



Mary
**HELP OF
CHRISTIANS**
CATHOLIC COLLEGE — SHAW

COLLEGE HANDBOOK 2026

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Principal's Welcome

Welcome to Mary Help of Christians Catholic College.

We provide a welcoming and inclusive learning environment that is focused on **learning, service** and **compassion**. As a Catholic school, we embrace the teachings of Jesus Christ and strive to integrate them into our daily lives. We are called to live Christ's love in the world. Our mission is to foster a holistically balanced education where learners can thrive, discover and nurture their sense of purpose, and explore and ponder the possibilities in their lives ahead. We believe that a strong spiritual foundation will guide our students to become compassionate, moral and contributing citizens.



Mary Help of Christians Catholic College is Townsville Catholic Education's 30th school and opened in 2025, with five classes of Year 7 students. We are the first stand-alone coeducational Catholic secondary school in Townsville, providing another Catholic secondary schooling option for our city's rapidly growing northwest corridor. Each year, another year level will join us to eventually become what is master planned to be a six-stream College of over 850 students.

All Mary Help of Christians Catholic College staff members are committed to encouraging and supporting learners to achieve high academic standards and personal excellence so that each individual develops into an active and informed citizen. We are dedicated to creating a culture that encourages, supports and develops our students through these transition years while building their sense of connectedness and responsibility within the community. Our learning and pastoral program enables teachers and support staff to work with students to set clear goals and plan and implement strategies that help them reach their potential and understand that striving daily to do their utmost is essential to success.

We work in partnership with you to support your children on their learning journey with us, and as such, we always welcome and value your feedback.

Thank you for choosing to be a part of the Mary's community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mardi Grubba".

Mardi Grubba
Principal

About Us

Our Mission

“Inspired by Jesus, with Mary as our model of faith, we are called to experience the fullness of life through learning, service and compassion.”

Our Motto

Called to Learning, Service and Compassion.

Our Catholic Identity: The Mary Help of Christians Story

Mary Help of Christians is one of the numerous titles by which Catholics have come to know and love Mary, the mother of Jesus. The title refers to the aid Mary gives as the great intercessor—one who prays with and for us to God.

The Mary story underpins the Catholic identity and spirituality of our College, which is informally known as **Mary's**. At Mary Help of Christians Catholic College, we live in the spirit of Mary and are open to God's calling.

Pope Pius VII established the feast in honour of Our Lady Help of Christians in 1815. After being imprisoned by Napoleon Bonaparte, he established the feast in thanksgiving for his release.

At the time, Australia—recently colonised by Europeans—had no Catholic priests and, therefore, no Mass available. The faithful recited the Rosary to sustain their Catholic community. In 1844, Australia became the first country in the world to be granted Mary Help of Christians as its **Patron Saint**, and we celebrate **Mary Help of Christians Feast Day** on 24 May each year.

Mary Help of Christians is also the **Patron Saint of the Townsville Diocese**.

Our Logo

Blue is the colour of Mary.

Mary is depicted holding the infant Jesus. Both Jesus and Mary have their arms outstretched to symbolise the grace and mercy offered. The Southern Cross on Mary's cloak acknowledges the cross as the universal symbol of Christianity and Mary's role as Patron Saint of Australia. Each star in the Southern Cross is in the shape of the flower of the broad-leaved tea tree, found in the local area and significant to the Wulguruwaba - the traditional custodians of the land on which our college is built.



The Mary's Way

The Mary's Way is the foundation of our college culture and the touchstone for every aspect of life at Mary Help of Christians Catholic College. It shapes how we teach, how we learn, and how we live together as a community.



The Mary's Way is more than a values statement — it is our daily practice. It informs how we design curriculum, shape relationships, and support each learner's growth. In classrooms, it means high expectations and purposeful learning. In our pastoral care, it means restoring relationships and walking with students through challenges. In service and outreach, it calls us to look beyond ourselves to the needs of others.

All members of our community — students, staff and families — are invited to embody and live The Mary's Way. Together, we strive to form young people who think deeply, act justly, serve selflessly, and live with compassion.

Our Parish

Our college is situated within the **Ministerial Region of the Good Shepherd** parish. All students and families are invited to join the parish and participate in parish life.

The parish has two community centres - the Ryan Community Centre (Morindo Drive, Kirwan) and the Good Shepherd Community Centre (Allambie Lane, Rasmussen). Daily mass times are available at <https://www.tsv.catholic.org.au/ministerial-region-of-the-good-shepherd-kirwan/>. Alternatively, you can contact the parish office via goodshepkirwan@tsv.catholic.org.au.

Our parish offers an annual sacramental program with the support of the four parish schools. This program will be open to students from Mary Help of Christians Catholic College. Interested families are encouraged to contact the parish or the Assistant Principal – Catholic Identity, Mission and Wellbeing for further information.

Our Contact Details

Telephone: (07) 4427 1000

Email: enquiries@mhoc.catholic.edu.au

Address: 1 Bishop Putney Avenue, Shaw QLD 4814

Our Office Hours

Monday to Friday - 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Compass Parent Portal

Compass is a school management program that allows parents and carers to access up-to-date and meaningful information about your school and your child's progress. Compass includes many different features, including the ability to:

- View the school's Compass news feed
- Receive messages from the school
- View your child's timetable and the school calendar
- View Learning Tasks
- Provide consent to attend events and excursions
- Book parent-teacher-student conferences
- Add Attendance Notes
- View academic reports

Compass is accessible on any modern web browser (Edge, Firefox, Chrome, Safari) or by using the Compass iOS or Android apps.

To access the parent portal via your web browser, navigate to: <https://mhoc-qld.compass.education/>

You can download the Compass School Manager App via the **iOS App Store** or the **Google Play Store**. Make sure you install the correct Compass App - search for "**Compass School Manager**" published by **JDLF International**.

For assistance with logging in to Compass, please contact the college office.



Uniform and Personal Presentation

General College Uniform Rules

- Mary Help of Christians Catholic College has two uniforms: a formal uniform and a sports uniform. **All students wear their formal uniform every Friday** and are welcome to wear their formal uniform on other days when they do not have PE. Students should wear their sports uniform on days when they have practical PE lessons.
- Full, correct uniform is to be worn each day. If a student is unable to wear the complete and correct uniform at any time, they must have a note from their parent or caregiver. This can be written in the student's diary or sent via email to the Pastoral Leader.
- Mary Help of Christians Catholic College uniforms may not be modified after purchase; i.e., skirts or shorts may not be rolled up, and the hems of skirts and culottes may not be taken up.
- Undergarments must not be visible under a blouse or shirt, i.e. students should wear skin-tone or white undergarments. This includes compression garments worn for sport.
- The Mary Help of Christians Catholic College school bag is the only school bag to be used.

Hair and Grooming

- Hair must be kept in a colour that looks natural on the student, well-groomed, and off the face at all times. Fringes should not interfere with eyesight. Long hair must be tied back and kept up off the collar. Hair ties/bands/clips are to be in college colours. A range of hair accessories in college-approved colours, made by Pritti Design, is available from [The School Locker](#) (Domain Central, Duckworth Street, Garbutt).
- Hair should be kept clean and washed regularly.
- Hairstyles may employ nothing less than a number 2 blade/comb.
- No extreme hairstyles are permitted, including – but not limited to – burst fades, tracks, cornrows, dreadlocks, rats tails, horseys, undercuts or mullets.
- Students who present to school with unacceptable hairstyles or colours may be required to correct any issues before they are permitted to attend classes (e.g. get haircut fixed or dyed back to a natural colour).
- Students must be clean-shaven.
- The college will respectfully support students who have bonafide cultural or religious reasons for not shaving or for having a particular hairstyle. Families should discuss the matter with their student's Pastoral Leader early to avoid unnecessary conflict.

- No makeup is to be worn to school. Students wearing visible makeup will be asked to remove it and will be provided with disposable make-up wipes to do so.
- Clear nail polish or French nail polish may be worn. No coloured nail polish.
- Fake tans, acrylic nails, and false eyelashes are not permitted.
- Body art/tattoos, including temporary and henna-style tattoos, are not to be visible. Students with tattoos not covered by the uniform may use a skin-coloured sleeve to cover the design.

Jewellery

- **Necklaces** 1 x simple metal chain with a religious medal or cross only 
- **Bracelets/ wristbands** None permitted
- **Rings** None permitted
- **Earrings** 1 x pair of plain gold or silver studs or sleepers in the ear lobes only
Studs: no more than 4mm in diameter
Sleepers: no more than 15mm outer diameter; no more than 1mm thickness
No gemstones or pearls
No large hoops or shapes
- **Other piercings** None permitted.
No plastic place holders or tape to cover piercings.

Earrings

Students may wear the following options:



Gold or silver sleeper



Gold or silver stud

Wrist Watches

- Wrist watches are permitted; expensive smart watches are discouraged.
- Students will be asked to place their smart watch in their locker if they are using them inappropriately.
- Students who use their smart watches as a personal communication device will receive a Tier 2 Orange Behaviour Detention (After School).

Hats and Headwear

- The correct hat must be worn. This means that formal hats must be worn only with the formal uniform, and sports hats must be worn only with the sports uniform.
- Hats must be worn to and from school and at all times when outdoors at school
- Ripped, torn, or tattered hats need to be replaced. Names must be clearly but inconspicuously labelled on the hat, and it must remain graffiti-free at all times.
- For sun safety reasons, a 'no hat, no play' rule is in place. Students who forget their hats will be asked to go to the library or Vocatus Centre (eating area) at lunchtime. Loan hats may be borrowed from the college office **once per term**. If a student continuously forgets their hat, a school-based consequence will be issued at the discretion of the Pastoral Leader.
- In respect to those of other faiths, a navy head covering may be worn in lieu of college hats.



Formal Uniform

The Mary Help of Christians Catholic College formal uniform has been designed with inclusivity and flexibility in mind. All items are available for purchase from [The School Locker](#) (Domain Central, Duckworth Street, Garbutt).

Formal Tops

Students may wear the following options:



Formal Blouse



Formal Shirt

Formal Bottoms

Students may wear the following options:



Formal Shorts



Formal A-Line Culottes



Formal A-Line Skirt

Formal Hat (all students)



Formal grey college socks (all students)



Formal Shoes - Polishable black lace-up leather shoes (all students)



Example above - any brand is OK. **Black joggers are not acceptable for formal uniform.**

Sports Uniform

The Mary Help of Christians Catholic College sports uniform has been designed with inclusivity and wearability in mind. All items are available for purchase from [The School Locker](#) (Domain Central, Duckworth Street, Garbutt).

Sports Tops

Students may wear the following options:



Short Sleeve Sports Shirt



Long Sleeve Sports Shirt

Sports Shorts (all students)



Reversible Bucket Hat - House Colour (all students)



Plain white socks - must cover the ball of the ankle



No visible logos, no anklet socks or invisible socks



Sports shoes (all students)

Sports shoes (joggers) must be suitable for running and participating in sports. Any colour is OK. However, high-tops (including Basketball shoes), skate shoes, canvas sandshoes, Converse shoes, deck shoes, Vans, mid-tops, Dunks, etc., are NOT suitable as part of the uniform.



Student Life

Daily Routine - Arrival and Morning Supervision

- Students may arrive at school **from 7:45 a.m.** From this time onwards, staff members are on duty to monitor student safety.
- Students arriving **between 7:45 a.m. and 8:10 a.m.** must sit outside the Vocatus Centre in view of the Administration Building. In accordance with college policy, mobile phones may not be accessed or used by students on campus.
- **From 8:10 a.m. onwards**, students may access their lockers, the College Library, and the Vocatus Centre (Hall). The oval is out of bounds before school unless students are participating in a school-based activity.

Daily Routine - Bell Schedule

Time	Event	Duration
8:35 am	Readiness bell - proceed to class	
8:40 am	Pastoral Care Group	20 minutes
9:00 am	Period 1	60 minutes
10:00 am	Period 2	60 minutes
11:00 am	Lunch	35 minutes
11:35 am	Readiness bell - proceed to class	
11:40 am	Period 3	60 minutes
12:40 pm	Period 4	60 minutes
1:40 pm	Afternoon Recess	25 minutes
2:05 pm	Readiness bell - proceed to class	
2:10 pm	Period 5	60 minutes
3:10 pm	Students dismissed	

Daily Routine - Departure and Afternoon Supervision

- **Staff are on duty at the front of the college after school until 3:30 p.m.** Please make arrangements for your child to be collected from school before 3:30 p.m. Students remaining on campus after 3:30 p.m. must wait quietly outside the Administration Building.

Attendance and Absences

If your child will be absent from school for the day, please notify the College as early as possible and by 9:00 a.m. at the latest.

Ways you can let the college know:

1. Via the **Compass Parent Portal** or **Compass App**. The Compass Parent Portal can be accessed via <https://mhoc-qld.compass.education/>, and the Compass App can be downloaded from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store. Please refer to the *Compass Parent Portal* section for more information about accessing Compass.
2. Via the dedicated **Student Absence Line: call (07) 4427 1000** and leave a message clearly stating:
 - a. your full name
 - b. the student's full name and year level
 - c. the day and date they will be absent
 - d. the reason for the absence

Example: *Hello, this is Jenny Smith, parent of James Smith in Year 7. James will be absent from school today, Monday 7th March 2024, due to illness. Thank you.*

If the college has not been notified of a reason for the student's absence by 9:00am, the parents/carers listed in the student's Compass profile will receive an automatic SMS notification that their child is absent from school.

Late arrivals

Students arriving at school **after 8:40 a.m.** must sign in using the **Compass Kiosk** in the college office before class. The Compass Kiosk will print a late arrival slip, which must be presented to the teacher on arrival at class.

Early Departures

Students are not permitted to leave the college grounds during the school day unless:

1. they are accompanied by a teacher on a college excursion; or
2. they have the authorisation of their parent/carer.

Parents/carers who need to collect their child during the school day for an appointment or other reason will be required to meet their child at the college office to ensure that their child is signed out from school correctly.

Extended absence during the school term

If your child will be absent from school for an extended period during a school term, it is important that you make contact with their Pastoral Leader as soon as you are aware of the absence. The Pastoral Leader will contact you to discuss what support can be put in place to minimise disruption to your child's education.

Timetables

Our college runs a two-week rotating timetable (Week A and Week B). This means students will study a different sequence of lessons in Week B than in Week A. Having a two-week rotating timetable enables us to ensure that each learning area is allocated the correct number of hours per year in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Week of Term	Week on Timetable
Week 1	Week A
Week 2	Week B
Week 3	Week A
Week 4	Week B
etc.	etc.

Each student receives a printed copy of their timetable at the commencement of each Term. Students should keep these in their student diary. Parents and students can also view timetables at any time in [Compass School Manager](#)

The main elements of a secondary timetable are:

- Days (top row)
- Period Numbers (left-hand column)
- Class Codes and Teacher Codes
- Rooms

Student code
SKYWALKER, LUKE [LSKYW34] 07R *Pastoral Care Group*

	MonA	TueA	WedA	ThuA	FriA
AM1					
AM2					
PCG	07PCG.R	A1	07PCG.R	A1	07PCG.R
1	07MAT.1	ALLP B4	07REL.1	ALLP B4	07DTE.1
2	07JAP.1	ALLP B4	07MUS.1	ALLP B4	07MAT.1
L1	<i>Subject code</i> 07(Year 7) MAT(Mathematics)			Teacher Code	Room
3	07ENG.1	ALLP B4	07HPE.1	ALLP B4	07ENG.1
4	07HIS.1	ALLP B4	07MAT.1	ALLP B4	07HPE.1
AT					
5	07SCL.1	ALLP B4	07DTE.1	ALLP B4	07JAP.1
PM					

These are before school times, mainly used for teacher duties and extension classes in Year 11/12

This is an after school time, mainly used for teacher duties and extension classes in Year 11/12

Period Number
Lunch (split for teacher duties)
Afternoon Break

Lunch and Afternoon Recess

The college operates on a five-lesson day. Each lesson is one hour in duration. There are two breaks throughout the day.

Lunch (11:00 a.m. to 11:35 a.m.)

This is the main break for the day. During the first 10 minutes of the break, students sit and eat their own lunch together with others, or collect their pre-ordered lunch from the canteen (optional).

For the remaining 20 minutes of the lunch break, students may continue to sit with friends and eat their lunch, play in the *Vocatus Centre* or on the oval, or visit the College Library.

Lunch is also a time when various co-curricular activities will be conducted (e.g. Chess Club, debating meetings, sports training, music rehearsals). Students should keep their eye on Morning Notices for information about what activities are on offer. At the end of this break, a warning bell will ring indicating that Period 3 begins in five minutes.

Afternoon Recess (1:40 p.m to 2:05 p.m)

The afternoon recess is a chance for students to stretch their legs, get some fresh air and engage with their friends. Students may eat their own food, visit the canteen, play in the *Vocatus Centre* or on the oval, or visit the College Library. At the end of this recess, a warning bell will ring, indicating that Period 5 begins in five minutes.

Canteen

Our college canteen operates five days per week and provides a variety of healthy lunch options for students and staff.

The canteen uses Flexischools to manage online ordering and payments.

Lunch items (11:00am - 11:35am) should be pre-ordered via Flexischools each day prior to 8:30 a.m. A limited range of food items may be available to students who have not ordered.

For **Afternoon Recess (1:40pm - 2:10pm)**, students may purchase snacks and drinks directly from the canteen counter. Students are welcome to make in-store purchases using Compass Card or a physical debit/credit card. *Important: The use of Apple Pay and Google Pay services by students to make payments at the canteen during the school day is not permitted under the college's Connected Devices Policy.*



Visit <https://flexischools.com.au/> to download the Flexischools app to your device.

Lockers

Each student is provided with a locker and a combination lock. The school retains a master key to assist students with opening their lockers if they experience difficulty.

Students store their learning materials, school bags, lunch, mobile phones and other connected devices in their lockers. Students may access their lockers at the following times:

- Before school (from 8:10am)
- At the beginning and end of each break
- After school (until 3:30pm)

Students are expected to keep their lockers tidy and regularly clean out any unneeded items. They should not leave food or food scraps in their lockers overnight. Pastoral Care Teachers, Pastoral Leaders, and members of the Leadership Team may request that students show them the contents of their lockers to ensure that they are maintained appropriately and being used safely.

Library

The library provides a welcoming and engaging space for students to study, read and collaborate. Designed to meet the needs of 21st Century learners, the library features:

- Spaces for different modes of study, both individual and collaborative, including a computer classroom and quiet reading lounge
- Flexible furniture to support a variety of learning modes
- An expertly curated collection of both print and electronic resources designed to support the academic and leisure needs of students
- Professional staff to support the use of the Library, the equipment and resources

RESOURCES

The Library provides access to a variety of information resources:

- Print - books, newspapers and magazines
- Online - databases, encyclopaedias, educational video, eBooks, digital subscriptions, software
- Equipment - laptops, scanners, printers, photocopiers, audio-visual equipment, cameras, iPads
- Textbooks - individual and class sets (print and online)

OPENING HOURS

The library is open from **Monday to Friday between 8:10am and 3:20pm**. During school hours, the library is used by staff and students for classes and related activities. It is also open before school, during break times and after school, for borrowing, reading, study, games and clubs.

While using the library, students must observe a few rules to ensure the space is pleasant for all:

- Choose appropriate areas for their activities, e.g., work silently in quiet areas and conduct group work in collaboration spaces.
- Respect the library by keeping it tidy and using it appropriately .
- Leave food and drinks outside.
- Be responsible for books and other resources that are borrowed.

Morning Notices

The Morning Notices share a range of important messages and reminders with students each day. These notices are read as part of the morning Pastoral Care Group routine and are available for students to view at any time in their Compass Portal.

Student Diary

At the commencement of the school year, all students are issued with a Mary Help of Christians Catholic College student diary.

The student diary is a vital organisation tool for all students. Students will use their diaries to record homework tasks, important school events, and assessment due dates.

Pastoral Care Teachers will support students in utilising their diaries effectively throughout the year. Parents are asked to sign their child's diary in the allocated space weekly. This helps you stay informed about your child's level of homework, organisation, and assessment due dates.

Students who lose, deface or damage their diary (not including fair wear and tear) must purchase a replacement diary from the college office.



Communication

Effective communication between the school and home is essential to ensuring that your child's school experience at Mary Help of Christians Catholic College is as positive and rewarding as possible.

The following information channels are essential, and we ask that you engage with them regularly.

1. **College Newsletter:** published three times per term via Schoolzine. A link is shared with all families via the Compass News Feed.
2. **Compass News Feed:** The Compass News Feed is a great source of information about important announcements, changes to routine, and upcoming events. Parents/Caregivers may elect to receive push notifications via the Compass App.
3. **Weekly What's On:** published each week on social media (Facebook / Instagram) and on the Compass News Feed.
4. **Pastoral Update:** Pastoral Leaders publish regular updates via the Compass News Feed. Pastoral Updates contains a snapshot of reminders and important messages for the Year Level.

You may need to contact us from time to time with any questions or concerns you have about your child's experience at Mary Help of Christians Catholic College.

- **For personal, social and wellbeing enquiries**

Pastoral Care Group teacher → Pastoral Leader → Assistant Principal Catholic Identity, Mission and Wellbeing

- **For academic and learning inquiries**

Classroom teacher → Integrated Learning Design & Delivery Leader → Deputy Principal

- **For Religious Education inquiries**

Classroom teacher → Assistant Principal Catholic Identity, Mission and Wellbeing

- **For Co-curricular activity inquiries**

Activity supervisor/teacher → Co-curricular Design and Delivery Leader

Right to Disconnect

In accordance with federal legislation, a Right to Disconnect Policy will be formulated to guide communication practices outside ordinary school hours. This policy will be finalised in consultation with staff in Term 1 of 2025.

Student Mobile Phones and Connected Devices

Mary Help of Christians Catholic College maintains a **phone-free learning environment**. This means that students are not permitted to access their mobile phones or other connected devices during school hours, including before school and at lunch and break times.

All students must place their mobile phones in their lockers upon arrival. Mobile phones must remain in lockers for the duration of the school day. Students are not permitted to access their phones to call parents or carers during the school day. Students who are ill should notify their classroom teacher and report to the office, and a staff member will contact parents or carers as required.

Please contact the college office if you need to get a message to your child during the school day. Our office staff will be happy to assist.

The Student Connected Devices policy can be found on the college website:

www.mhoc.catholic.edu.au

College-Issued Chromebooks

Each student is issued with a **school-managed Chromebook** as part of their enrolment. Chromebooks are essential learning tools used in all subject areas for research, collaboration, and coursework.

- Students are responsible for the care and safe use of their Chromebook.
- Devices must be charged at home each night and brought to school daily.
- Chromebooks may be taken home for homework, assignments, and revision.
- Access is included in school fees, but families are responsible for repair costs beyond fair wear and tear.

Devices are centrally managed for security, filtering, and software updates.

Acceptable Use of Technology

Students at the College have access to a wide range of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) resources for learning. Students are accountable for the appropriate use of these technologies. The Acceptable Use of Technology policy can be found on the college website: www.mhoc.catholic.edu.au

Health and Medication

Student Illness

In general, students who are sick should not attend school. Sick children at school can contribute to the spread of infectious illness, and they are often unable to concentrate in lessons.

Medication

Medical authorisation is required for a student to have medications administered at school or during school-related activities. All medications you provide for the school to administer to your child must be prescribed by a qualified health professional who is authorised to prescribe medications under the *Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2021 (Qld)* e.g. doctor, dentist, optometrist, nurse practitioner. Under this regulation, a pharmacist is not a prescribing health practitioner.

Type of medication		Description	Examples	Required Forms
Routine	Short term	Required over a short period of time for the treatment of an acute condition, e.g. infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Antibiotics• Ointments• Eye drops• Ear drops	Consent to Administer Medication at School Form - Part A
	Long term	Required over a long period of time for the ongoing management of a particular condition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ritalin• Enzyme tablets• insulin• anti-seizure medication	Consent to Administer Medication at School Form - Part A
As needed	Non-emergency response	Required as a non-emergency response to certain symptoms (e.g. rash, irritated eyes) in accordance with a medication order.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• antihistamines• topical creams for allergies	Consent to Administer Medication at School Form - Part A <u>and</u> Part B
	Emergency response	Required as an emergency response for medical conditions (e.g. epilepsy, asthma, anaphylaxis) in accordance with a medication order/health plan/written instruction from a prescribing medical practitioner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• midazolam• adrenaline auto-injector• ventolin inhaler• Glucagon pen	Consent to Administer Medication at School Form - Part A <u>and</u> Part B Health Plan (e.g. Asthma/Anaphylaxis)

For all prescribed medications to be administered to a student during school hours and/or during school-related events, provide the school with:

- a completed **Consent to Administer Medication at School Form** available from the school.
- the medication (in its original container, with intact packaging) with a completed current pharmacy label (that indicates that it is prescribed medication)

For further information and assistance, please contact the college office on (07) 4427 1000.

Camps and Excursions

Camps and excursions are developed as part of our educational and personal development program. They provide opportunities for students to learn experientially and to strengthen their understanding of their own capabilities, skills and attributes. Activities are carefully tailored to ensure that camps and excursions are accessible to all students in our community.

These activities are mandatory components of our curriculum and it is expected that all students attend, except in emergent circumstances.

Bus Routes

Bus routes are provided by Kinetic. Routes for 2026 have not yet been finalised. For further information, please contact enquiries@mhoc.catholic.edu.au.

Lost property

Parents, caregivers, and students are requested to ensure that all clothing and equipment is clearly labelled with full names. If items are lost or misplaced around the school grounds, they can be easily returned to their owners if they have been clearly named.

A lost property basket will be maintained at the college office. Students are encouraged to check this basket if they have lost an item. Unnamed, uncollected items will be disposed of periodically via charity donation or other suitable means.

Learning and Thinking

Our approach

We believe that every student can learn and achieve at high levels when teaching is intentional, evidence-informed and responsive. Our approach is built on three key pillars:

1. **Clarity:** Students learn best when learning goals are explicit, success criteria are transparent, and feedback is timely and constructive.
2. **Challenge:** Rigorous, knowledge-rich curriculum builds deep understanding and critical thinking. We teach for transfer, helping students apply learning in new and complex contexts.
3. **Care:** Relationships underpin learning. We know our students and differentiate teaching to meet their diverse needs, providing the support and stretch they require to thrive.

Our teachers use a shared instructional model grounded in the **Science of Learning**, ensuring that teaching aligns with how students think, process, and remember information. Lessons are structured to provide clarity about learning goals, explicit teaching of knowledge and skills, frequent opportunities for practice and retrieval, and regular feedback to guide improvement. We differentiate instruction to ensure that all students – whether they require additional support, extension, or enrichment – can access success. This shared approach guides every classroom, ensuring that learning at Mary's is purposeful, engaging and transformative.

Learning is not confined to the classroom. Through integrated projects, co-curricular activities, service initiatives, and partnerships with community and industry, students apply their knowledge to real-world contexts and develop the confidence to make meaningful contributions beyond school.

Australian Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum, with its eight learning areas, provides a modern curriculum for every student in Australia. Included in the content of learning areas are seven general capabilities intended to help prepare young Australians to learn, live and work in the 21st century. There are also three cross-curriculum priorities that are also a focus across the learning areas.

In addition to the Australian Curriculum, all students in Catholic schools undertake a course in Religious Education. In this course, they explore ways in which communities of believers, past and present, express their understanding of God, as well as consider and examine and the role of spirituality in their own lives.

Full details of all of our curriculum can be accessed via the relevant Year Level Curriculum Handbook, available on the college website: <https://www.mhoc.catholic.edu.au/>

Literacy Acceleration Program

Reading fluency is the gateway to success across every learning area. As students progress through secondary school, texts become longer, more complex, and discipline-specific. To ensure that all students are equipped to meet these demands, Mary Help of Christians Catholic College implements a targeted **Literacy Acceleration Program (LAP)** in Years 7 and 8.

Program Structure

- **Year 7:** All students participate in the program during both Semesters 1 and 2. Classes are purposefully grouped to provide targeted intervention and support where needed.
- **Year 8:** Students who do not meet the reading benchmark for the end of Year 7 continue in the program. Students who have achieved benchmark reading levels may select an elective in either *Japanese* or *Integrated Learning*.

Purpose and Focus

The Literacy Acceleration Program builds the foundational skills necessary for confident and capable reading. Lessons focus on four core pillars:

1. **Fluency:** Developing automaticity through repeated reading and oral fluency practice.
2. **Vocabulary:** Expanding students' language knowledge to support comprehension and writing.
3. **Background Knowledge:** Building schema to deepen understanding of increasingly complex texts.
4. **Comprehension:** Teaching explicit strategies to extract, interpret, and evaluate meaning.

Program Design

Students engage with a carefully sequenced progression of text types, including historical recounts, persuasive arguments, cultural stories, and scientific explanations. Each unit integrates vocabulary, morphology, etymology, and comprehension skills with writing tasks that reinforce understanding. Lessons are designed to be highly structured, explicit, and responsive to assessment data, ensuring that each learner makes measurable progress.

The ultimate goal of LAP is to ensure that every student reads with fluency and confidence, empowering them to access the full curriculum and succeed across all learning areas.

Academic Awards - Excellence and Effort

We believe that recognising effort and achievement encourages students to strive for excellence and reinforces the value of perseverance, curiosity, and commitment. The following academic awards are presented annually at the College Awards Ceremony.

Academic Excellence Awards (Achievement-Based)

Award	GPA Range	Typical Profile	Criteria
Gold Award	≥ 4.80	At least 8 As	Outstanding academic achievement across all subjects
Silver Award	4.50 – 4.79	Majority As with some Bs	Consistently strong performance with a majority of high grades
Bronze Award	4.20 – 4.49	Solid performance with some As	Sustained effort and commendable achievement

Awards are calculated using a Grade Point Average (GPA) based on the number of subjects undertaken. Students must complete all assessment tasks to be eligible.

Academic Effort Awards

Academic Effort Awards recognise students who demonstrate outstanding perseverance, motivation, and engagement with their learning, regardless of academic results. These awards are based on effort GPA, determined twice annually.

House Academic Shield

The House Academic Shield celebrates collective achievement. It is awarded to the House with the highest combined GPA average, reflecting the shared effort, collaboration, and academic excellence of its members.

Inclusive Practices Team

The Inclusive Practices Team supports teachers in providing a safe, supportive, and collaborative learning environment that is responsive to the needs of all students. Our goal is for all students to access and fully participate in learning alongside their peers, supported by reasonable adjustments and teaching strategies tailored to meet their individual needs as required. Through inclusive practices, we create an environment that supports and nurtures all students. These practices are embedded in all aspects of school life.

Please contact the college's **Inclusive Practices Leader** if you would like any further information about accessing support for your child.

First Nations Education

Mary Help of Christians Catholic College is deeply committed to the success of all students, including students from Australian First Nations backgrounds.

Students with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage are eligible for support from our First Nations Education Teacher and other support workers within our First Nations Education Team to meet their goals at school. The college also offers the TCE Emerging Leaders Incentive Scheme and accesses additional support and guidance when necessary from the Townsville Catholic Education First Nations Education Team.

Teachers at the college ensure that all students engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures in the context of relevant learning areas, in accordance with the Australian Curriculum cross-curricular priorities.

Students, staff, parents and the community join together to recognise National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. From time to time, students will also have access to a wide variety of external opportunities such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aspirations Program (ATSIAP), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in Marine Science Program (ATSiMS), and the National Schools Constitutional Convention.

Homework

Homework is independent learning. There is clear evidence that secondary students who complete independent learning as homework achieve better results. Professor John Hattie (2023)¹ identifies that homework has a significantly higher positive effect on student outcomes in secondary school than in primary school.

Types of independent learning activities that may be set for homework at Mary Help of Christians Catholic College:

1. **Fluency building** - provides opportunities to practise skills or retrieve the knowledge that has already been learnt in class.
2. **Application** - provides opportunities to apply skills or knowledge learnt in class to solve problems in a new situation.
3. **Spiral review** - utilises previously learnt knowledge or skills and allows students to confirm their understanding and assess their own learning.
4. **Extension** - activities that require the use of a variety of knowledge or skills and have the potential to develop new understandings.

Guidelines for the maximum amount of homework per day

Completing regular homework in secondary school is important. However, it is also important that we monitor the volume of homework that is being set. Not all subjects will set homework, and some subjects will set fluency-building activities that need to be completed over a period of time (e.g. a week) rather than being due the next day. Some students may receive differentiated or adjusted homework tasks based on individual needs.

Generally speaking, teachers work together to try to ensure that they do not set more than the following amount of homework across all subjects (combined):

Years 7 - 9: 45 - 60 minutes per day

Years 10 - 12: varies according to subject choices

Please get in touch with us if you have concerns about homework, including if:

- **Your child is spending too long on homework.** Check the school's homework guidelines for your child's year level. If your child regularly spends more time on homework than this, talk with the teacher. There might be some underlying learning difficulties that your child needs help with.
- **Your child doesn't understand the work.** If this is the case, your child might be missing concepts in class. If you let the teacher know, the teacher can fill in these learning gaps during class time.

¹ Hattie, J. (2023). *Visible learning: The sequel: A synthesis of over 2,100 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. Routledge.

Homework Program

Finding time to help young people complete their homework can sometimes be challenging for busy families. Mary Help of Christians Catholic College offers a Homework Program **two afternoons per week** to provide a supervised and suitable learning environment where students can complete set homework tasks before they go home.

- Days: Mondays and Wednesdays (from weeks 2 to 9 each term)
- Times: 3:10 pm - 4:00 pm
- Location: College Library

All students are welcome. Students who attend the program are expected to:

1. come with a plan to complete assigned homework, revision or other general study.
2. Students in Years 7 to 10 must sign in and out on arrival and departure. They must use the sign-in and sign-out process provided and remain for the whole session. Parents of students in Years 7 to 10 who wish to collect their child early from the Homework Program must do so in person at the college office or arrange for a signed note in the Student Diary to indicate early departure. Year 11 and 12 students may arrive and leave in accordance with their own personal schedules.
3. abide by all College rules, particularly with regard to mobile phone usage. Student mobile phones must not be taken out or used during Homework Program. All student mobile phones are to remain in lockers or school bags as per the College guidelines.
4. be considerate of the needs of other students. Any talking must be connected to learning, assigned homework, revision or other general study.
5. request help or guidance from teachers and school officers when needed.
6. accept help or guidance from teachers and school officers when offered.

These simple guidelines will ensure that the Homework Program is a successful and sustainable endeavour for all students, teachers and school officers.

Further information can be found on the college website: www.mhoc.catholic.edu.au

Parent-Teacher-Student Interviews

Parent-Teacher-Student interviews provide essential opportunities for meaningful dialogue about your child's academic progress, social development, and overall well-being at school. Scheduled twice-yearly, these meetings allow teachers to share insights about your child's learning journey, including their strengths, areas for growth, and specific strategies for improvement.

As parents, you can gain valuable understanding of how to support your child's learning at home, while teachers will benefit from your unique perspectives about your child's interests, challenges, and aspirations. These collaborative conversations strengthen the vital partnership between home and school, ensuring we work together effectively to support each student's success.

Parent-Teacher-Student interview dates are in the college calendar, available on the Compass portal.

Co-curricular Activities

Co-Curricular activities have many benefits and, at Mary's, we will offer a host of them to students. Participating in extracurriculars is linked to positive academic outcomes and can help provide a sense of purpose and fulfilment. They offer students the opportunity to apply skills learned in the classroom in a real-world context.

Examples of co-curricular activities:

- Instrumental Music Lessons
- College Choir
- Reader's Cup
- Teen Vinnies
- Chess Club
- After-School Homework Program
- Debating Team
- Art Club
- Interschool Secondary Block Sport
- Junior Secondary Sporting Gala Days
- eSports Club
- STEM Club
- Defence Students Group
- First Nations Group
- Lego & Coding Club
- Stewardship and Sustainability Club

Religious Education and Religious Life

Religious Education Classes

Religious Education is a compulsory and valued part of the Mary Help of Christians curriculum. All students from Year 7 to Year 12 engage with the Religion curriculum and complete assessment in this area. The curriculum is defined by Townsville Catholic Education and draws on the Brisbane Catholic Education RE curriculum. In Years 11 and 12, students may choose from a range of options within the Religious Education learning area.

Celebrations

In the tradition of the Catholic Church, the year is divided into a number of liturgical seasons, each of which is marked by key feast days and celebrations. Additionally, the college recognises a number of celebrations and commemorations that are significant to our community. We mark these days with liturgies, masses and/or community activities as appropriate to the occasion.

Participation in these celebrations is a part of our formation process and is a compulsory part of our school life.

Retreats

As a part of our spiritual and personal formation program, students participate in retreat days at key moments in their schooling life. Retreats are prayerful community experiences and are a mandatory part of our educational program. All students are required to attend.

Retreats respond to our students' needs at particular stages of their personal and interpersonal development. They may be conducted by college staff or by external agencies, and include a mix of reflective, interactive and physical activities.

House Structure

House Groups

Houses are an important part of the college's identity. Students complete many activities in their houses across year levels, including service and social justice activities, other charity and outreach activities, arts and cultural activities, and sporting carnivals.



Bakhita House (Yellow)

Saint Josephine Bakhita (1869–1947) was kidnapped and enslaved as a child in Sudan before eventually finding freedom in Italy. Despite suffering, she embraced forgiveness and placed her hope entirely in God's love. Her story is one of resilience, dignity and faith, offering a powerful example of hope in the face of adversity.



Frassati House (Green)

Saint Pier Giorgio Frassati (1901–1925) was a young man of joy, generosity and faith. Despite a privileged upbringing, he devoted himself to serving the poor, standing up against injustice, and living out Catholic Social Teaching. An avid mountaineer, he showed that faith and adventure can go hand in hand. His life reminds us that true greatness lies in love, service and courage.



Kolbe House (Red)

Saint Maximilian Kolbe (1894–1941), a Polish Franciscan friar, dedicated his life to serving others through his writings, teaching and acts of charity. During World War II, he sheltered refugees and spoke out against Nazi persecution. Imprisoned at Auschwitz, he gave his life in place of another. His courage and sacrifice stand as a testament to faith, compassion, and the power of service over self.



MacKillop House (Blue)

Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop (1842–1909) is Australia's first saint. A woman of deep faith, she dedicated her life to educating poor and rural children, founding schools across the country. Despite hardships, including excommunication, she remained steadfast in her mission. She inspires us with her courage, resilience, and belief in the power of learning.



Romero House (Purple)

Saint Óscar Romero (1917–1980), Archbishop of San Salvador, became a voice for the voiceless in a time of violence and oppression. He fearlessly defended human rights and the dignity of the poor, even knowing it would cost his life. Assassinated while celebrating Mass, he remains a beacon of justice, faith, and truth-telling in the face of fear.

Interhouse Carnivals

Our three Interhouse Carnivals - Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics - play an important role in building school spirit and fostering a sense of belonging among our students. These events provide valuable opportunities for students to challenge themselves physically, set personal goals, and experience the satisfaction of improvement through effort.

Beyond individual achievement, House Carnivals strengthen friendships as students cheer on their peers and work together toward their House's success. The carnival atmosphere, complete with House chants and colourful banners, creates lasting memories and traditions that enrich the school experience. Most importantly, these inclusive events allow every student to participate and contribute to their House's success through active participation and enthusiastic support from the sidelines.

House Cup

The **Mary Help of Christians House Cup** is awarded annually in December to the House that has accumulated the most House points throughout the school year.

Students can earn valuable House points through multiple pathways that reflect our school's commitment to excellence and character. Individual attendance rates of 95% or above earn points each term, while academic achievement is recognised through points awarded for outstanding results across all subjects.

Living out our motto of Learning, Service and Compassion, students can also gain points for receiving positive reward certificates throughout the year, or for volunteering in one of the college's social justice programs.

Attendance and full participation in House Carnivals earns automatic points for each student, with bonus points awarded for displaying outstanding House spirit.

The House Cup celebrates the collective effort of students supporting each other to be their best in all aspects of school life.



Pastoral and Wellbeing Support

Pastoral and Wellbeing Team

At Mary's, all members of staff take responsibility for students' pastoral care and wellbeing. The first point of contact for pastoral and wellbeing concerns will typically be the student's Pastoral Care Teacher. For complex matters, they may be supported by one or more of the following team members:

• Graham Joseph	- Assistant Principal - Catholic Identity, Mission and Wellbeing
• Shane Richardson	- Pastoral Leader - Year 8
• Rhylie Mathieson	- Pastoral Leader - Year 7
• Lesley Hutton	- Guidance Counsellor
• Aimee Young	- First Nations Education Teacher

Student Engagement and Wellbeing Frameworks

The structures and processes that are in place for pastoral and wellbeing support are outlined in our Student Engagement Framework and our Student Wellbeing Framework. Both of these frameworks have been developed in alignment with contemporary educational theory and share a number of commonalities:

- They take a positive approach to engagement and wellbeing, identifying the practices and behaviours that we *do* want to see and support in our schools rather than those that we *do not* want to see
- They also take a Catholic approach to engagement and wellbeing, aligning closely with our theological foundations and placing our innate dignity at the centre of our practices
- They are framed around a Multi-Tier System of Supports, which also underpins our academic support structures

Our frameworks are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they are up-to-date and reflect the needs of our community.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Mary Help of Christians Catholic College is committed to developing and maintaining a harmonious, safe and just environment in which all students feel safe to be themselves and to explore and share their inner potential. As a fundamental part of this environment, we aspire to remain free of bullying. Students and their families are encouraged to report bullying or suspected bullying behaviours via the online form on the Student Intranet.

Our college adheres to the principles of the Diocesan Education Council's *Student Bullying: Prevention and Response* policy. A copy of this policy can be found at

<https://www.tsv.catholic.edu.au/about/policies/dec-policies/>.

Guidance Counsellors

Guidance Counsellors provide counselling, student support, classroom support and assessment services. They provide a safe and confidential space for students to share their emotions and concerns, offering empathy, understanding, and guidance to help them cope with difficult experiences.

Through collaboration with the Catholic Education Office, school leadership personnel, teachers, parents and students, the following services may be available:

- Developing behaviour support strategies for students in collaboration with school staff and parents
- Liaising with staff from the Inclusive Education team to promote a multidisciplinary approach to support positive outcomes for our students
- Facilitating counselling to students with personal, social and emotional needs
- Liaising with health professionals to meet student needs which may include referral to external agencies for additional support and mental health assessment
- Facilitating and administering appropriate assessments

The college has access to a guidance counsellor for 2.5 days per week. For inquiries about guidance counsellor services, and to make bookings, students are encouraged to contact the Student Reception.

Chaplain

In our opening year, we will appoint a College Chaplain, who will play a critical role in the wellbeing of students by providing safe and positive mentoring. The chaplain will offer guidance and support to young people, providing holistic support and serving as a bridge between our faith formation and the wellbeing practices of our college. The Chaplaincy will serve the purpose of bringing faith to life through service action.

SchoolTV

Mary Help of Christians Catholic College subscribes to SchoolTV, an online platform delivering a range of content to help schools, parents and caregivers to support their children's personal, social and emotional wellbeing. The content is typically provided through videos featuring experts on a range of wellbeing matters. Over the course of the year, the college will highlight videos that are timely or significant; parents and caregivers also have year-round access to an extensive library of videos that may meet their families' needs.

Sun Safety

Mary Help of Christians Catholic College is a sun-safe school. Our local climate has consistently high levels of sunshine and a very high or extreme UV index throughout the year. For this reason, a number of measures are put in place to maximise the protection of our students:

- All students wear hats at all times when outside, including when moving between buildings, during breaks and before and after school. Students who walk to school are required to wear their hat while travelling.
- Shaded spaces are available for eating and playing. Students are encouraged to use these spaces except when activities require them to access the oval.
- Long-sleeved shirts are available as a part of the sports uniform. Families are encouraged to purchase long-sleeved shirts, especially for days with a high UV index.

- Students are encouraged to bring sunscreen and apply it before participating in outdoor activities. The college will provide sunscreen to those students who do not have their own.

Defence Support

In recognition of the challenges associated with employment in the Australian Defence Force, the college works closely with the Defence Member and Family Support Service to ensure that our students have access to the support they need to succeed in what can be a stressful and uncertain context. Defence support is overseen by the Assistant Principal – Catholic Identity, Mission and Wellbeing.

Our Community

Volunteering Opportunities

There are a variety of opportunities for parents to volunteer at the College: volunteering for classroom activities, excursions, carnivals, coaching, whole-college events, performances, or the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) events, just to name a few. Parents are encouraged to do ‘Just One Thing’ to support the College. For further information, please contact enquiries@mhoc.catholic.edu.au

College Board

The College Board is an important forum that draws its members from the parish and school community to discuss Catholic schooling and make significant “big picture” contributions to the life of our college. Members of the College Board are highly valued for the support and advice they provide to the college community and the Principal. In planning for a future of continual improvement, board members demonstrate a love for the college and a strong support of its Catholic ethos. The Board recognises and supports our long-term, multi-faceted, strategic view, and collectively, the members are prepared to contribute to the development and effectiveness of the school as a Catholic secondary college. For further information, please contact enquiries@mhoc.catholic.edu.au

Financial Matters

Tuition and Fees

School fees are issued (emailed) each term in Week 2 and are payable on Friday of Week 6 of each respective term. Statements of accounts are emailed at the start of each month. The College encourages paying fees by regular instalments. There is flexibility in determining the interval (weekly, fortnightly, or monthly) and number of payments. Please contact enquiries@mhoc.catholic.edu.au to arrange a payment plan.