Dear Parents and Carers,

There has been a lot of conversation in the media lately regarding the “new” Higher School Certificate (HSC) and how students need to obtain a minimum standard in literacy and numeracy before they will be awarded the HSC in the future.

This is important information for you and your daughter if she is in Years 7 or 8 this year, as this new HSC requirement will have an impact on Year 9 students from 2017 and beyond. Students need to achieve a Band 8 in their Year 9 NAPLAN reading, writing and numeracy tests or pass an online literacy and numeracy test in Years 10, 11 or 12 before they will be awarded a HSC.

The College will be holding an Information Evening for parents and students next year on the 27 February at 6pm to explain all of the new requirements. Please save this date in your calendar.

CHROMEBOOK INFORMATION EVENING:
There was great excitement with the girls from Year 9 on Monday night as we held an Information Evening and they received their Chromebooks. Training followed on Tuesday and Thursday, so all Year 9 are now familiar with google docs and cloud storage.

Next year four Year groups will have Chromebooks: Years 7, 8, 10 and 11 and then at the end of 2017 that Year 9 group will receive their Chromebooks so they are ready for use when they move into Year 10 in 2018.

VOLUNTEERS COCKTAIL PARTY:
It was a wonderful evening Tuesday night as the College Executive hosted a Cocktail Party for all those generous parents who volunteer in some way around the College. The sport that your daughters play, the food they eat from the canteen, the wonderful Breakfasts organised by the Parents & Friends would never happen if we didn’t have these volunteers. It was great to be able to, on your behalf, thank them for their generosity and for what they do for your daughter.
NEW CANTEEN STRUCTURE:
You might remember I mentioned in an earlier *Mercy Voice* that we were looking at outsourcing the canteen for next year. The College received tenders from six companies and we interviewed three of them. Two students were invited to be part of the interview process and you can read Paula and Ella’s story about their experience later in the newsletter.

TERM FINISHES:
Two important dates as we head towards the end of term are the College’s Awards Night on Tuesday the 13 December, which is compulsory for all students and Wednesday the 14 as classes cease for students on that day.

*Best wishes*

Suzanne Kavanagh
Principal

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Message from the Assistant Principal

*Awards Night Tuesday 13 December, 7pm at the Concourse Chatswood.*

All students are required to attend and they need to be at the Concourse no later than 6.30pm to meet their Year Co-ordinator for roll call.

Classes will finish at 2pm to allow time for students to go home and be back at the Concourse on time.

Ms E Kayrooz
Assistant Principal

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Message from the Business Manager

Hello to all the Mercy Catholic College Community,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself and invite families who wish to contact me, to do so.

As the new Business Manager at Mercy, I will be responsible for a number of areas including a couple that will be of direct interest to you; school fees and the appearance and upkeep of the school grounds.

**Fees**

Thank you to those families who have honoured their school fee commitment for 2016. All fees should be finalised by now.

If you have not finalised your account, please do so. If, however, you are experiencing difficulty in managing your account please contact me to discuss.

**School Grounds**

Throughout the term break, a great deal of work will be done to ensure the students return to a fresh looking school.

- Painting will be carried out through the school.
- Timber seating re-stained
- Heavy traffic areas high-pressure hosed
- Plantation shutters installed
- Windows tinted
- New gardens installed, etc

Again, please feel free to contact me should you have any concerns regarding fees.

I look forward to meeting you, the parents and the wider school community soon.

Kath Parker
Business Manager
The Power of Words

Over the year I have written about acts of kindness and portraying Mercy in the way we act and treat others and in the way we make others feel through the words we use. To say hello with a smile and really looking at that person can make them feel special for that moment and possibly make whatever negative has happen prior to the welcome be put aside for that second. At the Mercy Volunteers Cocktail party on Tuesday night I was speaking to Geraldine, who was a teacher, about the power teachers have in making a student feel good or bad. That one word could be something a student remembers for the rest of their life.

Recently my youngest daughter who is 19 and left Mercy in 2014 auditioned for a place in the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York starting in January. A few things occurred during her application; she had to audition with two monologues at the Hilton Hotel in Sydney. She turned up and performed and the comment by the lady auditioning her was “good on you”, no other words were exchanged. Olivia left the audition thinking to herself ‘what does that mean’, ‘was she been patronising’, ‘did she think the performance was bad’; ‘good on you for turning up but you are hopeless’. Olivia came home feeling deflated, she felt she performed well, however, the response said differently. In putting in the application Olivia asked Ms Donna D’Silva for a reference because Donna was her Drama teacher in Years 9 to 11. Donna gave the most beautiful reference. This auditioning process was a wonderful example of the power of words and how they can make a person feel good or bad for a long period of time. On the flip side is the special connection students have with their teachers and how treasured our Mercy teachers are to our students. The good news is Olivia did get accepted into the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and so my husband and I are off to America in December to settle Olivia into her student accommodation and new adventure in New York.

Interestingly another event coincided with this application, the American Election. When President Elect Donald Trump was elected Olivia was so upset because she could not understand how people would vote for someone that did not stand for equality, speak words of kindness and fight for justice for all, she was also worried about the use of guns on the streets of New York. When I reflect on her concerns, I again thank Mercy for the wonderful, caring and compassionate young women she has become and the love she has to give to the world.

Mrs G McDermott
Director of Student Wellbeing
The Student Special Minister of the Eucharist training has been running at Mercy College for a number of years. On Wednesday November 23, 9 students from Years 10 and 11 undertook the course at the College with 10 students from Pius X College. The ministry of a Special Minister of the Eucharist is that of assisting with the distribution of Communion.

The students had the opportunity to discuss the reasons for wanting to be Eucharistic Ministers and what current contribution they make to their parish community. Understanding the Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and how this translates into making a difference in the wider Church was highlighted on the day. After a healthy lunch provided by Pius X College, the students spent some time going through the practical steps of being a Eucharistic Minister at Our Lady of Dolours church. The day ended with Fr Paul Finucane, Parish Priest of Chatswood, celebrating the Eucharist in the College Chapel.

A special thank you to Adrian Brannan, Youth Minister at Chatswood Parish and Pius X College for helping organise the training day.

Congratulations to the young ladies and gentlemen who volunteered to be entrusted with this special service for the members of their communities. The students from Mercy College will be blessed and commissioned at the Mercy College Advent Mass on December 14 at 9am.

Helen Thomas
Youth Ministry Coordinator
OUR NEW CANTEEN FOR 2017

A few weeks ago, Ella and I were given the opportunity to attend the panel of which Ms Kavanagh, Miss Kayrooz and 3 others interviewed three different canteen companies. This was to choose a company to replace our current canteen with a new company in 2017.

The three canteen companies we interviewed were Munch, Total Canteen Solutions and Educatering. Before the interviews had started Ella and I were told to brainstorm a few questions that we wanted to know about each company in order for us to choose the company we thought was best for our fellow students. I was more focused on the nutritional value that the canteen would provide for our students and Ella was more focused on the prices and if the menu would be affordable for the students. During the interviews each company gave us a brief overview about their company history and what we would expect if we were to use them.

However, mine and Ella’s favourite part about the interviewing was getting to taste test their menu items they bought in for us. Personally, one company stood out a lot more to me than the others and I was very pleased when Ms Kavanagh made the decision of choosing my favourite, **Total Canteen Solutions** as our new canteen provider of 2017.

Paula P

When the company **Total Canteen Solutions** starts to run our canteen in 2017, you should expect a few changes. There will be a wider range of food to select from and healthier options like fresh salads and noodles which are made by them on the school premises.

The benefits of having Total Canteen Solutions run our canteen is that the food will be more catered to our needs as the company has had experience with a range of other schools. There will be consistent staff and so there will be no pressure for volunteers and the availability and quality of food will be of a higher standard.

We are very excited for this new change and we hope you are too.

Ella C
Resource Centre

**Mercy eBook Platform:**
With the Christmas holidays almost upon us, now is a good opportunity to draw your attention again to the presence of Mercy’s eBook platform. What better way to wile away the hot summer days than immersing yourself in a good book!

Students can choose a novel from our collection of over 470 ebooks across a range of genres, including those purchased by other high schools in the Diocese as a result of our reciprocal borrowing agreement. Students can access our eBooks by going to https://mercy.wheelers.co. New users are not required to register; instead their ebook account will be created on their first login. Simply click **Sign In** on the Home page, then click **Sign In** again (you don’t need to register), and use your school username and password as your credentials.

The eBooks can be borrowed for a period of three weeks, and students can choose to read them online whilst connected to the Internet, or can download them for free on any device including an ereader, tablet, ipad, smart phone, Chromebook, desktop or laptop. At the end of this time, the eBook will automatically return itself.

For further information or assistance in using our eBook system, please see Resource Centre staff who will be happy to help.

**NSW Premier’s Reading Challenge:**
Each year in the Resource Centre, we encourage students in Years 7 to 9 to participate in the NSW Premier’s Reading Challenge. Students are required to read 20 books during the Challenge period from March to the end of August.

I am pleased to announce that in 2016, the Challenge was successfully completed by: Annabel L, Isabel L, Sophie S, Jasmin W, Felicia L and Marie D L. Of these students, special mention goes to Isabel L who received a Gold Award after successfully completing the Premier’s Reading Challenge on four occasions. Sophie S and Annabel L each received a Platinum Award after successfully completing the Premier’s Reading Challenge on seven occasions. A fantastic achievement!

We will be offering the opportunity to participate in the Premier’s Reading Challenge again in 2017, so I encourage students in Years 8 and 9 next year to consider taking part.

Ms Siobhan Betts
Teacher Librarian
Student News

Is your Chemistry knowledge as light as helium or as heavy as plutonium?

There has been another exciting year in the Science department with 93 students participating in the 2016 Australian National Chemistry Quiz.

The ANCQ is a challenging chemical activity which promotes interest and curiosity about chemistry and the role of chemists in modern society. This year Mercy Catholic College was represented by 43 students in Year 9, 35 students in Year 10, 12 students from the in Year 11 Chemistry class and 3 students from the Year 12 Chemistry class.

The Quiz comprised of 30 multiple choice questions which students had to answer in 60 minutes. Our students received six Distinction awards. Congratulations to Tara A, Jacinta R and Caitlin S in Year 10, Natalie M in Year 11, Karina B and Esther T in Year 12 and five Credit awards were received. Congratulations to Jamie C, Claire F in Year 9, Georgia C and Grace J in Year 10, Maryja L-R in Year 11. All students received a Certificate of Participation. The Science Department acknowledges the efforts of the students at Credit and Distinction levels and thanks all the students in Years 9-12 who participated in this year’s quiz. You made your teachers very proud.

Miss Lana Sage
The Chemistry Quiz Coordinator

Article for Maths Excursion:

On the Monday 21st of November, Year 9 went on a Mathematics excursion to Luna Park at Milsons Point, Sydney.

From Chatswood we caught the train to Milsons Point and then gathered underneath the iconic Harbour Bridge to enjoy our morning tea before heading to Luna Park.

Once we arrived at the park we collected our wristbands and walked into the park. The park was busy with other schools attending on this day as well. We all split up and rode on the various rides, tasted the parks food and enjoyed the overall experience.

Although the heat was intense, we still enjoyed all the rides including: the Hair Raiser, the Rotor, the Wild Mouse, the Ranger, the Power Surge, to name a few. After a long and enjoyable day we all caught the train back to Chatswood where we all parted ways.

Overall, everyone enjoyed fun rides, tasty food and found ways to apply our maths into real life situations which was fun and interesting, as well as a new learning experience.

By Natasha R
Rock for a Reason 2016

The black velvet was draped, and the RFAR sign was up for the second annual 'Rock For A Reason'!

On the 18th of November, a number of students from St Pius and Mercy gathered to watch bands play from both schools, paying tribute to the legendary rock and punk artists ranging from Guns’N’Roses to The Cranberries to the Indie rockers and Jungle Giants. The crowd were also surprised with a comedy act from a couple of Mercy girls as well as the hilarious running commentary by Alyssa and Brodie - specifically the amazing contouring and makeup skills, and not to mention the awesome snapchat geofilter which the audience had plenty of fun with.

The musicians from both Mercy and St Pius showed exceptional skill in pulling together their acts and forming bands, raising over $400 for Catholic Mission. A big thank you to the Mercy Action crew and the staff who assisted in preparing the food and drinks that were available to purchase, as well as the skills of the decorating team - the place looked amazing! Also, to the backstage crew and music department who helped in the smooth running of the show, with a few laughs during soundcheck.

Overall, 2016’s ‘Rock For A Reason’ was a loaded gig for a great cause. A final thank you to all the brilliant bands that brought their talent to the stage - you guys killed it.

Rhea T
Mercy have just finished their first T20 cricket season and made it the Semi Finals! The new season will start on 28th January 2017 (just before school starts for Term 1) and should run for approximately 6 weeks.

If you are interested in playing in the next competition, then please let Mrs Kellendonk know by the 9th December.

For further information about the rules etc then please email mercycricket@gmail.com

BASKETBALL UPDATE...

CONGRATULATIONS to Mercy Wildcats U14 division 2 team who have finished on top of the ladder, they have had a great first season together. They are playing in the playoffs this Friday 2/12 at 5pm at the Crows Nest Indoor Sports Centre.

A win on Friday will see them play in the GRAND FINAL on Friday 9/12. Please come along this Friday if you can to cheer on the team, they play at 5pm.

Thanks
Sharon Houston
Basketball Convenor
FROM THE P & F PRESIDENT
Thank you to Suzanne Kavanagh for hosting the Cocktail Evening this week to thank all the volunteers so generous with their time this year. It was lovely to meet again and chat without ‘working’.

Merry Christmas

On behalf of the P&F Executive Team, may I wish you and your family a very Happy Christmas. Thank you for your support at the various P&F and school functions this year.

We look forward to seeing you at these again next year.

Phillipa, Catherine, Meredith and Robyn.

Phillipa Sobb
President P & F
perrysobb@gmail.com
0411 429 629

MCC P&F invites all MCC Parents and Carers to the Annual Cocktail Party on Friday 10 March 2017

Mercy Catholic College
2017
Cocktail Party

Additional details will be available early in 2017.
We look forward to welcoming you.
Phillipa Sobb perrysobb@gmail.com
P&F President
Parent News

School travel 2017
Application information Nov 2016

Information for parents, guardians and students

Our school has partnered with Transport for NSW to use the new online process for you to submit school travel applications.

This means we will be able to process your applications online, making it easier and faster for parents, guardians and students to apply for school travel.

Applications for school travel in 2017 are now open, including for travel to Mascot and Green Square station and for private ferries. Parents, guardians and students are encouraged to apply as soon as they are able via:

Applications for 2017 school travel are now open via www.transportnsw.info/school-students

A new application is required when:

- applying for a School Opal card or travel pass for the first time,
- enrolling in Kindergarten, or
- requesting an additional entitlement as a result of a shared parental responsibility situation.

You will need to do an update application if the student has a current school travel pass and:

- is progressing from Year 2 to Year 3,
- is progressing from Year 6 to Year 7, or
- changes address, or
- changes school or campus.

Already have a School Opal card or travel pass?

- When you've updated, and you are eligible for free school travel next year, Transport for NSW will send you an email confirmation once your application has been processed. For travel in rural or regional NSW, we'll also inform your nominated transport operator(s).
- If you already have a School Opal card that does not need updating, or you've successfully re-applied, the Opal card will automatically be updated for travel next year. Do not throw it out as you'll be able to use it when the school year starts in 2017.
- If you currently have a printed travel pass provided by your transport operator, a new pass will be ready at the beginning of the new school year.
**REUSE, RECYCLE**

We have all learnt across various subjects and extra curricular activities (and hopefully at home) that it’s important to help others and look after the planet. Jesus says it, Pope Francis says it – hopefully your conscience says it, but we don’t all do it. Sometimes we think it’s too hard – takes up too much time, money and effort – but really it doesn’t. We’ll show you three easy ways you can help others without spending money – and also keeping things out of landfill and giving them a second chance to enjoy life with a new (and grateful) owner.

Op shops collect and reuse your unwanted goods by giving them to needy families or selling them to fund their goal of helping others. They are located all over Sydney and take any items that can be re-used and reloved. Many of you have shopped or volunteered in Op shops like Vinnies and know the wonderful job they do. They take clothes, books, household goods etc.

**STUDIO ARTES – HORNSBY – SPECIAL NEEDS**

Studio Artes runs art workshops for teenagers with Special Needs. They are in desperate need of art supplies, new or used.

**SECOND LIFE STATIONERY IS A NEW CHARITY THAT BELIEVES THAT EVERYONE DESERVES EQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION.**

Unfortunately though, not everyone can afford what is required to get the most out of the learning environment. They started up in January 2016 to address that issue and in their first ten months alone donated 175 backpacks full of essentials to students in need.

Stationery is a particularly costly part of schooling, for children, teens and adults alike. Second Life Stationery collects, cleans, sorts, packs and redistributes gently-used stationery and school gear through not-for-profit organisations (like Catholic Care), to disadvantaged families. They know they’ve found both a fantastic new way to reduce landfill and to give access to basic tools for students all over the east coast.

Take a look around at home or in your locker. Do you have unused stationery cluttering up your drawers? Or maybe you’re getting new school gear for next year and want to donate what you’re currently using? Second Life Stationery collects and re-purposes all of the following gently-used items – pencil cases and anything that goes in them, exercise books, lunch boxes and drink bottles and more.

In fact many of you have already donated to them without knowing it – last term we sent 4 bags of our lost property to them and they sent this thankyou in return.
Canteen Roster

If you are unable to attend Canteen on your rostered day please try and swap with another volunteer.

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