

Middle School Information Handbook

2026



MIDDLETON
GRANGE SCHOOL



Introduction

Kia ora and welcome to Middle School.

It is our pleasure and passion to host you during your time with us. Our prayer is that this will be a time of success, growth, and encouragement for you as you embark on this chapter of your life.

As the Head of Middle School, I am committed to seeing the best outcomes for each of our Year 7 - 10 students. We want to see our students thrive and flourish, not only academically, but in all areas of life. God has given each of us unique gifts and talents; these can be nurtured and developed while students are in our Middle School.

As a Christian school we aim to guide our students, cultivating their character, helping them to learn resilience, and teaching them to act with integrity, kindness and respect.

I look forward to getting to know you, as you undertake this exciting journey with us at Middleton Grange School.

Ngā mihi nui,

Mrs Louise Arndt

Acting Deputy Principal ~ Head of Middle School

MGS Vision Statement:

Middleton Grange School assists families in the education of their children by providing an environment in which Biblical truths in Jesus Christ are taught and lived.

MGS Mission Statement:

At Middleton Grange School we are committed to a rigorous learning culture based on an understanding of truth as revealed in the whole counsel of Scripture. We equip students with the knowledge and skills to understand their heritage and their place in it; and to critique and engage contemporary society. We work with parents to encourage students in their gifts and abilities to serve God and others.

School Verse:

In Thy Light shall we see Light - Psalm 36:9

School Moto:

Character, Excellence, Service for the Glory of God



Overview

What is Middle School?

The Middle School at Middleton Grange School is comprised of Years 7 - 10. This stage is a time of rapid growth—intellectually, socially, and emotionally. Students gain independence and responsibility while still needing clear boundaries and support.

Our vision is to nurture academic, social, and spiritual development. Building on Primary School foundations, students explore their world, develop God-given gifts, and prepare for Senior College and life beyond school.

Even as independence grows, parental involvement remains vital. Your encouragement and engagement make a significant difference. Please use this handbook as a guide throughout the year.

Middle School Goals:

We aim to help students grow academically, socially, and spiritually by encouraging them to:

- **Know Christ** – Develop a personal relationship with Him and live for His glory.
- **Learn Actively** – Engage with expert, biblically based teaching in a safe, supportive environment.
- **Contribute Humbly** – Pursue excellence, show character, and serve others with integrity.
- **Think Critically** – Make informed decisions and engage thoughtfully with contemporary society.

How We Achieve These:

- **A diverse curriculum** that celebrates individual gifts within a collaborative environment.
- **Extra-curricular** opportunities that shape the whole person, recognising each is made in God's image.
- **Extended Learning** – Field trips, hands-on projects, and guest experts connect learning to real-world skills and encourage positive contributions to society.
- **Parent Partnership** – Families are invited to join these activities, listed in the School Newsletter and Events Calendar.
- **Focus on Culture** – Our **Social Culture Plan (SCP)** is intentionally built around fostering Belonging, Honour, and Resilience, while our **Learning Culture Plan (LCP)** is centred around minimising distractions in the classroom to improve teaching and learning outcomes.



Middle School Staff

Middle School Leadership:

Mrs Louise Arndt

Acting Deputy Principal: Head of Middle School



Mr Geoff Steyn

Assistant Head of Middle School

Miss Anne Mackechnie

Assistant Head of Middle School

For contact details, please refer to the school website - www.middleton.school.nz/contact-us/

Deans - Pastoral Care:

Middle School Girls: Mrs Ruth Ellena

Years 7 & 8: Mr Sam Rees

Year 9: Mr Aidan Baker

Year 10: Mr Nathan Sinclair

Year 7 & 8 Learning Team Leader:

Mr Ben Townshend

Whānau Teachers:

Year 7:

Mrs Juliet Cruz

Mr Ben Townshend

Mr Brad Taylor

Mr Eugene Zeelie

Year 8:

Mrs Cassandra Robb

Mr Sam Rees

Mr Bailey Stocks

Mrs Grace Weir

Year 9:

Ms Melandi Culverhouse

Miss Jo Dodge

Mr David Elder

Mr Matt Lawrence

Mr Nathan Millar

Year 10:

Ms Dale Goddard

Mr Ben Gracey

Mr Rob Liebert

Mr Zac Medland

Mrs Emma Taylor

Middle School Supporting Staff:

Learning Centre:

Mrs Leslie Barnes

Librarian:

Mrs Becky Ross

Communications & Admin:

Mrs Melissa Broughton

Learning Support Co-ordinator:

Mrs Kirsten Russell

Counselling:

Mrs Wendy Bowen Graham



Student Behaviour

Code of Conduct:

Our expectation of student behaviour is based on Matthew 22:37-39 and encourages us to '... put the needs of others before our own, make wise choices, accept responsibility for any wrongdoing and its consequences and demonstrate repentance through attitude and action.'

Discipline:

Through the Code of Conduct we intend to provide for students and staff, a safe, ordered, secure and caring environment which is conducive to working and learning.

The ultimate aims of discipline are to:

1. Develop self-discipline in students
2. Develop biblical virtues
3. Promote academic excellence
4. Promote a suitable environment for learning

No student has the right to interfere with the teacher's ability to deliver the lesson or other students' ability to learn, and may be referred out of the classroom in order to reflect on their error, then return to the classroom teacher at the end of that period to discuss further. Caregivers will be emailed home to advise if this occurs.

Behaviour Level System:

This is a period-by-period tracking sheet that is used to monitor student behaviour and to assist in its correction. A student may be placed on a level for attendance, punctuality, work ethic, uniform or anything that a Dean believes would be beneficial for a student.

There are three levels:

- Level 1:** The Whānau teacher will be responsible for monitoring students on Level 1. It is normally the Dean who places the student on the level.
- Level 2:** The Dean will be responsible for placing and supervising of students on Level 2.
- Level 3:** The Head of School will be responsible for placing and supervising of students on Level 3.

For students placed on a level, parents will be informed by phone or email of the decision to have them on a level.

Detentions:

Lunchtime detentions are given out for:

- General misbehaviour, both within and out of class
- Repeated lateness to class or school
- Not completing an attendance sheet
- Eating or chewing gum in class time

After-School Detentions are given out for:

- Disobedience
- Verbal abuse
- Fighting
- Truancy
- Bullying
- Dishonesty
- Theft
- Missed lunchtime detentions

or other serious offences.

An email is sent home to the student and caregiver(s) informing of the date and time of the after school detention. Failure to attend without adequate reason will result in further discipline.

Note: Detentions take precedence over all other school or work activities. If there is a problem, students need to see the Head of School *before* the day of the detention.

Guidance Counsellors:

Guidance Counsellors are specially trained to help students in many ways.

They can guide students in:

- Dealing with personal issues
- Finding specialist help for a student if necessary
- Maintaining good physical and mental health
- Developing skills to manage his/her own life.

A counsellor does not make decisions for students but will help them to work out ways to manage difficulties. The counselling service is confidential, which means that the things discussed remain totally private.

To arrange an appointment with a counsellor, students can fill in an appointment card, available from the Guidance waiting area. Parents/Guardians can also call or email the counsellors if they have concerns relating to their child's school life.



Social Culture

Our school culture is also driven by our Code of Conduct, honouring the command in Matthew 22:37-39 to:

“Love God with all your heart, soul, mind and love your neighbour as yourself”

We aim to foster this by encouraging and upholding...



A Culture of Belonging

- We include and accept each other, treating others as we would expect to be treated ourselves.
- We show manaakitanga (hospitality) to everyone
- We have friendship groups but not friendship cliques
- We show kindness, care, compassion, forgiveness, encouragement and empathy with our words and actions
- We look out for and support each other and the school
- We have a sense of Tūrangawaewae (acknowledge our past, the present and this place)
- We wear our uniform correctly and with pride



A Culture of Honour

- We honour God and each other through our words and actions
- We always tell the truth
- We do not swear, use unwholesome or crude language or words
- We honour and respect the school environment, buildings and equipment
- We honour and abide by the school rules and expectations
- We acknowledge and take ownership of our actions
- We demonstrate maturity, respect and responsibility



A Culture of Resilience

- We give our best in all we do
- We have a growth mindset, giving things a go!
- We are resilient
- We encourage each other in all we undertake
- We pray for and support each other in difficult times



Classroom Learning Culture

Classrooms are learning-centered environments and every student's actions & behaviour *must* support this.

Before Lesson Starts:

- Ensure you are wearing your uniform correctly and tidily
- Have everything you need for the lesson including the right stationery, equipment, materials and books
- Be on time
- Wait quietly outside and come in under the instruction of the teacher. Go straight to your allocated seat.
- Take off any outside wear (e.g scarves, jackets etc)
- Take out your equipment and books (or device if BYOD is being used in this class)
- If you are late, present a late pass or note and follow the teacher's instruction. Do not disrupt the class.

During the Lesson:

- Always follow the teacher's instructions and promptly
- Raise your hand to contribute ideas or ask questions
- Complete all of the work that is set for you or your group. Speak to your teacher about what is required if you're unsure.
- Do not chew or eat in class (water bottles are ok)
- Respect the classroom environment, clean up rubbish and do not graffiti desks or equipment
- Only use your device at the direction of the teacher
- Only move around the room with the permission of the teacher
- Employ the 'Focused Learner' Principles:

Focused Learner:

1. Give your **Full Attention** when the teacher or classmate is speaking to the class
2. Be **Organised** throughout the lesson
3. Be **Curious about Content**, ask questions and engage with the tasks
4. Make **Useful Contributions**, don't call out or talk loudly - stay on task
5. Be **Self-Managing**, do not disrupt the teacher or other students, do not act silly

End of the Lesson:

- Record any homework, reminders or tasks to complete
- Pack up only when instructed by the teacher
- Ensure that both the room and your uniform is tidy before leaving the classroom
- Only leave the room when directed to by your teacher
- Go directly to your next class. Only visit your locker during scheduled break-times.



Uniform Code

We expect *all* students to wear our uniform in an honourable way, at all times. We expect students dress tidily and show respect and care for their uniform. Please do not send your child with additional items of clothing that are not part of the uniform.

Uniform for Boys/Girls:

All uniform items should be clearly and securely named.

For all uniform code please visit our school website under '**Life at MGS**' → '**Uniform**'.
www.middleton.school.nz/uniform-code/

Physical Education Uniform:

PE uniform is compulsory for all students taking part in Physical Education.

Rainwear:

Raincoat – plain dark colour, to be worn over uniform. These are not to be worn in the classroom.

Uniform Shop:

Up to date information can be found at www.middleton.school.nz/uniform-shop/ and includes:

- Uniform Shop Hours
- Online Orders (Kindo)
- Booking Appointments



Attendance

Attendance at school for all children is expected. However, there may be the occasion when students may need to be absent for a variety of family reasons. If this is so, please let Student Services know following the steps below, preferably well before the day(s) of absence.

Ministry of Education policy is "An absence explained by a parent is not necessarily a **'justified'** absence. Parents do not have the right to excuse their child from school without just cause, for example – last day of school, sports day at school, meeting someone at the airport, dirty uniform, caring for a sick family member, birthday, taking advantage of cheap flights etc".

Daily Absentees:

Middleton Grange School has a dedicated mobile app for our school community. You can download it by clicking this link: <https://middletongrange.apps.school.nz/install/>. If you click on **'Absentee'** you have the option of **'Call office'** or **'Email'**. The email option allows you to save details for your child. Then, you give a detailed explanation why they are absent and send. It would assist us greatly if messages were left prior to 8.30am.

Teachers of each class will mark student attendance. If a student remains unmarked in the morning, the caregiver will be sent a txt message to ascertain the student's whereabouts. We have to account for all absences, so we appreciate clear communication about why your child is away from school.

Absence for Holiday, Tangi etc:

Absences for holidays during school term can be very detrimental to a student's learning and we cannot approve these as **'justified'** absence. Please consider this when planning family holidays.

For absence/leave 2 days or longer, please provide an email to our attendance officer at attendance@middleton.school.nz explaining why your child will be absent, with dates. We require notification for our records. For coding purposes, we also ask that you submit an absence notification following the steps above.

Absence for Sickness:

If a student is unwell, please keep them at home and inform the school following the steps above.

For more information on illness please visit:

<https://www.education.govt.nz/parents-and-caregivers/early-learning/health-safety-and-wellbeing/illness-and-injuries>

Absence for Appointments:

Appointments should be scheduled out of school hours. Where this proves impossible, a parent/guardian or caregiver are to email **absences@middleton.school.nz** at the start of the day, alternatively students are to bring a signed note to Student Services.

The email/signed note must include the following details:

- **Student name**
- **Whānau class**
- **Date and time of the appointment**
- **Relevant details of the appointment e.g. Doctor, Physiotherapist, Dentist etc)**

Students will be given a green slip to use later. When it is time to leave school, the student presents the green slip to the classroom teacher, then goes to Student Services, and also shows them the green slip in order to sign out. All students **must** sign back in at Student Services when they return from the appointment.

Weekly Off-site Appointments:

For regular external appointments, a request must be made in writing in advance to the Head of Senior College at **dpmiddle school@middleton.school.nz**. Students granted approval **must sign in/out** at Student Services.

Medical:

If your child injures themselves at school or become unwell Student Services will contact a parent/guardian or caregiver directly. Should your child require further treatment or need to be taken home, please collect your child from Student Services.

Unexplained Absence:

At the beginning of each week, every Year 9 & 10 student who has an unexplained absence is sent an email from the Attendance Officer. This contains an "attendance sheet", showing which period(s) they were absent the week before. The student has until interval on Thursday to return it to Student Services. They must print it out, and have the relevant teacher correct and sign it, to verify their whereabouts. If this is not possible, they should speak with their Dean for advice as soon as possible.

If it is not handed in, they will be sent a physical note to class, as a final reminder. After interval on Friday, Deans will be emailed any students with an outstanding attendance sheet, and they will issue that student a detention (often via email).

Note: For Year 7-8 students, their attendance is monitored between the whanau teacher and attendance officer. If any follow up is required, then the dean will check in with the student/caregiver.



Day-To-Day

Dental Clinic:	<p>As with all Christchurch schools, we now have a Mobile Dental service which checks students in Years 0-8. Any treatment required needs to be done at our allocated local Dental Hub, which is in Hillmorton.</p> <p>Parents are responsible to book and transport their children to and from this Dental Hub should the need arise. From Year 9 onwards, school children attend private dentists, free of charge.</p>
Lateness:	<p>Punctuality is valued at our school. Students are expected to be at school by 8.40am and to be in class by 8.45am.</p> <p>Students who are not in class by 8.45am must have had their parent/caregiver notify Student Services (or bring a signed note), before proceeding to class. (NB International Students need to bring this to International College Office).</p>
Cycling to School:	<p>Students who cycle to school must wear approved safety helmets. They must come to school in their school uniform. Approved Raingear is allowed over the uniform.</p> <p>Cycles must be locked on the school grounds, behind B block. No students should loiter around the bicycle stands during school hours.</p>
Classroom Entry:	<p>Classrooms are not open until school starts for the day, but E Block (the Year 7-8 building) is open from 8.20am, when students can come in and get organised for the day. Students must wait outside until 8.20am.</p>
Lockers:	<p>Year 7 & 8 lockers are assigned by Whanau teachers. Year 7's do not require a lock. Year 8 students require a lock (preferably a combination lock) ASAP once they bring stationery to school.</p> <p>Year 9 & 10 lockers are applied for at the beginning of the year, through mgs.nz → Student Links. Students must agree to terms of use, then are emailed a locker number for use during that school year.</p>



Day-To-Day

Cell Phones & Electronic Devices:	<p>The school does not encourage students to bring any of these items to school but if they do, they must be turned off and in your bag during school hours. If any of these items are seen or heard, they will be confiscated and taken to the Student Services office.</p> <p>Consequences for student phones being visible or used during the day are:</p> <p>1st time cell phone confiscated by staff member and returned to the student at the end of the school day, after 3pm from the Student Services office.</p> <p>2nd time cell phone confiscated, and caregiver is required to collect it.</p> <p>3rd time meeting with student and caregiver(s) regarding continual disobedience.</p>
Computers & Internet:	<p>Students are required to sign the ICT user agreement or access may be revoked. This will be available at mgs.nz → Student Links</p>
Canteen:	<p>Lunches can also be ordered online using the “Kindo” app, or purchased at the window using cash or card (no PayWave available). Please visit www.middleton.school.nz/canteen/ for information.</p>
Lost Property:	<p>It is essential that student’s clothing and other possessions are clearly named. If property is lost, these are often brought to Student Services. For all unnamed and unclaimed items, these will be donated out at the end of each term.</p>
Extra-curricular activities:	<p>There are numerous extra-curricular activities available at school. Some are school initiated, and some are private enterprises that use the school venue. As well as music tuition, school productions and Kapa Haka are just a few examples.</p> <p>Sports, performing arts and other extra-curricular activities can be signed up for using the online forms at mgs.nz → Student Links</p>



Day-To-Day

Alcohol & Drugs:

Alcoholic liquor, solvents and illegal/dangerous drugs are not permitted on the school premises at any time. The possession or consumption of alcohol/drugs/solvents is also forbidden on school sports trips and all other outside school trips and activities.

Students are not permitted to consume alcohol/drugs/solvents prior to coming to school functions such as dinners and dances, or at any organised functions following school events.

Relationships:

There is to be no physical contact between students. Where a natural interest develops it must be conducted so as not to be conspicuous or exclusive.

Smoking & Vaping:

Smoking and vaping is not permitted on the school premises at any time. Cigarettes and vapes are not allowed on school premises at any time and are not to be used while a student is wearing school uniform.

Food:

Food may not be eaten in class. Only water may be consumed in class. Chewing gum is not permitted at school at any time.

Bullying:

If students experience or witness bullying, they are encouraged to speak with their Dean for support. Our school is committed to a safe and respectful environment, and concerns will be taken seriously and addressed right away.



School App

Middleton Grange School has a dedicated mobile app for our school community. The app centralises all school communication, making it easier for you to stay connected and informed. You can download it by clicking this link: <https://middletongrange.apps.school.nz/install/>

Why Use the App?

The app centralises all school communication, making it easier for you to stay connected and informed. It includes:

- A simple way to notify us of student absences (our preferred method)
- Access to the school calendar
- Contact details for key staff
- Links to our newsletter and school website
- Instant alerts for urgent notifications (e.g., lockdowns)

Stay Informed:

We encourage all parents and students to download the app to stay up to date with what's happening at school.

Subscribe to Alerts:

To receive the notifications that matter most to you, go to the Menu (top left corner), tap "Alert Subscriptions," and select the groups you'd like to follow.

We strongly recommend subscribing to the Emergency Alert group.



Get Involved

In the Middle School we enjoy a great deal of parent support in a wide variety of ways. Here are some ways you might like to get involved.

- ✓ **Middleton Grange Board**
- ✓ **Sports Coaching**
- ✓ **Helping with Major Activities / Units of work**
 - ✓ **Reader/Writers**
 - ✓ **Help at Canteen/Uniform Shop**
 - ✓ **Help with Middle School Dance**
 - ✓ **Sponsor Events and Mission Trips**
 - ✓ **Host an International Student**

There are many ways to get involved. If you are keen or have a skill you can share with staff and students, please let your child's dean know. Parents and Caregivers can assist us greatly by upholding the school, students and staff in prayer.

Prayer Group:

Come and pray God's cover over our school community. All welcome! Please make enquiries at Student Services for further information.

Coffee @ The Grange:

If you have any barista skills & would like to help in the school cafe, we would be very grateful. Please make enquiries at Student Services for further information.

Special Assemblies/Events:

Supporting and encouraging your child to attend these events that celebrate our student achievement.



Contact Us:

30 Acacia Avenue, Christchurch 8041

Phone: 03 348 9826

www.middleton.school.nz

Term Dates:

Term 1: Wednesday 28 January - Thursday 2 April

Term 2: Monday 20 April - Friday 3 July

Term 3: Monday 20 July - Friday 25 September

Term 4: Monday 12 October - Friday 11 December

For all key dates and holidays please visit: www.middleton.school.nz/calendar