

Mercy College Mackay

2022 Annual School Report



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

Mercy College, Mackay

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

Principal

Mrs Janelle Agius

Address

2 Penn St
South Mackay Qld 4741

Total enrolments

951

Year levels offered

Year 7-10

Type of School:

Co-educational

School Overview

Mercy College Mackay is a Middle School catering for Catholic students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10. We predominantly enrol boys and girls from Catholic feeder schools in the South Mackay area, extending west into the Pioneer Valley and south to Sarina and surrounding beach settlements. We offer an outstanding curriculum with both challenge and variety specifically designed to the developmental needs of early adolescents. Our belief in the educational benefits of co-curricular is evident in the extensive range of staff and community supported sports and cultural events available to our students. Current student enrolment is around 980 and it is expected to grow over the next several years. In 2023, Mercy and St Patrick's College, Mackay will combine to form one, split campus 7-12 school. In addition to an outstanding profile in a number of sports for both girls and boys, we offer a special emphasis on technology education, language, and the arts. It is the pastoral care of our staff and service-learning that make Mercy a great school for Mackay adolescents.

More information on our school can be accessed from myschool.edu.au

Curriculum Offerings

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

Mercy College Mackay is a Catholic College which follows a National & State based curriculum infused by the values of Christ. It has adopted a number of specific curriculum and structural changes designed to meet the individual learning needs of middle adolescents and allow them to respond to the needs of a changing world. We have a curriculum of cumulative semester units that builds in both challenge and support depending on the student needs. We believe middle schooling should extend a student's horizons. The Mercy College Curriculum focuses on the needs of middle secondary adolescents, and also seeks to develop skills required by industry in the Mackay region. Mercy offers a large range of stand-alone elective subjects, allowing students to explore potential pathways from a young age. The College also implements a personal leadership program, the Leader in Me, which is explored in depth in the Careers subject from 7-10. Mercy also prioritises multiple Language offerings, which is currently both French and Japanese.

Extra Curricula Activities

Our curriculum aims to incorporate many extra-curricular activities into the school unit selection. This has the added bonus of allowing students to gain credit for them and other outside activities.

Year 7 Band Project - New students to Mercy who have had no musical training will be tested for aptitude and given the opportunity to take on an instrument for the first time.

Debating and public speaking - Many students participate in local interschool debating competitions and individuals are encouraged to enter public speaking competitions including Rostrum. Art Department prepares students for the Mackay Show.

Musicals are a regular feature along with annual Music/Arts showcase evening. Mercy has a Choir, Concert Band, Dance Troupe, Rock Pop Mime group, Cheer group, Strings Ensemble, Percussion groups and Mass Band. These groups participate in the Mackay Eisteddfod and many other events.

Interact - A very active Interact club operates within the College with a Rotary representative attending school meetings. Other major clubs include St Vincent de Paul, Environment, Social, Sports, Book Clubs, Chess, Student Welfare, Infotech, Student Wellbeing and Photography.

Sport - The college is very competitive in all interschool sports, some being – Rowing, Netball, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Soccer, Hockey, Futsal, Basketball, Water Polo, AFL, Cricket, Tennis and Bowls. Within the curriculum the college also offers units including Rugby League, Cricket, Futsal, Golf, Lawn bowls, Tennis, Basketball, Netball, Archery, Swimming and Athletics.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning

Mercy College adopts a 1:1 iPad program to give students instant access to a wide range of curriculum-based apps and instant access to the Web. All subject areas use a wide range of digital resources and interactive texts to assist learning. Programs such as Education Perfect, Stile and Writers Toolbox enhance traditional learning resources. All students complete Digital Technology units as a stand alone subject, and these skills are then integrated across the curriculum.

All classes use Google Classroom to post lessons, resources, assessment tasks and is also used as a communication method between teacher and student. Absent students can use Google Classroom to keep up to date with lessons and resources, as each lesson has a Google classroom post. The Google suite of educational products creates an environment of interactivity between teacher and student and allows learning to take place both in an out of the physical classroom environment.

This year, staff have been trained in the use of Writers Toolbox, an online platform that uses AI to enhance student writing outcomes. Students have been exposed to its usage and this will be further rolled out in 2023. Also, staff use of Track One – Learning Analytics has developed their skills in data informed practice.

Social Climate

Religious Education - Apart from our formal RE program, the college places a high priority on the celebration of our Catholic faith through daily prayer and regular celebration of the Eucharist. Students have the opportunity for self-reflection during retreats. Days are set aside each year for all students to build friendships and a sense of belonging at the college. Mass celebrations occur each Semester, on a rotating roster, where one of the six Houses will participate in a Mass at St Mary's church. The students of the House lead in song and prayer steered by the AP Mission. Service learning has a renewed emphasis forging connections between our students and the community. 'Justice@Mercy' is a large group of students and staff who, on a weekly basis, take on a particular community service initiative. This ranges from 'Clean Up Australia' to making birthing kits for women in third world countries. This year has been the second year we have operated the "Brekky Van" initiative for Year 10's. This has provided an amazing experience to allow students to provide service for those less fortunate in our local community.

Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies

Our school has implemented Diocesan policies on Acceptable Use Agreements for students and staff. The school regularly communicates to parents and the school community about cyber safety issues. We also have appropriate policies in place to deal with the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices. Our school has a number of social/emotional learning programs in place to assist students in guarding against bullying at school. The school community is kept up to date about developments in this area. All Diocesan and school policies are reviewed on a regular basis.

Strategies for involving parents in their child's education

Parents and Friends Association (P&F) is active within the college and arranges both social and fund-raising activities. The 'Just One Thing' initiative was launched in 2013 and continues to encourage every parent to make at least one voluntary contribution per year. Support is also organised in the form of Tuckshop and ground improvements. Mercy P&F Bike a thon Fundraiser requires involvement from 100+ families to ensure the safety and general care of our students on their bicycle ride/walk challenge.

College Board - The College Board is of the pastoral model. Guided by a common faith and vision, Board members work with the principal, staff and parent groups to develop policies and provide support.

Parents are consistently encouraged to attend school functions such as assemblies and Masses and Parent/Teacher evenings. This reinforces the crucial partnership role of parents. In 2023, the College will be disbanding the traditional P&F structure in favour of a Parent Engagement forum, whereby parents will be invited to attend a series of information sessions focusing on various aspects of the school's function.

Reducing the school's environmental footprint

Mercy College Mackay has recently undergone a major upgrade of solar power including 250kw of panels, inverters and Tesla battery backup. This is designed to reduce our power bills to less than one fifth of present expense. All

classroom fluorescent lights have been replaced with strip LEDs to improve efficiency. Our student-led environmental committee runs many initiatives to educate and immerse students in ways to care for our local environment including bottle and can recycling and reducing soft plastics.

Characteristics of the Student Body

The Mercy College student population is highly diverse in terms of socio-economic background ranging from situations where parents are on support benefits to highly paid professionals. There is a limited ethnic diversity with a strong contribution by the Maltese community. There is also a strong indication of increasing enrolment numbers from families with South-East Asian and Indian ethnicity. The school has an educational commitment with specific curriculum initiatives to improving outcomes for Indigenous students. Initiatives at the College have steadily built up the number of Indigenous students enrolled at the school.

Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate was 83.73%

Management of non-attendance

Attendance at school is given high priority at Mercy College through the administration and Pastoral teams. Rolls are taken in every class with absences followed up on with parents. The Pastoral Care teams, including House Coordinators and Guidance Counsellors, work with family to assist students with long term absences to re-engage with school. Families of students with continuing absences and who are not engaging with school support measures will have an interview with the Principal to discuss ongoing enrollment.

Year 10 to 12 Apparent Retention Rate

The Year 10 to 12 apparent retention rate was 91.5%.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	79.00	60.00	2.00
Full-time equivalents	76.50	45.13	1.79

Qualifications of all Teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	8%
Bachelor Degree	70%
Diploma	1%
Certificate	

Major Professional Development Initiatives

A large cohort of staff undertook an intense 2 day training program in the “7 Habits”. Teaching staff extended good professional practice through a series of PDs on ‘Visible Learning’. All teaching staff received professional training

in personal/professional goal setting, behaviour management, OH&S, child protection and Google Docs. Bishop's In-service Day provided a full day's training in spirituality for all teachers followed by two 3 hour twilight in-services; one devoted to subject area knowledge, the other to spirituality & our Catholic identity. Department planning, staff meetings, House meetings were held on Pupil free days. All teaching staff have access to Professional Development funds. A focus on collaboration with St Patrick's to upskill Mercy Staff in the new senior curriculum as a precursor to the combining of the two Colleges was a feature of the pupil free days. The current phase of the Visible Learning professional development program with Corwin this year has been Effective Feedback driving improvement. The College is using Educator Impact to guide professional reflection, coaching and goal setting, which has been widely embraced by staff. Another focus has been to align a whole school approach to writing through the tool – Writers Toolbox. All staff have undergone training in this, as well as developing proficiency in the use of Track One to enhance data literacy.

Pastorally, all staff have engaged with Berry Street – Trauma-informed teaching practice. This is a focus of every staff meeting, as is upskilling in Responsible Thinking Program, which drives our College behaviour management processes.

The percentage of teacher participation in professional development was 100%.

Total funds expended on Professional Development

The total of funds expended on teacher professional development was \$58,000.

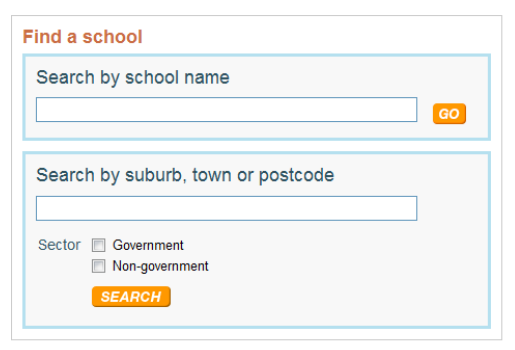
Average Staff Attendance and Retention

The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to 5 days, was 89.71%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 91.5%.

School Income

School income broken down by funding source is available via the My School website at www.myschool.edu.au. (The School information below is available on the My School web site).



The screenshot shows the 'Find a school' section of the My School website. It features two search boxes: 'Search by school name' with a 'GO' button, and 'Search by suburb, town or postcode' with a 'SEARCH' button. Below the second search box, there are radio buttons for 'Sector' with options for 'Government' and 'Non-government'.



National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results




Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for Years 7 and 9 are available via the My School website at www.myschool.edu.au.

If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school's NAPLAN results.



Strategic Improvement: Progress and Next Steps



Strategic progress in 2022

1. Catholic Identity 		2. Effective Teaching and Learning (NSIT Domains 2,5,6,7,8) 	
PRIORITY	GOAL	PRIORITY	GOAL
Enhance an authentic and contemporary Catholic identity	To develop the dual charism of Catherine McAuley and Edmund Rice	Enhancing every student's achievement	To improve student writing ability

3. Pastoral Support and Wellbeing (NSIT Domain 3) 		4. Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing (NSIT Domains 1,4,9)  	
PRIORITY	GOAL	PRIORITY	GOAL
Incorporate trauma informed practice throughout the college	Introduce an understanding of trauma to staff and students	To enhance student learning and wellbeing opportunities across Years 7-12	Continuity of standards and expectations for all students

Strategic priorities for 2023

1. Catholic Identity 		2. Effective Teaching and Learning (NSIT Domains 2,5,6,7,8) 	
PRIORITY	GOAL	PRIORITY	GOAL
Enhance an authentic and contemporary Catholic identity	To continue developing the dual charism of Catherine McAuley and Edmund Rice	Enhancing every students' achievement	To improve students' persuasive writing

3. Pastoral Support and Wellbeing (NSIT Domain 3) 		4. Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing (NSIT Domains 1,4,9) 	
PRIORITY	GOAL	PRIORITY	GOAL

Incorporate trauma informed practice throughout the college

To implement trauma informed practices throughout the college.

To enhance staff data collection and analysis across both campuses.

Consistency of practices and expectations for staff and students across both campuses.

Reasons for these priorities:

Catholic Identity – the combining of Mercy and St Patrick's requires us to acknowledge the traditions of the past, based on the charisms of faith of the founding orders, as well as developing a new Charism for the future. The College has decided on adopting the dual charisms of Catherine McAuley and Edmund Ignatius Rice – and the common values of Compassion, Hope, Justice and Respect

Effective Teaching & Learning – the key to academic success in senior school, particularly for those on an ATAR pathway, is being able to articulate a point of view, analyse sources and justify a response. Developing these persuasive writing skills therefore, needs to be a focus for every subject from year 7-12. Writers Toolbox is one way to develop these skills.

Pastoral Support and Well-being – trauma takes many forms and has a significant adverse effect on student learning outcomes. Proficiency in trauma-informed practice and associated strategies creates better engagement with learning and improved academic outcomes. The Berry Street program is a highly effective methodology that allows this to happen.

Leadership, Partnership and Resources – the use of Track One allows teachers to use student data across subject based results and standardized testing to develop an effective response to students strengths and weaknesses.

There is little difference between the 2022 and 2023 key priorities. Combining two schools is a difficult task and the College Leadership Team has chosen a consistent approach to key priorities that will lead to improved student outcomes, and ones that resonate with teachers. Combining schools creates a lot of stress among staff, and these priorities maintain focus on what every school should, making every lesson of every count towards our students, learning and growing and achieving their potential.

Parent, teacher and student satisfaction with the school

Methods to gauge Parent, Staff and Student Satisfaction

- Surveys
- School Review and Improvement – was held in 2022
- Staff Meetings
- Parent & Friends and College Board
- Student Representative Council
- Staff end of year interviews.