



MERCY
REGIONAL COLLEGE



YEAR 7

WELCOME BOOKLET 2022



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PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

We welcome you to our Mercy Regional College community. Our school motto is *“Learning to Care, Caring to Learn”*. Care is at our heart. We hope to promote and nurture in all young people their academic potential but also a spiritual way of living, learning and being that is based on “Good ethics, good morals, care, kindness”.

The focus of this booklet is those vital first few weeks of secondary school and all the details that you need to ensure that this start to Year 7 is as seamless as possible. The guide is roughly chronological with events detailed in the order they will occur. It also includes contact details for Junior Leadership Team at the O'Keeffe Campus.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to the development and production of this booklet – Mrs Emily Stephens, Mrs Lydia Darcy, Ms Katya Belokon, Mrs Jenni Lenehan, and the staff of the O'Keeffe Campus.

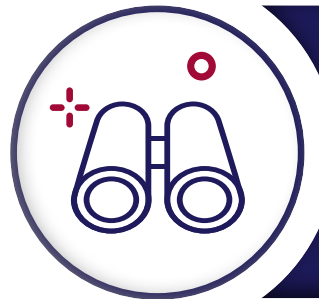
With kindness,



Sharon Gillett
Principal



1. MISSION & VISION



OUR VISION

Mercy Regional College serves a wide rural community which values growth and diversity in Catholic Education in the Mercy tradition.



OUR MISSION

In the Spirit of the Gospels we commit ourselves to the core values of community, inclusiveness, learning, care, justice and mercy, excellence and achievement.



COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

All students enrolled, and any child visiting, have a right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety.

CORE VALUES



COMMUNITY

Through the Mercy tradition we promote the uniqueness of the community and its heritage.



INCLUSIVENESS

Through the Mercy tradition we welcome and celebrate individual difference.



LEARNING

Through the Mercy tradition we encourage our community to seek knowledge, to nurture curiosity and to love learning.



CARE

Through the Mercy tradition we commit ourselves to caring for each other.



JUSTICE AND MERCY

Through the Mercy tradition we seek to act with love, fairness, tolerance and compassion to all.



EXCELLENCE AND ACHIEVEMENT

Through the Mercy tradition we support, acknowledge and strive for personal excellence and achievement.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Mercy website, www.mercy.vic.edu.au, **SIMON** and **Parent Access Module (PAM)** are all valuable sources of information for parents and students. Each student will be issued with a Mercy diary. The front pages are filled with information that is relevant for both students and parents. The College newsletter is published fortnightly and is available via email or accessible on the College website. **'The Week Ahead at O'Keeffe'** is a memo outlining important information and activities which are coming up. It is uploaded to PAM every Friday evening.

The O'Keeffe Campus Office will be closed when there are no students at Noorat e.g. Sports Days/Masses etc. The phone will be diverted to the McAuley Office on these occasions.

2.1 The O'Keeffe Campus

At Mercy Regional College we recognise the significance of facilitating a smooth and inclusive transition for all students to their secondary school experience. To support this transition, all Year 7 students attend our dedicated Junior School campus located at Noorat. The O'Keeffe campus is shared with Year 8 students and the curriculum is designed to meet the individual learning needs of all students whilst providing an opportunity for connection to the environment, local community and to our shared history inclusive of the traditional owners of the land on which we learn.

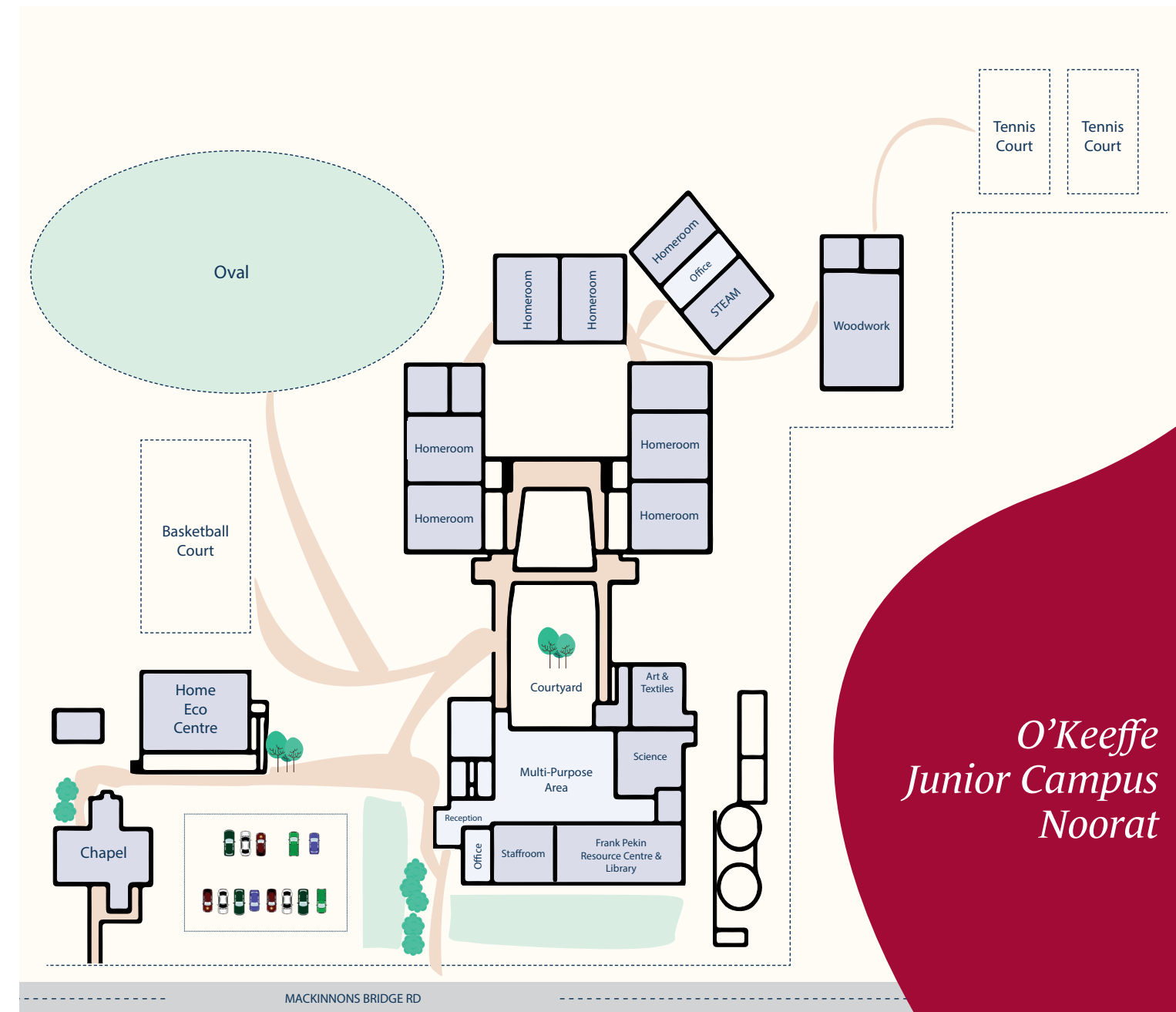


The O'Keeffe Campus Courtyard



The O'Keeffe Campus Captains 2021

2.2 The O'Keeffe Campus Map



2.3 College Uniform Shop

The Mercy Uniform shop is located inside the Administration building at the McAuley Campus, Camperdown, and is open on the following days:

Terms 1 & 4

Monday 12.00pm to 4.00pm
Tuesday 8.00am to 12.00pm
Thursday 8.00am to 12.00pm

Terms 2 & 3

Monday 12.00pm to 4.00pm
Thursday 8.00am to 12.00pm

January 2022 Opening Days & Times: available on the Noone website
www.noone.com.au/school/mercy-regional-college/stores

Click to go to the Uniform Shop website

Parents visiting the uniform shop are to register at Reception on arrival. If you have any questions regarding uniform, please contact the uniform shop on **7020 2625** or email uniform@mercy.vic.edu.au.



2.4 College Uniform Expectations

School uniform is compulsory and students are expected to maintain high standards of personal grooming and neatness and to take pride in their College uniform. All students are expected to wear full school uniform while at school.

Students are offered the choice of a *trans-seasonal uniform*, i.e. the uniform can be worn in accordance with the weather. However, students must wear either the full summer or full winter uniform, not a combination of both.

Any student not wearing full uniform is to bring a note from his/her parents, written in the Student Diary and to be given to the Home Room Teacher, explaining the reason for being out of uniform and the expected length of time the student will be out of uniform. Students are advised to mark their name on all items of uniform and personal property brought to school.

Sports uniform must be worn during PE class. Students who are unable to wear the correct sports uniform must bring a note from their parents. *O’Keeffe students are permitted to wear their correct PE uniform to school for the day, only when they have PE practical class. In winter students will be encouraged to wear the new College logo tracksuit pants.*

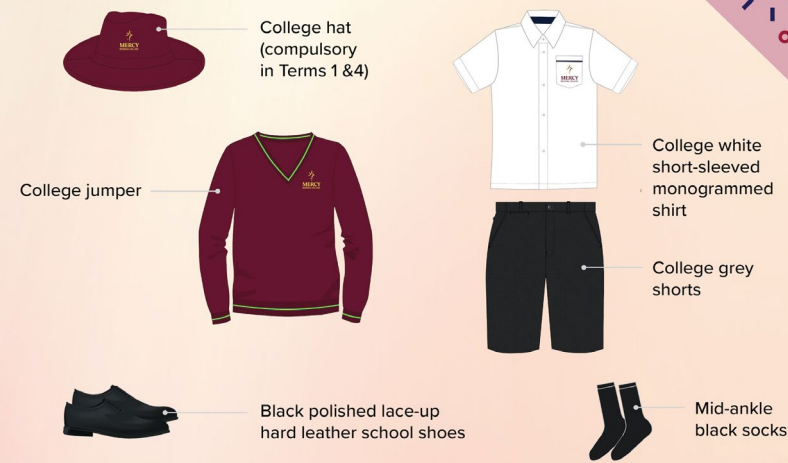
During cooler months students are permitted to wear only the College Spray Jacket as an over garment for protection from the weather. During Terms 1 and 4 students are to wear a College hat during recess and lunchtime.

The following page has a detailed overview of MRC uniform.

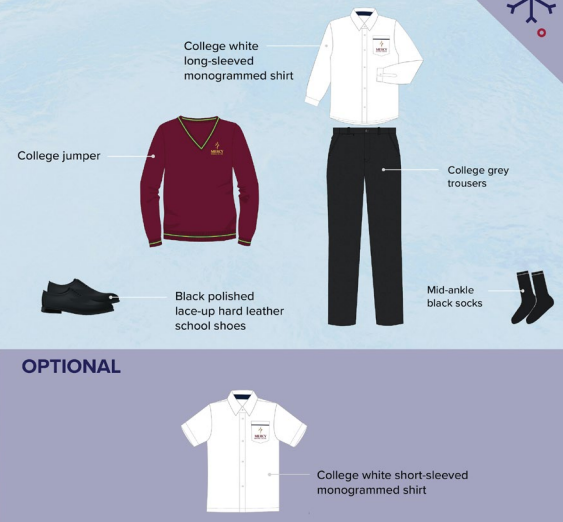
Please refer to the College website for *Mercy Regional College Uniform Policy*.

Upon a breach of the uniform guidelines a warning by the Homeroom teacher will be given first. A second breach results in a level one tracing incident recorded on SIMON.

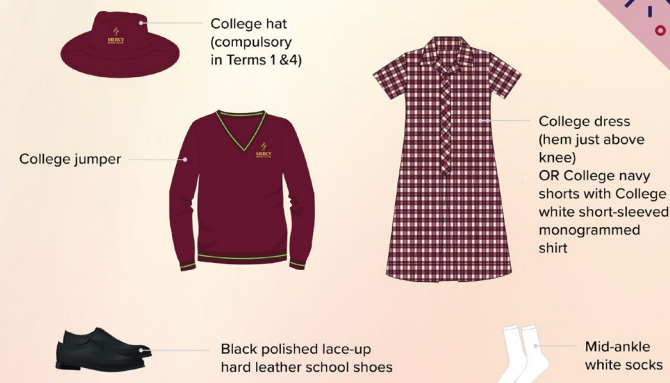
SUMMER UNIFORM: Boys



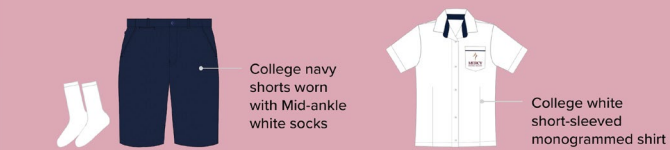
WINTER UNIFORM: Boys



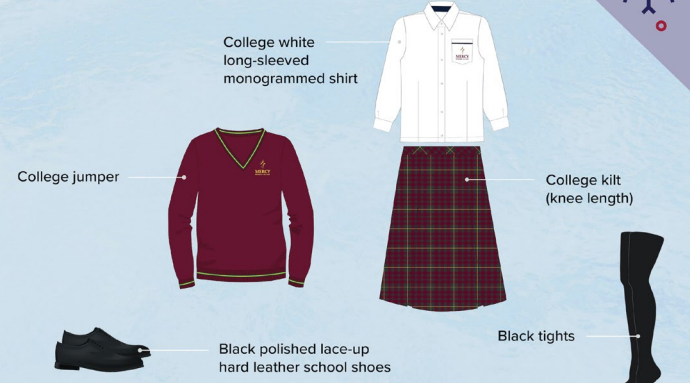
SUMMER UNIFORM: Girls



OPTIONAL



WINTER UNIFORM: Girls



OPTIONAL



SPORTS UNIFORM: Boys & Girls



Senior Years Jumper

Senior Years navy jumper is worn by Year 11 & 12 students instead of the maroon College jumper.



College Bag

All students are to carry their belongings in the College bag.



Grooming & Accessories

Not permitted: Any visible make-up, nail polish, tattoos and extreme hair colours.

Hair: Must be clean and tidy. Collar length hair must be fully tied back with navy, white or maroon ribbons/hair ties.

Facial Hair: Boys must be clean shaven at all times.

Jewellery: Must be discreet. Two pairs of earrings are permitted per ear (studs/plain earrings). If nose is pierced, only a clear plastic retainer or a stud less than 2mm is acceptable.

Warmth: Navy gloves, a maroon scarf and a navy Senior Years scarf are available at the uniform shop to keep you warm. In cold weather, students may wear thermals, singlets, T-shirts or extra layers if they are not visible under College uniform.



OPTIONAL: College Spray Jacket

During cooler months students are permitted to wear the College spray jacket as the outer garment over school jumper for protection from the weather.



2.5 Grooming

Students are expected to maintain a high standard of personal grooming and neatness and to take pride in their College uniform.

Jewellery - Girls/Boys:

Must be discreet and can include any of the following:

- Two pairs of earrings are permitted per ear studs/plain earrings. If nose is pierced, only a clear plastic retainer or stud less than 2 mm is acceptable.
- No visible tattoos are allowed.

Hair:

Must be clean and tidy.

- Collar length hair must be fully tied back. Partially tied up hair is not permitted.
- No extremes in hair styles, e.g. dreadlocks or spiked hair, extreme hair shaving or colours.
- Navy, white or maroon ribbons/hair ties.
- Facial Hair:** Boys must be clean shaven at all times.
- Make-up:** No visible make-up or nail polish are allowed.

2.6 Book Collection

For the 2022 school year, the book list will be distributed from a new source called **Campion Education**. With the move to this new company, all book lists will need to be submitted online. More details will be available closer to the date and instructions will be included. Due to the current circumstances, there will not be a Book Collection Day at school in January. Books will either be available for collection from the Campion Education store in Warrnambool or, for a small fee, delivered to your home address.

2.7 Lunch Orders

There is no canteen at the O'Keeffe Campus but lunch orders are available 5 days a week and are supplied by 'The Shed', at Noorat. Students place their orders in their homeroom tubs at the beginning of the day. A price list will be given to students on their first day.

2.8 Student Absences

Parents are required to notify the school if their child is going to be absent or will be arriving late to school. Notification can be given via PAM, phone or email to **reception@mercy.vic.edu.au**. It is a legal requirement that the school follow up all student absences and a reason noted. Any student who is marked absent from period without notification will be followed up with an **SMS message** asking the parent to contact the school. Do not reply to the SMS message – please telephone the appropriate campus to explain the absence.

The O’Keeffe Campus Office will be closed when there are no students at Noorat e.g. Sports Days/Masses etc. Please ring the McAuley Campus on **5593 2011** with any absences.

Notification of absences for holidays during school term needs to be given at least two weeks in advance in writing addressed to the Principal.

3. BUS TRAVEL

School staff will be at the following connection points on the first day of Term 1.

Cobden Technical School from 8.30am
McAuley Campus, Camperdown from 8.30am

Where fitted, seat belts must be worn on buses. Misbehavior on buses may result in a student’s suspension from bus travel for a period of time. Please contact the College **IMMEDIATELY** if your child encounters any problems with bus travel.

Students will be advised well in advance of any changes to bus arrangements, e.g. full days at McAuley such as Sport days or Masses.

3.1 Bus Passes

Many of the College buses are at or near capacity and only a limited number of requests will be able to be granted. All passes will be issued at the discretion of the Principal. Consideration will only be given to requests for ongoing sporting/music/after school activities **BUT NOT** for social reasons such as birthday parties or sleep overs.

Parents requesting bus passes will need to complete the ‘Bus Pass Request’ form and submit to the school office 2 days prior to when the bus pass is needed for the request to be considered.

Bus passes on the state coordinated bus runs are issued under their policies and guidelines. For some of the bus runs this means, no bus passes can be issued.



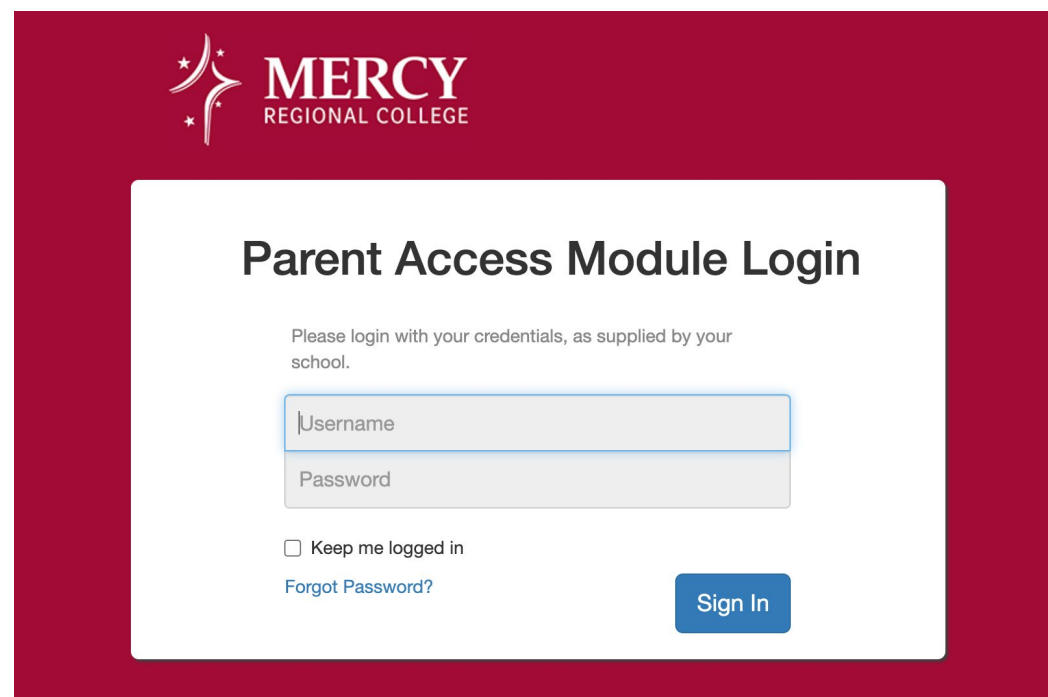
4. SIMON & PAM

The online platform **Parent Access Module (PAM)** is an invaluable tool for parents. Its user-friendly format allows parents to observe and follow aspects of their child's school activities. Parents have access to MRC's daily messages and upcoming events and each student has a customised profile.

In the student profile parents can track test results, assignment tasks and overdue homework. Parents also have access to daily timetable, classroom behavior, roll attendance and school reports. PAM is very easy to navigate and is great as another form of communication between the school and home.

Your PAM username and password have been provided with your enrolment confirmation pack.

Parents are required to update their child's medical profile details in PAM before 26 November, 2021.



5. CLASS COMPOSITION

We endeavour to group your child with at least 1 or more other students from their previous school. These students may **NOT** be your child's closest or best friends - your encouragement and strategies for resilience in this situation would be appreciated, as once selected it is very hard to change.

With approximately 60 students to allocate into classes, equal gender mixes needed, ability levels catered for and allocation of aides, it is not always possible to cater for every child's friendship requests. Students have the chance to mix before and after school and at recess and lunch.

For some students the first few days may be a little challenging, but all students are encouraged to make new friendships and the camp is often a great factor in making new friends. We encourage students to persevere in this area and be resilient - and by Week 3 all students are usually very settled.

5.1 Year 7 Homeroom Teachers 2022



Mrs Melissa Brisbane
mbrisbane@mercy.vic.edu.au



Mr Tim Woodmason
twoodmason@mercy.vic.edu.au



Mrs Lydia Darcy
ldarcy@mercy.vic.edu.au

6. COLLEGE CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any problems or questions, your child's Homeroom teacher is usually the first point of contact. Their email details are available on the previous page. If you have any concern or problem, please contact the College straight away. We are there to help you and your child.

The student diary is an effective way of communicating with teachers.

O'KEEFFE JUNIOR CAMPUS

Street Address: **McKinnons Bridge Road, Noorat Vic 3265**
Postal Address: **PO Box 152 Camperdown Vic 3260**
Phone: **5592 5353**
Email: **office@mercy.vic.edu.au**

McAULEY SENIOR CAMPUS

Street Address: **Henderson Street Camperdown Vic 3260**
Postal Address: **PO Box 152 Camperdown Vic 3260**
Phone: **5593 2011**
Email: **office@mercy.vic.edu.au**

COLLEGE OFFICE HOURS

O'Keeffe Campus: **8:15am - 4:15pm**
McAuley Campus: **8:30am - 4:30pm**



O'Keeffe
Community Leader
Mrs Emily Stephens
estephens@mercy.vic.edu.au



Year 7 - 10
Learning Leader
Mrs Lydia Darcy
ldarcy@mercy.vic.edu.au



Learning Diversity
Leader
Mrs Claire Walsh
cwalsh@mercy.vic.edu.au



Family
Liaison
Mrs Leah Buckle
lbuckle@mercy.vic.edu.au

7. FIRST WEEKS OF SCHOOL

7.1 The First Day

Monday, 31 January 2022

- Students should be in full uniform, including a hat.
- All belongings should be labeled with a student's name. This should include all clothing, books and equipment.
- Students need to bring their own lunch, a drink, a pencil case and an exercise book.
- There is no need to bring text books on the first day.
- The Homeroom Teacher will advise what to bring for the rest of the week.
- Student MacBooks will be distributed during Week 1 and 2 of Term 1.



7.2 Student Timetable

The student timetable is structured as 6 periods per day as shown below. The timetable rotates fortnightly between Week 1 and Week 2. The End of Day finishing times are staggered to allow for buses to meet connections in Mortlake, Cobden, Camperdown, Terang and Lismore.

9.00 – 9.10	Homeroom
9.10 – 10.00	Period 1
10.00 – 10.50	Period 2
10.50 – 11.15	RECESS
11.15 – 12.05	Period 3
12.05 – 12.55	Period 4
12.55 – 1.30	LUNCH
1.30 – 2.20	Period 5
2.20 – 3.10	Period 6

7.3 Swimming Sports Carnival

Friday, 11 February 2022

- Students will be required to go straight to the McAuley Campus on this day. Senior students will be advised to help Year 7's on the buses.
- Students will need drinks, bathers, sunscreen, hat & lunch although a fundraising BBQ will be available.
- All students need to come to school so they can be marked off their Homeroom roll.
- Parents are most welcome to attend and students are encouraged to come dressed in House colours.
- If you want to take your child home after the Swimming Sports Carnival, please give your child a note for their Homeroom teacher.
- Students will catch buses for home from the McAuley Campus at the end of the day.
- One piece bathers are required for girls.



7.4 Welcome BBQ & Information Night

Monday, 7 February 2022

6 pm - 7.30 pm, O'Keeffe Campus

- All Year 7's and their families are invited to attend.
- Meat and salads supplied, please bring your own drinks.
- Homeroom teachers will address parents in each class.

This is a great time to see your child's classroom, meet their classroom teacher and look around the O'Keeffe Campus.



7.5 Commencement Mass & Assembly

Thursday, 15 February 2022

The Commencement Mass will be held at the McAuley Campus beginning at 9.30am and followed by an Assembly. Parents are warmly invited to both events. Students will be required to go straight to the McAuley Campus on this day. Following the Assembly, students will be transported by bus back to the O'Keeffe Campus for normal classes.



7.6 Year 7 Camp

Wednesday, 23 February - Friday, 25 February 2022

- Year 7 Camp is held at Cape Bridgewater Coastal Camp, Bridgewater.
- Information and Permission will be sent out via PAM.
- Each student will be given a 'Camp Booklet' which includes the Camp outline, packing lists, contact details and times for the week.



7.7 School Photos

Monday, 28 March 2022

School photos are taken at both Campuses on this day. Arrangements can be made to transport siblings so a family photo can be taken.

7.8 Athletics Carnival

Thursday, 3 March 2022

- The same procedure as with Swimming Sports Carnival regarding how to get to and from school and what to bring.
- Athletics Carnival is held at Camperdown College Sports Oval in Frederick Street.
- Parents are encouraged to attend.
- BBQ and drinks will be available for sale.



8. MACBOOK PROGRAM

All students at Mercy Regional College receive an Apple MacBook as part of their enrolment.

- The MacBook is provided for students in Years 7-9 as part of their College fees.
- The College supplies a carry bag and clip-on hardcover at no charge.
- The MacBook is subsidised by the College to keep the rental below what it would cost you to purchase your own.
- The College retains 'ownership' of the MacBook which is handed back at the completion of Year 9.
- The MacBooks are bundled with a 3-Year AppleCare+ Warranty which covers accidental damage (including screen breakages).
- 'Theft' and 'Water Damage' are not covered under warranty or insurance and the parent is liable for the full cost of replacing a lost, stolen or water damaged MacBook.

For more information, please refer to the College website or contact our IT Manager Daniel Beard at daniel@mercy.vic.edu.au.

When students move to Year 10, they can decide the best MacBook to suit their subject focus heading into Senior classes. Parents do have the option to purchase the MacBook outright up front or repay over 6 monthly repayments.



9. HOMEWORK & STUDY

Homework is beneficial when it is specific, has a purpose, and reinforces learning. It can help students practice skills learned in class and develop further understanding of key concepts. We strongly encourage reading as a priority - class texts and wider reading for interest and enjoyment.

Completing homework on a regular basis develops good work habits, but we also acknowledge that a balance is vital. Time spent with family and friends after school, in a range of activities and commitments is very important, and encouraged.

Students can expect some regular homework. Making effective use of class time is the best strategy to keep up-to-date with school work. Parents can monitor class, assessment and homework tasks via PAM (Parent Access Module) online. We encourage communication between parents and teachers, via a note in the student's diary or email.

The time students need to complete tasks at home varies, but should not be excessive. Extended assignments or project work can be daunting for some students. Making the most of class time and breaking the task into smaller chunks is advisable, rather than leaving it to the last minute. Staff are very happy to support students with this when needed. There is generally no prescribed holiday homework for Years 7-10, however, the reading of English texts is an expectation. Text details are regularly published in school newsletters or emails home.

Examples of homework & study tasks:

- Reading (15-30 minutes per night is suggested)
- Maths Online tasks (1 hour per week)
- Preparing for a test with revision notes or practice questions
- Finishing off a task not completed in class
- Catching up on work missed while absent
- Watching the news or a documentary
- Reading newspapers and magazines

10. INCREASING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT SCHOOL

At the O'Keeffe Campus we would like to provide opportunities for our Year 7 & 8 parents to be actively involved in the school, not only to support teaching and learning but to also continue to build a sense of community where our students and parents feel a belonging to our great College. Activities include **Community Morning Teas**, **The Mercy Kitchen** and **Grandparents & Special Friends Day**. We understand that not all parents can be involved due to commitments.

Further information will also be sent home early in Term 1.

10.1 Grandparents & Special Friends Day

Term 3

Grandparents & Special Friends Day is an opportunity to celebrate the many important people in the lives of our students and also gives our Year 7's the chance to celebrate and share their school. The day includes morning tea, performances and classroom visits.



Grandparents & Special Friends Day 2019

11. MOBILE PHONES

Any student who has a mobile phone at school must have it recorded on the College register. Please obtain a form from the office. No student is to use a mobile phone while at school. If students are found using a phone it will be taken from them. Please refer to our digital technology policy on the College website for more details.

Students are not to contact parents directly via email, phone or text if they are unwell. They must notify their teacher or the office and contact will be made with a parent by a staff member.

11.1 Messages to Students

Students can only be called to the office at recess, lunch or at the end of school bell to receive messages from parents.

11.2 Student Emergency Contacts and Pick Up Arrangements

During the enrolment process, parents nominated contacts for their students in case of an emergency. Anyone already nominated can pick up your child from school. Occasionally students need to be picked up by someone not already on the list. If this is the case, please contact the office or send a note outlining the arrangements. This also applies if students are going home via a different method, e.g. with other students or walking to sporting commitments.

12. MERCY MERITS PROGRAM

The Mercy Merits Commendation Program is used to complement positive behaviours and to encourage and acknowledge students who strive for personal growth. Personal growth at Mercy is demonstrated through students displaying a positive attitude towards their learning, peers, teachers, and the Mercy community. Mercy Merits encourages a student involvement in various aspects of our College community and the wider community.

The Mercy Merits are recorded on SIMON under student commendations where students can see them, parents will also be able to access this information on PAM. These commendations will accumulate to encourage students to strive towards **Mercy Merit Awards**. The Mercy Merits reflect our school's core values. Mercy Merits will be achieved by students will also contribute to the **House Award, The McLeod Shield**. Students can achieve commendations in recognition of personal achievement and growth in the following categories:

- **Learning Growth:** Individual's growth in school work.
- **Acts of Mercy:** Assisting and helping others in our community and the wider community.
- **Leadership and Positive Role:** Examples of positive student leadership/College representation.
- **The Arts & Cultural:** Examples of student involvement across arts and culture.
- **Sport:** Representation and achievement in College sport only.

Students who accumulate **20 commendation points (which must have a minimum of 2 achievements in each of these categories)** will be awarded with a **Bronze Merit award**.

Students who accumulate **50 commendation points (which must be in at least 2 different categories and have a minimum of 3 achievements)** will be awarded with a **Silver Merit award**.

Students who accumulate **110 commendation points (which must be in at least 3 different categories and have a minimum of 2 achievements)** will be awarded with a **Gold Merit award**.

13. STUDENT WELLBEING

The wellbeing of our students at Mercy Regional College is central to all that we do. The student's wellbeing is every teacher's responsibility and we work to ensure all students are happy and feel safe in our College environment. The Home Room teacher is the first person to contact should there be any concerns with your child. We have a **Wellbeing Team** consisting of *the O'Keeffe Community Leader, Mrs Emily Stephens; Deputy Principal - Staff & Students, Mrs Berni Sinnott; College Pastoral Care Worker, Mrs Sharon Suhan*. Their role is to provide support to the students, not only involving mental health of the individual but also allowing them to grow as a person by guiding each individual to make decisions for themselves. We provide students with resources and materials with the goal to help and assist young people in making positive decisions about their lifestyle taking into consideration the values of their family, school and culture. One of the major barriers and challenges is improving access to information and services for young people. We work with the student and parents.



R U OK? Day 2021

13.1 MERCY (Mindfulness, Empathy, Resilience, Care, You)

Mercy is a dedicated pastoral care program that includes lessons from the Resilience Project, Positive Education Institute and Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships. MERCY lessons are held in homeroom groups and are centered around resilience, empathy, mental health, respectful relationships and emotional literacy.

13.2 Websites for Parents and Young People

A great way young people access information is through the Internet. Below are some fantastic sites for young people.

www.eheadspace.org.au

A confidential free, anonymous, secure space where young people can chat with or email qualified mental health professionals.

www.reachout.com

An online community for young people that can help with mental health and wellbeing related issues. It also provides opportunities for connecting with young people.

www.smilingmind.com.au

A modern meditation for young people. This is a web and app-based program to help bring balance into young lives.

www.kidshelp.com.au

Australia's only free, private, confidential telephone and online counselling service for young people between 5-25 years of age.

www.esafety.gov.au

ESafety is committed to helping young people have safe, positive experiences online and encouraging behavioural change, where a generation of Australian children act responsibly online just as they would offline. Our goal is to empower all Australians to explore the online world safely.

www.cybersmart.gov.au

Free and private advice online.

www.youthbeyondblue.com

A dedicated site for youth. Information, resources and support for young people.

www.headspace.com.au

National youth mental health foundation. Helping young people get through tough times.

14. COLLEGE EXPECTATIONS

1. Students are to contribute to a welcoming, caring and supportive environment by showing consideration for each other and ensuring that their words and actions cause no harm or offence to others.
2. Students are expected to attend all classes and, if sick or absent, make contact with the College to communicate this. When at school, students are expected to be on time and be properly prepared for class.
3. Students are to contribute to a conducive and effective learning environment in the classroom by following instructions and obeying classroom rules.
4. Students are expected to strive for personal excellence in all areas of College life. All College staff will do their utmost to foster a learning environment that enables students to pursue and achieve excellence.
5. Students are to contribute to a safe, orderly environment by moving and acting in a way that is not disruptive or unsafe to themselves or others. The school strictly enforces a 'Hands Off' Policy between students, in recognition that every student has the right to feel safe at all times within the College.
6. Students are to contribute to a secure, clean and pleasant environment by acting in ways which look after their own, other people's and College property. Students are to contribute positively to the health and hygiene of the school surrounds and wider community in a manner that is consistent with the importance of preserving and maintaining the natural environment.
7. Students are to take pride in their College by wearing the uniform correctly and acting in a way that reflects well on themselves, their families and the school.

