



MERCY COLLEGE COBURG

2019 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY





Contents

Contact Details	2
Minimum Standards Attestation.....	2
Our College Vision	3
College Overview.....	4
Principal's Report.....	5
Education in Faith	6
Learning & Teaching	9
Student Wellbeing.....	11
Child Safe Standards.....	15
Leadership & Management.....	18
College Community	20
Future Directions	22
School Performance Data Summary	23



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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Lila McInerney attest that Mercy College is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2019 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

30 June 2020

Our College Vision

At Mercy College, in the spirit of Catherine McAuley and the tradition of Mercy, we endeavour to empower students to engage in authentic learning. We seek to recognise, nurture and develop the gifts of all – underpinned by our Mercy values of Excellence, Hospitality, Compassion and Justice.

The Mercy College vision for each student is that she will become a socially responsible, compassionate, critical and articulate young woman who will make a difference to the changing world in which she lives.

We aim to do this within a faith based, nurturing and educationally challenging environment that is child safe.



College Overview

Mercy College is a school with a specific focus on and commitment to learning for young women. Our values of hospitality, compassion, justice and excellence are 'who we are' to each other and for each other.

We believe that our College is a place where every girl is nurtured and encouraged to seek her own ambitions for the future. Our goal as educators is to ensure that each student acquires the values, skills and knowledge she needs for realising her dreams and aspirations, as well as developing a strong sense of what it means to be a Catholic Christian in our community, and in our contemporary world.

Because of our rich heritage and cultural diversity as a learning community, we draw upon a strong sense of being a local school in the heart of the northern suburbs of Melbourne. Due to our curriculum offerings and co-curricular pursuits, we are able to make learning valuable, engaging and motivating for our students in many and varied ways.

The Mercy Sisters have worked as educators in the Coburg area since 1886, and Mercy College continues this proud tradition in the twenty-first century. Honouring the vision of the order's founder, Catherine McAuley (1778-1841), we recognise that a Catholic education is an education for life and the Mercy charism has a place, and is a motivation for all those who learn in the Mercy College, Coburg tradition.

Just as we strive to instil in our students a keen awareness of the importance of lifelong learning, we also provide them with a spiritual framework within which to achieve their dreams, while living lives of compassion, fairness, justice and respect for all of God's creation. As women of the present and the future, we urge our students to see the world as one that they shape through their minds, hearts and hands. Bringing compassion and care to all of their pursuits now and when they enter the wider world is a critical feature of our motivation as a school that specialises in learning for girls.

Being a member of our school community requires each student, parent, staff member and friend or partner of the school to believe in the value of learning and the commitment to lifelong learning. Seeking the highest level of skill and knowledge remains a high priority at the College.



Principal's Report



I am delighted to share with you the accomplishments and successes of Mercy College in 2019.

2019 was a year of growth and development at the College. We experienced the process of the VRQA review, an in-depth analysis of all we do here at Mercy. Along with development for the 2020 Annual Action Plan, this opportunity for reflection allowed us to recognise many of the wonderful things we do at Mercy, and in looking to the future, plan for what we can improve on and take to the next level.

We have continued our strong commitment to student engagement allowing our students to deeply connect with who they are and who they can be - within their faith, in recognising and reaching their potential, and in developing positive and connected relationships.

I am proud of the learning environment at Mercy that allows each girl her own success, however that may look. Through student leadership and voice, homework clubs and acceleration programs, cultural and language experiences and various other programs, opportunities to grow and excel are provided both in and out of the classroom.

Our VCE results were recognition of the students who worked diligently in their final year of schooling, evident in an increased median score of 30. It is a credit to the students and their families, as well as our teaching and support staff, and the leaders within our College that drive and support academic excellence. It is through this invaluable partnership that our students flourish.

We celebrated a significant milestone this year as it has been 50 years since our foundation students graduated in 1969. It has been interesting to hear of their vivid accounts of the old College days and the many bonds of friendships that began here and have remained. We look forward to celebrating 55 years of Mercy College in 2020 and continuing our strong alumni connections.

2019 has been a year of improvements for Mercy College, and it is with great excitement that we look ahead to the future. The renovation of the Clairvaux Building with its state of the art Performing Arts Space and Cafeteria has given us new community spaces in which to gather and to learn. We continue these improvements as we work with all in our community on the development of a Master Plan in 2020, which will provide versatile learning spaces that enable our students to have modern skills and promote creativity, collaboration and innovation.

We acknowledge our students, who are those at the heart of who we are and all that we do here. They make Mercy a vibrant and welcoming community where all are encouraged to strive for excellence. We also recognise and give thanks to the supporters, parents/guardians and members of the wider community who strengthen and give meaning to who we are. Parent/guardian partnerships have been pivotal in influencing their children's learning and development throughout the year. In working in partnership with all, we allow ourselves and our students the very best opportunities and successes.

Education in Faith

Goals & Intended Outcomes

As a Catholic school, within the Mercy tradition, we seek to live the Gospel values as a faith community.

That our identity as a Catholic community be actively shared and strengthened.

Achievements



In all facets of life, we encourage our community members to be and see the values we espouse: Compassion, Hospitality, Justice and Excellence. The broader religious education program includes age-appropriate opportunities for faith reflection and prayer.

To begin the year teachers and Religious Education leaders participated in an annual theme lesson to unpack the theme for 2019, "Find your way with Mercy". They explored how this theme could be applied to the experience of the Mercy community throughout the year. Homeroom teachers unpacked the theme with their students, which fostered a whole-school approach to religious education and the role of all staff as religious educators in a Catholic school.

In 2019 we had many opportunities to celebrate as a faith community, in formal whole school Eucharist celebrations and liturgies, as well as year level based sacramental, prayer and reflection opportunities. The College continues to enjoy the support of our chaplains and priests from the wider community who help us to bring the sacraments into the lives of our students and families. In 2019, the Retreat and Reflection Days continued to provide a supportive environment for individual growth and development and offer diverse opportunities for students to explore aspects of faith together.

The Australian Catholic Youth Festival is a gathering of Catholic youth in Australia occurring every two years. 2019 saw the festival move to Perth, where two teachers and three students from Mercy College made the pilgrimage along with 6,000 other pilgrims from around the country. This was an enriching experience for our Mercy pilgrims, as they were wholly committed to the festival's theme of "Listen to what the Spirit is saying". We look forward to extending this opportunity to prospective pilgrims from Mercy College in the future.

To commemorate our wide network of feeder primary school's sacramental celebrations, our Mission Captains, along with an enthusiastic group of volunteers, committed their lunchtimes to create cards to mark Reconciliation, Communion and Confirmation celebrations. The passion shown by our students in creating these cards was matched only by the gratitude of the children who received them, with many thanks extended from students, teachers and principals of the local Priority Parish primary schools.



In 2019, the Mercy College community also had the opportunity to have their say on the future of the Catholic Church, as senior students and all staff participated in the Listening and Dialogue phase of the Plenary. This consisted of an overview of the Plenary and its focus being presented by the Mission and Identity team to all staff, and a student delegate presenting this information to their peers. Following the overview were small group discussions, reflections and surveys which contributed towards the Plenary Council 2020. The responses from these surveys will help shape the future of the Catholic Church in Australia.

Social justice drives so much of what we do at Mercy College and this was reflected in our 2019 theme, "Find your way with Mercy". Our theme encouraged both students and staff to use Mercy to guide them in times of difficulty or when courage and fortitude was needed.

The Seeds of Justice program through Mercy Education continues to be a valuable forum for interested students and staff to engage with other Mercy schools concerning common social justice issues. The Mercy College Seeds of Justice group presented to students in St. Oliver Plunkett Primary School, Pascoe Vale about social justice, what it is and what we do as a Seeds of Justice Team at our school. In addition to this, we also held awareness raising events on Indigenous issues and the plight of Refugees and Asylum Seekers throughout the year.

As part of Mercy Day 2019, students enjoyed presentations made by past students of Mercy College as they reflected on how they had found their way with mercy in their lives since graduating from school. This reinforced the point that the Mercy values and lessons learned during secondary school apply to life far beyond the school gates.

Senior students and staff showed their concern for the homeless and vulnerable in our local area by providing food for the Hope Cafe on a number of Thursday evenings at St. Mark's in Fawkner. Donations of goods such as Christmas hampers were also given to the Hope Cafe for their guests. At the end of the year, the local St. Vincent de Paul conference was also provided with close to a hundred hampers thanks to the donations from our school community.

The annual stamp drive was also a fantastic success. The Mercy Sisters collected stamps which were then exchanged for funds donated to improve life for women in Papua New Guinea, many of whom are taught basic life and employment skills to prepare them for a better future. The Mercy College community donated nearly 2000 stamps, which was an amazing result, and the Mercy sisters sent their warmest thanks for our support. Another initiative undertaken during the year was the sale of pizza slices to staff and students to raise money for Catholic Care Family Week, which was another great success and can be expanded on in future.



VALUE ADDED

In 2019, student experiences of education in faith included:

- Whole school 'Mercy values' lesson focusing on our theme, "Find your way with Mercy"
- Retreat and liturgy participation at whole school, year and specialist group levels
- Year 7 'Welcome to Mercy' retreat program in the College chapel with sessions led by senior students
- Year 8 Reflection Day at Amberley
- Year 9 Stations of the Cross installations and Lenten liturgy
- Year 9 Religious Education excursion to various important historical Catholic sites in Melbourne, including the McKillop Centre and St Patrick's Cathedral.
- Year 10 incursion with the Director of the Islamic Museum
- Year 10 Reflection Day facilitated by the Youth Mission Team
- Year 12 Retreat at Pallotti College
- Sisters of Mercy were invited to attend school liturgies and events
- Student participation in St. Patrick's Day Mass at St. Patrick's cathedral
- Student and staff participation in the "Listening and Dialogue" phase for the Plenary Council of 2020
- Student participation in the Catholic Youth Festival, held in Perth, Western Australia
- Students creating Sacrament Cards for primary school students in our feeder schools and local area
- Family Week activities and fundraiser for Catholic Care

Social Justice Opportunities:

- Project Compassion
- Close the Gap Day
- Refugee and Migration Week
- International Women's Day event
- National Reconciliation Week
- Mercy Day awareness and fundraising with a focus on raising money for vulnerable communities
- Student presentation to students in St. Oliver Plunkett Primary School, Pascoe Vale about Social Justice
- Stamp drive for vulnerable women in Papua New Guinea.
- Student participation in Seeds of Justice camp
- Year 9 city experience with a focus on how Melbourne cares for its people and environment.
- Year 11 and 12 food preparation for Hope Cafe
- Christmas Hampers for the Hope Cafe and St Vincent de Paul



Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To provide authentic and effective contemporary learning experiences which impact positively on all learners.

That every student is challenged in her learning and supported and encouraged to achieve her personal best.

Achievements

At Mercy College, we continue to provide authentic and effective, contemporary learning experiences. Curriculum and pedagogy align with the Victorian Curriculum and our Visible Learning approach, forming the basis of staff professional development. Diagnostic and standardised testing continue to inform curriculum planning, while student goals allow each student to be both challenged and supported in order to achieve their personal best.

Mercy College's *Visible Learning* journey with *Corwin* came to an end in late 2019. This experience has provided an opportunity to reflect and make a strong commitment to improvement. It has enabled the College to better understand what constitutes an effective learner and what makes inspired and passionate teachers.

Teaching staff have developed goals based on the College's Pedagogical Framework, implemented interventions and evaluated their practice in order to see student growth as part of their professional growth in 2019. They have worked together with their professional growth coaches to further unpack their area of inquiry and deepen their knowledge of how students learn. This in turn allowed for the further development of their professional capacity.

The success of STEM at Years 7 and 8 encouraged the launch of STEM electives at Years 9 and 10 in 2019. The new subject offering, *Sustainable Technology*, provides students with insight into the contemporary issue of global warming and allows them to investigate renewable energy sources. *Digi Tech and Design*, another new subject, continues student exposure to robotic technology, as they use their knowledge and skills to develop a product focused on solving a social justice or contemporary issue.

In showcasing the Performing Arts, a learning spectacular headlined a Tuesday evening at the Darebin Arts Centre. The Creative Arts concert saw students from across all levels share their gifts and learnings with the Mercy community. Performances included classical and contemporary dance and music. The evening permitted students to showcase creativity and collaboration, and the success of the event will ensure that this is an annual showcase.

Global awareness and intercultural understanding are imperative in today's world, allowing us to gain insight into the world around us. This year we welcomed our sister school in Java, *SMP Progresif Bumi Shalawat* to the College. Great relationships were forged and deep learning of language and culture was experienced by all.

Students studying Italian were also fortunate to have the opportunity of an in-country experience. The Italian tour was a memorable mixture of classical history, religion, culture, cuisine and stunning scenery. This immersion also provided ample opportunities to engage in Italian conversation.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This was the first time the students at Mercy College completed NAPLAN online. The online platform allowed students with various learning needs to be accommodated, while providing teachers with additional data. This was a great step towards encouraging inclusion.

The Year 7 NAPLAN results are positive with 88% of students above the NMS in the four areas of testing: Reading, Writing, Spelling and Numeracy. Year 7 results are above the State Median in the areas of Writing and Spelling. For Year 9, 82-85% of students are above the NMS in Reading, Spelling and Numeracy. Year 9 results are above the State Median in the areas of Writing and Spelling.

Across the three years from 2017-2019, Year 9 results show great improvement, trending upwards in: Reading, Writing and Numeracy, with marked improvement in Numeracy.

Relative growth for students of Year 9 indicate significant high growth for students in the area of Reading. Tracking growth from Year 7 to Year 9 reinforces the investment in comprehensive diagnostic testing and the development of intervention programs.



Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes



To further develop a culture where wellbeing underpins our Catholic Mercy community, caring for and nurturing every individual student.

That students will continue to develop into autonomous, resilient, responsible learners and leaders.

Student Engagement and Wellbeing at Mercy College embraces the principles and values of the Catholic ethos and is inspired by the Catholic Education Melbourne documents *Horizons of Hope*, *eXcel: Wellbeing for Learning* and the *Australian Student Wellbeing Framework*. It is underpinned by Restorative Practices and infused with the Mercy charism.

In our Catholic school setting, 'wellbeing' is understood to be 'realising one's unique potential through physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development'. Wellbeing incorporates 'the degree to which a student is functioning effectively' and their capacity to cope, learn and thrive. Student engagement is valued and promoted as integral to the wellbeing of students and all members of the school community.

Achievements

Focus on Respectful Relationships by explicitly teaching social and emotional skills using evidence-informed practices related to personal safety, resilience, help-seeking and protective behaviours

- All staff participated in training offered by the Victorian Government regarding Respectful Relationships
- Level groups planned, devised, documented and implemented Year Level Wellbeing programs developed from Respectful Relationships curriculum as part of a school-wide approach
- Respectful Relationships lessons were taught by Homeroom Teachers at Years 7-10 and Religious Education teachers at Years 11-12
- Each level attended an incursion based on Respectful Relationships.
- Continuing to utilise School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) across the school community in daily interactions as well as in formal structured wellbeing programs, underpinned by Restorative Practices.
- Continued promotion of student voice within the School and wider community. An outcome of this was the creation of a Wellbeing Room as a 'time out' quiet place for students.
- A wide range of opportunities for small groups and individuals to access external programs about youth leadership, mental health and wellbeing and careers opportunities took place throughout the year.
- A particularly positive partnership was formed with Moreland Council's OXYGEN team which provided invaluable support for some of our curriculum programs such as COMPASS at Year 9.
- Opportunities for students to participate in activities supporting local primary schools were also valuable chances for growth and development, these included musical performances and College promotional activities.



- Staff discussions began around use of mobile phones and a policy to support the ban of mobile phones during school hours was created to be implemented in 2020.
- Staff discussions around the structure of the school day began. In order to support learning and promote punctuality the decision was made to begin the day with period one and so move Homeroom to after recess.

Implement a whole school approach to wellbeing and student behaviour with tiers of support to meet the diverse needs of staff, students and families

- Staff participated in professional development to enhance on behaviour management skills, leading to the 'Behaviour Codes and Protocols at Mercy College' policy which was ratified and implemented
- Behaviour management and associated strategies were a particular focus at many Learning and Wellbeing Team and Year Level meetings
- Behaviour Management Plans were formalised and supported *Students at Risk* with greater family involvement
- Focus was on the message : 'Response to ALL unacceptable student behaviour is:
Calm, consistent, brief, immediate, respectful and private'
- CEM experts and professionals presented to staff on issues such as school refusal and the engagement of students with particular needs i.e. students of a refugee background and EAL students

Effectively utilise available data to respond to students' learning needs and enhance student engagement

Regular scheduled meetings supported the collection of Data around learning, wellbeing and engagement:

- The Director of Student Engagement and Wellbeing held cyclical meetings with each Learning and Wellbeing Level Leader
- The Director of Student Engagement and Wellbeing was a member of the NCCD Team
- Staff were guided on how to write effective student notes on SIMON, particularly in the Wellbeing sphere, as a way of ensuring student profiles were a source of meaningful data for teaching, learning and wellbeing supports being provided.
- A Guideline to Writing Student Notes on SIMON is available to staff.
- The Chaplaincy Role was re-imagined with two staff working to focus on and support the wellbeing and learning need of two particularly at risk groups at Mercy - students from a refugee background and students who experience Absenteeism and School Refusal behaviours
- The College Counselling supports were increased and students had additional supports including an Art Therapist and Masters of Social Work students
- With the extra resources, most students were given the opportunity to talk or 'check in' with a staff member from the Wellbeing Team. This was invaluable in terms of alerting staff to the needs of students and enabling the College to provide further support
- To aid the transition process and build the community, all Grade 6 students attending Mercy College in 2020 were visited at their Primary school prior to mid November 2019.



VALUE ADDED

In 2019, student experiences continued to involve:

- Student leadership opportunities
- Student involvement in Discover Mercy days as speakers and guides.
- Student Ambassador Morning Teas grew with the increased number of students participating
- E.I.G.H.T : Year Eight Inquiry Based learning program
- COMPASS : Year Nine Inquiry Based learning program
- Whole School College Assemblies facilitated by students
- End of Term showcases
- Performing Arts Concerts
- Music groups: Choir, Band, Ensembles
- Annual Creative/Performing Arts Concert.
- Italy and Malaysia Immersion
- Year 10 ballroom dancing
- Book Club, Chess Club, Craft Club
- Year Seven Walking Group

Some examples of some new extra-curricular activities include:

- Students working on their COMPASS Year 9 program, were able to secure a \$3,000 Grant from the Moreland Youth Initiative to start their work on a Wellbeing/Meditative outdoor space at the College.
- House Assemblies held every Wednesday B provide students to gather with those in their House, build spirit and plan activities and events. With this House Assembly time being moved to a new time slot (after recess in 2020) even more can be achieved.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE

Students are required to attend all classes and compulsory activities.

Students are not permitted to leave the College grounds during school hours without written permission from their parent/guardian.

Students must not leave the classroom without a note in their Planner from the class teacher.

If a student must be absent, parents/guardians are asked to telephone Reception on 9319 9299 to report the absence. A written note must be sent with the student on their return to school.

Medical, dental and other appointments should be made outside of scheduled class time, where possible.

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE – WHOLE SCHOOL/LEVEL/CLASS EVENTS

Throughout the course of the school year, there are many whole school/level/class events at which student attendance is compulsory.

These include (where appropriate):

Opening School Eucharist

Mercy Day

House Swimming and Athletics

Retreat

Activities Week

Year 11 and 12 2019 Head Start Program



CONTACTING THE COLLEGE TO REPORT A STUDENT ABSENCE

Parents/guardians are to report their child being absent from school by leaving a message on the Student Absentee Line (phone 9319 9299 and select 1) before 8.45am on the day of the absence. The following details are to be left:

- a) the student's full name and Homeroom
- b) name and relationship to the student
- c) the date/s of absence
- d) the reason for absence

Parents/guardians of students who are absent without notification will be contacted via SMS to advise them of their daughter's absence. The College will contact parents/guardians after 10.00am.

Parents/guardians who have not notified the College of their daughter's absence are required to respond to the notification by calling Reception and advising the circumstances as to why their daughter is absent.

If a parent/guardian responds that their daughter should be present, a staff member will immediately check the timetabled class to see if the student is in class. The staff member will update the parent of the outcome of the class check immediately.

If the parent/guardian does not respond to the SMS notification, administration staff will continue to attempt to contact the parents via phone and email.

STUDENT ABSENCES FOR HOLIDAYS DURING THE SCHOOL TERM

Mercy College prefers that families make holiday arrangements during term breaks to avoid any disruption to the learning outcomes of their daughters. Parents are asked to notify their daughter's Homeroom Teacher, in writing, of any planned absences. Please note it is not a requirement of the College to provide extra work or catch up work when a student misses classes as a result of family holidays in term time. However, where possible, students are encouraged to approach their teachers for advice regarding keeping up with learning prior to the commencement of their absence.

STUDENTS LEAVING THE SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Students are not permitted to leave the College premises/grounds during the school day without parent/guardian permission. A student may leave early when a parent/guardian has given written permission which states the time the student will leave and the reason for the early departure. The following procedure is to be followed:

- Student brings a note outlining why and when an early departure is requested.
- Student gives the note to her Homeroom teacher.
- Homeroom teacher fills in details in Student Planner.
- Note is put in student's file in class folder.
- At the appointed time, student shows classroom teacher her Planner.
- Student reports to Reception to officially sign out using iPad.
- Parents/guardians of students in Years 7-10 must meet them at reception if they are leaving early.



Child Safe Standards

At Mercy College, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our commitment is inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel ([CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety](#)). Central to this, is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children and young people and providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Goals and Intended Outcomes

We continue to review our practices within the realm of child safety to ensure that we are compliant with all Child Safe Standards and maintaining best practises. We aim to ensure that our commitment to Child Safe Standards is evident in the work that we do and that our commitment to Child Safe Standards is visible to the Mercy College community at all times.

The *Mercy College Child Safety Policy* commits the College to upholding the safety of all students. It is integrated into all spheres of school life, but managed within the Student Wellbeing sphere of the School Improvement Plan. The Goals and Intended Outcomes for Child Safety are then imbedded in the Student Wellbeing sphere.

We continue to be purposeful and directed in this approach as we:

- Develop an organisational culture marked by collaborative, vigilant and proactive approaches across policies, procedures, curriculum and practices.
- Raise staff awareness, skills and knowledge regarding student wellbeing issues and protective approaches, and their role to educate and care for our students.
- Ensure that we are a child safe environment, which has zero tolerance for all forms of child abuse.
- Actively listening to, engaging with and empowering all our students through 'student voice'.
- Encourage open dialog with our families, supporting them to promote the wellbeing and safety of the children in their care.
- Establish child-safe relationships within our community.

Achievements

Mercy College supports the Ministerial Order 870 and Child Safe Standards to ensure protection of all children, believing all have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect.

Local Child Safety Policies have been updated using CEM resources. These are readily available for staff access via the school's intranet platform SIMON together with notifications about updates on best practice around child safety for all adults and members of school communities and the Child Safety online bulletin via CEVN website called 'Safeguarding News.'

Mercy College's commitment to the development of policies and commitments to Child Safety has been extensive in 2019.

The College's current policies include:

- Updated Mercy College Child Safety Policy
- Updated Code of Conduct - Child Safety
- Updated Child Protection - Mandatory Reporting Procedure.



- Child Welfare Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Working with Children Review Policy
- Respectful Community Charter coupled with Managing Challenging and Aggressive Behaviour Policy
- Medical Administration Policy
- Disability Provision Policy
- Updated Anaphylaxis Policy

Training and awareness raising strategies have been a consistent feature of staff professional learning both formally during staff meetings and via online resources.

Each of the Child Safety Standards have been addressed and consistently worked towards in terms of awareness raising for all members of the school community via staff briefing and SIMON.

Presentations on Child Safe Standards and obligations together with information on reporting, the role of Protective Services/Human Services and the Wellbeing Team have taken place on a number of occasions and in multiple modes, including staff meetings and the Implementation of 'PROTECT, Identifying and Responding to all Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools'.

In the process of reflecting on our current and past practices to ensure all student are safe, feel safe and know their rights, a review of the College Anti Bullying and Harassment approach was undertaken.

Student Safety and Management Plans have been developed for 'at risk' students and a register of students who are 'at risk', because of low attendance or school refusal are under case management by the NCCD team.

Child Safety is a consistent feature of the Advisory Board Meeting Agenda, a standing agenda item at Leadership Team meetings and has, when appropriate, featured in MLT staff meetings (professional learning gatherings) with a clear connection made between Child Safe Standards and the College Annual Action Plan (AAP).

In conjunction with Child Safety expectations, the Reportable Conduct Scheme was extensively explained and discussed with staff in order to deepen and broaden understanding and appreciation of community standards and expectations.

Consultation with the community has taken place in a number of forums including via the College Advisory Board, through requirements of volunteers to sign-up to the Child Safety Code of Conduct and via the College newsletter and digital platforms.

To build on our existing data and Standard 7, Student Voice and Empowerment, students across all year levels undertook the Moreland Schools Network Resilience Survey.

The purpose of the resilience survey was to undertake an evidence-based youth survey that analyses and measures resilience amongst 10-18 year olds (Year 4 – Year 12).

The result will be that individual schools, the City of Moreland and the local LLEN have measurable data that can be compared over time to monitor and improve resilience as identified by our young people.

This project provided our school with:

- A statistically validated measure of the resilience, hopefulness and the incidence of depressive symptoms of young people in our school; and
- A baseline of wellbeing that we can use to show the impact of possible interventions.

Mercy College has continued to consolidate and enhance best practice in child safety by enhancing already established recruitment practices at the College.

This included:

- The use of proformas for recording interview notes, as well as referee checks with both explicitly addressing child safety has made the area of Child Safety transparently important to all potential employees.
- Reviewed Induction practices incorporating child safe requirements
- Contractor Inductions Handbook incorporating child safe practices
- Enhanced systems to log of all visitors and contractors to the College in the VPASS system
- More explicit job descriptions detailed with child safe standards
- Reviewed employee contracts with specific child safe clause
- All staff checked for VIT, Working with Children Cards





Leadership & Management

Goals & Intended Outcomes

We seek to foster a model of joint responsibility to continue to build a healthy organisation in which trust and vision are shared.

Build a culture of collaboration, creativity and innovative practice, characterised by accountable staff members who empower each other and their colleagues.

- To further develop a work environment that is characterised by a shared vision, a strong sense of teamwork and a focus on continuous improvement.
- That appropriate levels of distributed leadership are evident in school operations

Achievements

Continuing to develop leadership capacity and role clarity, has been an important focus for the leadership and management of the College throughout 2019.

As part of this focus, role clarification was undertaken with all staff along with explicit articulation of professional expectation. As part of this process, the college organisational chart was unpacked with staff. This ensured staff had an understanding about the core purpose of their role, what they are required to do and professional expectations.

The identity and function of the middle level leadership groups, in particular the Learning and Teaching Team and the Wellbeing Team as operational groups that act as a conduit between the Leadership Team and the various staff groups across the College, has been an area of ongoing development.

Broaden opportunities for all staff to participate in leadership capacity building strategies has been a major initiative.

College leaders have worked with an external consultant who is familiar with the Catholic sector, school improvement and the Catholic Leadership Standards Framework.

As part of the PoL Leadership program embedded into the College's Professional Learning program the focus on building leadership capacity has been to illicit leadership learning dialogue from our middle leaders.

The aim of this dialogue was to generate thinking about what is distinct about leadership in a Catholic context, for our Mercy College vision and mission and to undertake leadership review and reflection with a particular focus on leading key teams within the College.

In addition to building the leadership capacity of the College's middle leaders, there was a structured process to mentor all new staff to the College and/or new to leadership roles for 2019. This structure involved calendared meeting times allocated and a defined meeting structure for mentoring new staff /or to new roles.

This mentoring process also included ongoing and intensive mentoring for beginning teachers to complete their full VIT registration. This involved a planned weekly program structure for mentoring of beginning teachers to provide support.

Essential to the smooth running of the College is a clear commitment to strategic improvement.

The College has undertaken our External School Review. Together with external reviewers, we have had an opportunity to talk as a community about what has been going well and what we would like to change



for the future. With an improvement focus based on transparency and collaboration, we are now almost ready to finalise our school improvement plan for 2020-2023.

As part of our ongoing commitment to professional codes of practice and child safety, all staff have also been briefed on the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Renovations and Maintenance have been undertaken to renew and refresh facilities for learning and teaching, as well as ensuring occupational health and safety standards are maintained and administration, leadership and management is made efficient and effective.

This work has included:

- Clairvaux full renovation
- Science Laboratory renovation
- Windows in all office doors to enhance Child Safety

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

DESCRIPTION OF PL UNDERTAKEN IN 2019

Ongoing development of teacher's capacity to be the best educators they can be, continued to be a professional learning priority for the College in 2019.

The following priorities and externally provided programs, aligned with the College school improvement Annual Action Plan (AAP) saw the largest time investment:

- First Aid and CPR training
- Implementation of new VCE study designs,
- Faith formation and CEM Accreditation
- Teaching and supporting students with special needs.
- "Targeted Teaching in Secondary Mathematics" (CEM funded program)
- A range of CEM network meetings and other professional network participation.
- Teachers involved in the CEM Improving Reading and Writing in Years 7-10 Research Project.
- Staff updating their training in First aid, CPR and Anaphylaxis.

In addition, Annual Review Meetings (ARMs) have been refined for teaching staff to ensure they are focused on goals aligning to the Australian Institute for Teaching, School Leadership (AITSL) standards and the College AAP.

NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN PL in 2019

38

AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER TEACHER FOR PL

\$668.00

College Community

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To enhance the college community through the building of collaborative relationships.

Achievements

At Mercy, we believe wholeheartedly in the building and maintain of collaborative relationships to enhance College life.

The home school partnership is imperative to the academic and wellbeing growth of all students. It is in working with parents and guardians, establishing strong connections and open, honest dialog that we can best prepare our students to achieve individual success. We have seen increased engagement from our parent and guardian community by increasing the frequency and methods of communication. In diversifying communications with families, including text message, email, phone calls, newsletters, PAM and of course face to face conversations – we find that we are achieving a higher level of engagement with our parent and guardian community, and in turn our students.



2019 was a period of significant growth and recognition for the Mercy College Alumni community. Not only did 2019 mark the 50 year anniversary of the graduation of our foundation students, but it saw us develop further ties with our past students. The first edition of Our Mercy Alumni Magazine was published in February, with great success. A project driven by Alumni president and past student, Diane Psaila, new connections and stories were uncovered in the research phase of the magazine.

The annual alumni reunion continues to grow in numbers, as past students are invited to visit the College to share stories and connect with one another. Community based events such as this, as well as other annual events including the International Women's Day Breakfast, Mother's and Father's Day celebrations and Welcome BBQ's strengthen the bonds that exist within our community.

The College Advisory Board is an integral role within the Governance structure of the College. Members of the Board come from all backgrounds, and in 2019 we saw further commitment from our Parent community as they applied to be on the Advisory Board. These parents provide invaluable insight and perspective, along with the other members who share their expertise, knowledge and leadership with our community. Through the College Advisory Board, we have seen a willingness to have greater parent and guardian involvement in College life, and though in its infancy, a Mercy College Parents and Friends Committee has been established to allow these opportunities for involvement to flourish.



VALUE ADDED

The College continues to actively promote connections with the wider community as an important part of school life. Activities in the 2019 school year have included:

- International Women's Day Breakfast
- Mothers' Day morning Tea
- Performing Arts Opportunities with Parade College including the Musical and Drama Productions
- Year 7 Principal Lunches
- Student of the Term celebrations
- Ambassador Morning Tea recognition
- Year 12 Celebration Evening
- Night of Excellence
- Fathers' Day Breakfast
- Mercy Alumni Reunion
- Primary School visits to Mercy Music Performances
- Year 4 Explore Day with feeder primary schools
- Various after school and holiday programs for local primary school students
- Involvement in local primary school events such as fetes and fairs

PARENT SATISFACTION

In the areas of *Catholic Identity, Communication, Student Safety, School Fit* and *School Climate*, the 2019 Family CEMSIS Data Survey, results were overwhelmingly positive and above average in most criteria.

Interestingly, Family Engagement, and specifically the questions around barriers to family engagement reiterate the need to diversify communication methods, in order to reach all in our community.

CEMSIS FAMILY SURVEY DOMAIN	DOMAIN DEFINITION	School % positive endorsement (n=29)	CEM average SEC school comparison % positive (n=3,597)
1. Family engagement	The degree to which families are partners with their child's school.	26%	28%
2. Barriers to engagement	Factors that can hinder a family's interaction or involvement with their child's school.	88%	86%
3. School fit	Families' perceptions of how well a school matches their child's developmental needs.	71%	72%
4. School climate	Families' perceptions of the social and learning climate of the school.	79%	76%
5. Student safety	Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety while at school.	78%	64%
6. Communication	The timeliness, frequency, and quality of communication between the school and families.	79%	67%
7. Catholic identity	Families' perceptions of and engagement with the overall Catholic identity of the school.	69%	62%

Future Directions

In 2020 Mercy College will be undertaking the following initiatives and strategies in response to our mission and vision, strategic direction and Annual Action Plan, as our 2017 – 2019 School Improvement Plan is finalised.

EDUCATION IN FAITH

Mercy College will further develop an understanding of the Mercy values through explicit school wide teaching, and promote these values through every facet of College life.



LEARNING AND TEACHING

Mercy College will continue to develop the professional capacity of staff and use quality evidence and data to effectively differentiate the learning for each student. A curriculum review will take place, with a specific focus on the middle years Maths program. Building upon the STEM success, we will look to introduce further STEM based subjects.

STUDENT WELLBEING

A focus on student wellbeing data will drive and promote student wellbeing in 2020. Using surveys to map the wellbeing of each student will assist the Wellbeing Team, homeroom teachers and in turn, all staff to recognise the individual story of each student and allow for the College to provide the support required.

College policies will be reviewed to ensure that they support and foster student wellbeing, and provide appropriate guidelines and expectations to all in our Community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

We will redesign our professional growth models to further incorporate data and feedback, culminating in a professional review of middle leaders. We will continue the process we began in relation to staff, student and broader community involvement in the construction of a new College masterplan. We will commence works on the refurbishment of the College carpark and continue to work with key stakeholders to future proof the College.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Mercy College will continue to strengthen parent and guardian partnership in establishing a parents and friends network. We will establish formal opportunities for Mercy Alumni to stay connected to the College and other past students, through the publication of the annual Alumni magazine, events and digital connections.

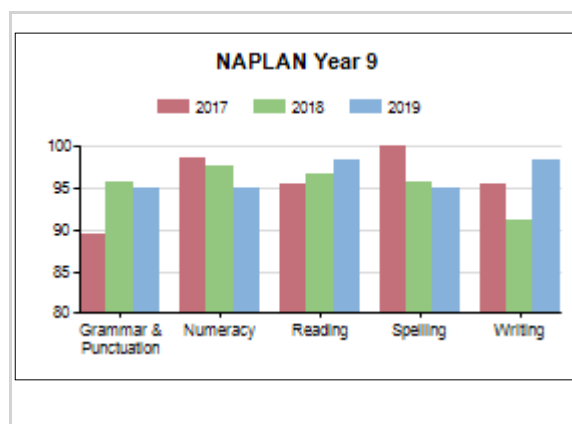
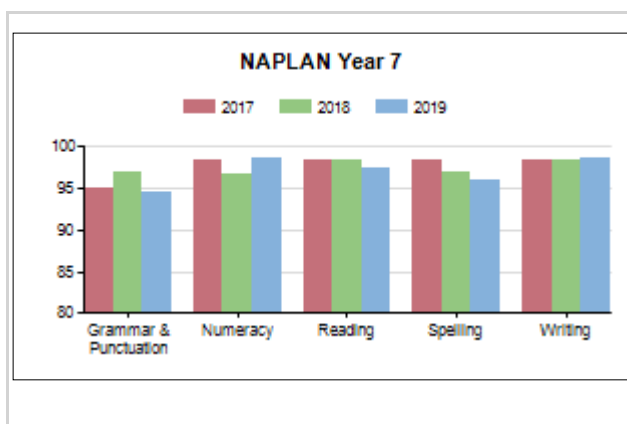


School Performance Data Summary

E1256
Mercy College, Coburg

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS

NAPLAN TESTS	2017 %	2018 %	2017 - 2018 Changes %	2019 %	2018 - 2019 Changes %
YR 07 Grammar & Punctuation	95.1	96.8	1.7	94.5	-2.3
YR 07 Numeracy	98.4	96.7	-1.7	98.6	1.9
YR 07 Reading	98.4	98.4	0.0	97.4	-1.0
YR 07 Spelling	98.4	96.8	-1.6	95.9	-0.9
YR 07 Writing	98.4	98.4	0.0	98.7	0.3
YR 09 Grammar & Punctuation	89.4	95.6	6.2	95.0	-0.6
YR 09 Numeracy	98.5	97.7	-0.8	95.0	-2.7
YR 09 Reading	95.5	96.7	1.2	98.4	1.7
YR 09 Spelling	100.0	95.6	-4.4	95.0	-0.6
YR 09 Writing	95.5	91.2	-4.3	98.4	7.2



YEARS 9 - 12 STUDENT RETENTION RATE

Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate	87.7%
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AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

	%
Y07	93.4
Y08	88.9
Y09	88.1
Y10	88.9
Overall average attendance	89.8

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	90.8%
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ALLSTAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	84.4%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	30.8%
Graduate	35.9%
Graduate Certificate	20.5%
Bachelor Degree	94.9%
Advanced Diploma	23.1%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	44
Teaching Staff (FTE)	38.3
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	24
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	21.8
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

MEDIAN NAPLAN RESULTS FOR YEAR 9	
Year 9 Grammar & Punctuation	574.9



Year 9 Numeracy	580.4
Year 9 Reading	586.7
Year 9 Spelling	586.7
Year 9 Writing	572.9

SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES	
VCE Median Score	30
VCE Completion Rate	100%
VCAL Completion Rate	95%