MERCEDES COLLEGE

COMPASSION  LOYALTY  JUSTICE  INTEGRITY  RESPONSIBILITY  MUTUAL RESPECT
From the Principal

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.

Peter Daw
Principal
Our Mission
To provide all students with the opportunity to reach their God-given potential.

Our Vision
As a learning community guided by our Catholic identity, Mercedes College proclaims hope for the future grounded in our faith in the gospel of Jesus.

As an internationally focussed, co-educational school in the Mercy tradition, we aspire to develop global citizens, committed to living with responsibility, integrity, compassion, loyalty, mutual respect and dedicated to justice, whose passion is to make a positive difference in our world.
The Mercy Keys

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

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

Compassion
- We are aware of and respond to the needs of others
- We show by an open response to those in need, a true reflection of Christian values
- We care for all members of our Mercedes community

Loyalty
- We affirm the Mercy spirit
- We support and promote the school and all its activities
- We support each other
- We seek ways of being of service to the school community

Justice
- We make fair decisions
- We respect the rights of others
- We communicate positively and fairly

Integrity
- We admit our mistakes
- We have the courage to do what is right
- We are honest and trustworthy in our dealings with others
- We act in a way that is true to our Christian values

Responsibility
- We accept responsibility for our actions
- We complete all tasks to the best of our ability
- We are willing to take on positions of trust and leadership
- We participate generously in school life
- We demonstrate a responsible approach to our environment

Mutual Respect
- We acknowledge the presence of others with a positive greeting
- We take time to listen
- We recognise the importance and dignity of others
- We respect our own property and that of others
- We treat others as we would have them treat us
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Catholic Community

Many of our students are of faiths or denominations other than Catholic. They’re warmly welcomed and harmoniously settle into the College community.

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 religions from all over the world.

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 those in need.

The value of these programmes lies not only in these contributions, but also in the increased level of understanding, responsibility and patience they develop.
International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate (IB) offers an educational challenge that provides scope for both academic achievement and worthwhile practical activities in community service. It is a cross-cultural approach that encourages students to gain an increasing knowledge of, and respect for, the cultures of the world.

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 to offer the programme at all three levels: Primary Years, Middle Years and the Diploma Programme in Years 11 and 12.

IB students at Mercedes College are provided with a unique education. The Australian curriculum is incorporated into the IB PYP and MYP frameworks. The IB Programme structures how the content is delivered to enable students to develop the problem-solving and critical thinking skills required to be successful learners in the 21st Century. At all three levels of the programme they develop strong academic, social and emotional characteristics and will:

- Be encouraged to think independently and drive their own 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

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

SACE is a senior secondary education 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 students are awarded the SACE, qualifying them for admission to universities throughout Australia.

The SACE meets community expectations that school-leavers will have:

- Been equipped to successfully undertake further studies, training and employment
- Achieved a desired level of literacy
- Studied a broad range of subjects
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 Year 6, they continue with French and commence learning Indonesian. In Years 7-10, students must choose to continue their study of either French or Indonesian.

In Years 11 and 12, International Baccalaureate 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 and 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 physical, intellectual and emotional needs of students
- Determining and responding to the range of learning styles of students

To support the diversity of student learning, a broad range of programmes are coordinated by a Learning Support Team comprising the Director of Wellbeing, Coordinator of Inclusive Education, Director of Curriculum and Learning and Deputy Principal.

Screening assessments, diagnostic assessment reports, standardised assessment programmes and NAPLAN results are used to identify early risk factors. 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.
The Junior School prepares students in becoming active participants in a lifelong journey of learning through the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IBPYP). The essence of the PYP focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and 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.
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 7 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 places. This creates a stable environment in which to learn.

Our pastoral care focuses 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.

ignITe

The ignITe programme for students in Years 6 – 8 aims to develop confidence using innovative technology in appropriate contexts to develop creativity, ingenuity and collaboration skills.

In Years 6 and 7, students use Lego Mindstorms EV3 (robotics for beginners) and creation game Minecraft to develop collaborative skills in managing a large project.

Students are provided opportunities to develop their coding skills through the Scratch and Grok Learning platforms. We introduce students to SOLE (Self-Organising Learning Environments) to develop their creative problem-solving and research skills.

The ignITe programme complements the Australian Curriculum Information and Communication Technology Capability and Digital Technologies curriculum.
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.

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

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.
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.

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 staff as essential for ensuring a safe, supportive and thriving learning environment. The College actively works to build strong relationships, positive emotions, personal resilience and healthy lifestyles.

We work with students to ensure they have a sense of belonging, are engaged in their learning, persevere in times of difficulty, give generously of their time and skills to others and express hope for their futures.

Inclusive Education

Students with special needs, requiring additional support or extension, are a valued part of a diverse mainstream classroom. Teachers take into consideration academic ability and the curriculum is structured to suit the level of each student.

Students with complex needs are supported individually or in small groups by inclusive education staff, with suitable co-teaching models used to best accommodate them. For students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP), inclusive education staff work collaboratively with teachers and parents to ensure the appropriate level of adjustments are implemented, enabling students to participate on the same basis as their peers.

Academically gifted students in the Middle and Senior Schools are catered for with opportunities to participate in enrichment and extension activities that expose them to a greater level of challenge in their learning. Mercedes College belongs to a cluster group that provides students with high intellectual potential from Years 8-10 an opportunity to attend master classes facilitated by experts in various areas of interest.

Study Extension Programme

The Study Extension Programme (STEP) has an emphasis on self-acceptance and empowerment through good choices and is dedicated to wellbeing at Years 9 and 10. 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.

In STEP, the journey through adolescence to adulthood is investigated through a series of contexts and experiential methodologies. Students can attend an optional nine-day trek to the Pitjantjatjara Mimili community and Mutitjulu in far northwest South Australia. This enrichment of cultures has a meaningful impact on our young people and their ability to understand others and the changes currently taking place within Australia.
**Student Mentoring Programme**

The Student Mentoring Programme (SMP) provides one-to-one guidance and support to students who benefit from individual time with a mentor in a caring and supportive environment. It creates the opportunity to embrace and encourage a student’s diverse academic and personal qualities and assists to build upon their strengths, interests and learning abilities.

**Break Free**

The Break Free programme for 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 break free from the pressures of social media through conscious and intelligent discussions and by tangibly switching them off.

The small group activities promote self and peer-awareness, personal strengths and weaknesses, provide interesting and unique experiences and deconstruct media stereotypes. All students involved participate in a range of activities, including self-defence, surfing, paintball and yoga, concluded by a camp at Aldinga Beach.

**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.

It is concluded by a two-night camp at McLaren Flat where students participate in a range of activities, including group dynamics and problem-solving challenges, team building activities, solitude and a shared reflection around a campfire.
International Focus

Mercedes College has always maintained 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.
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
- Cricket
- Football
- Netball
- Softball
- Table Tennis
- Touch Football
- Athletics
- Water Polo
- Chess
- Cross Country
- Hockey
- Soccer
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Track and Field
- Volleyball
- Skill Development

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.

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 counter arguments, and develop confidence and public speaking skills.

Students from Years 5 to 12 can participate in an inter-school competition. Each increasing level of challenge requires new skills to succeed. By their Senior years, debaters prepare secret topic debates under time constraints.
Our Community

School Governance
The Mercedes College Council is a body of highly skilled parents who work alongside the College 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 the 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 in the Senior School, career mentoring Year 11 and 12 students, volunteering for the Mimili Trek, sporting carnivals, school camps and retreats, as well as awarding an annual bursary.

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.
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.

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.