



2 February 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians

Welcome to 2018! I am sure you are all ready for the year ahead. I would like to especially welcome our Year 7s and their families, and new students who are joining Merici College from Years 8 through to Year 12.

Just a quick update from me. In December I had an ultrasound that found two large growths (both about 5cm in size). It was a bit of a shock but I was rushed through for an operation just before Christmas. They removed five growths (not two) and I have received an all clear result from the doctor. So I am very grateful and feel blessed to start the year healthy and full of energy after the break.

Celebrating our 2017 Achievements

Year 12 students received their Year 12 ACT Senior Secondary Certificate. 67% of students set their goals on achieving an ATAR in 2017 and all achieved this milestone. Our median ATAR was 73.95 and our average ATAR was 75.4. Nine students received an ATAR of 90 or higher. 27 students received an ATAR of 80 or higher. Over 74% of students who sat for the AST and completed a T Package received 65+. In this cohort of 92 students, we had 97% of students receive a Vocational Qualification. This was well above the other Colleges.

Staffing: New Staff

We congratulate the following staff on their new positions:

Head of Senior School	Gregory Baines
Head of Junior School	Virginia McLeod
Inclusive Education Coordinator	Jennifer Medd
Mathematics Co-Coordinator	Terry Brady and Robyn de Puit
Indigenous Officer	Jennifer Wright
Critical Thinking Project Officer	Jen Baines

We welcome new teachers:

Louisa Barnsley (Behavioural Studies and English), Anna Gaska (Science), Melissa Ishihara (Japanese), Jesang Kim (Maths), Charini Kumarasinhe (Maths), Karen McKerrow (Maths), Andrew Turnbull (Religious Education and English)

We welcome support staff:

Emma Kipling, Jill Masters, Theresa Nichols, Damian Predovan,

Theme for 2018

2018 marks the Year of Youth in the Australian Catholic Church's calendar. It is 10 years after World Youth Day was held in Sydney. Within this year is our pastoral theme - Joy. You will hear more about our theme and celebrations as the year progresses.

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Learning Focus – Critical Thinking and the International Baccalaureate

For the past week staff have been involved in a variety of professional learning workshops. They have focused on pastoral care, Critical Thinking and the use of data in the classroom. We have also spent time going through the International Baccalaureate (IB) Learner Profile and compared this to our own Principles of Powerful Learning. The aim of the IB program is to develop internationally-minded people who, recognising their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. IB Learners strive to be: Reflective, Open-minded, Risk-takers, Caring, Balanced, Principled, Knowledgeable, Inquirers, Communicators, Thinkers. Merici will continue to work towards our application to become an IB accredited school over the course of the year.

Communication:

Towards the end of last year, we saw a big rise in students and parents contacting each other via text message during the school day. These messages were not for emergency, but one – which happened to occur in a class I was supervising, was a text message from a parent asking their daughter what she wanted for dinner! Please do not message or call your daughter during the school day. Recess is 10.41-11.11am and Lunch is 12.54-1.24pm. All students can access their phones at this time. Messages during class time cause unnecessary stress to students. If it is urgent and an emergency, we ask that you call reception, they will find a trusted adult that will deliver the message to your daughter and support her. If your daughter contacts you during the school day and is not feeling well, please encourage her to find her PC or House Coordinator.

If contacting a staff member, I ask that you please be patient. Most of our teaching staff are full time and therefore cannot access their emails or the phone message system. They will contact you within a 48-hour period. All of these details are explained in the Student Planner in more detail. Please read this with your daughter and sign both the Merici College Expectations, Uniform and Positive Peer Relations policy and the Digital Community agreement.

New Timetable

Just a reminder that we have new times this year. The school warning bell will sound at 8.40am for classes to start at 8.45am and will finish for Years 7-10 at 3.07pm and for Years 11-12 at 3.25pm.

Monday-Friday	Activity
8:40 am	Warning Bell
8:45 - 8:55 am	PC
8:58 - 9:48 am	Period 1
9:51 – 10:41 am	Period 2
10:41 – 11:11 am	Recess
11:11 -12:01am	Period 3
12:04 – 12:54 pm	Period 4
12:54 – 1:24 pm	Lunch
1:24 – 2:14 pm	Period 5
2:17 - 3:07 pm	Period 6
3:07 – 3:25pm	Period 6 extended (Year 11/12)
3:25pm	End of school day

Save the Date - Upcoming Events

Thurs 8 - Fri 9 February	Year 11 Conference
Monday 12 February	Swimming Carnival
Monday 19 February	Academic Awards
Tuesday 27 February	Opening Mass – 11.10am
Monday 5 March	Year 7 Parent Transition Workshops 6.30pm
Tuesday 13 March	Year 10-12 Leading Students to Excellence Evening 5.30pm
Thursday 22 March	Athletics Carnival

I look forward to seeing you all and working with you in 2018.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Loretta Wholley
Principal