



MERCY CATHOLIC COLLEGE
CHATSWOOD

EST. 1890



2019 PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK

Providing Excellence in Teaching and Learning since 1890

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INTRODUCTION

Mercy Catholic College has a rich history. It commenced operation in 1890 and then, as now, it attempted not only to reflect present needs in education, but also to challenge those involved to explore the future. The College aims to educate women for the 21st century to take their rightful and recognised roles as individuals within the community.

College life is based on Gospel values where the worth of each individual is recognised irrespective of ethnic background, academic ability or social opportunity. This diversity of characteristics is viewed as an opportunity for richness.

The academic curriculum offered at the College aims to provide a broad education which will challenge the creativity, initiative and ability of each student. This challenge is extended further through the cultural and sporting activities of the College. Mercy Catholic College also has the role of educating girls to have a responsible and valuable role in our global society.

The College community leads by example – displaying care, love, respect, friendliness and compassion towards its members. It operates as a just and peaceful society in which all members may grow in confidence as Christian witnesses modelled on Christ and His Mother Mary, under whose patronage the College exists.

Mercy Catholic College recognises the worth of each individual (be they students, parents or staff). It values the role of the individual within the community, encourages the understanding that rights must be balanced by responsibilities, and strives to meet the sentiments of the Prophet Micah to “act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).

ACCEPTANCE OF ENROLMENT

At Mercy Catholic College we expect students to:

- *be actively involved in our Catholic Community*
- *uphold the College motto “Strive for Better Things”*
- *respect those who hold authority within the College*
- *respect the rights and good name of all members of the College community*
- *show consideration for all members of the wider community, particularly when using public transport and facilities*
- *acknowledge that they are ambassadors for the College and behave appropriately on all occasions*
- *respect the rights of others to learn*
- *respect the property of others*
- *acknowledge a personal responsibility for the maintenance of a pleasant school environment.*

TERM DATES – 2019

2019	Term Commences	Term Finishes
Term 1	Tuesday 29 January 2019 (staff) Wednesday 30 January, 8:30am – 12pm Year 7 & Year 10 and all students new to the College in 2019 Thursday 31 January, 2019 All students, Years 7 – 12 Easter	Friday 12 April 19 April – 22 April
Term 2	Monday 29 April	Friday 5 July
Term 3	Monday 22 July	Friday 27 September
Term 4	Monday 14 October	Friday 20 December

BEGINNING OF YEAR PROCEDURE – YEAR 7 ONLY

Year 7 students start on Wednesday 30 January 2019 - half a day only

8:30am	Year 7 students arrive
8:45am	Year 7 students assemble in the amphitheatre Students must attend school in full school uniform Students will be given their timetables, College Planner, padlock and general organisational details Items required on the day <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Morning Tea 2. Pen & pencil case 3. College backpack
12 noon	Students are dismissed

**NB: It is a good idea for your daughter to bring her text books to school in stages. Students will be required to have all text books at school by the end of the first week of term.*

Thursday 31 January 2019 is a normal school day for all students Years 7 – 12

8:30am	Normal arrival time
8:45am	Tutor Group and regular daily timetable begins
3:10pm	Students are dismissed

COMMUNICATION – WHO TO CALL

It is important that parents and teachers work closely together in partnership. If there are concerns or problems, then a solution is often not far away if we work on it together. If there are disruptions or stress at home then it is very helpful for us to know so that we can support your daughter at school.

Parent Communication Procedures

ACADEMIC		PASTORAL	
If you have a question or matter of concern regarding your daughter's learning:		If you have a concern regarding your daughter and her punctuality, absenteeism, peer relationships, social development, mental health or other pastoral care areas:	
If you have a question about your daughter's progress in class	Contact the classroom teacher by phone or email via the College office	If your daughter is late to school or is absent from school	Contact your daughter's Tutor by phone or email via the College office, and write a note when she returns to school or use the College App.
If you want more information or need to raise a concern	Contact the relevant KLA Co-ordinator by phone or email via the College office	If you have a concern about your daughter's well-being at the College	Contact your daughter's Year Co-ordinator by phone or email via the College office

Contact Emails and Numbers

College Administration Office	mercy@dbb.catholic.edu.au	9419 2890 or 9419 2933
College Absentee	Via the College App or email SMCCC.absentees@dbb.catholic.edu.au	
College Registrar	SMCCC.registrar@dbb.catholic.edu.au	
College Fees	Attention to Business Manager c/- mercy@dbb.catholic.edu.au	

COLLEGE APP

For Android & Apple Phones

DOWNLOAD the Mercy Catholic College Chatswood App. It's a great way to get up to date College information.

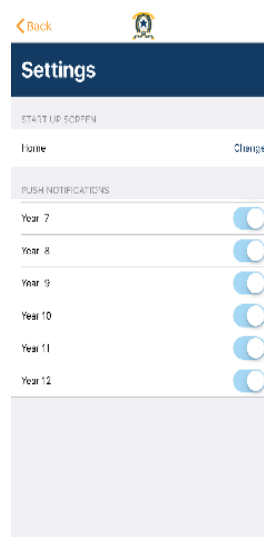
To get started simply follow the steps below.

INSTALL

Step 1: Download 'Mercy College Chatswood' on your Android phone or iPhone Via [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#).

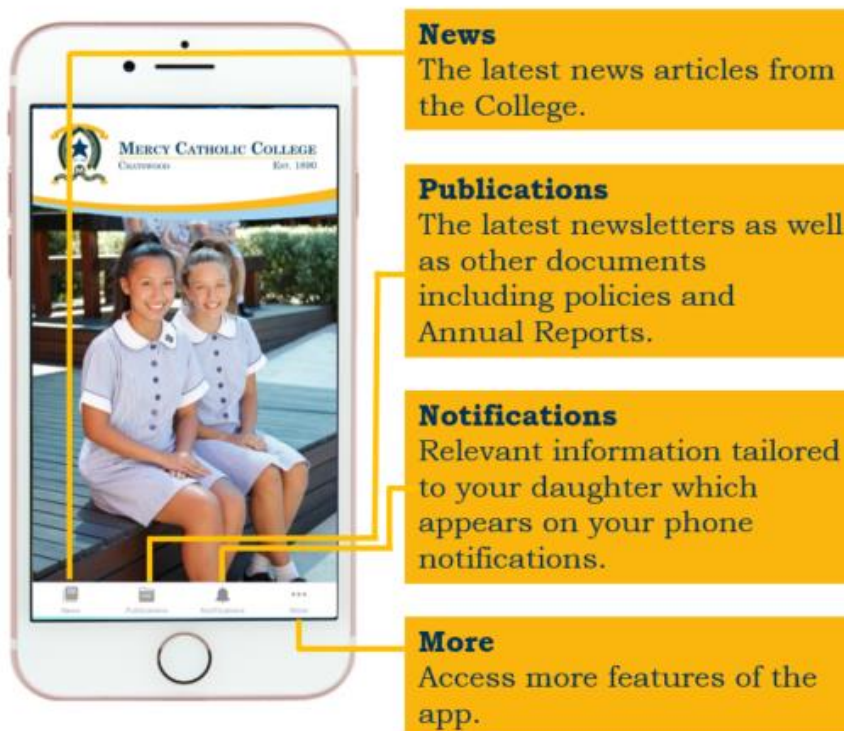
Step 2: Click on 'More' and go into 'Setting' to select your preferences for your *push notifications* based on your daughter and her College activities.

You are now all set up to get newsletters, news, images and notifications instantly on your phone.



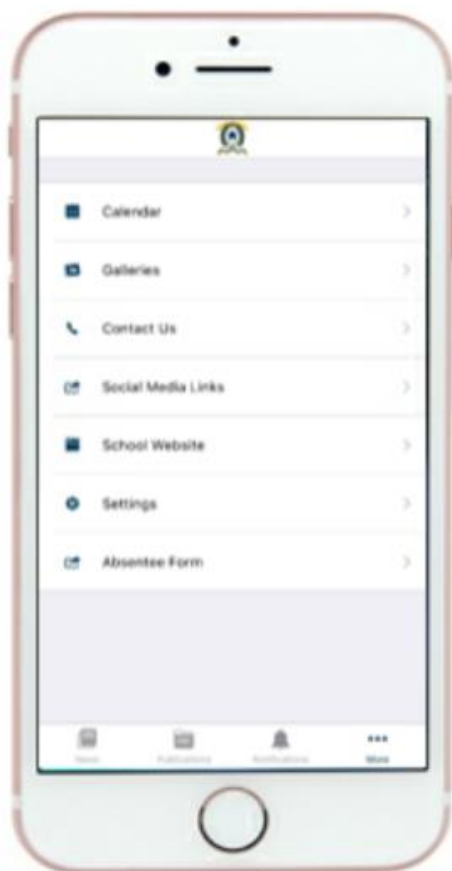
HOW TO USE THE APP

Upon opening the app, you will be greeted by the Main Screen. From here, you can quickly navigate to the most frequently used areas of the app.



HOW TO USE THE APP

The more function contains other features including



Calendar

View all the upcoming events at the College

Galleries

View all the latest event photos.

Social Media Links

Be part of our online community.

School Website

Access more features of the app.

Setting

Customise your experience in the App.

Absentee Form

Contact the College when your daughter is sick and will not be attending school.

ABSENTEE FORM

In the event that your daughter is sick and unable to attend school, please complete the Notification of Student Absence within the App.

If your daughter is away sick from school for three or more days a doctor's certificate is required, to be given to their Tutor on their return.

Parents should contact the Tutor or Year Co-ordinator if absentees are longer than three days.

*This form is **not to be used** for absences other than those due to illness.*

A white smartphone with a red case is shown vertically. The screen displays the 'Absentee Form'. At the top, there is a paragraph of text explaining the purpose of the form. Below this, there are several input fields: 'Student Name', 'Tutor Group', 'Year', 'Parent/Carer Name', 'Parent/Carer Email', and 'Parent/Carer Mobile'. At the bottom, there are two dropdown menus for 'Absent or Sick Date' with 'From' and 'To' labels. The 'From' dropdown is currently set to '01' and the 'To' dropdown is set to 'January'.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Mercy Catholic College enjoys a strong level of parent involvement across a variety of areas.

The Mercy Catholic College Parents & Friends Advisory Association

The Mercy Catholic College Parents & Friends Advisory Association provides the community with a forum for discussion, debate and dialogue on issues concerning the education of young women and the challenges which face parents. The Association also facilitates social events for parents and families which strengthen our sense of community. Many outstanding facilities have been provided for Mercy Catholic College through the work of the Parents & Friends Advisory Association. These include the provision of computers, data projectors, refurbishment of student bathrooms and the replacement of classroom and outdoor furniture and air conditioner units.

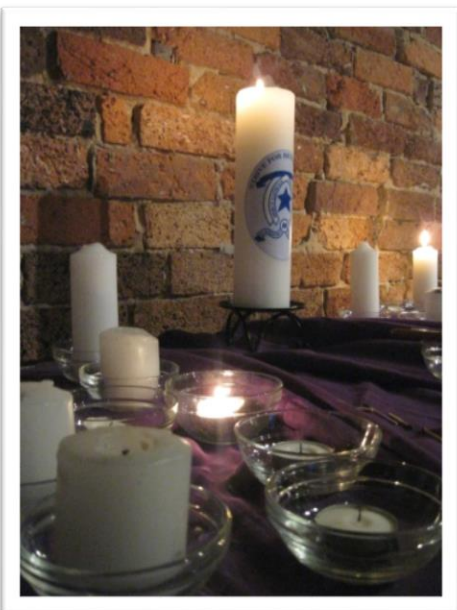
School Sport

Mercy College offers a variety of sports.

These sports can only be offered to your daughter if we have the support from parents. Parents play important roles in the co-curricular development of their daughters by taking on roles such as team manager and coach.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Students are challenged each day to live out their home and gospel values. We aim to foster in our students the capacity to make decisions about their life that are in keeping with the values of Jesus, a search for the truth, and an ability to think critically.

Students participate in a fortnightly Mass which is prepared by individual Year groups or classes and also in Reflection Days or Retreats.

The sacrament of Reconciliation is available to students and an opportunity to participate in Social Justice activities and Reflection Days.

All students will have the opportunity to partake in a Christian Initiation programme lead by our Youth Minister.

We also welcome parent attendance at our fortnightly Mass on Tuesday in the College Chapel.

PASTORAL CARE

The aim of Pastoral Care at Mercy Catholic College is to provide a caring educational environment where each student is known and cared for as an individual and where she feels included within the classroom and the College community.

College Pastoral Goals

Relationships

Goal: for students to interact in a positive way with members of their friendship group, other students and staff.

Outreach

Goal: for students to develop a strong and active awareness of people outside their own immediate experience, particularly the poor and the marginalised.

Self-Discipline

Goal: for students to grow in awareness of the importance of their own goals, words, actions and commitment in relation to learning and living in the school community.

Environment

Goal: for students to actively participate in the care and promotion of the created and built environment within which they learn and relate to others.

Each of these goals challenges students to recognise they have certain rights and responsibilities as members of the community. Some of these are:

Responsibilities	Rights
To treat others with respect and dignity	To be treated with respect and dignity
To contribute in a positive way to the learning environment	To learn within a supportive classroom environment
To refrain from hurtful behaviours	To live within the College community free of verbal, physical and emotional hurt
To respect another's right to hold and express an opinion	To hold and express an opinion
To maintain a clean, safe environment	To work in a clean, safe environment

Caring is seen as the role of every member of the community - teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and students. Strong lines of communication are kept open between the girls and their Tutor, Year Co-ordinator, College Counsellor, College Executive, and parents.

Pastoral Care programme

The Pastoral Care programme operates on a number of levels. All students are placed in a vertical Tutor Group and Year 7 students are given a “Big Sister” to assist with their transition from primary to high school.

Student Leaders draw the community together by working with staff, students and the community at large to foster a sense of common purpose and celebration.

The Year Co-ordinators and Tutors provide the focus of the pastoral care system by providing a liaison function between the counsellor, Director of Student Wellbeing, parents, students and staff to ensure that behaviour management is maintained for the benefit of all. Teachers use the Student Planner to affirm students and raise issues of concern with parents.

Throughout the year all students participate in the RISE Wellbeing programme. The RISE programme is about building a better sense of self, connectedness with those around us and in our community and to help in understanding the importance of fostering positive relationships and empathy. Many studies have shown good wellbeing goes hand in hand with learning engagement, academic success and self-efficacy. It is hard to have one without the other.

RISE stands for:

1. **Relational** – Fostering positive relationships and also knowing how to handle relationships that break down.
2. **Inspire** - It is hoped the programme will help students learn more about them self, feel inspired and more able to handle situations.
3. **Spiritual** – As a Catholic school we draw on our faith to help us deal with people and situations.
4. **Empower** – It is hoped the programme will help students feel empowered to move forward, to go out of their comfort zone, grow and be independent articulate, young women.

Parental involvement is an important factor in the process of pastoral care. Parents are kept informed of school activities through Information Nights, emails, fortnightly newsletters (Mercy Voice) and the College App. Year Co-ordinators regularly send home letters which contain information of relevance to particular Year groups.

Student Awards

Student Awards are a regular feature of life at Mercy Catholic College. Students may strive to achieve awards in the following categories, which are issued at each fortnightly Year assembly: **Academic Achievement, Academic Effort and Citizenship Awards**. Upon attainment of five of these awards, students are presented with a Principal’s Award at a College Assembly.

Student Planners

Student Planners are used to keep the lines of communication open between parents and teachers and parents are always welcome to keep in contact.

Each student is given a College email address. They are encouraged to check this regularly for messages from their Year Co-ordinator and other College staff.

SOCIAL JUSTICE PROGRAMME

Catherine McAuley founded the Sisters of Mercy in 1831 with the intention of attending to the poor of Dublin, Ireland. Catherine once wrote to another Sister of Mercy, “the poor need help today, not next week”. This approach of seeing need and acting upon it now, not next week is the focus of Mercy College’s Social Justice Programme.

The main student group is Mercy Action, which meets regularly to raise awareness of injustices and devise activities to raise funds. They support relief for people affected by natural disasters and raise funds to provide education for students in Vietnam.

During Mercy Week all students are involved in the local community lending a hand at a variety of institutions, such as St Canice’s Kitchen, the Matthew Talbot Hostel and Mamre House or assisting at aged care facilities or primary schools with children who have disabilities.

In senior years there is an opportunity for students to visit another country and be involved in an overseas outreach programme, working in orphanages, as well as on building projects.



Being welcomed by the children of the Lai An parish during the Vietnam 2018 immersion programme

TEACHING AND LEARNING

A Culture of Thinking

Mercy Catholic College is dedicated to developing metacognitive skills within our students, so they do not merely accept information but learn to question and debate material to gain a deeper understanding. We want our students to develop into better thinkers.

To think well in day-to-day life, students must develop patterns of thinking in which their ability to think is combined with the disposition to think and an awareness of thinking opportunities.

In seeking to develop our students' disposition towards thinking, the College takes an enculturative approach, meaning that we believe students' dispositional development occurs best within a cultural context in which:

- thinking is valued
- there is time for thinking
- rich opportunities for thinking abound
- thinking is regularly modelled
- the process as well as the products of thinking are present in the environment.

Our teachers are skilled in planning lessons and programs that actively encourage thinking. These lessons include the use of "thinking routines" - simple protocols for exploring ideas around topics being studied. Our teachers are focused on making students' thinking visible to themselves and one another through the use of documentation, which is evident in our classrooms. When thinking is visible, students are in a position to be more metacognitive, to think about their thinking and improve on it. By using the language of thinking, thinking routines, probing questions, and documentation we can foster better thinking in our students and a deeper understanding of content. Immersed in a classroom culture of thinking, students find learning more meaningful and make greater connections between school and everyday life.

Our Culture of Thinking framework, inspired by the Project Zero research team at Harvard University, helps students to build the foundations for lifelong learning and academic achievement.

CURRICULUM

At Mercy Catholic College academic excellence is fostered. In order to allow students to study subjects of both importance and personal interest, a wide range of subjects is offered and developed through to the Higher School Certificate level.

The courses on offer are carefully selected to provide a balance between catering for the interests of individual students and the student body as a whole.

Mercy Catholic College is proud of its performance in past Higher School Certificate examinations with the majority of our students successfully gaining entry into their choice of a tertiary course.

Subjects offered for HSC include	
Ancient History Biology Business Studies Chemistry Community & Family Studies Design & Technology Drama Economics English Standard English Advanced English Extension 1 & 2 Food Technology French Continuers Geography	History Extension Italian Continuers Information Processes and Technology Legal Studies Mathematics & Mathematics Standard Mathematics Extension 1 & 2 Modern History Music 1 & 2 PD/H/PE Physics Society & Culture Studies of Religion 1U + 2U Studies in Catholic Thought 1U Textiles & Design Visual Arts

Small candidature courses may be offered off-site.

Other subjects available for HSC study include	
Business Services Engineering Studies Entertainment Financial Services	Hospitality Human Services Retail Services Software Development & Design
Community & Heritage languages may be studied through NSW Language School or Saturday School (external providers).	

Subjects offered in Years 7-10	
Geography History Commerce Design & Technology Drama English Food Technology French Italian Information Software and Technology (IST)	Mathematics Music Personal Development / Health / Physical Education Religious Education Science Textiles Technology Technology (Mandatory) Visual Arts

CURRICULUM SUPPORT

The College places great emphasis on reporting student performance to parents. This is accomplished through two formal reporting periods each academic year and Parent/Teacher/Student Evenings held throughout the year.

Academic achievement is acknowledged on School Reports, at whole school assemblies and on the Awards Night, which is held at the end of the academic year.

Mercy College believes in the principle that all children should learn together wherever possible. We recognise that the needs of our students are diverse and we attempt to accommodate different learning styles, rates of learning and learning abilities.

Learning Support Team

Our Learning Support Team is comprised of teachers who have post-graduate qualifications in a variety of fields within Special Education. They are supported by an expert group of Learning Support assistants who work with individual students in mainstream classes. The College does not withdraw students with Learning Support needs from mainstream classes.



The following Learning Support Groups are catered for:

Hearing Impaired
Vision Impaired
Learning Disabilities
Physical Impairment

Support Structure

Students with Learning Support needs are identified in Year 6 or Year 7 with the help of testing procedures and information from previous and present teachers and in consultation with parents. Once a student's needs are identified and the appropriate funding is acquired, the Learning Support Team ensures that the student is given the level of support required. Learning Support assistants work with teachers in the development of learning strategies and ensure that, where necessary, the curriculum is differentiated and that special provisions are organised during examination periods. An Individual Education Program (IEP) or an Individual Training Program (ITP) is developed for all funded students.

The majority of a student's education is carried out in an inclusive classroom. Students receive support from Learning Support Assistants in the classroom, depending on the level of funding.

Exit Credentials

Students can study Life Skills for their Record of School Achievement (R.O.S.A) and complete a Life Skills Higher School Certificate programme. TAFE courses can be concurrently undertaken in Years 11 & 12.

Gifted & Talented

Mercy College acknowledges and challenges our gifted and talented students by providing a range of stimulating extension and enrichment activities across all curriculum areas.

STAR Programme

Mercy College's Student Transition and Resilience programme (STAR), for Year 7 students, is designed to develop higher order thinking and problem solving skills. Students are encouraged to become self-motivated, independent learners for life.

Honours Programme

The Honours Programme gives students who meet the selection criteria an opportunity to graduate from any Year level at Mercy College with Honours. The programme encourages students to achieve academically as well as fulfil a range of social justice and community based commitments.

Honour students are recognised at the annual College Awards Evening.

Blue & Gold Award

The Blue & Gold Award recognises students who endeavour to meet the challenge of foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, Catherine McAuley and assist those less fortunate than themselves. Students who nominate to strive for the Blue & Gold Award are expected to fulfil a range of requirements in the areas of community service and social justice.

Blue & Gold Award students are recognised at the annual College Awards Evening.

CO-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
Public Speaking
Debating
Tournament of Minds
Choir
Chamber Choir
Concert Band
String Ensemble
Flute Ensemble
Guitar Ensemble
Mercy Action Group
Overseas Immersion Programme
Mercy Week Social Justice Activities
Enrichment Programme
Australian Chemistry Competition

Australian History Competition
Australian Mathematics Competition
Australian Science Competition
Book Club
Bootcamp
Dance Club
Competitive Dance Ensembles
Drama Club
Film Club
Homework Club
Mathematics Club
Meditation
Science Club
Walking Club
Yoga

SPORT AT MERCY COLLEGE

At the College, we strongly encourage student participation in sporting activities. This can be through The Broken Bay Secondary Schools Sports Association (BBSSSA) or our MCC sport teams.

Through the BBSSSA, Mercy students are given the opportunity to represent the College, the Diocese and ultimately NSW in the following Sports; Softball, Basketball, Touch, Swimming, Soccer, Rugby Union, Cross Country, Netball, Athletics, Surfing/Bodyboarding, Squash, Tennis, Beach Volleyball, Baseball, Biathlon and Surf Life Saving. For more information visit <https://www.brokenbaysport.org.au/secondary>

Please refer to the next page for a list of the co-curricular Sports & Activities. These sport programmes rely on parents to coach and manage teams.

As well as participating in sporting teams, students are also placed into one of four Colour Houses. These Houses compete against each other in the annual Swimming and Athletics Carnivals, as well as a number of other fun activities throughout the year. The names of the Houses are a reflection of our Mercy heritage and are linked to Mother Mary and Catherine McAuley.

Colour Houses

COOLOCK	Gold	The house from which Catherine McAuley began her works of mercy.
MERCY	Blue	The order of teaching and nursing sisters begun by Catherine McAuley.
MCAULEY	Green	Named after Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy.
STORMANSTON	Red	The property at which Catherine McAuley resided with her parents in her very early years.



BRIEF OVERVIEW OF CO-CURRICULAR SPORTS

Netball

Each year the College enters teams in the Northern Suburbs Netball Association Competition. The competition is played during the winter months, commencing at the beginning of April and running through to the end of August. The games are played on Saturdays at Bicentennial Park, adjacent to the Willoughby Leisure Centre.

Soccer / Football

Soccer continues to be popular with the College entering teams in the well organised North West Sydney Women's Football competition. Games are usually held in the Meadowbank and Morrison Bay area and are played on Sunday Mornings. The Football season commences in February and continues through to late August / early September.

Basketball

Basketball continues to thrive at Mercy where we have teams registered through the Northern Suburbs Basketball Association and Manly Warringah Basketball Association. Games are usually played weeknights (dependent on age) at Crows Nest and Warriewood.

Cricket

MCC participate in the Northern Sydney Region of the T20 cricket competition. Games are played on a Saturday afternoon against club and school sides within the region.

AFL

In 2019 the College hope to offer AFL to students in Years 7 and 8. (Dependent on participation numbers) The team will be affiliated with the Lane Cove Cats AFL Club. Training is generally run on Thursday afternoons at Blackman Park, with games being played on Sundays. The season runs from April through till August.

Non Competitive Sports

Swimming

Swimming is a non-competitive sport offered at Mercy. All levels are catered for from beginner to squad with qualified coaching at a reasonable cost. Swimming is held two mornings a week, currently Wednesday and Thursday from 7.00am to 8.15am at the Fitness First Gym Endeavour Street, Chatswood. Parent volunteers provide supervision for students at the gym.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Drama Club

Drama is currently held two afternoons per week and available to students in Years 7 and 8 and is extremely popular. Students enjoy mime, comedy, group performances, script writing etc. Classes are provided by an external drama teacher at the College after school and performances are usually held for family and friends at the end of each term.

Dance Club

Dance is offered both as a recreational and competitive activity.

Recreational Dance is open to Years 7-12 students offered by an external teacher and currently held on a Monday afternoon. Classes are offered in Year Groups and open to all abilities and levels. The Dance Group offers opportunities to learn and perform various dance styles during the year. Students enjoy music and movement, keep fit and healthy with friends and develop performance experience. All ability levels are welcome.

Competitive Dance classes are also offered to all students, however based on an audition process. Selected students will have the opportunity to perform at eisteddfods and competitions throughout the year. In 2019 Competitive Dance offers Jazz and Contemporary classes on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons.

Every effort is made to ensure all students are able to participate in a co-curricular activity however spaces are limited. All co-curricular activities require payment to participate. Competitive sports such as Netball, Basketball, Soccer, Cricket and AFL rely heavily on parent volunteers to help facilitate these sports. For further information on any of these activities please contact our co-curricular Administrator Mrs Margaret Kellendonk on 9419 2890 or

margaret.kellendonk@dbb.catholic.edu.au

For information about the other co-curricular Clubs students need to read the daily notices for days and times.



MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES

Music at Mercy is offered in two strands

- **Classroom Music and**
- **Co-Curricular Music**

Classroom Music

All students study the mandatory Course in Years 7 and 8. Students may elect to take Music in Years 9 and 10. The College offers both Music 1 and Music 2 courses for study during the HSC year.



Co – Curricular Music

Students are encouraged to become involved in the wide range of optional musical activities at Mercy Catholic College.

a) **Private Tuition**

Many instruments are available for study and / or hire. A list of these instruments is outlined overleaf.

b) **Concert Band Programme**

A wide range of Band instruments are available for study and hire. Once students have been learning their instrument for one term they are encouraged to join the College Concert Band. Concert Band rehearsals are held every **Tuesday morning from 7:20am – 8:35am**

The Band represents the school at a variety of events and competitions throughout the year. Students in the Concert Band are required to be receiving tuition on their instrument (either through the College or outside the College).

c) **String Ensemble**

The String Ensemble rehearses each **Thursday from 7:45am – 8:35am**. This group performs at Liturgies and Masses, as well as a variety of school events throughout the year.

d) **Guitar Ensemble**

This group includes acoustic, electric and bass guitars. Guitar Ensemble rehearsals are held every **Thursday from 7:45am – 8:35am**. The group performs at a number of events throughout the year including the Creative Arts Showcase.

e) **Flute Ensemble**

This group rehearses every Friday at Lunch and performs at various school events throughout the year.

f) College Choirs

The College has two choirs – College Choir and Chamber Choir. We encourage anyone from any Year group to join. The College Choir is non auditioned whilst the Chamber Choir requires an audition. The College Choir rehearses each **Monday at lunch**. The Chamber Choir rehearses each **Wednesday before school**. Both Choirs perform regularly at school functions and represent the College at a number of community events and competitions throughout the year.

Music Camp

Music Camp will be held on Thursday 9th and Friday 10th May 2019 at the Baden Powell Scout Centre, Pennant Hills. This overnight camp is compulsory for all members of the Concert Band, Choirs, String and Guitar Ensembles. The Camp is a rigorous format of rehearsals and combined sessions to prepare our ensembles for Eisteddfods/competitions, public performances and major school events. The fee for the Camp is \$240. More information about this will be sent during Term 1 2019.

Private Lessons

The following instruments are available for private study

- Piano
- Singing
- Flute
- Guitar
- Clarinet
- Saxophone
- Trumpet
- Trombone
- Tuba
- Drum Kit/Percussion



Mercy College Choir perform at the Annual Creative Arts Showcase, The Concourse, Chatswood

Instrument Hire

The following instruments are available for hire

- Flute
- Clarinet
- Alto Saxophone
- Tenor Saxophon
- Trumpet
- Trombone
- Tuba
- Guitar
- Violin



Introduction to Music

During the second week of Year 7, the students will attend a short concert and demonstration by the College Concert Band and Choirs. All details regarding learning an instrument or joining any of our co-curricular music ensembles will be explained during this presentation.

Year 7 will also be issued with the *Mercy College Music Information Booklet* for 2019. This Booklet is for parents and it explains, in detail, all information about learning instruments and joining co-curricular music ensembles.

COLLEGE FEES

The fees for 2018 are listed below. They apply to all Australian citizens and permanent residents or temporary residents.

For 2019 there will be a minimal increase of 3% or less.

School Fees at Mercy Catholic College have two components:

1. those set by the Diocese of Broken Bay for systemic schools
2. those set by the College.

	Years	7-8	9-10	11-12
Diocesan School Fees per annum	1 st Child	\$3,442.00	\$3,575.00	\$4,090.00
	2 nd Child	\$2,753.60	\$2,860.00	\$3,272.00
	3 rd Child	\$1,721.00	\$1,787.50	\$2,045.00
	4 th and subsequent child		No charge	
College Education Fees	\$2,135.00 per student			
Parents & Friends Levy	\$120.00 per family			
Diocesan Building Levy	\$970.00 per family			

An annual invoice covering the full fees for the academic year is issued at the start of Term 1. The standard payment terms are over 3 instalments, due for payment at the end of February, April and July. Other terms, e.g. monthly payments, are available on request.

Extra curriculum fees, e.g. Music Ensembles, Music Camp, Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and sports activities are not included in the College Education Fee and will be payable during the year. There are also additional fees for students in Years 9-12 for some elective subjects, e.g. Food technology. TAFE courses studied by Students in Years 11 & 12 are approximately \$2500 per annum. Final costs are advised once courses are confirmed.

COLLEGE FEE POLICY

In order to keep parents informed of the policy requirement and changes relating to collection and payment of fees, we advise the following:

Payment of school fees is a condition of your daughter(s) enrolment in the College.

Fees are billed on an annual basis with a third of the amount due payable at the beginning of school Terms 1, 2 and 3. To assist families, flexible payment arrangements are also available.

At the commencement of enrolment and in each subsequent year, families are required to complete a Family Registration Form on which they nominate their preferred Term of Payment.

Options are as follows:

Standard	Yearly	Monthly	Fortnightly	Weekly
3 instalments	1 instalment	10 instalments	20 instalments	40 instalments

It is important to note that the instalment schedule provides for all fees to be paid in full by November, hence the restricted number of weeks, etc.

Families will receive a statement each month. Each statement will indicate your instalment schedule, detailing instalment amounts and due dates.

Fees can be paid by BPay, Credit Card, Cash or Cheque. Due to Privacy legislation, we are unable to accept direct debit authorities for credit card payments.

The Diocesan Policy which is applicable in all schools, is that all fees are payable by the due instalment date. If you are unable to pay by the due date, you must contact the College and make alternative arrangements for the payment of any outstanding fees.

Since the College can only continue to operate if we meet our financial commitments, the non-payment of fees or levies, except by agreement, creates considerable financial difficulty for the College. Whilst we appreciate that circumstances can change and families may experience financial difficulty or hardship, the key is to keep the line of communication with the College open. The College is able to provide options to assist.

It is important to note that failure to pay fees by the due date, particularly without prior arrangement with the College, may lead to accounts being referred to a collection agency for recovery.

SCHOOL STUDENT TRANSPORT SCHEME

Situated within the heart of Chatswood, Mercy Catholic College is within easy walking distance of bus and train transport.

The Student Opal Card provides subsidised travel for eligible school students on government rail, government and private bus and ferry services and long distance coaches.

The Scheme can only be used for travel between home and school. It does not extend to activities such as school excursions, sports and work experience or attendance at joint secondary/TAFE programmes, multi-campus high schools, Saturday schools, pre-schools, mini-schools, before and after school care or child minding premises.

To find out more about the scheme, including information for new applicants and existing pass holders, visit <https://transportnsw.info/travel-info/school-travel>

Replacement Travel Passes

Student travel passes, if lost, damaged or stolen, can be replaced. Please note that a **replacement fee will be incurred** and is payable to the company used for travel. To apply for a replacement student Opal card please register your details at <https://ssts-apply.transport.nsw.gov.au/ApplySSTS/ReplaceCard.html>

GENERAL GUIDELINES & POLICIES

Absence from School

If a student is absent from school an SMS will be sent at approximately 10am to notify parents. Parents are asked to contact the College to report their daughter's absence, and the reason for the absence. A letter explaining your daughter's absence is required upon her return to school. The letter of explanation can be either handwritten or sent via the College App (see pg 8 & 9).

- * **Unforeseen lateness:** Your daughter must sign in at the College Office, have her Planner stamped "late" and signed by the office staff. The Student Planner should be shown to the Tutor as soon as possible. Repeated unexplained lateness will result in a Friday afternoon detention. A note from the parent on the day is required explaining the lateness. Three late stamps will incur a detention.
- * **Illness at School:** If a student becomes ill during school hours, the student sees the relevant Class Teacher, Tutor or Year Co-ordinator. The student's Planner is signed by the Teacher / Tutor / Year Co and the time of entry to sick bay is noted. If required the Office contacts a parent to advise of the illness. Parents must collect their daughter from school if they are too sick to return to class.
- * **Extended Absence:** If a student is to be away for more than two days, a telephone call to the Office is required. A note explaining any absence from school must be produced to the Tutor on the first day the student returns to school. An extended period of time e.g. holiday, requires a written application for leave to the Principal one month in advance. ***Generally, it is expected that family holidays are taken during the term break.*** Please also note that leave applications of 10 days or more require the completion of an 'Application for Exemption from Attendance' form, available from the College office on request.

Exit Passes

All students are expected to move directly to and from school without going to any shops.

If a student needs to leave school early an exit pass must be obtained from the Tutor. This will occur only if a parental note is forwarded prior to the request. However, parents are urged to make appointments for after school, weekend or holiday times. It should be unusual for a student to have an appointment during school hours. No student will be allowed to leave school early without parental permission.

Colour Houses

Students will be assigned to a particular Colour House for the various sporting and other activities. Siblings will be assigned the same Colour House. If there is a family connection to a particular Colour House (e.g. through the student's Mother or Grandmother) a request can be made to be placed in this House.

Canteen

A range of healthy, nutritional food is available for purchase. Students may order from the canteen. Students should not present big notes at the canteen for change.

Tutor Group

Students are assigned to a specific Tutor Group for the duration of their College life. Roll call takes place in these groups. The Tutor will look after the daily administrative and pastoral matters of the Group. All students must attend Tutor Group.

Change of Details

Please notify all changes of name, address, telephone number and email address in writing to the College Office.

At least one (1) month's notice in writing is to be given to the Principal for any student intending to withdraw from the College.

Lockers

Students are allocated a combination padlock. The cost will be billed to Term 1 fees. The Assistant Principal keeps a record of all combinations allocated in the event that the combination is forgotten. All clothing and other possessions must be clearly labelled and kept in the locker. The College does not take responsibility for lost items. **Students must not have large amounts of money at school.** Money to cover the cost of a single day's activities should be sufficient.

Messages to Students

Only messages of the utmost urgency should be phoned to the College. Only messages from parents & carers will be passed on to a student. While students may carry mobile phones in their bags they are to be locked in their lockers from 8:30am – 3:10pm.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are not permitted to be used during school hours. Use of mobile phones by students during school hours will result in confiscation of the phone and a College detention will be issued.

College Student Planner

Students will be issued with a College Student Planner, which outlines the school rules and philosophy of the College. It is for recording homework and will be checked periodically by the Tutor. Unnecessary stickers, notes, etc are unacceptable in Planners. They are for homework only. If the Planner is found to contain graffiti, is damaged or lost, then a replacement Planner will need to be purchased at a cost of \$25.

College Hours

Students are expected to be at school by 8:30am ready to start school at 8:45am. Dismissal will occur at 3:10pm. Tutor Group takes place at 8:45am until 9am. Year Group meetings take place every Thursday at 8:40am until 9am. There is no supervision of students before 8:30am or after school. Parents are encouraged not to have students arrive at school before 8:30am unless for a supervised activity.

The Daily Timetable

The timetable is organised on a 10- day cycle. Lesson times are outlined below

Period	Times	<i>(Alternate Tuesdays - Day 2)</i>
First bell	8.35am (students to organise books and bags)	
Tutor Group	8:45am to 9:00am	<i>8:40am to 8:55am</i>
Period 1	9:00am to 10:00am	<i>8:55am to 9:50am</i>
Period 2	10:00am to 11:00am	<i>9:50am to 10:45am</i>
Recess	11:00am to 11:20am	<i>10:45am to 11:05am</i>
Period 3	11:25am to 12:25pm	<i>11:07am to 12:02pm</i>
Period 4	12:25pm to 1:25pm	<i>12:02pm to 12:57pm</i>
Lunch	1:25pm to 2:05pm	<i>12:57pm to 1:27pm</i>
Period 5	2:10pm to 3:10pm	<i>1:30pm to 2:25pm</i>

Please note Thursdays commence at 8:40am with Year Meetings.

Guidelines for Students

1. All students must be at school by 8:30am. If your daughter is late, they should go to the front office and have their Planner stamped and signed by a member of the Office Staff and then **show it to their teacher before they enter the classroom. Students will be refused entry without a late stamp.**
2. **No bag is to be taken to class. Valuables should not be left in bags at any time.** Students are provided with a locker to keep any item of value in; it is the responsibility of all students to keep their belongings safe. Students must ensure that their **padlock is locked**. The College cannot take responsibility for lost or stolen items.
3. During Tutor Group, all students will be expected to be in the classroom with their Tutor. **No students will be let out of Tutor Group before the bell goes.**

NB: At school and at all school functions/excursions etc. no student is to be in possession of any alcohol, prohibited drugs or dangerous implements, including knives of any sort. Such possession may result in immediate suspension and the reporting of the incident to police.



UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

All Mercy College uniform requirements can be purchased from LOWES in Victoria Ave, Chatswood. The College Backpack & Sports Bag is available from Cowan & Lewis (www.cowanlewis.com.au).

Summer Uniform

- Summer dress - uniform should reach the middle of the knee.
- White ankle socks - not long ones pushed down, or low-cut sports socks.
- **Black leather lace up school shoes** (not fashion shoes with coloured stitching, metal tabs/high heels etc.)
- Navy school jumper.
- College Blazer - required for formal College occasions.
- Navy Blue or White hair ties, ribbons/combs - shoulder length hair must be tied back.
- Hair must be of a natural colour.
- Hair must be tied back if it touches the collar. Hair ties in black, white or navy.
- A watch maybe worn.
- Earrings are only to be: one pair of small round plain studs of sleepers (gold or silver) in the lower lobe. No other body piercing is permitted, including tongue rings. No plastic studs are to be worn (in the ear or tongue).
- No rings, bracelets, chains, make up, acrylic or gel nails, nail polish.
- A regulation College back pack and sports bag must be purchased from Cowan & Lewis. Other bags and handbags are not permitted.

Winter Uniform

- All students: College Kilt (length is 5cm below the knee when standing) blouse, jumper, blazer (no skivvies).
- College Blazer – must be worn to and from school in winter.
- Black lace up leather shoes as per summer uniform.
- Pale grey tights or stockings.
- Navy or black scarf (if required) purchased from the College Office

P.E. Uniform

- White grand slam shirt with Mercy crest.
- Shorts with the Mercy labelling.
- White P.E shoes, white ankle socks.
- Swimming caps (House colours) purchased at school.
- School caps (purchased from Lowes).
- College tracksuit.

Mufti Days / Excursions

- The same regulations apply to make-up, hair and jewellery.
- Clothes must be clean, neat, modest, in good repair and appropriate to the day's activities.
- Very short skirts and shorts, midriff / tank tops, leggings and torn jeans **are not permitted**.
- Sports bag (compulsory).

SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS POLICY

CHILD PROTECTION

We take our responsibility to protect children seriously. All staff are expected to promote child safety by having a clear understanding of their legal child protection responsibilities and act in accordance with those responsibilities.

In particular the school will:

1. maintain professionalism in our interactions with children and young people at all times by exercising appropriate Duty of Care and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.
2. follow an established process to address allegations of inappropriate behaviour by staff towards children and young people.
3. ensure all people working in our school who are required to undertake a Working With Children Check have a valid clearance.
4. respond appropriately when we suspect a child or young person is at risk of significant harm due to possible abuse or neglect by a parent/carer or other adult.

COMPLAINTS

We take complaints seriously and try to resolve them in the most appropriate, efficient and confidential manner possible:

- if you have a complaint about a student other than your own daughter you should raise it with the relevant Year Coordinator.
- if your daughter has a complaint about another student they should raise the issue with the relevant teacher, KLA Coordinator, Year Coordinator or Director of Student Wellbeing.
- if you or your daughter has a complaint about a staff member relating to teaching and learning, the issue should first be discussed with the relevant teacher, KLA Coordinator or Director of Curriculum.
- if you or your daughter has a complaint about the inappropriate behaviour of a staff member towards any child or young person, your concern should be directed to the Principal and confidentiality must be maintained.

PARENT HELPERS / VOLUNTEERS

The participation, involvement and help of parents, close relative and other volunteers are welcome and appreciated for various activities both in school and on excursions.

It is important that all volunteers are aware that they are subject to Child Protection legislation. This means all volunteers must:

- sign on at the front office, be inducted and get a visitors badge from the office as per College procedure.
- check with the College what the current requirements are for the working with children
- not engage in any inappropriate behaviour towards any children. In particular although volunteers are technically not employed by the school, they are considered to be 'staff' for legal purposes and need to be aware that complaints about inappropriate behaviour towards any child or young person must be investigated.

Maintaining Professionalism

All staff are expected to act professionally and in accordance with the College's expectations regarding staff conduct toward children and young people. Members of staff receive guidance and professional development in relation to appropriate interactions with students, how to exercise Duty of Care and how to maintain professional boundaries.

We understand that staff have a duty of care to:

- ensure no child or young person is exposed to foreseeable risk of harm;
- take action to minimise risk;
- supervise actively and;
- if we see others acting inappropriately with children or young people, report concerns to the Principal or seek further advice.

School staff also understand that they are in a position of trust, authority and influence in relation to children and young people and that it is important that we do not take advantage of that position to mistreat or misguide them either intentionally or inadvertently.

Staff strive to:

- demonstrate appropriate relationships with children and young people that cannot be misinterpreted as overly personal or intimate;
- remain within the responsibilities of their roles and allow those appropriately trained to deal with student welfare concerns;
- minimise physical contact with children and young people unless it is necessary to exercise appropriate Duty of Care;
- follow the school's policies and procedures relating to pastoral care and wellbeing including serious incidents and reporting risk of harm.

Addressing complaints of inappropriate behaviour by staff

We are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for both students and staff. This includes addressing complaints of inappropriate behaviour by staff towards any child or young person.

Such complaints are handled differently to other types of complaints which may arise in the College because of legal obligations established by the NSW Ombudsman Act 1974. The NSW Ombudsman is a government agency which requires schools and other organisations working with children and young people to ensure systems are in place for recording and responding to all allegations of a child protection nature against staff. You should be aware that 'staff' includes volunteer helpers as well as paid staff.

If you have concerns about alleged inappropriate behaviour by a staff member towards any child or young person it is important that you discuss your concerns with the Principal who in turn will consult with the CSO's Child Protection Team.

All complaints are investigated and resolved through a fair and confidential process which involves listening to 'both sides of the story' and giving all involved an opportunity to be heard. If the concerns involve alleged criminal behaviour they will be reported to the Police and the CSO will wait for the outcome of the Police investigation before continuing its own investigation.

At the end of an investigation a finding will be made and appropriate follow up determined. In relation to the staff member this may include no action, increased support, professional development, increased supervision/monitoring or disciplinary action, removal from duties or termination of employment.

If harm has occurred to a child or young person, counselling or other support will be offered.

Screening of those working in schools

Working With Children Checks are undertaken by staff working in our College. External tutors and coaches working with students in dance, music, sport, art etc are also expected to obtain a check which is verified prior to engagement.

The purpose of the check is to exclude people from working with children and young people who are not suitable. A person who has been convicted or found guilty of a listed serious offence against children (whether in NSW or elsewhere) is prohibited from child-related employment.

Volunteers who are not the parent or a close relative of a child at the College will be expected to undertake a Working With Children Check.

- A 'parent of a child' includes a carer or person who has legal responsibility for a child.
- A 'close relative' includes a spouse or de facto partner, child, step-child, parent, step-parent, sibling, step-sibling, grandparent, step-grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew. In the case of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, a close relative includes people who are part of the extended family or kin of the child according to the indigenous kinship system.

Similarly, any volunteer working in a high risk role will be required to undertake a Working With Children Check. High risk roles are those where volunteers are working with particularly vulnerable children:

- Providing personal care with intimate contact to children with disabilities
- Providing mentoring services

Further information on the Working With Children Check can be found on the website for the Office of the Children's Guardian at <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/>.

If you would like further information regarding any of the above please contact the CSO Child Protection Team on: **Phone: 9847 0618 or Office Fax: 9847 0611**

Responding to risk of harm

All College staff are mandatory reporters. This means that if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person is at risk of 'significant harm' from abuse or neglect, then a report must be made to the Family Community Services (FACS) Child Protection Helpline (CP Helpline).

College staff are expected to inform the Principal if they are concerned that a child or young person may be at risk. It is the role of the Principal (or delegate) to make the report to the CP Helpline.

In making a report the Principal will consider all of the information and seek appropriate advice from the CSO's Child Protection team (CP team). Any information about a child or young person at risk is kept confidentially by the Principal.

In situations where a child or young person is considered to be at risk the school will work with the child or young person and their family to assist them as much as possible.

If you have concerns about a child or young person who you consider may be at risk, please discuss your concerns with the Principal as soon as possible and maintain confidentiality.

Further information regarding this, and other College policies, is available on the College website, www.mercychatswood.nsw.edu.au/about-us/policies.



**We are delighted to welcome you to
Mercy Catholic College.**

**We look forward to you joining
our vibrant Community and
know that it will be a long and
rewarding association for all.**

**Suzanne Kavanagh
Principal**



Catholic Girls Secondary College, Years 7 - 12

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www.mercychatswood.nsw.edu.au