



CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

# ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2018



**BUILDING  
FUTURES**

## Merici College Braddon

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### **Principal**

Mrs Loretta Wholley

# Section One: Message from Key Groups in our Community

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## Principal's Message

Spreading Joy has been an apt theme for 2018. To live a life filled with joy is a challenge and a choice. Working with an amazing group of adults and young women every day brings me that joy. Together we celebrate individual and group achievements. Transforming our learning and living environment is something the Board and Executive have had as a focus over the past 12 months and will continue into 2019 and beyond.

In 2018, we have been progressing our application as a candidate school for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years and Diploma Years Program. The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world. For the majority of 2018 the College has been reflecting and creating our new 2019-2021 Strategic Plan.

Merici College is a place where exploration, creativity and imagination make learning exciting and where all learners aspire to reach their dreams. May the development of our young women as happy, confident and engaged students be always at the forefront of our minds and decisions.

Principal

## Parent Body Message

This year has been full of achievement and positive changes for the College. Like all schools, Merici continues to face significant funding uncertainty, however despite these challenges we are secure, future focused and moving forward - a great place to be. This was due to making a proactive decision three years ago through our strategic plan. We have been able to be a smaller, educationally rich College for girls in Canberra. We have gone to great efforts to maximise operating efficiencies and reduce costs over the last few years. This has placed us well and we have done this without compromising the high quality teaching and learning that is taking place.

Merici has such an array of subject and extracurricular options to complement every student's talents and a passionate and wonderful staff. Parents are supportive and enthusiastic and we thank them all for their dedication.

Board Chair

## Student Body Message

As Captains, our ambition in 2018 was to foster students' aspirations, while continuing to uphold and build community, and the identity of the College. We wanted students to be the best they could be and challenge themselves, so we could continue to strive as a community, which truly feels like a family.

Throughout the year we have facilitated many initiatives which allowed students to express their gifts, passions and perspectives. One of the initiatives we implemented was "Feel Good Friday" where every fortnight, we encouraged girls to eat lunch in the Indigenous garden and listen to good music and have a fun time. This fostered a sense of sisterhood at Merici.

We are very thankful for the support and opportunities we were given this year as leaders and ambassadors of Merici College. We are thankful for the wonderful staff and student participation in all of our events. Every girl has accepted our challenge, consequently becoming an agent of change, much like St Angela Merici.

We hope that every single Merici girl continues to love life, have hope, be faithful and to build futures more wondrous than they dare to dream.

College Captain and Vice-Captain

## Section Two: School Features

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Merici College is a Catholic systemic Girls College located in Braddon.

Merici College:

- follows the Principles of Powerful Learning which promote academic excellence, innovative digital learning, inclusivity and an environment underpinned by the values of Faith, Hope and Love.
- has an engaging educational environment, designed to challenge our students to take risks within and beyond the classroom to achieve individual academic excellence.
- has an accredited Trade Training Centre, Technical Support Centre and a Vocational Educational Career Centre.
- is a candidate school for the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Diploma Years program.
- students are engaged in a Religious Education program that bridges knowledge, faith and life.
- responds to and supports local and global needs through our Social Justice and Christian Service Learning Program.
- fosters in all students, positive mental health and wellbeing through a vertical pastoral care system.
- provides mentoring support to students of Australian Defence Force members and their families.
- offers a wide range of co-curricular activities in sporting, cultural and social experiences, placing emphasis on broadening education and leadership opportunities.
- provides opportunities for students to immerse themselves in different cultures through an extensive Foreign Languages program complemented by overseas tours.
- is a technology-rich school with BYOD (Bring Your Own Device Program), enhanced through the Digital Community Agreement.
- enjoys facilities that are being constantly upgraded - including refurbished Science Labs and the Auditorium, plus the facade on Limestone Avenue.
- has an excellent sustainability, kitchen garden and healthy eating initiatives.

## Section Three: Catholic Identity and Faith Formation

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Our school follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old*.

### Religious Life & Religious Education

2018 was the Year of Youth and Spreading Joy at Merici College. The official Australian Catholic Church's Year of Youth celebrated the 10 year anniversary of World Youth Day, encouraging the nurturing of the physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of young people. It also focussed on local renewal and engagement of young people in the Church and broader community. Merici students were inspired not to be afraid of setting out on new or uncharted paths; to take leaps of faith to uphold and discover JOY within their lives and their communities in the spirit of St Angela Merici. As well as working with each other and the Holy Spirit to open their spirit to others to renew the Catholic Church, students were also encouraged to think about what they could do to achieve personal growth during the year.

Catholic Schools Youth Ministry Australia (CSYMA) was a continued focus for the Canberra Goulburn Archdiocese in 2018, allowing for further establishment of Youth Ministry at Merici. Students across Years 7-12 had opportunities to participate in youth Masses, rallies and student conferences such as iWitness, LEAD and SHINE. They have also been invited to participate in Connect Youth Masses with Marist College, actively contributing through music and reading. Three Year 12 Students also participated in the inaugural CSYMA Youth Academy (ACU) this year, which included participation in the SPIRIT Retreat, local parish and Merici spiritual formation and leadership. These CSYMA experiences provided opportunities for students and Youth Ministry teams throughout the CSYMA network to gather, be equipped in ministry and formed in faith.

Angela's Angels, Merici's Youth Ministry group, has continued to grow in 2018. It was exciting to have Alannah Hodge join the staff as our first Youth Minister at Merici College. The Christian Service Learning Program (CSLP) continues to grow at Merici College. At the conclusion of St Angela Merici Day Mass and Year 12 Farewell Assembly students were recognised for 50, 100 and 150 hours of Christian Service in both the Merici and broader communities. More than 70 students alone received their Blue, Red and Gold Angel awards on St Angela Merici Day.

The Merici College community would like to sincerely thank Fr Bernie Patterson for his contribution over the years to the liturgical life of the College. Fr Bernie announced his retirement as Parish Priest this year. We thank all religious who continue to contribute so much the Merici community, and in particular, Fr Bernie and Sr Genny Ryan for their ongoing generosity and support of the faith formation of all those within the Merici College community.

## Section Four: Student Profile

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### Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Year 7 to Year 12. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2018:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
678	0	16	678

\* Language Background Other than English

### Student Retention

Of the students who completed Year 10 in 2016, 69% completed Year 12 in 2018.

### Enrolment Policy

The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn has established an *Enrolment Policy for Catholic Schools*. The Catholic Education Office monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements.

Information about enrolling in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn may be accessed at the Catholic Education Office website.

### Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2018 was 91%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Year 7	91%
Year 8	93%
Year 9	91%
Year 10	92%
Year 11	89%
Year 12	90%

## Managing Student Non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The School, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, School staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the School community;
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance;
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance;
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance;
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented;
- documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern;
- the Catholic Education Office designated School Services Officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom School strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

## Student Post School Destinations

Each year the College collects destination data relating to the Year 12 student cohort. The table below sets out the percentages of students for the various categories.

<b>Destination Data</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>TAFE / Other institutions</b>	<b>Workforce entry</b>	<b>Destination not reported</b>
<b>Year 12, 2018 Graduating Class</b>	87%	7%	6%	0%

## Section Five: Staffing Profile

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The following information describes the staffing profile for 2018:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
56	28	84

\* This number includes 35 full-time teachers and 21 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	0%
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### Professional Learning

All teachers have been involved in professional learning during the year. These learning opportunities are designed to develop the skills and understandings of staff to improve student outcomes. They include at a whole staff level:

- Whole staff and departmental planning
- International Baccalaureate staff training
- Inquiry Based Learning models
- Pastoral Care
- Interfaith Excursion and Reflection
- Compliance Training: Child Safety, WHS and CPR

Individual staff have also attended workshops/conferences in their learning areas or for personal development.

### Teacher Qualifications

All teachers are qualified as required by the relevant authorities.

### Teacher Accreditation

Levels of Teacher Accreditation are as stated below:

Graduate Level	Proficient Level	Lead/Highly Accomplished
3	51	2



## Section Six: Academic Profile

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists School planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the average scores in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The School results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four Domains: Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single Domain.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2018		Average Scores	
		School	Australia
Year 7	Reading	559	542
	Writing	526	505
	Spelling	552	545
	Grammar and Punctuation	566	544
	Numeracy	558	548

NAPLAN RESULTS 2018		Average Scores	
		School	Australia
Year 9	Reading	620	584
	Writing	576	542
	Spelling	604	583
	Grammar and Punctuation	609	581
	Numeracy	620	596

## Student Credentialing

### **ACT Year 10 Certificate**

All students at the end of Year 10 received their Year 10 Certificate.

### **ACT Year 12 Certificate**

94% of our cohort will continue in recognised education and training in the year after they have left school or after they have taken a Gap year. 53% will go directly into further study at university (combination of university, CIT/TAFE or a private provider for traineeship), while 36% have decided to take a Gap year. 6% have moved into full time employment and 5% are combining full-time work with study.

Students have chosen to study at:

- University of Canberra 56%
- Australian Catholic University 8%
- Australian National University 6%
- Canberra Institute of Technology 6%
- Other (NSW, VIC, QLD) 10%

## Section Seven: School Review and Improvement

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Each year, the School develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the School's Strategic Plan and informed by the Internal School Review process. The School engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the Regional Consultant.

### Key Improvements Achieved in 2018

Merici College's 2016-2018 Strategic Plan came to its conclusion. 2018 focus included:

#### *Identity and Faith Formation*

- Embedding Catholic Schools Youth Ministry Australia (CSYMA)

#### *Teaching and Learning*

- Progress candidacy as a school for the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Diploma Years program.
- Ensure that Vocational Education is widely recognised as a valuable opportunity.
- Improve transition processes and pathways.
- Explore models of effective feedback to constructively encourage and direct student growth.

#### *Pastoral Care and Well-Being in our Community*

- Extend the Student Success Program
- Expand the alumni and engage them in preparing for the 60th Anniversary celebrations.

#### *Leadership and Professional Practice*

- Provide a whole school Professional Learning Plan to to strengthen individual teaching practice regarding the principles, philosophy and methods of International Baccalaureate.

#### *Strategic Resourcing*

- Complete Stage 1A Auditorium and 1B Science and 1C Limestone Avenue upgrade.
- Reduce energy usage by 10% in comparison to 2017 costs.

## Priority Key Improvements for 2019

For the majority of 2018 the College has been reflecting and creating our new 2019-2021 Strategic Plan. Merici College is a place where exploration, creativity and imagination make learning exciting and where all learners aspire to reach their dreams. We are a place where the values and teachings of Jesus Christ as presented in the Gospel and proclaimed by the Church are central to the Catholic school vision – a vision that offers fullness of life, faith, hope and love. We are proud of what we are doing here at Merici College. We reviewed the feedback and considered the challenges and opportunities facing our community. Merici has identified four priority areas:

*Strong Faith* - To build a strong and positive catholic identity where faith is nurtured and all are empowered to serve others.

*Powerful Learning* - An educational environment that inspires life-long learning, enabling everyone to achieve individual excellence.

*Thriving Community* - A connected community that cultivates compassionate relationships, wellbeing and the whole person.

*Sustainable Future* - Ethical practices ensure shared responsibility for the stewardship of all resources.

# Section Eight: School Policies

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## Student Welfare Policy

Pastoral Care Policies include the philosophy and structure of Pastoral Care, the House System, the Positive Peer Relations (Anti-bullying and Harassment) policy, the Digital Community Agreement and the Behaviour Management Policy. These policies are based on the principles of Glasser and are actively endorsed and fully implemented throughout the school. We take a proactive approach to investigate all instances of bullying. Students, staff and parents have a clear understanding of the expectations articulated through our policies and are supportive of the need to provide a safe and caring learning environment. These policies acknowledge teacher and student rights and responsibilities and are based on Catholic Values, Restorative Practices and Authentic Conversation models.

### Anti-bullying

Bullying behaviours are a social problem involving an imbalance of power, where there is a deliberate intent to cause harm or distress. These behaviours are sustained over a long period of time and are aggressive, repetitive and malicious causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to others. Bullying behaviours diminish the life of our community and are not tolerated in any form.

It is the policy of the College that all students act positively towards each other at all times. It is our responsibility to act and respond should situations occur which are counter cultural to the aims and philosophy of the College. Through this policy and our actions we aim to:

- Assist adults and students to actively contribute to positive peer relations;
- Enable all members of the college community to understand their responsibilities and rights;
- Ensure support for persons affected by harassment or bullying; and,
- Intervene to implement strategies towards resolution.

### Discipline

Merici College adheres to the Student Management (Discipline) Policy of Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. Our school's policy of student management reflects Gospel values and respects the dignity of students. Teachers and students understand and comply with the requirements of this policy. Teachers foster a teaching/learning environment where there is good order and purposeful learning. Corporal punishment is not to be administered in any circumstance. Additionally, schools must not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school. Should the behaviour of a student seriously interfere with the requirements of this policy, more serious responses may be required.

Reference should be made to the policies on Suspension and Exclusion, Expulsion and Transfer of Students. Behaviours warranting such consideration:

- Behaviour disruptive to the student's own learning and/or to other student's learning;
- Aggressive or dangerous behaviour;
- Drug-related behaviour;
- Sexual harassment of other students or staff; and,
- Other behaviours believed to warrant action.

The Student Welfare Policy including anti-bullying and discipline was reviewed March/2018.

Restorative Practices and procedures changed to ensure pastoral care flow from Teacher to House Coordinator to Head of School to Deputy Principal was consistent.

The full text of the School's Student Welfare Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the Administration office.

## Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (CECG) has established a *Complaints Policy* which is implemented by our school and all systemic schools in the Archdiocese. The rationale for the policy is that within the reality of school life it is recognised that from time to time misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of our contemporary world. CECG monitors the implementation of this policy.

The full text of the *Complaints Policy* may be accessed on the Catholic Education website at <https://cg.catholic.edu.au>.

We are committed to providing a safe and supportive work and learning environment for all employees and students. We acknowledge that employees, students and parents can sometimes feel aggrieved about something that is happening at the school. This policy describes the process for effectively managing complaints whilst protecting the rights of all parties involved and seeking a solution to the problem in the best interests of all affected.

Merici develops and implements a clear, fair and effective policy on the management of complaints. A commitment to respond positively to feedback ensures that people have the opportunity to contribute to the continued improvement of the school. Staff demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that a culture of consultation and open dialogue is nurtured at every level, giving every member of the school community the opportunity to express dissatisfaction as well as satisfaction. Complaints are addressed responsively, openly and in a timely manner. Staff develop an open expectation of a cooperative and genuine effort to resolve any valid complaint. In all matters the educational wellbeing of students is the first priority.

## Section Nine: Community Satisfaction

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The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

### Parent Satisfaction

Merici enjoys a very high rating across most of the measures. Across all surveys, participants repeatedly commended the school on the positive culture, sense of faith and community, teacher engagement and caring attitude and the diversity of the student body and inclusive culture.

Parents were primarily concerned with the need for increased opportunities to participate in College life and be more aware of student performance. Both teachers and parents expressed dissatisfaction with the parent-teacher interview process. Recommendations included ensuring more consistent use of Moodle and greater use of social media and new technology platforms. Reporting processes were also highlighted with a view for more clarity in rubric descriptors and greater relevance to learning goals.

There were many conflicting responses in regard to technology use from advice to remove it altogether, to increase usage further and move entirely to digital resources. Generally, however, there were recurring themes in opportunities to more strictly manage use of mobile phones and social media during class and need to improve the wi-fi connection.

All parent items received a rating of 2.0-2.4, which is very high.

### Student Satisfaction

Students identified particular appreciation of the canteen facilities, pastoral care system and extra-curricular activities. Student awards had entirely opposing feedback with some students, parents and staff believing there is an over-emphasis on academic achievement through to not enough recognition of academic achievement. Recognition of external activities and more awards related to achievement of learning goals and progression in contrast to academic rankings was highlighted.

Items that scored strongly (2.1-2.4) by students included:

- Our school gives me opportunities to do interesting activities
- I regularly use technology at our school to help me learn
- Our school celebrates student achievements
- Our school encourages me to be a good community member.
- I am encouraged to care for others.

Items that had an average score of 1.4-1.6 were:

- The homework we do helps me learn
- Our schools takes students' opinions seriously
- I value the Religious Education taught at our school
- I enjoy the prayer life at our school.



## Teacher Satisfaction

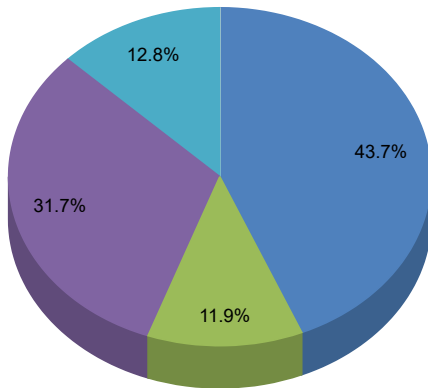
Culture, Faith and Community, one of Merici's greatest strengths, reported consistently well across all survey results. The surveys very strongly reflected appreciation for the strong, caring and respectful culture and sense of belonging at the College. Catholic identity was thought to be strong by the staff cohort, 'needs to be better emphasised' by the parental cohort but was 'not highly valued overall' by the student cohort. Increasing a focus on service hours was thought as a way to improve Catholic identify in the student body.

Items that scored strongly (2.3-2.6) by teachers included:

- I get a lot of satisfaction from working in our school
- I would recommend our school to others
- I have opportunities to enhance my students' learning through the use of technology
- Our school celebrates student achievements
- Our school communicates clearly that it has high expectations for student attendance, engagement and outcomes
- Our school manages behaviour incidents well
- Catholic religious identity is a strong focus in our school

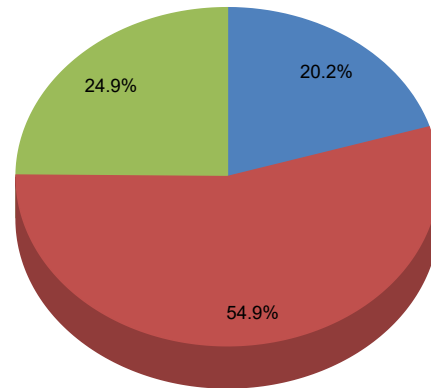
## Section Ten: Financial Statement

Income



- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants (43.7%)
- Government Capital Grants (0%)
- State Recurrent Grants (11.9%)
- Fees and Private Income (31.7%)
- Other Capital Income (12.8%)

Expenditure



- Capital Expenditure (20.2%)
- Salaries and Related Expenses (54.9%)
- Non-Salary Expenses (24.9%)

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$5,594,976
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$2,421
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$1,519,004
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$4,061,773
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$1,636,573
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$12,814,747</b>

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$3,376,298
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$9,152,802
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$4,144,040
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$16,673,140</b>

**Notes**

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.