



MERCEDES COLLEGE

Thank you for considering Mercedes College as a choice for your child's education.

We look forward to welcoming you into our school community to discuss the learning opportunities, pastoral care programmes, and extra-curricular activities available to our students.

As you will discover, we are proud of the achievements of our students both past and present. We strive to provide opportunities for all members of our College to be the best person he or she can be and thus reach his or her full intellectual, spiritual, physical and emotional potential.

We invite you to visit the school and experience the sense of welcome that is a fundamental part of our Mercy culture, and trust you will feel the spirit of belonging that exists amongst the members of this thriving community.



Mercy Keys

Compassion, Loyalty, Justice, Integrity, Responsibility and Mutual Respect shape the culture of the College and are integral to the way of life for all members of the Mercedes College community.

Mission

As a Catholic school in the Mercy tradition and inspired by the Gospels, we work in partnership with families enabling students to flourish in all aspects of their humanity and thus contribute to a better and more peaceful world.

Vision

To be a sustainable, internationally minded, world-class school, providing a holistic educational experience for our students within a unique culture and community where we honour our Catholic traditions and live the Mercy Keys.

Mercy Keys

Each year the College highlights one Mercy Key and encourages students to fulfil the core value through their everyday experiences.

Compassion

We demonstrate compassion when we are aware of and respond to the needs of others.

Loyalty

We demonstrate loyalty when we recognise and support personal, community and Gospel Values.

Justice

We demonstrate justice when we act with fairness and are willing to speak up for the rights and dignity of others.

Integrity

We demonstrate integrity when we have the strength to do what is right, are honest and trustworthy in our dealings with others and are true to our Christian values.

Responsibility

We demonstrate responsibility when we are reliable and responsible for our actions and do the right thing by ourselves, others and the environment.

Mutual Respect

We demonstrate mutual respect when we acknowledge the dignity of others by treating them as we would have them treat us, by listening to them and considering their perspective.





Catholic Community

Along with our Catholic community, our students and their families comprise a diversity of global religions, faiths, and beliefs.

While our morning prayer and celebrations as a community are observed following the Catholic faith, the students study and respect global religions as part of the curriculum to ensure each has a comprehensive understanding of world religions and faith communities.

Mercy Outreach and Community Service

An important part of life at Mercedes College is the Mercy Outreach Programme and community service. Students take the initiative to involve themselves in various community activities to help and support others.

Students derive great value from these programmes, where understanding, respect, and patience are valued and nurtured.

Curriculum

In Years 11 and 12, students have the option to choose either the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma or the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).

International Baccalaureate

International Baccalaureate (IB) educational programmes are driven by the IB mission to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

Mercedes College is the only Catholic school in South Australia to offer curriculum provided by the IB Organisation from Reception through to Year 12, and one of only a few schools in South Australia to offer the programme at all three levels: The Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme in Years 11 and 12.

IB students at Mercedes College are provided with a unique education. The Australian curriculum is taught through the PYP and MYP frameworks. Each of the IB programmes reflects a central desire to provide an education that enables students to make sense of the complexities of the world around them, as well as equipping them with the skills and qualities needed for taking responsible action for the future. They provide an education that crosses disciplinary, cultural, national and geographical boundaries, and that champions critical engagement, stimulating ideas and effective relationships.

At all three levels of the programme our students develop strong academic, social and emotional characteristics and will:

- Be encouraged to think independently and drive their learning
- Build a sense of identity and cultural awareness
- Stimulate curiosity to foster a spirit of discovery and enjoyment of learning
- Become equipped with the skills to learn, individually or collaboratively, and apply these qualities across a broad range of areas
- Take part in programmes of education that can lead them to some of the highest ranking universities around the world
- Become more culturally aware through the development of a second language
- Be able to engage with people in an increasingly globalised, rapidly changing world

South Australian Certificate of Education

The SACE is an internationally recognised senior secondary qualification that provides students with the knowledge, skills, and capabilities they require to advance to further learning and work as confident and responsible global citizens. Upon successful completion, the SACE qualifies graduates for admission to tertiary institutions both nationally and abroad, and meets community expectations that school-leavers will:

- Be equipped to successfully undertake further studies, training and employment
- Achieve a desired level of literacy and numeracy
- Study a broad range of subjects

The SACE offers subjects and courses at two stages, Stage 1 (Year 11) and Stage 2 (Year 12). Students acquire valuable literacy, numeracy, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The SACE helps students to learn how to work with and alongside others, and to understand how one's decisions can affect people, situations and the world.

These outcomes are encapsulated in the seven capabilities that underpin the SACE:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Information and communication technology capability
- Creative and critical thinking
- Personal and social capability
- Ethical understanding
- Intercultural understanding

The development of these capabilities supports students to become successful 21st Century learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.

The SACE is a future-focussed programme, which puts students and the community at the centre, delivering flexibility in assessment and reflecting real-world experience. This is being demonstrated through the Australian-first introduction of electronic examinations.

Languages

Language learning at Mercedes is fundamental to the concepts of the IB Primary Years, Middle Years and Diploma Programmes and is also available as a SACE subject.

Students study French from Reception to Year 5. In Years 6-10, students continue with their Language Acquisition studies as part of the Middle Years Programme of the IB. In Years 11 and 12, IB students may choose from French Language B, Indonesian Language B, Spanish Ab Initio, Chinese Language A and English Language B. SACE students may select language options available in French, Indonesian and Chinese.

Technology

Mercedes College uses technology as a valuable tool to support learning. Devices, including laptops, tablets, IT labs and interactive whiteboards, are used effectively in creative and constructive ways to integrate into the curriculum and actively deepen learning.



Learning Support

Mercedes College has a diverse student body with a range of learning needs.

Mercedes College is committed to providing all students with the opportunity to reach their potential by:

- Supporting students in striving to be the best they can be
- Considering the individual needs and talents of each student
- Meeting the students' physical, intellectual and emotional needs
- Determining and responding to the range of learning styles of students through quality differentiated teaching practice

To support the diversity of student learning, a broad range of programmes are coordinated by a Learning Support Team.

Screening assessments, diagnostic assessment reports, standardised assessment programmes and NAPLAN results are used to identify early risk factors and monitor student progress. Teachers may also refer students based on classroom observations and/or assessments. This data is used to identify targeted intervention learning programmes or instructional adjustments aimed at supporting students and developing teacher capacity.

Inclusive education celebrates diversity recognising that each student is unique. It focusses on a strengths-based, personalised approach to planning and providing learning support to maximise learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students with disabilities and additional needs. The students in collaboration with their families are involved in the decision-making processes as respected partners in education.

Junior School

Reception to Year 5

The Junior School prepares students in becoming active participants in a lifelong journey of learning through the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP). The essence of the PYP focusses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside. It allows students to explore their world through a series of guided inquiries that enrich the curriculum and gives students increasing responsibility and ownership over their learning.

The PYP offers a high quality education that encourages international mindedness and a positive attitude to learning. Educational experiences are planned with consideration of the needs, abilities and backgrounds of all students.

Our learning environments, both inside and out, are designed to stimulate and promote a love of learning, wellbeing, friendship, and community.

The PYP framework incorporates a balance between five essential elements: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action. Subjects within this transdisciplinary programme of inquiry are identified in terms of six themes:

- Who we are
- Where we are in place and time
- How we express ourselves
- How the world works
- How we organise ourselves
- Sharing the planet

At the end of their final year (Year 5), students participate in the Year 5 Exhibition, which culminates the Primary Years Programme through the search for a solution to a problem of global significance.



A strong sense of community is nurtured in the Junior School with an emphasis on the pastoral care of students. We understand that each child is unique and brings different skills and capabilities to the classroom. Our teachers focus on developing strong and trusting relationships.

Middle School Year 6 to Year 9

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP) caters for Middle School students with a unique curriculum framework designed for adolescents. It promotes research, self-management, collaboration and critical thinking skills, and requires interdisciplinary thinking through the study of meaningful and relevant topics.

The MYP is a student-centred curriculum that spans five years of learning, commencing in Year 6 and concluding in Year 10 (the first year of our Senior School). Students are actively involved in Year 9 Middle School Leadership, the peer-elected Student Representative Council and Year 6 House Leadership.

During this stage of rapid change and development, students feel connected to our Middle School community and actively embrace the life of the College. Middle School students are provided with a classroom they call their own, where most of their core learning takes place. This creates a stable environment in which to learn.

Our pastoral care focusses on wellbeing. Positive student-teacher relationships are central to our work and

structures have been implemented in support of our Middle School philosophy to cater for the different needs of Middle School students.

Our students enthusiastically participate in a range of cultural, musical and sporting activities through the co-curricular and extra-curricular programmes to drive their personal development outside of the classroom.

ignlTe

The ignlTe programme has been developed for students from Reception up to Year 8. It complements the Australian Curriculum Information, and Communication Technology Capability and Digital Technologies Curriculum, but also focusses on creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication in the use of technology.

Students are involved in learning opportunities that involve robotics, coding, game-based learning and augmented/virtual reality to deepen their understanding and stimulate their curiosity.



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Senior School Year 10 to Year 12

The Senior School expands further on the essential educational values and opportunities established in the Junior and Middle Schools.

There is an emphasis on learning, co-curricular choice and participation in community service. An added focus is placed on preparing students for their post-school academic, employment and spiritual endeavours.

Students in Year 10 complete their International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme. Students in Years 11 and 12 study either the IB Diploma or the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE). Within both curriculum models, students choose subjects from the essential areas of learning – the arts, English, languages, physical education, mathematics, science, studies of society and technology. Religious education and pastoral care programmes are provided through Home Group classes at each year level.

Tutor Groups

Students in Years 10-12 are welcomed each day by a dedicated Tutor Group teacher. Tutor Group teachers may advocate on behalf of their students in the event of illness or matters of personal wellbeing, and serve as a point of contact for families in their communication with the College. In addition, specific curriculum matters are taught and explored within this class group in our Growth and Personal Skills (GPS) Programme.

Each week, students and teachers work together on aspects of personal growth, skills relevant to life beyond school and

the development of the whole person. Tutor Group teachers also teach specific academic subjects and this relationship is supported through the contact with each other at the beginning of every day.

Student Leadership

Developing leadership skills is at the core of our ethos at Mercedes College. Through our formal leadership structure all students are provided with the opportunity to express themselves and be a voice for the student body.

Our leaders demonstrate a range of skills including vision, reliability, commitment and inspiration with the Mercy Keys of Compassion, Loyalty, Justice, Integrity, Responsibility and Mutual Respect becoming the essence of this journey.

Opportunities for student leadership exist through the Student Representative Council, College Captain, Sports Leader and House Captain roles and leadership of student clubs and societies.

Student Services Centre

The Student Services Centre offers a variety of services and information to students. Career and tertiary course counselling and assessment services assist students in making study and career choices appropriate to their talents. Work experience and observation programmes are provided and a personal counselling service is also available through the College Psychologist (R-12).



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A Unique Environment

Mercedes College is a contemporary school in a historical setting with open spaces and beautiful gardens.

The College is positioned at the base of the Adelaide foothills overlooking sweeping views of the city and the vast South Australian coastline.

Located 6km from the city of Adelaide on 6.5 hectares of land, the school is located in a calm and pleasant environment, offering students and families a reassuring sense of wellbeing.

One Location

Mercedes College is currently the only co-educational Reception to Year 12 Catholic school in suburban Adelaide situated in a single location, providing students a unique opportunity to grow and learn in familiar, comfortable surroundings throughout their entire schooling.

Council of International Schools

Council of International Schools (CIS) accreditation drives continuous improvement at Mercedes, demonstrating our commitment to a high quality international education. It also synchronises the IB Programme evaluation process of whole-school evaluation and accreditation.



Wellbeing
Mercedes College values the wellbeing of all students and community members as essential for ensuring a safe, supportive and thriving learning community that actively works to build strong relationships, positive emotions, personal resilience, and healthy lifestyles.

We work with students to ensure they have a sense of connectedness, are engaged in their learning, persevere in times of challenge, give generously of their time and skills to others, and express hope for their futures. This is achieved through a range of programmes and activities that have been specifically designed to meet the unique needs of our College community.

Student Mentoring Programme

The Student Mentoring Programme (SMP) is a school-based wellbeing programme providing one-on-one guidance and support to students who benefit from individual time with a mentor.

SMP creates the opportunity to embrace and support students’ diverse academic and personal needs building upon strengths, interests and learning abilities. SMP encourages positive relationships, creating a sense of wellbeing and connection within the Mercedes College community.

SMP student participation is based on five principles:

- Have an interest or talent to be extended, enriching the curriculum experience
- Need a safe and positive environment in which to be themselves
- Have English as an additional language
- Experience grief or family crisis
- Benefit from a one-on-one connection with a caring mentor

Growth and Personal Skills

Growth and Personal Skills (GPS) is a coordinated programme of developmentally sequenced themes and activities, aimed at building students’ capacity to navigate life’s inevitable challenges. Embedded within the Middle and Senior School timetables, GPS is delivered by Home Group teachers and tutors, which reflects the importance of their significant relationships with students. Lessons draw on evidence-based

programmes and resources to develop the skills, attitudes, and values essential for flourishing.

Study Thinking Extension Programme

The Study Thinking Extension Programme (STEP) has an emphasis on self-acceptance and empowerment through good choices and is dedicated to wellbeing at Years 9 and 10. STEP provides no grades, reports or assessment. There is no book work and very limited use of computers. The student and the world are examined from a number of perspectives, such as the need for self-esteem, confidence, positive relationships, reflection, meaning, resilience, and community.

The journey through adolescence to adulthood is investigated through a series of contexts and experiential methodologies. STEP is a unique blend of experiential learning involving interpersonal skills, etiquette, investigative scenarios, team building exercises, field trips, mindfulness sessions, maintaining environmental sites, and an optional Life Camp in Victoria. Students can also choose to undertake a nine-day immersion trek to the Mimili community in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankuntjatjara Lands of South Australia.

Being Boys

The Being Boys programme assists Year 9 boys manage their journey into manhood in a positive and respectful way. With a strong focus on health and social education, the nine week programme includes weekly workshops in which boys explore important topics, communicating together to develop appropriate life skills.

Break Free

The Break Free programme for Year 9 girls is a 10 week programme that allows students to question stereotypes, reflect on relationships and discuss common issues, such as bullying, media and social influences. It provides an opportunity for the girls to switch off and break free from the pressures of social media through conscious and intelligent discussions.





International Focus

We maintain a strong commitment to fostering international understanding and awareness of others.

The College was the first Australian school to become an associate member of the European Council of International Schools.

International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate is a global learning community of inquiring students, passionate educators and engaged parents. More than 4000 schools worldwide offer the IB, which provides an international curriculum universally recognised throughout the world by schools and universities. IB World School students develop strong academic, social and emotional characteristics and aim to do more than other curricula by developing inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who are motivated to succeed.

International Students

International students have been studying at Mercedes College since 1969. Each year long term international students enrol to complete their secondary education at Mercedes College, while short term students enrol for the opportunity to experience an international school.

The World Culture Club is an opportunity for local and overseas students to gather informally to foster international understanding, friendships and an increasing awareness of the world's cultural diversity. Our students learn much from these visitors who make a valuable contribution to the cultural and social fabric of the school. In addition to students enrolled in the International Student Programme, Mercedes College welcomes students and their families who have recently moved to Australia and wish to continue or begin an IB education.

Visual and Performing Arts

Mercedes College is committed to providing a rich arts experience.

Students from Reception to Year 10 engage with performing and visual arts as part of the curriculum. In the Senior years, students can select from a number of arts subjects within the IB Diploma and SACE.

The visual and performing arts calendar outlines the impressive range of performances and exhibitions that occur throughout the year. Highlights include dramatic performances, music recitals, concerts, musicals and exhibitions.

From Reception onwards musical talent is nurtured in the classroom. Students desiring to deepen their knowledge of a musical instrument can develop their skills through private tuition by specialised staff. Students may also become involved in bands, ensembles, choirs and instrumental groups, which perform on many occasions both inside and outside the school.



Extra Curricular

The extra-curricular activities offered at Mercedes College complement our student academic programme, providing a balanced education for each student.

Sports at Mercedes

Mercedes College has a strong sporting tradition and is recognised as a leading school in athletics, cross country and various team sports. The College aims to achieve excellence through participation, the provision of high quality coaching and active involvement in inter-school competitions. The Mercedes sporting programme encourages participation at all levels, which leads to personal achievement, social interaction and an opportunity to explore new skills and improve performances.

Extra-curricular sports available at Mercedes include basketball, chess, cricket, cross country, football, hockey, netball, soccer, softball, swimming, table tennis, tennis, touch football, track and field athletics, volleyball and water polo.

In addition to these, the sporting programme caters for students with other interests outside of the College, including rugby, golf, diving, surfing and mountain bike competitions.

Physical Education

An enjoyment of sporting and physical activities is important in the education of young people to acquire skills, maintain

a healthy fitness level and create an understanding of teamwork, commitment, and sporting camaraderie.

The curriculum provides a comprehensive programme covering a wide range of individual and team activities, and introduces students to a varied curriculum that supports lifelong learning and participation.

Camps and Outdoor Education

Students in Years 6 to 10 are engaged in a series of camping experiences. This is designed to develop an appreciation for, and understanding of, our environment. It also introduces camping skills and provides opportunities to develop personal skills of independence, self-reliance, co-operation, and teamwork.

Debating

Debating at Mercedes College encourages students to research topics, gain knowledge of current affairs, use logic to develop a case and consider counterarguments, and develop confidence and public speaking skills. Students from Years 5 to 12 can participate in an inter-school competition.



Our Community

We pride ourselves on our strong community spirit.

School Governance

The Mercedes College Council is a body of highly skilled parents who work alongside the College Executive Leadership Team and teachers to ensure Mercedes continues to be a progressive school in Catholic education.

The College Council aims to make decisions on the current and future direction of the school. Decisions are made from a place of gratitude for the incredible opportunities the College offers, respect for the hardworking teachers, and a commitment to the core business of education.

The College Council holds an Open Council Meeting each year to provide parents with an opportunity to observe and ask questions of the Council.

Old Scholars' Association

The Mercedes Old Scholars' Association (MOSA) maintains school friendships and creates opportunities for continuing contact between former students and the school community.

Old scholars play a pivotal role in the continuing development of Mercedes by supporting the College in various programmes, including tutoring Senior School students, career mentoring Years 11 and 12 students, and volunteering for the Student Mentoring Programme, Mimili

Trek, sporting carnivals, school camps and retreats, as well as awarding an annual bursary and a Senior School scholarship.

MOSA supports and coordinates many events and continues to expand its services through a variety of old scholars sporting teams to retain current members and encourage new ones.

Parents and Friends

The Mercedes College Parents & Friends Association (MP&FA) was formed to foster solidarity between parents and the College with a schedule of activities planned each year enabling parents to build on their own networks.

The committee is comprised of an energetic and passionate group of parents from the Junior, Middle and Senior Schools who meet regularly during the year to actively support the College and raise funds to improve the educational facilities.

Mercureans

Many of our parents continue to be involved with the Mercedes community after their children have moved on from the College.

The Mercureans catch up twice a year to revive old friendships and remain an active part of the Mercedes community. They also provide support to the College by offering an annual bursary and patronage to the parents and friends and old scholars in their many fund and friend raising activities.



