

Secondary School Year 8 Experience



We are excited to announce that Mandarin Chinese will be available for Year 8 students from next year. Mandarin will be available along with Japanese and German in 2012.

It will be the study of both language and culture. The course aims to develop basic communication skills in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing and a basic understanding of China and Chinese society.

EASING INTO SECONDARY SCHOOL WITH CONFIDENCE

The move from primary to secondary school can be daunting for both students and parents.

Westminster School's Year 8 program is designed to achieve a successful, positive transition from primary to secondary school, integrating students from a variety of backgrounds and schools into a happy, supportive environment. We have implemented a number of innovative strategies, laying the foundation for success (in its many forms) at our School and beyond.

At Westminster School, we aim to move Year 8 students from the familiar primary school structure of one class teacher and homeroom, to the secondary school structure of multiple teachers and classrooms, through a series of graded steps. Our Year 8 program therefore offers a relatively structured environment, helping students steadily develop skills, confidence and greater independence to prepare them for their remaining secondary years. At the end of Year 8, students complete the move into our House structure, which sees all students (Years 8 to 12) grouped into 'vertical' Houses. They then remain in the same House for the rest of their schooling.

DEDICATED YEAR 8 SUPPORT

Our Year 8 class teachers work closely with our Head of Year 8 to form a dedicated team committed to the welfare and development of all Year 8 students. The Head of Year 8 is responsible for the care and direction of all Year 8 students and the Year 8 program generally. Each Year 8 class has a class teacher who is responsible for the class and acts as the first point of contact for parents. The class teacher meets with their class at the beginning of each day and also has pastoral lessons with the class. The Year 8 class teacher also teaches their class, usually in one of the core subjects.

A TASTE OF EVERYTHING

Our Year 8 curriculum is designed to provide each Year 8 student with an introduction to the broad range of subjects at Westminster. In addition to the traditional core subjects (such as English, Mathematics, Science and the Humanities), every student experiences a 'taste' of our Performing and Creative Arts, Agriculture, Information Technology (computing), Home Economics and Technology programs. This allows students to make informed decisions about their subject choices as they move through Senior School - decisions that will influence their future studies and life direction.

SENIOR SCHOOL/CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Opportunities to grow...

At Westminster School, we have found a strong correlation between students participating in co-curricular activities and performing well academically. Our co-curricular program is voluntary, but we strongly encourage all students to participate in co-curricular activities. Students may choose from a wide range of sports, music, drama, dance and other activities.

STEPS TO COMMENCING YEAR 8 AT WESTMINSTER

Orientation day – Westminster School holds a special orientation day on the first Friday of December before the beginning of Year 8. This provides an opportunity for Year 8 students to get to know their class teachers and other Year 8 students. Information about uniform, daily routines, the School's layout and the First Day program is also provided.

Interview day – Before the School term begins, new Year 8 students and their parents are invited to meet the Principal, Head of Year 8 and their class teacher. These interviews provide further information, particularly for parents. At this time, the class teacher will arrange to meet the new student personally on the morning of their first day at Westminster.

The first day – A staggered start to our School year means that Year 8 students commence the day before the majority of the student population. This gives Year 8 students an opportunity to spend time with their class teachers, become familiar with procedures and to meet with some of their subject teachers before the term gets fully under way.

