

The Mount Erin College Deaf Education Centre (DEC) guides and supports students who have a hearing loss to achieve their educational goals and to prepare them for further studies or the general workforce.

Mount Erin College, which conducts the DEC for the Southern Metropolitan Region, has created an inclusive, accepting and well-supported environment for Deaf students.

The benefits for Deaf students attending the Mount Erin DEC include:

- Extensive transition assistance from Grade 6 to Year 7, plus Deaf awareness instruction for all Year 7 students.
- Access to mainstream classes that have appropriate resources and staff to cater for individual needs.
- Inclusion in and identification with the main college.
- Access to specialist staff including the guidance officer, welfare officer, speech pathologist and Educational psychologist.
- Student Support Programs to monitor progress and learning goals.
- Support for parents to meet and share their experiences, plus opportunities for morning coffee talks where guest speakers provide information about resources available to them.

A proud history

Mount Erin DEC (formerly Mount Erin Deaf Facility) was established in 1998 after two years of lobbying by parents of Deaf and hearing impaired students, who needed a local secondary school option on completion of their primary schooling.

Mount Erin DEC began with five students. Over its years of operation it has assisted more than 50 students, who have achieved goals such as passing the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), going on to tertiary education, taking up apprenticeships, and full-time jobs.

Understanding and support for families

Mount Erin DEC provides a base for parents to meet and to share their experiences with other parents. There are frequent morning coffee sessions, where parents can listen to guest speakers from organisations such as Australian Hearing and the Cochlear Implant Clinic.

Other specialists, such as the school's guidance officer, welfare officer, speech pathologist and Educational psychologist, visit the DEC to meet with parents and students on nominated days.

Student Support Program meetings are conducted twice each term so that learning goals can be discussed between the student, parents, mainstream teachers, specialist staff and DEC staff.

Resources are provided so that parents and students can consider options in the senior years. VCE, the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL), or vocational education and training (VET) are offered to all students. Assistance with the transition from secondary to tertiary education or a reference to an employment agency is also provided.

Mainstream inclusion for all

Deaf and hearing-impaired students are part of both Mount Erin College and the Deaf Education Centre and their classes are taken within the mainstream college.

Qualified Teachers of the Deaf and Educational Interpreters support students in mainstream classes. The teachers work as a team, with the Teacher of the Deaf focusing on one-to-one or group tutoring.

The Teacher of the Deaf also provides an extensive language program in Deaf education classes and is responsible for developing programs that meet the educational needs of Deaf students.

The Educational Interpreters act as facilitators between signing students and the mainstream teachers in classes, assemblies, intra-curricular programs and intra-school sports.

Who can enrol?

Students who have a bilateral hearing loss that is moderate, severe or profound are eligible to enrol in the Mount Erin DEC. Students who use oral or signed communication are fully supported.

For students who are not eligible to enrol but are eligible for the Visiting Teachers Service, use of the DEC can be provided. The DEC Coordinator liaises with the Visiting Teacher of Hearing Impaired.

For students who have not previously attended a Deaf Education Centre, an Educational Needs Questionnaire must be completed. This will help to determine whether the student is eligible for the program.

Technology that assists Deaf students

Mount Erin College and the Deaf Education Centre provide:

- Video conferencing. This new, state-of-the-art facility provides students with the ability to communicate live with other deaf students, external organisations, and families in Gippsland and Mornington Peninsula regions.
- Interactive whiteboards. The recent installation of 10 interactive whiteboards across the college allows lessons to be displayed visually, including real-time Internet access.
- Deaf-specific technology. The DEC provides instruction in Telephone Typewriter (TTY), National Relay Services, and auditory listening skills. Also Visual Warning lights are located in the Deaf Education Centre.

Transport assistance

Students who live more than 4.8 kilometres from Mount Erin DEC are eligible for a conveyance allowance, which is administered by the Department of Education. Mount Erin College also provides transport assistance to and from school.

Extra-curricular activities

Mount Erin College encourages all students to be involved in extra-curricular activities such as music, performing arts, and sports.

Students in the DEC program have the opportunity to enjoy activities that encourage socialising with other Deaf students, such as Australian Theatre of the Deaf performances, secondary school Deaf sports days and Deaf camps.

Students can also participate in school holiday programs or sports clinics of their choice provided by Deaf Children Australia and the State Deaf/Hearing Sports Association.





Extensive orientation and transition programs

Students enrolled in the Mount Erin DEC take part in an extensive orientation. This includes:

- A three-week transition program where students participate in classroom activities one day a week to learn about the school's culture and prepare for the official Grade 6 orientation day.
- DEC staff visit local primary schools to spend a half day with Deaf students in the classroom to learn about their needs and to work with parents and teachers.
- All Year 7 students are taught Deaf awareness, which enables them to understand how to communicate and interact with Deaf students in the classroom and within the school community.

An extensive network

The Mount Erin DEC work closely with many organisations. These include Australian Hearing, Cochlear Implant Clinic, Deaf Children Australia, Parents of Hearing Impaired Children, Victorian Federation Inc, Australian Teachers of the Deaf, other coordinators of secondary Deaf Education Centres, Visiting Teachers of the Deaf, employment agencies and Disability Liaison Officers at tertiary institutions.

For more information

For more information or to make an appointment, contact the Deaf Education Centre Coordinator.

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Secondary Deaf Education Centres in Victoria

In the state of Victoria, only one school for each of the four regions is allocated with a Deaf Education Centre. They are:

Northern Metropolitan Region – Banksia Secondary College

Eastern Metropolitan Region – Forest Hill College

Southern Metropolitan Region – Mount Erin College

Western Metropolitan Region – Sunshine Secondary College

Mount Erin College DEC Deaf Education Centre



For the purpose of this brochure, both Deaf/Hearing Impaired Students and hearing students were used in the photography

Education, social inclusion, specialist support