

# THE Y VOCATIONAL SCHOOL



## Students and Parents, Guardians and Carers Handbook

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## OUR PURPOSE

The Y Vocational School (YVS) is a senior secondary school, enrolling students for 2022 in years 10-11 and growing to include year 12 students in 2023. We engage students who have previously disengaged from school for a variety of reasons. Our school supports students through their re-engagement journey by providing small class sizes, individualised programs and extensive pastoral care.

We understand that learning occurs when young people are given interesting, challenging and manageable targets. We know that young people often face circumstances which may make it difficult for them to be successful at school. We guarantee a safe and stimulating environment which encourages success.

## OUR VALUES

- Honesty
- Caring
- Respect
- Responsibility

## OUR BELIEFS

- We believe in the power of inspired young people.
- We believe that education should be accessible to all young people.
- We believe that all young people deserve the opportunity to guide their own learning.
- We believe that all young people deserve to be listened to.
- We believe that all young people are capable of success.

## PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

I am excited to welcome you to The Y Vocational School, Mirrabooka. I have worked with an amazing team of people to create the first school of its kind in Western Australia. My team and I have designed a space for young people to feel empowered and motivated to learn and to develop into contributing, productive young adults.

The YMCA has a long history of supporting young people to realise their potential and creating a CARE school has been a continuation of this journey. We are fortunate to draw on the experience of the YMCA in Queensland, who have a long and successful history of providing alternative education programs.

I look forward to working with a qualified and engaged group of people to provide a positive and meaningful educational experience for our young people

My door is always open so please pop in to ask questions, raise concerns or just to say hello.

Kind regards



Navit Shchigel  
Principal

## ENROLMENT

The first step to enrolment is to fill in our enrolment form, which is available online or by request. Our enrolment process includes interviews and a tour of the school. Parents/carers are required to present documents relevant to enrolment; these are listed on the enrolment form. Our acceptance is based on a combination of factors including student demographics and our ability to support the needs of the student.

The YVS complies with the Privacy Act 1988 which regulates how personal information is handled and includes thirteen Australian Privacy Principles and the Privacy Amendment Act 2017 (Notifiable Data Breaches). The YVS is committed to making sure that personal information is collected, held, used, and released according to legislative requirements and the Australian Privacy Principles, as detailed in the *Privacy Policy* (available on the YVS website).

The YVS collects and holds personal information about its students that is reasonably necessary for, or related to, our activities and the services we provide. At enrolment the YVS collects personal details about identification, contact details, previous education and anything that will affect a student's schooling. The YVS is required to pass some of the details on to the VET provider for vocational courses.

Students have the right to have their privacy respected and personal information treated confidentially. This information may need to be shared with other teachers, the principal, and staff within the YVS. Students will be told if this is to happen. Parents/carers may only access student personal information with the permission of the principal, who will consider the safety, privacy and maturity of the student, the issues involved and the parent/carer's need to know that information in order to care for the student.

Personal information may be disclosed to child protection agencies, family support agencies or emergency services when the YVS reasonably believes that a student is at risk of harm.

## SCHOOL FEES

School fees are \$1000 per year and are invoiced each term. Alternative payment arrangements can also be made to suit family circumstances. Families who are unable to pay the fees due to financial circumstances are welcome to contact Navit Shchigel, the principal, to discuss.

**No child will be turned away or disadvantaged because of the inability of the family to pay fees.**

## WELLBEING

YVS delivers the *Mind, Body, Spirit*, wellbeing program which teaches students a range of life skills including budgeting, workplace skills and healthy habits. Students are supported in their academic endeavours by staff who are trained in trauma-informed practice. Our young people learn how to self-regulate and create a positive outlook.

The culture of the school promotes respect, honesty, responsibility and caring. Students and staff work together to create an environment that is safe and welcoming for a diverse range of students.

The wellbeing team at YVS is led by the youth manager who is assisted by qualified youth workers. The Y WA has an approach to youth work which is trauma-aware, solutions-focused, person-centred and strength-based. All youth work at YVS takes place within this framework.

We have access to a clinical psychologist once a fortnight on campus and will refer students to external agencies when suitable. Our wellbeing team assists student to access support for health management, crisis intervention and family support as needed.

## **LEARNING**

Students benefit from direct instruction in literacy and numeracy, taking advantage of evidence-based programs. Literacy and numeracy are also integrated throughout the curriculum.

YVS engages students by delivering a challenging and achievable curriculum. We use diagnostic testing to ascertain the academic needs of our students and we create an Individual Education Program to guide progression through the curriculum. We want our students to develop a life-long love of learning and we know this is achieved when they experience success and can see themselves progressing. We give our students the opportunity to experience academic success by providing access to a range of recognised qualifications. Our goal is that every student leaves us with qualifications which will lead to further employment or tertiary study. Qualifications are delivered by us and by partner registered training organisations.

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed with each student and parents/carers. The plan includes academic, wellbeing and vocational subjects, and individual supports to boost engagement and learning. All IEPs are reviewed and approved by staff, parents and students prior to being implemented.

Our strong focus on developing skills in literacy and numeracy is supported with evidence-based programs and whole school strategies.

### **Child Protection and Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum**

We implement the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum (KS:CPC). All staff are trained to deliver the program in an age and culturally appropriate way.

The KS:CPC is a Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) responsibility, to ensure that effective abuse prevention programs are implemented and that all children and young people have access to the approved child protection curriculum. The KS:CPC is an evidence based, best practice curriculum developed collaboratively with child protection experts, teachers, educational leaders and other professionals. It is based on two main themes:

- We have the right to be safe.
- We can help ourselves to be safe by talking to people we trust.

Further information is available on request and an information letter will be sent to parents/carers.

## WORKING

YVS creates community partnerships and works within the existing framework of the YMCA WA to give our students access to workplace learning, traineeships and employment. We teach our students workplace norms and aim to provide all students the opportunity to participate in a workplace by the end of year 12. We know that a job is not just about earning money, it contributes to personal fulfillment and community belonging, and we are driven to guide our students into the career of their choice.

## STAFF AT YVS

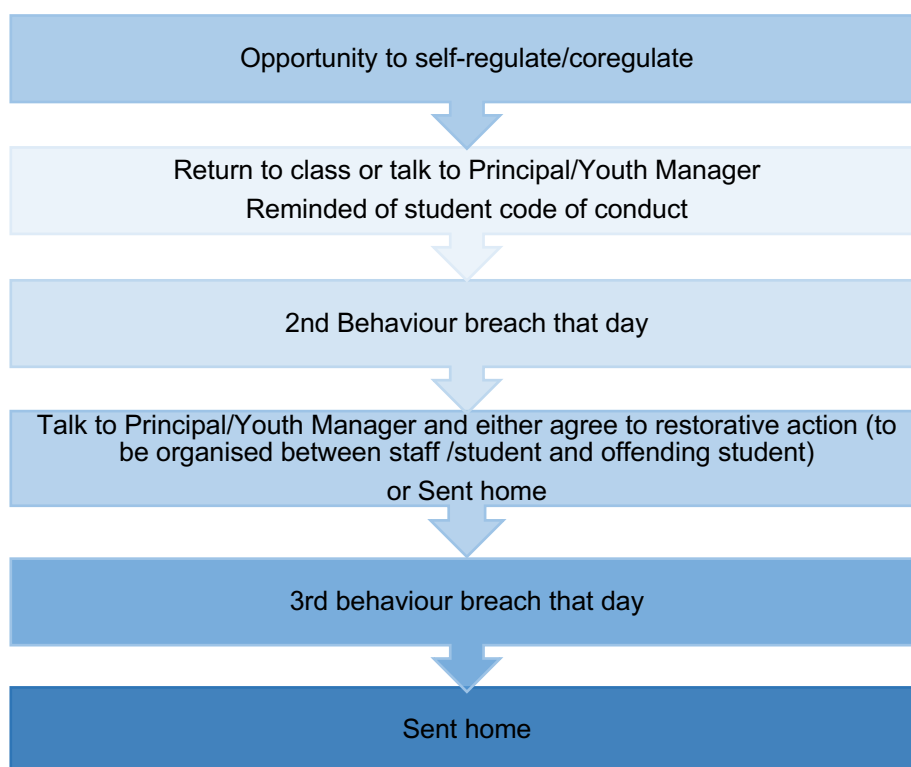
YVS provides an equal mix of teaching and welfare staff. All staff are trained in trauma-informed practice and have experience in supporting disengaged students. Staff undergo child safeguarding and diversity training and are qualified in their areas of expertise. All staff understand the importance of wellbeing in underpinning academic success.

## BEHAVIOUR AT YVS

YVS provides a safe environment for all staff and students. Any behaviour which infringes on the rights of others to learn and feel safe is not tolerated. Our behaviour support policy is based on restorative justice and aims to develop an understanding of the needs of the community. In recognition of the primary purpose of creating and maintaining a safe learning community, there may be instances where students are temporarily or permanently excluded from YVS.

Students at YVS are expected to behave according to the values of Respect, Honesty, Caring and Responsibility. We take a proactive approach to positive behaviour, teaching these values and providing clear instructions in how to express them.

## BEHAVIOUR BREACH FLOW CHART



In recognition of the individual nature of students and their behaviour, the behaviour chart is used as a guideline. If a student breaches the student code of conduct frequently, or their behaviour breaches are ongoing, it may be decided to send the student home straight after the first breach in a day or to impose stronger consequences. These decisions will be made by the principal and/or youth manager, in consultation with relevant staff members.

For serious behaviour breaches (violence, verbal assault, bullying, harmful gossip or illicit substances) decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. Behaviour of this nature may result in temporary or permanent exclusion, depending on the severity and the impact of the behaviour on community safety.

As part of our behaviour support strategy, staff will hold regular de-briefing sessions and case management meetings. In these sessions, avenues for supporting positive behaviour will be explored and discussed. Behaviour support strategies are reviewed and are updated in keeping with the needs of the cohort. These may include Individual Behaviour Support Plans.

YVS explicitly forbids the use of any form of child abuse, corporal punishment or other degrading punishment. Four forms of child abuse are covered by WA law and are defined as follows:

**Physical abuse** occurs when a child is severely and/or persistently hurt or injured by an adult or a child's carer.

**Sexual abuse** occurs when a child is exposed to, or involved in sexual activity that is inappropriate to the child's age and developmental level, and includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:

- The child is the subject of bribery, coercion, threat, violence or exploitation.
- The child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour.
- There is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.

**Emotional abuse** includes:

- Psychological abuse.
- Being exposed to an act of family and domestic violence.

**Neglect** is when children do not receive adequate food or shelter, medical treatment, supervision, care or nurturance to such an extent that their development is damaged, or they are injured. Neglect may be acute, episodic or chronic.

- Adequate care for the child.
- Effective medical, therapeutic or remedial treatment for the child.

**Corporal punishment:**

Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light; typically involving hitting the child with the hand or with an implement; it can also include, for example, forcing the child to stay in an uncomfortable position. It does not include the use of reasonable physical restraint to protect the child or others from harm.

**Degrading punishment:**

Any punishment which is incompatible with respect for human dignity, including corporal punishment and nonphysical punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child.

## **DRESS CODE**

Students at YVS are provided with a YMCA t-shirt on enrolment and it is mandatory for students to wear it during school excursions. Students can wear the t-shirt at school if they choose and extra t-shirts can be ordered at cost.

As part of our strategy of teaching appropriate behaviour, students are expected to dress in an acceptable manner for school. Clothing which is inappropriately revealing is considered unacceptable, as is clothing which contains offensive language or images. Clothing which displays drug, sex or alcohol references is inappropriate. Students who arrive in unacceptable clothing are given the opportunity to change into clothing which is kept in stock at school. If the student doesn't agree to change into the clothes on offer, they will be sent home for the day.

## **OUR DAY**

We begin each day with a communal breakfast, a stretch and morning circle. This gives us the opportunity to share and to check in with ourselves and prepare for a day of learning. Students and staff may choose a topic for discussion. This is followed by curriculum based subject learning and recess. After lunch, students take part in our Body, Mind, Spirit program; a wellbeing program which includes movement, self-awareness, protective behaviours and community building. Each Friday, morning circle includes the recognition of student achievement by awarding certificates for community contribution and healthy choices.

Our school timetable runs from 9am to 2.30pm, Monday to Friday. Our term dates align with government schools.

**Before school:** We assume duty of care from 8.30 am and will supervise students from this time until the commencement of class.

**After school:** We will provide supervision until students depart the school grounds. Parents/carers who are delayed should contact the school to arrange supervision or to make an alternative arrangement.

Start and finish times may be adjusted for excursions, sporting activities, incursions or offsite training days. When this occurs, parents will be informed. Students are under the duty of care of YVS on all excursions, incursions and during sporting activities.

### **Term Dates 2022**

Term 1: Monday 31 January – Friday 8 April

Term 2: Tuesday 26 April – Friday 1 July

Term 3: Monday 18 July – Friday 23 September

Term 4: Monday 10 October – Thursday 15 December

**Pupil free days will be announced to parents/carers and students**



## **BULLYING AND GOSSIP**

Bullying and gossip are strictly prohibited at YVS. We recognise that gossiping is harmful and has the potential to lead to bullying. Gossiping makes people feel unsafe.

**Bullying** is an ongoing or repeated misuse of power in relationships, with the intention to cause deliberate physical and/or psychological harm. The behaviour need not be the same type each time.

Bullying can be direct or indirect, verbal, online or physical.

Examples of bullying behaviour include:

- abusive, insulting, or offensive language
- behaviour or language that frightens, humiliates, belittles, or degrades including criticism that is delivered with yelling and screaming
- inappropriate comments about a person's appearance, lifestyle, or their family
- spreading false or malicious rumours about someone
- excluding or isolating
- deliberately denying access to information, consultation or resources, or unfair treatment
- physical assaults or threats
- posting humiliating images or media content

In keeping with the YVS focus on restorative justice, the initial consequence of bullying is to educate and encourage the expression of feelings in a safe environment. If bullying continues, it may result in a student being withdrawn from YVS. Safety of the community is given absolute priority.

## **MOBILE PHONES AND ICT USE**

YVS does not allow the use of mobile phones during school hours. If a student brings a phone to school, it must be out of sight and turned off. If a student uses their mobile phone at school, it will be confiscated and held at the office until the end of the school day. Repeat offenders will be subject to our behaviour support strategy.

The banning of mobile phones during school hours is common to almost all schools in Australia. The use of phones has been linked to online bullying, inappropriate social media use and unwelcome videos and photographs.

The school provides access to laptops and the internet. This is to be used in line with our overall commitment to the safety of students and the community. Unacceptable use includes, but is not limited to, social media use in school time, online bullying, offensive material.

## **THE KITCHEN**

A light daily breakfast will be provided to students as part of the learning program. Other meals are not provided. Students are free to use the microwave and kettle at recess and lunchtime to heat their food or make instant soups/noodles. We encourage parents/carers to provide their children with food for lunch and recess as this will help them to focus on their studies. If a family is struggling to provide food, they are invited to speak to the youth manager to discuss possible arrangements.

## ATTENDANCE

YVS students are expected to attend between the hours of 9.00 and 2.30, Monday to Friday unless there is an acceptable absence.

### Acceptable absences:

A student is excused from attending YVS, or from participating in an educational program of YVS, on any day —

(a) if the student is prevented from attending YVS, or from participating in the educational program by —

- (i) temporary physical or mental incapacity; or
- (ii) any other reasonable cause.

and

(b) if a responsible person has notified the principal of the cause of the student's non-attendance or non-participation —

- (i) as soon as is practicable; and
- (ii) in any case within 3 school days of the day on which the non-attendance started

(c) where under paragraph (b) the incapacity of the student is given as the cause; if the responsible person provides the principal with a certificate in support from a registered medical practitioner if requested to do so by the principal.

In this case a student's acceptable absence will be recorded in Edumate in accordance with the Attendance Procedure.

### Unacceptable absences:

A student's parents/carers are required to provide an explanation for any absence to the principal within three days of an absence occurring. If the Principal is of the opinion that a reason is not genuine or not of sufficient cause, the student will be recorded in Edumate as absent in accordance with the Attendance Procedure

If a student's absences are the subject of a welfare concern, the Youth Manager will case manage the situation by contacting the student, their parents/carers and any relevant agencies. The case management will promote a return to regular attendance in line with the needs of the student and their family.

If a student has had a pattern of absences and the principal is of the opinion that reasons have persistently —

- (a) been not genuine; or
- (b) not amounted to sufficient cause for absences,

then, the principal may refer the student's case to an Attendance Panel under section 39 of the Education Act 1999. Repeated unexplained absences may put the student's ongoing enrolment at risk.

### Centrelink payments

Centrelink payments may be affected by non-attendance. YVS must report to Centrelink after 5 consecutive days of unacceptable absence.

### **Late arrivals and early departures**

Students arriving late will be asked to sign in. An SMS will be sent to parents/carers if a student hasn't arrived by 11am and no explanation has been provided.

Students leaving early need permission from parents/carers. Students who choose to leave without permission will be suspended and will require to attend a re-entry meeting to attend school.

More detailed information is available in our *Late Arrival and Early Departure of Students Procedure*.

### **STUDENT COMMITMENT**

Students at YVS agree to uphold the values of

- Honesty
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Caring

YVS provides a fair, safe and positive environment that recognises and values diversity, abilities and contributions of students and staff. At YVS all students have the right to learn, and teachers have the right to teach, in a fair, safe and positive environment. Students and staff have the right to be treated with respect and engage in an environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or vilification.

**A full copy of the Student Code of Conduct is available on our website or on request.**

Breaches of the Code by a student may be reported to a member of staff by other students, YVS or other Y WA staff, or a member of the public.

Any breaches will be addressed by YVS staff in accordance with the Behaviour Support Policy, which is available on our website or on request. This is about supporting the student to self-regulate their behaviour, engage in learning, and become increasingly positive members of the school and community.

Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained, respecting the rights of individuals involved.

### **STAFF COMMITMENT**

Staff at YVS agree to uphold the values of

- Honesty
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Caring

We are committed to listening to the young people in our care and providing them with a safe learning environment, free from all forms of harassment and bullying. We commit to upholding the Staff Code of Conduct for the YMCA, which adheres to Child Safeguarding Principles and to valuing diversity, recognising the academic and social/emotional needs of our cohort and to acting in the best interest of our students.

**A full copy of the Staff Code of Conduct is available on our website or on request**

Breaches of the Staff Code of Conduct will be addressed as outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct and Concerns, Complaints and Disputes Procedure. These are available online or on request.

## **PARENT/CARER COMMITMENT**

Working in partnership with our parents and carers is vital to the wellbeing of our students. In recognition of this, we ask that parents/carers commit to upholding the values of YVS. As YVS is a safe space, parents and carers are expected to dress appropriately on school grounds, refrain from using profane language and speak to staff and students with respect. Parents and carers should provide YVS with up to date information about their child and ensure that all information relevant to the school is submitted to YVS in a timely manner. Parents and carers who breach this agreement may be banned from school premises.

## **CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES**

We recognise parents/carers, students and other stakeholders have a right to complain and our aim is to ensure that:

- a child-focused, child-friendly, culturally safe dispute and complaint process is adopted
- complaints are received in a positive manner and the outcome, the complainant or the subject of the complaint is not pre-judged
- concerns are dealt with promptly and thoroughly and those who have raised them are kept informed about progress
- all complaints are handled on their merits
- complaints made by parents will not rebound adversely on their children and similarly, complaints raised by students will not rebound on them or on other students
- confidentiality is respected and maintained so far as is possible
- a resolution of the matter is sought, with the parties directly involved, at the local level
- children and staff are engaged in the review processes and provide feedback on review outcomes
- complaints are recorded and regularly analysed
- mandatory reporting obligations when receiving, responding to and investigating complaints of child harm or abuse are adhered to
- the dispute and complaint processes are reviewed annually, or after an event and participation of children and young people is sought in this review.

Every student, staff member and parent/carer at YVS has the right to speak up about issues which affect them. Feedback can be expressed in the following ways:

- Tell someone – talk to a staff member at the school and let them know your feedback
- Write it down – you may find it easier to write down your concerns and then give it to a staff member
- Alone or in groups – you may discuss the issue with another person and decide to provide the feedback together or in a group.

Every YVS staff member is familiar with our procedures and can be approached by stakeholders who want to make a complaint or provide other feedback.

Formal complaints can be addressed to

**The Principal  
The Y Vocational School  
1 Chesterfield Road  
Mirrabooka 6061**

Or

[navit.shchigel@yshcools.wa.edu.au](mailto:navit.shchigel@yshcools.wa.edu.au)

or formal complaints can be made in person by arranging a meeting via the campus administrator.

Formal complaints will be logged and investigated in keeping with our Concerns, Complaints and Disputes Policy and Procedure. These are available online or on request.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Parent/carers and students are encouraged to contact the school to give feedback or to discuss concerns with relevant staff members by phone or email.

Phone: 08 6234 1173

Email: [admin@yschools.wa.edu.au](mailto:admin@yschools.wa.edu.au)