latest news and events.



4-Year-Old ELC Requirements

4-Year-Old ELC Uniform List

- Huntingtower navy sports shorts
- Huntingtower short-sleeve sports top
- Huntingtower long-sleeve sports top
- Huntingtower polo fleece
- Huntingtower jacket vest
- Huntingtower tracksuit pants and top
- Huntingtower sports socks
- Huntingtower navy sun hat
- Huntingtower backpack
- Sport runners, non marking sole with Velcro fastening

Other Requirements

- Clearly named CHILD SIZED sleeping bag in a named fabric bag, optional named SMALL pillow and soft toy for Rest Time. Please provide these items by the end of Week one of Term 1.
- Clearly named cloth library bag (32cm x 40cm)
 with a drawstring. Library books may be borrowed
 weekly and are carried to and from ELC in this bag.
- Clearly named long-sleeved cloth smock for use with all the messy activities that are prevalent at ELC. Please ensure that it is cloth and not plastic or vinyl.

- Clearly named SMALL face washer (or small towel of face washer size) with a loop at one corner for ease of hanging. These are taken home on a weekly basis for washing. The small size is crucial due to health regulations.
- Named broad brimmed sun hat to be worn during Terms 1 and 4. (Baseball caps are not appropriate as they offer limited sun protection).
- Spare set of named clothing (including shoes and socks).
- Box of tissues.
- Roll-on sunscreen to be kept at the ELC.

Notes

- For comfort and safety no jewellery should be worn.
 (Children with pierced ears are permitted to wear gold, silver, or stainless steel stud earrings no larger than 4mm).
- Long hair needs to be tied back to keep it out of the way of activities. (Hair ties to be light or navy blue)
- Nail Polish is not suitable for ELC.
- Please ensure that all clothing and personal items are clearly named.
- See additional sheet for uniform price list on the <u>Huntingtower Website</u>



Snacks & Lunches

At ELC, we encourage healthy food at all times. We ask parents to **pack two named, separate food containers**, one labelled 'snack' and one labelled 'lunch'.

- For morning snack: a very small snack is required such as fresh fruit, vegetable portions or savoury biscuits. Cheese portions or one small sandwich are also fine.
- For lunch: a small sandwich, fruit, vegetable portions, dried fruit or savoury biscuits would be suitable. Please avoid 'Squeezy yoghurt' as some children are challenged to open the packaging
- Water is best to drink.

Please ensure that your child's snack is contained within a suitable snack box and that the child is able to open the container and the individual food items **independently**. The children will be encouraged to manage independently during all food times.

We encourage healthy eating and ask that lollies, chips, chocolates and carbonated drinks are not brought to school.

Drinks

Children are requested to bring their own drink bottle (no pop tops) and it is strongly recommended that they be encouraged to drink water from their drink bottles. Please avoid high sugar content juices and cordials. Drink bottles should be **clearly** named.

Nuts

Huntingtower ELC asks that <u>no</u> foods with any nut content are brought onto the premises in order to minimise the risk for children with severe allergies. This includes Nutella and pesto.

Birthdays

If parents would like to celebrate their child's birthday at the ELC, please check with the teacher to ensure that appropriate food is brought and that the ingredients are listed.

There may be children within the group who are intolerant of ingredients such as eggs and nuts. Individual items such as cupcakes should be supplied. Please ensure they do not contain cream or nuts.

Encouraging Independence

It would be a good idea to give your child the opportunity to practise packing and unpacking their bag; handling their lunchbox; pouring from their drink bottle; undoing lunch wrap; putting a smock on and taking it off again and putting on footwear **independently**. These are skills we often take for granted and independence is something that is encouraged at ELC.



Working with Children Check

A current Working with Children Check (WWCC) and completed HT Volunteering paper work is required by all parents involved in supervising the students in any capacity. This includes, excursions, PMP and any other duty that you may be rostered.

The school keeps a WWCC database for all staff, parents and volunteers. Information about WWC has been included in your Orientation Pack and can also be found by visiting www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

Click here for the information about Volunteering

Click here for the school Child Safety Policies

Excursions & Incursions

The 4 year old group have excursions as well as incursions each term.

Perceptual Motor Program (PMP)

Before a term starts, and if current health advice allows, parents are invited to assist with the Perceptual Motor Program which runs for ELC and Foundation throughout the term. Parents are required for approximately one hour.

Please note that parents must submit a Working with Children Check before assisting and sign in at reception to receive a name label to be worn whilst on school grounds.

Observations of Student Development

Individual observations and documentation of individual children's play and learning will be recorded in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Such documentation is kept confidentially in the ELC office. Photos of the children will be taken as part of a cycle of observation, planning and evaluation.

Individual Child Portfolios

Throughout the year, artwork, photos, documentation of learning, observations and celebrations of the many diverse learning opportunities we offer at ELC, are recorded in your child's Individual Portfolio.

At the end of the year, this record of your child's learning journey is taken home. We welcome your feedback and comments about what your child is enjoying in the program via email and or by filling in the family contributions sheet located by the sign-in book.

Individual portfolios are located in the ELC centre and may be posted on HT Connect.

Parent Teacher Interviews

During the year there will be Parent Teacher interviews where your child's progress and needs can be discussed. These provide the opportunity for parents to raise issues, provide feedback and to develop appropriate goals for their child's progress.



Using Personal Information

Huntingtower ELC may use your personal information for the following reasons:

- To comply with the requirements of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Enrolment information.
- To contact the parents/guardian/emergency contacts in the event of an emergency.
- For reference by the ELC staff.
- In order to provide the best possible care and attention to your child based on recent, accurate and relevant information.

Click here to review the Privacy Collection Statement.

Huntingtower ELC will take reasonable precautions to prevent the loss, misuse or alteration of your personal information.

Huntingtower ELC will store all the personal information you provide in a locked and secure location.

In addition to the disclosures reasonably necessary for the purposes identified, Huntingtower ELC may disclose your personal information to the extent that it is required to do so by law, in connection with any legal proceedings or prospective legal proceedings, and in order to establish, exercise or defend its legal right.

Privacy

Huntingtower is committed to maintaining the privacy of the personal information that is collected, stored and used for documenting and planning purposes.

The school adheres to strict privacy and confidentiality procedures in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2000 and the Health Records Act 2001. A parent may gain access to their child's personal information through a request to the Director of ELC.

Code of Conduct

Parents are asked to read the Code of Conduct Policy. After reading, parents must sign and return the Code of Conduct Agreement provided in the Enrolment Pack to the ELC.

Child Safety

The School is committed to the care, safety and well-being of children and young people. As part of the School's commitment to the Victorian Government's Child Safe Standards, the School is required to collect, verify, and record the volunteer's history of work involving children. or young people. Further information is available from our website <a href="https://example.com/humanes.com/



Volunteering at Huntingtower

Huntingtower encourages an open and friendly learning environment, which values community participation and volunteer involvement. Our volunteers may be parents, guardians, carers of students at the School, alumni or members of the broader school or local community.

Volunteering

The School recognises the integral role that volunteers play and actively seeks to develop structures and procedures that encourages volunteers to become actively involved in the life of the School. We are grateful to the many volunteers who already make a significant contribution to the School by bringing different levels of expertise and skills to the curriculum as well as the cocurricular program.

Any member of our community wishing to become a volunteer at the School will need to be on our Volunteers Register prior to performing any volunteer duties. All new and existing volunteers will be provided appropriate training to enable them to understand their role and provide clarity about what is expected and how they can positively contribute to the School's programs.

Further information is available on our website Click here for Huntingtower School - Volunteering at Huntingtower

If you require assistance, our Human Resources Team are available to support and answer any of your questions via <u>volunteers@huntingtower.vic.edu.au</u>.

Child Safe at Huntingtower

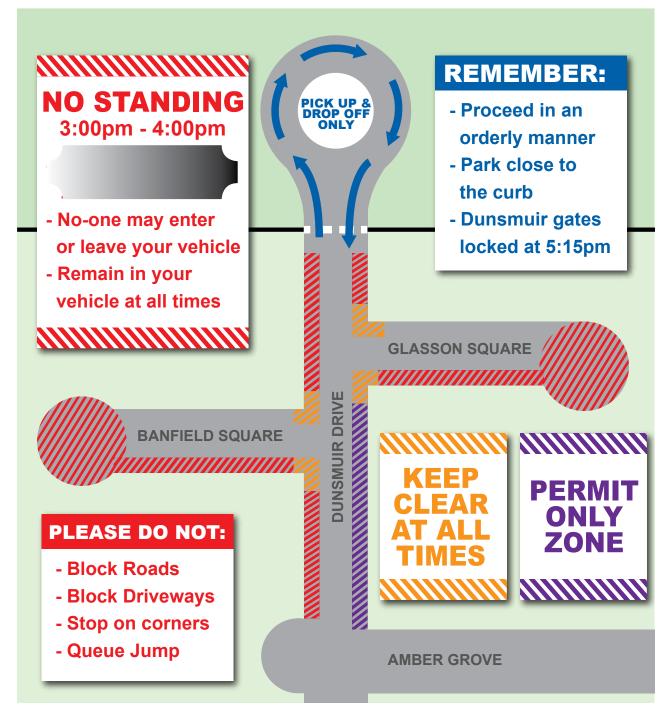
At Huntingtower we are committed to providing a nurturing school environment where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all students.

The welfare of each child and young person studying at Huntingtower is the School's paramount concern. Huntingtower has a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse and is committed to promoting child safety. Ministerial Order 1359 requires Huntingtower to implement child safety standards and to accommodate and take the needs of all children (including but not limited to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable) into account when creating a child safe environment.

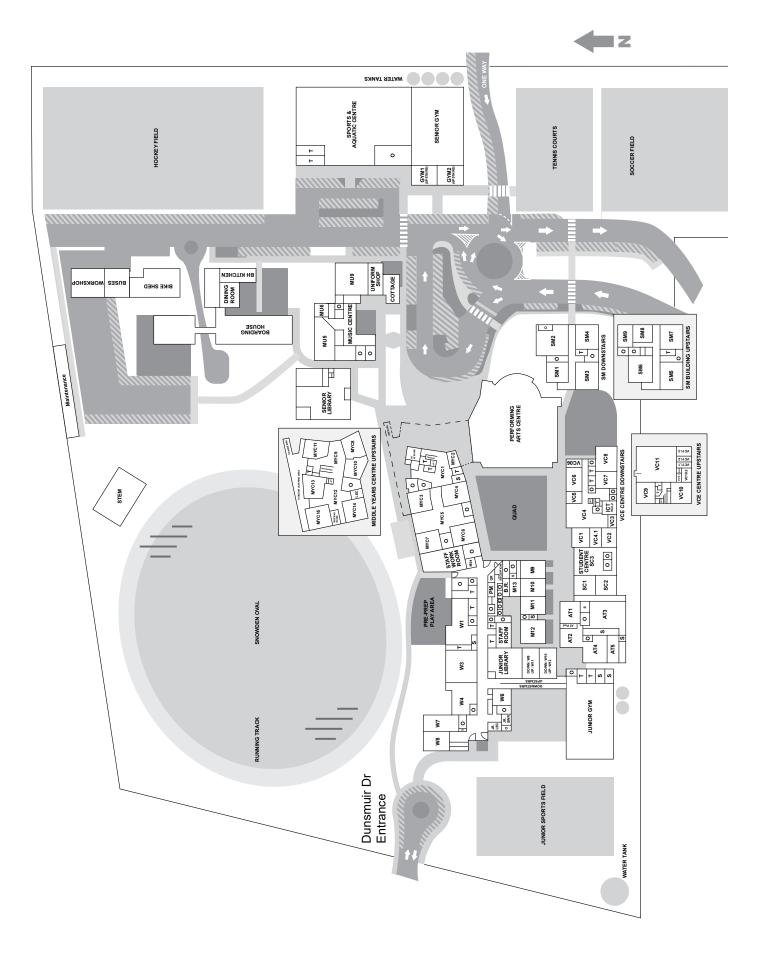
Everyone employed or volunteering at Huntingtower has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure a child safe culture in which the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make. We encourage any student who feels unsafe to contact one of the School's Child Protection Officers.

Child Safety Policies, Codes & Information are also available on the HT Connect Parent Page.





Campus Map



School Communications

Quick-Reference Guide

Parent Communication

Method	Purpose	Parent Actions
Phone	Used to reach the primary contact in an emergency or if unreachable, the secondary contact or emergency contacts.	Please ensure all contact details are up to date via the Parent Portal. School Office: +61 3 9807 8888
Messages	Used to alert parents to student absence or event changes. (Please do not 'reply' to SMS messages, call the school directly if required)	When a child is absent please notify the school via one of the following: SMS: +61 0412 790 238, Phone: +61 03 9807 8888 Email: absences@huntingtower.vic.edu.au
Email	For excursion permissions, student and medical info updates, event reminders, important information, Bulletin, news and contact from teachers.	Check emails for important information. Update email address with the School if changed.
2Go Consent2Go	Consent2Go is the software platform used to obtain parental permission for school incursions and excursions as well as updating your child's medical and allergy information online.	When your child requires permission to attend an event eg. excursion, camp, sport etc you will receive an email from MCB Schools. This email will allow you to accept, or decline, the invitation and to update your details. It is important that you add the email address, admin@mcbschools.com, to your safe email list in advance so it doesn't go to your spam folder.

Information Sharing

Method	Purpose	Parent Actions
Website	General school information, calendars, key dates.	Regularly check calendars for important dates.
Facebook & Instagram	Community updates and photos.	Engage in the Huntingtower community.
U Bulletin	Upcoming events, school news, Parents and Friends news. Bulletin is sent by email or accessed through the Website or Parent Portal.	Read the news to keep up to date with school activities.
HT Connect	Secure website for reviewing and managing your student's information, paying school fees, downloading student timetables, photos, reports, booking parent teacher interviews and contacting teachers.	Regularly check that all information is up to date and correct. Pay school fees. Download school reports as they are distributed. Book parent teacher interviews, order student lunches on Flexischools.

