



Merici College  
Information Handbook 2018

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Mrs Loretta Wholley  
Principal

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome! Merici College is named in honour of St Angela Merici, a famous educator during the Renaissance period. We are a Year 7-12 Catholic all girls' college, situated in Braddon in the heart of Canberra.

Established in 1959 and known at that time as Canberra Catholic Girls' High School, we are dedicated to excellence in the education of young women. From 1983, the year of our Silver Jubilee, the College has been known as Merici College.

We are very proud to be the oldest established Catholic girls' secondary school in Canberra. Merici is a vibrant community committed to preparing confident and competent young women well equipped to contribute to the world beyond high school. We create innovative learning environments that meet the needs of individual students and inspire them to strive for the highest levels of personal achievement.

As a Catholic school, our central aim is to guide each individual towards full human development. We seek for each student to grow emotionally, socially, intellectually, spiritually and physically, supported by the principles of the Catholic faith. Merici is also enriched by families from diverse Christian and other faith traditions.

We are a dynamic, welcoming and energetic community with a rich and varied curriculum and an outstanding system of pastoral care. Our Mission Statement is a lived reality within the College: "Merici challenges you to love life, have hope, be faithful and build futures more wondrous than you dare to dream". Our approach to all areas of college life — pastoral care, curriculum, service-learning, leadership and our co-curricular program — reflects our dedication to this vision. It is grounded in the scripture message of St Paul to the Corinthians of a true Christian community where "faith, hope and love abide" (1 Cor 13:13)

We are a school at the forefront of technology, with a fully integrated BYOD laptop program which is committed to enhancing learning through technology for all students. Our Principles of Powerful Learning are testament to our desire to ensure that teaching and learning at the College is based on the most recent educational research. We seek to work closely in partnership with students and their parents to maximise student performance and success in response to every student's ability level.

We are committed to innovation and continuous improvement. This, together with well-equipped facilities and a rigorous academic program in both the junior (Years 7-9) and senior (Years 10 - 12) school ensure that we are exceptionally well placed to guide students through their adolescent years into young adulthood.

In 2018 we continue on the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of our strategic plan and commence a refurbishment program. These are very exciting times at Merici and we look forward to accomplishing great things in our year of 'Fidelitas'.

Join us as we work together to support and challenge your daughter to develop her talents and share them generously with others.



Mrs Loretta Wholley  
Principal

## CATHOLIC ETHOS AND VALUES

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Our specific aim is to guide our students towards full human development in an authentic Catholic community. As such, we are committed not only to academic excellence but to the holistic development of each student. We believe in the innate dignity of every person, and seek to have all of our relationships reflect the love of God as witnessed through the person of Jesus Christ. As a community, we celebrate the spiritual liturgical life of the Catholic Church. Students are also called to bring our values of faith, hope and love to life through the Christian Service Learning Program.

## **ST ANGELAMERICI**

The College is named for St Angela Merici whose life provides inspiration to us in the way we structure our community and care for our students.

Angela Merici was born in Desenzano, Italy, sometime between 1470 and 1474. Her birthplace and the area where she worked for a major part of her life are in that section of northern Italy that can rightly be called the "cradle of the Renaissance Movement."

During the time of Angela, religious revolt rocked the Church; the Venetian Lombardy area was at war and family life was threatened. Inspired by Gospel challenges, Angela served the needs of the rich and poor alike. Those of prominent position sought her as their guide and their inspiration; to the lowly and the poor she brought help and comfort. Her love and sensitivity to human needs won her the title, "Madre Angela," from the people of Brescia.

Angela was concerned about the lives of girls, as they were generally uneducated at that time, as well as the life of people in slums. After trips to many places including the Holy Land and Rome, in 1535 she, with others, founded the Order of Ursulines in Italy, named for its patron saint, Saint Ursula, a martyr.

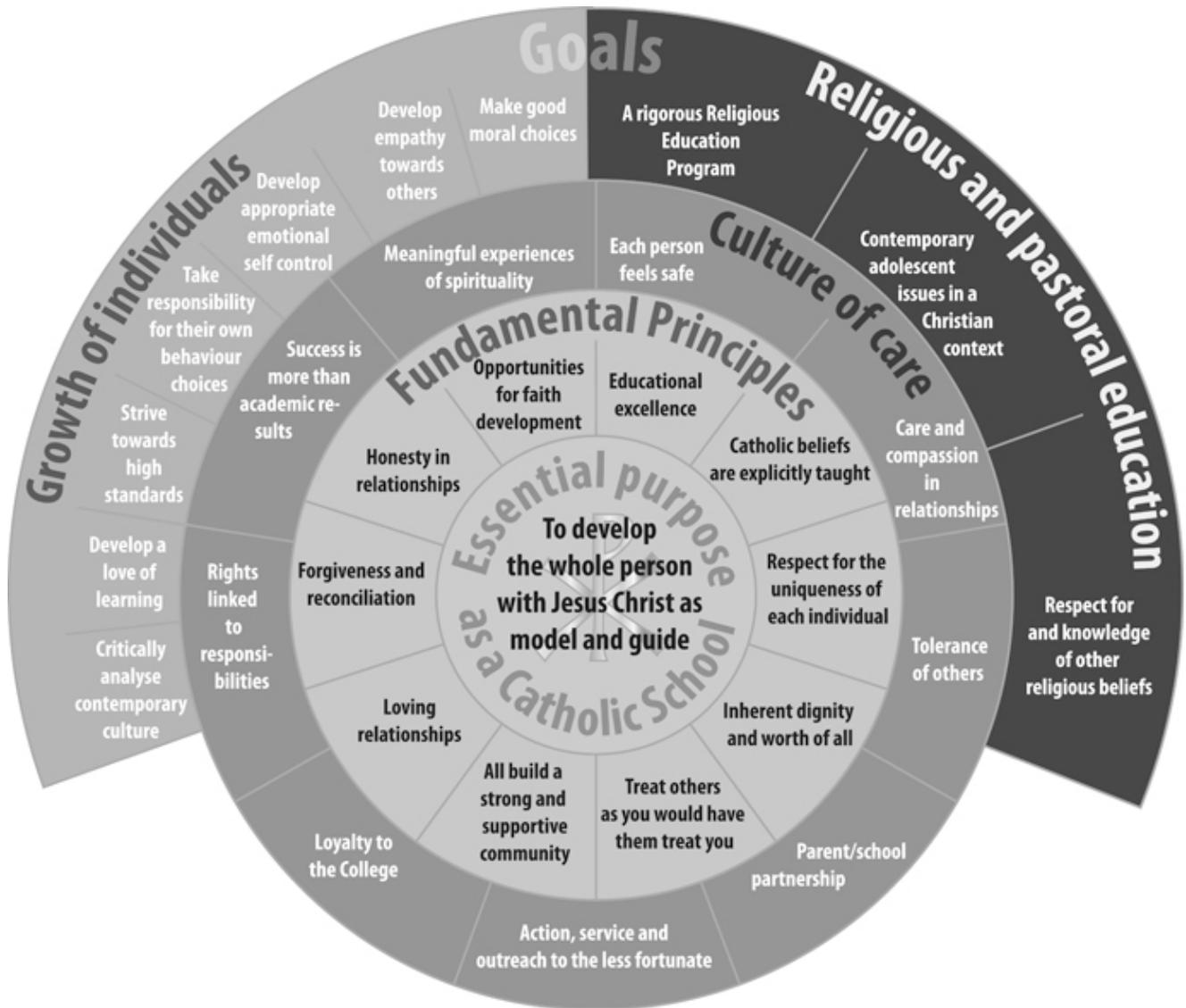
Angela's spirituality is one that affirms and celebrates each individual person; we are all children of God and therefore precious. The individual should be nurtured and cared for in a supportive community, which works for the good of all. St Angela is a model for us in her deep relationship with God, her practical love for others, her simplicity and her wisdom. In 2007, we celebrated the two hundredth anniversary of her canonisation as a saint.

*Angela was beatified in 1768 by Pope Clement XIII and canonized in 1807 by Pope Pius VII. Her major shrine can be found at the Church of Saint Afra, Brescia, Italy. Angela's feast day is observed on 27<sup>th</sup> of January.*

### **The Merici College Mission Statement:**

MERICI CHALLENGES YOU TO  
LOVE LIFE, HAVE HOPE, BE FAITHFUL  
AND BUILD FUTURES MORE WONDROUS  
THAN YOU DARE TO DREAM

## OUR VALUES



At Merici, we are explicit about the values we espouse. The diagram above was developed from a whole school survey aimed at identifying and clarifying those values central to our community. In stating these, the diagram links the values to the environment we are seeking to create and to our goals, both for religious and pastoral education and for the development of the individual.

## **PASTORAL CARE AND STUDENT WELLBEING**

Merici's formal and informal pastoral care structures and processes, affirms the dignity and worth of every student and provides a sense of belonging, security and wellbeing. We empower our students to develop feelings of hopefulness about the future, allowing them to act purposefully and positively. Students set goals for the future and make plans to meet these goals. They explore positive expectations, positive risk-taking, realistic thinking and problem-solving. In addition, we meet the growing need to educate our students about living in a global digital community and focus on digital citizenship.

Pastoral care in the College seeks to foster growth in students in partnership with parents, families, community agencies and the Church. A formal Pastoral Care program is developed each year to address contemporary and emerging adolescent issues and to support learning through the Student Success Program. Each year this program is guided by the College theme and a selection from the Principles of Powerful Learning. Senior students assist in providing administrative support to teachers, delivering supervised lessons, building relationships and by engaging in discussions with younger students.

### **The House System**

When a student enters the College she is placed into one of the six Houses. The Houses have been named after a significant location associated with one of the six religious orders that taught in the College when it was established in 1959 and each House fosters the charism of their religious order and founder. Each House has a dedicated House, charity which enables the students to contribute to the broader community through social justice activities. Pastoral Care classes in each House are vertically arranged, comprising students from each year group, to encourage a sense of belonging and continuity for students and their families. They are the nucleus for forming a working relationship with each student, providing ongoing pastoral support and leadership opportunities. Students remain in the same Pastoral Care class, often with the same Pastoral Care Teacher throughout their years in the College. Each House also has a House Coordinator who ensures that students have access to any additional support that they may require.

While the Pastoral Care system operates formally through the House system, it is not restricted to this program. Pastoral care is integral to the mission of Merici College, which aims to:

- engender wellbeing, belonging and security
- affirm the dignity and worth of the individual
- assist in personal growth to full potential
- provide relationships of care and support
- encourage growth and expression of compassion, tolerance and reconciliation.

### **Student Success Program - SSP**

In recognition of the fact that pastoral and academic performance strongly influence each other, Pastoral Care Teachers engage in our Student Success Program to assist students to reach their full potential. This program is run during dedicated Pastoral Care time and is designed to allow Pastoral Care Teachers to support each student's academic journey, identify areas of need in study skills, and provide the information and access to resources that students need in order to improve their academic performance.

## HOUSES



## POWERFUL LEARNING AND POWERFUL TEACHING

'We should turn out people who love learning so much and learn so well that they will be able to learn whatever needs to be learned.' John Holt (John Holt, 1923-1985)

**PRINCIPLES OF POWERFUL LEARNING**

**MERICI COLLEGE**  
**BUILDING FUTURES**

**Innovative Digital Learning**

- Transforming learning through technology
  - Bring Your Own Device
- Academic Tracking of each student
- Utilisation of a school wide learning management system

**Academic Excellence**

- Innovative and informed teachers who address varied learning styles
  - Growth Mindset thinking
  - Guided Inquiry based learning
  - Reflective learning and teaching
  - Independent learners who are encouraged to take academic risks
- Cooperative Learning

**Faith, Hope and Love**

- Christ centred values
- Build positive relationships for all
- Foster mindfulness and resilience
- Future focused

**Inclusivity**

- Everyone can learn
- Foster a joy of learning
- Differentiated learning and teaching
- Supportive learning applications

Merici College is an innovative school where students embrace their learning and excel. One of Merici College's educational goals is to imbue students with a lifelong love of learning. Students who develop a love of learning and the ability to apply what they have learned to new and challenging situations will be well equipped to face the many challenges of life.

### **Merici College Principles of Powerful Learning**

The Merici Principles of Powerful Learning are our ongoing blueprint for teaching and learning in the College. The four tiers of the Powerful Learning are inextricably linked to the holistic development of strong, intelligent young women who make values based decisions, based on Christ centred relationships, and who aim for Academic Excellence to build for their futures. Integral to the design are the use of the Merici logo colours and background images of the mosaic from the Merici Indigenous Garden, reflecting Merici's ongoing commitment to our indigenous students and local indigenous heritage.

### **Best practice teaching and learning**

The Principles of Powerful Learning are a blueprint for best practice teaching and learning and they underpin all aspects of our teaching strategies, from lessons in the classroom to assessment and beyond. They are a set of principles that have been tested against local and national directions. As a staff we embed the Powerful Learning Principles in our documentation, our professional learning, our professional dialogue and most importantly, in our classrooms. This ongoing initiative across the school results in quality education for our students.

### **COUNSELLING SERVICE**

Merici College utilises counselling personnel from CatholicCare. The counselling service is available as part of the Pastoral Care system of the school. The role of the Counsellor is to focus on the emotional, social and educational wellbeing of Merici students.

As well as individual sessions with students during school time, the Counsellors work with families, consult with parents, carers and teachers and carry out some group work. For long term therapy, the Counsellors will also refer students and families to specialist services and professionals when appropriate.

The two Counsellors at Merici College have skills in areas such as child development, the assessment and treatment of a range of mental health problems and social and interpersonal relationships.

The Counsellors welcome contact with students having difficulty with some part of their life, whether or not it affects their schoolwork. The problem does not have to be a big one. It is better to seek help sooner than later.

If something is interfering with a student's learning or affecting their general wellbeing, then contact with a counsellor may be appropriate. Referrals to the Counsellors come from teachers, parents, family members, students themselves and other services outside the school.

Some typical concerns include:

- Depression
- Anxiety and fears
- Anger issues
- Family conflict
- Self-Harm
- Loss and grief
- Peer relationships
- Separation, divorce and stepfamilies
- Stress
- Post-Traumatic Stress

The Counsellors may also be involved in a range of other activities including:

- Running support and therapy groups with students
- Consultation with staff
- Parent education
- Referrals to other agencies or specialists
- Policy development
- Community liaison

Counsellors are available throughout the week, with the exception of Wednesday afternoons.

## DIGITAL COMMUNITY AGREEMENT

### What is the Merici Digital Community?

Merici's approach to managing student and staff use of technology, formed after extensive research and community consultation, has evolved into us seeing ourselves as the 'Merici Digital Community'. This enables us to manage the needs of our students and promotes their responsibility to become efficient, highly enabled, users of technology.

Students, parents and staff are all members of this inclusive community and being a member means that we all agree to support the following key principles:

1. Protect yourself
2. Respect yourself
3. Protect others
4. Respect others
5. Protect intellectual property
6. Respect intellectual property
7. THINK TWICE



## **Personal Health, Safety and Behaviour Management**

Merici College is committed to ensuring that all members of the community, particularly students, feel safe and are free from verbal and physical abuse and harassment in the school grounds, classroom and allied teaching and sporting areas. The College employs a comprehensive anti-bullying and harassment policy that consistently demonstrates fairness and equity in managing and supporting students. This policy is in line with the ACT Education and Training Directorate Providing Safe Schools P-12 policy and is also in line with the implementation strategies of the National Safe Schools Framework.

Within the parameters of the National Safe Schools Framework, Pastoral Care and behaviour management at Merici are closely linked, as both aim to promote a respectful, secure and healthy environment for all members of the College. Our Behaviour Management protocols and systems are informed by a commitment to the Principles of Restorative Practices and are designed to ensure the wellbeing of all members of the community and to encourage the development of responsible behaviour in students. Our approach is based on the Glasser model where students are aware of their rights and responsibilities and where, if difficulties arise, they discuss their behaviour with their teacher, recognize the impact of that behaviour, take responsibility for it and formulate a mutually acceptable plan for the future.

## **Expectations of Student Behaviour**

In the classroom students should:

- be courteous and considerate at all times
- respect each other's opinions and property
- be punctual and well prepared
- participate in all classroom activities
- not endanger their own health and safety and that of others by their behavior

Within the College they should demonstrate:

- respect and care for others in all interactions
- respect for school and personal property
- avoidance of dangerous or unsafe practices

In setting good health habits, students are not permitted to smoke or use alcohol or drugs when at school, on a school-organised activity, or when wearing school uniform. All senior students and their parents sign an agreement about their attendance, work ethic, uniform, behaviour and commitment to the College.

## **Positive Peer Relations**

Through our interactions we aim to foster a healthy culture in which high levels of achievement take place within a positive social environment. Our Positive Peers Relations Policy is designed to promote high standards of behaviour for our students based on cooperation, mutual responsibility and self-discipline and to promote positive, inclusive relationships among students. This policy, enacted both within the curriculum and co-curricular programs, is designed to be respectful of the dignity and rights of each student and to provide learning opportunities that are responsive to the student's unique growth and development.

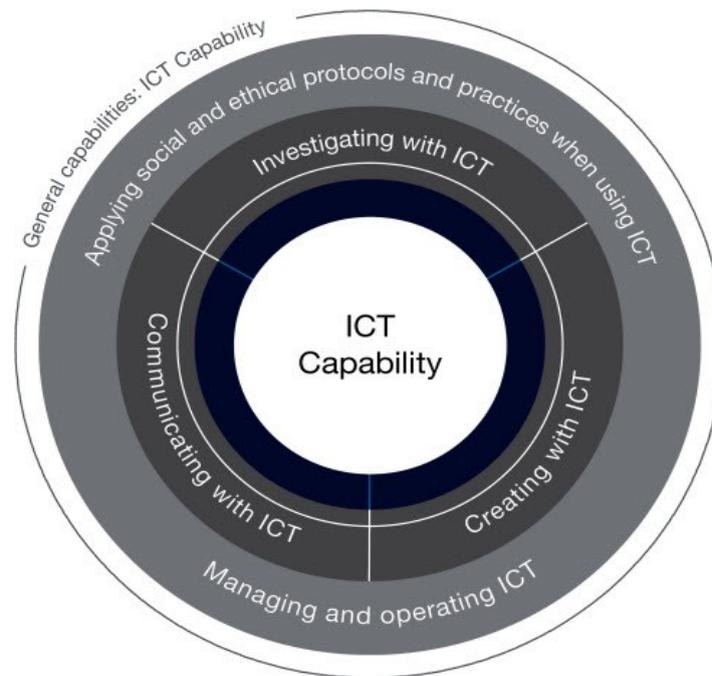
## **Induction of New Students**

Merici is committed to ensuring that new students and their parents feel welcomed and comfortable in their new environment. We have an extensive induction process in place for all new students. We try to ensure that new students to the College have a personal interview with the Principal and their House Coordinator prior to beginning at the College. The House Coordinator and Pastoral Care Teacher take particular responsibility for ensuring that the student settles in quickly. A student "buddy" from their Pastoral Care Class is assigned to ensure that new students are able to find their way to classes and are looked after at breaks in the early days. All new students also have an induction in the Information Centre and to the College network, and undergo some simple testing of literacy and numeracy skills to enable us to identify areas of strength and/or areas where the student may require some support.

## TECHNOLOGY IN THE CURRICULUM

### Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

"In the Australian Curriculum, students develop ICT capability as they learn to use ICT effectively and appropriately to access, create and communicate information and ideas, solve problems and work collaboratively in all learning areas at school, and in their lives beyond school. The capability involves students in learning to make the most of the digital technologies available to them, adapting to new ways of doing things as technologies evolve and limiting the risks to themselves and others in a digital environment.



The ICT capability learning continuum is organised into five interrelated elements

The *Melbourne Declaration on the Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA 2008) recognises that in a digital age, and with rapid and continuing changes in the ways that people share, use, develop and communicate with ICT, young people need to be highly skilled in its use. To participate in a knowledge-based economy and to be empowered within a technologically sophisticated society now and into the future, students need the knowledge, skills and confidence to make ICT work for them at school, at home, at work and in their communities."

<http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/GeneralCapabilities/Information-and-Communication-Technology-capability/Introduction/Introduction>

## Information and Communication Technologies at Merici

Merici College supports a wide range of technologies. Through experience, we have found the value in investing in the very best available technology to enable the latest suite of applications to work at full capacity in our various subject areas. This digital environment is important to prepare our students with the experience and skills that are now a norm for most households and expected of a modern 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce. One concrete goal is that all our Year 10 students achieve a nationally recognised vocational certificate: Certificate I in Information, Digital Media and Technology.

With over twenty years of experience in delivering ICT to students through our Laptop Program, Merici has recently updated its capacity to an industry mapped wireless network that has been carefully designed to handle the load of our Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program. Merici has about 300 24" touch screen all-in-one desktop computers in computer labs and flexible learning spaces. We have a purpose built, on-site repair facility and a team of dedicated IT staff.

### Bring Your Own Device - BYOD

In 2015, Merici College moved to a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program. BYOD is a technological trend in both the educational and corporate worlds. The objective of the BYOD program is to engage students using their own devices to achieve learning in the classroom with technology and to enable them to continue learning anywhere, anytime.

All students are required to have a laptop (not a tablet, phone or smart device - these may be used to supplement creativity, but not as the major item). We publish minimum specification on the websites. BYOD is designed to give you, as students and families, freedom to make technology choices that suit you and your circumstances, while enabling your daughter to integrate with Merici's digital platform.

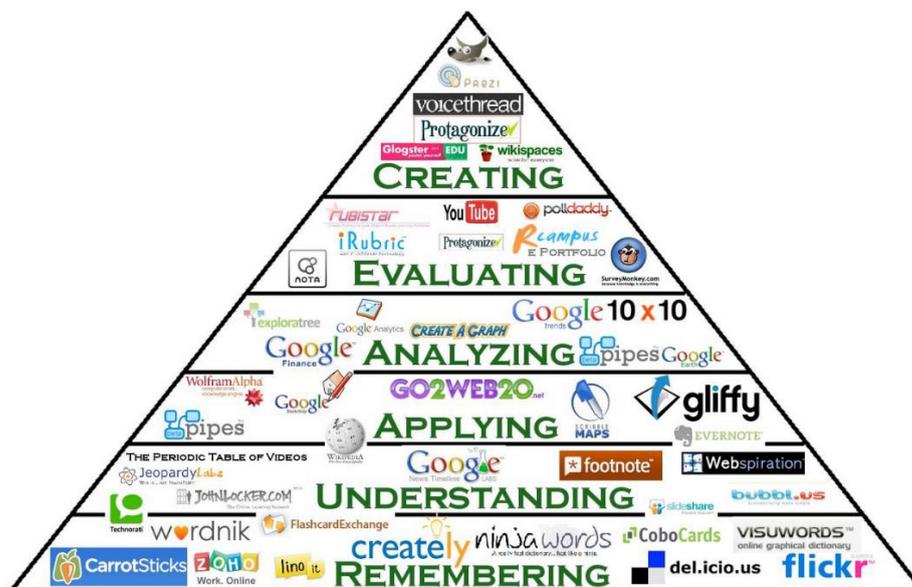
The College continues to provide a Laptop service, whereby we offer families the opportunity to purchase a school approved laptop through a service provider and we deliver ongoing technical support.

All students and parents must read and sign their Digital Community Agreement before being allowed to use any electronic device in class.

### Learning and ICT

Students are able to:

- develop high level skills
- use ICT as a tool in relevant and challenging ways which are fully integrated into the curriculum - laptops are not used simply to replace exercise books
- link their learning with the outside world through moderated Internet access
- develop co-operative learning skills
- be challenged and motivated to learn in new ways, and
- have immediate access to technology in class and for research and homework at recess, lunch and at home.



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When it comes to the use of the technology in the class room it is important to recognise the increasingly diverse nature of the method of application in each subject area. From the Arts and Media to Science and Physical Education from History and Mathematics to the Languages, technology plays a role in shaping how lessons are prepared and communicated both in the class room and online via our Learning Management System (LMS), known as Moodle. Moodle becomes a shared interactive environment for the class where the opportunities for communication and collaboration are significantly enhanced through students' ongoing access. Students complete much of their work on their laptops, but there are times where the use of the laptop may not be appropriate, e.g. exercises in handwriting, spelling tests.

## Moodle

Moodle provides a Virtual Learning Environment. Used extensively across the College, it is a tool for communication and organisation and allows student access to school files from any location with Internet access. Every class at Merici College has a Moodle page, which is accessed through a student's Merici username and password. Moodle also enhances the Parent-Teacher-Student partnership in student education, so Moodle passwords are considered a 'family' password and students are expected to logon for their parents when required. Depending on the way classes have been structured by the teacher, students will have access to:

- subject specific documents, for example assessment outlines, major work tasks and assignments
- class notice board with message or Internet links from the teacher
- class calendar
- electronic learning activities that enable students to submit work on-line
- on-line discussion forums and journals
- class email from the teacher

## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Merici College believes that all students can learn and acknowledges different learning styles. We encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and we aim to develop enthusiasm, enjoyment and love of learning. This encompasses all students, irrespective of differing abilities, and we ensure that all students have the opportunity to be educated with their peers; accepting each other as persons with gifts that enrich the whole community. The Inclusive Education Team promotes inclusive practices that strive for the spiritual, physical, emotional and intellectual development of all students.

While the standard classroom employs progressive and effective techniques to provide for mixed abilities, the College also acknowledges the specific needs of students requiring enhanced learning opportunities.

Students with identified learning difficulties may have been identified through:

- Information from parents
- NAPLAN results
- Information as part of the transition from Primary School to High School
- Information from class teachers
- May be a Student with a Disability (as identified by Catholic Education as required by the Australian Government definition)

Skilled teachers and assistants provide specialist support for students requiring help with basic skills and those who need to be challenged beyond the normal requirements of classroom activities.

The support and extension provided to students with additional needs may consist of one or more of the following:

- Modified assessment
- Differentiated curriculum
- Individual Programs
- Teacher-Assistant time
- Collaborative teaching and learning
- Homework Club
- Cross-Age Tutoring
- Hub sessions
- Computer technology



### Enrolment Policy

Parents or guardians of Students with a Disability (as identified by Catholic Education as required by the Australian Government definition) are required to have a panel meeting to determine their level of need. The panel consists of:

- The Principal
- Inclusive Education
- The Learning Support Teacher
- Parent/s and child
- Other professionals if required.

### Other Avenues of Support

Merici College also offers specialised programs that are designed to help students develop more effective learning, social and organisational skills.

### Merici Hub

Students can be booked into the Merici Hub, by their classroom teacher, to receive help and support in organisation, researching and undertaking assignments. This operates on a Thursday and Friday.

## Merici Homework Centre

All students who are experiencing difficulties with their studies, or in need of additional support with assessment, are encouraged to access homework assistance in the Homework centre that runs after school in the *iC*, Monday to Thursday 3.10 – 4.30pm. Students are encouraged to be booked in via the Inclusive Education Coordinator.

## Cross-Age Tutoring

Cross-age tutoring is available from students in Years 10, 11 and 12 for students in the junior years. Senior students are paired with junior students according to academic interests and needs. Students may meet before school, at lunch time or after school.

## JUDITH FOLLETT INFORMATION CENTRE: *iC*

A staff of dedicated Teacher Librarians and Library Assistants actively support and nurture both formal and informal learning.

### Opening Hours

Monday to Thursday: 8.30 am – 5.00 pm (closed recess)  
Friday: 8.30 am – 4.00 pm

### The Physical Environment

A **flexible learning area** that incorporates twenty desktop and twenty laptop computer workstations facilitating individual, group and class learning

A **multimedia learning area** with thirty computer workstations, active board and full data projection facilities.

A **small group room** with active board and full data projection facilities, which can be used for a variety of teaching and learning experiences.

A **Reading Lounge** surrounding the fiction collection, providing a wonderful reading space for students in both lesson and recreational time. All junior classes have regular reading periods in this area.

### The Resources

**Extensive print resources** – fiction and non-fiction books, magazines, serials/periodicals newspapers, which support the curriculum and recreational reading.

### The Virtual *iC*

**Merici College LibGuides** – accessed via the College web page and *iC* Moodle.

These give access to digital and electronic resources – Oliver online catalogue, World Book Encyclopaedia, Facts on File, ClickView videos, online magazines, ebooks and study guides.

### General Services

Books available for a two week period

Kobo E readers with extensive e-book libraries, available for borrowing Video and DVDs available for viewing in the *iC* and from home

Scanning

Printing Photocopying

Periodicals available - one week loan period

### Co-Curricular

**Cosy Reading Café** on Monday lunchtimes. Students are permitted to eat their lunch in the *iC* whilst reading in the Reading Area. Hot chocolate is provided in the winter terms.



**The Lunch Bunch – iC Book Club.** The club meets on Tuesdays at lunchtime in friendship or year groups - we choose a book to read together and meet weekly to discuss.

## **ABORIGINAL CONTACT TEACHER**

Merici College has an Aboriginal Contact Teacher, who provides an essential link between the College and students of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and their families.

The Aboriginal Contact Teacher coordinates tutoring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in literacy and numeracy and works with students and their families to 'close the gap' for this group of students.

## **Programs**

This group is called *Narragunnawali* which means 'Alive, wellbeing, coming together' in the Ngunnawal language.

The Narragunnawali Mob seeks to create an environment where the community experiences indigenous Australian culture and gives opportunity to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to celebrate their heritage, to highlight positive experiences, acknowledge the past and develop relationships with the local Ngunnawal people. The Narragunnawali Mob is also known by its shorter name the Merici Mob.

Reconciliation is about equal and respectful relationships between Australians with and without Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. Reconciliation is for all members of our Merici community: students, families and staff from all cultural background.



## **DEFENCE TRANSITION MENTOR**

At Merici College we are fortunate to have a significant number of students from Defence families. To facilitate the transition into College life we have a Defence Transition Mentor (DTM).

The role of the Defence Transition Mentor is to support the Defence School Transition Aide Program and assist young people from Australian Defence Force (ADF) families as they progress through their secondary schooling years.

The objective of the program is to ensure that all ADF students achieve the highest educational outcome during their latter schooling years. This is achieved through mentoring personal and social wellbeing, furthering educational pursuits, offering guidance when required and supporting these aspiring young adults during times of parental absence.



## **CURRICULUM**

The Junior Curriculum at Merici College is based on the Syllabus Treasures New and Old, Stages 4 and 5 and the Australian Curriculum 8.3. The incorporation of Australian Curriculum content (understanding, knowledge and skills), cross curriculum priorities and general capabilities has followed the ACT implementation plan for Phases 1-3. Within these expectations for teaching and learning of specific content and skills, Merici aims to give students choice through an elective program.

Merici is constantly reviewing its course structures and subject offerings. Adjustments for the full implementation of the Australian Curriculum and BSSS requirements are being planned for 2018.

## **LOCKERS AND VALUABLES**

Each student is issued with a locker located in her House area near her Pastoral Care Room. Students do not carry their bags with them, leaving them instead in the locker. They may access their locker before school, at recess and at lunch.

Large sums of money should not be brought to school. Valuables of any kind should be stored in the student's own locker, secured with a good quality key lock. Locks are supplied to students in Years 7 & 8. We prefer students to not use combination locks other than those issued by the school. The use of iPods, iPhones, Mp3 players and mobile telephones is not permitted during lessons and formal activities. They are brought to school at the child's own risk. All articles of uniform and valuable items should be clearly named.

## **DAILY ORGANISATION**

The College runs on a five-day cycle, with 6 periods allocated to each day. Student move to the morning Pastoral Care after the warning bell at 8.45 am. Warning bells ring five minutes before the end of Recess and end of Lunch. Students have 3 minutes to move from Period 1 to Period 2, Period 3 to Period 4 and between Period 5 and Period 6

Class	Length	Start	Finish
PC	0:10	8:45	8:55
Period 1	0:50	8:58	9:48
Period 2	0:50	9:51	10:41
Recess	0:30	10:41	11:11
Period 3	0:50	11:11	12:01
Period 4	0:50	12:04	12:54
Lunch	0:30	12:54	1:24
Period 5	0:50	1:24	2:14
Period 6 - Junior	0:50	2:17	3:07
Period 6 - Senior	1:08		3:25

The lessons in Periods 5 and 6 flip in order in odd and even weeks. Lessons for senior students will finish at 3:25pm Monday to Thursday.

## ATTENDANCE

Students are required to attend all timetabled lessons during the school day. It is required that Junior students attend from 8.45am-3.07pm.

Religious activities, Pastoral Care and Sports Carnivals activities are important, compulsory elements of our school life and must be attended by all students in Years 7 through to Year 12. Attendance rolls are marked each period and students frequently late or absent without valid reasons will be referred to their House Coordinators.

Any absence during the day must be explained by a note from the students' legal guardians or parents and must be presented either in PC that day for a short absence or the first day the student returns to school following the absence. If a student is absent from school, parents are required to inform the school either by phone – 6243 4165 or email [attendance@merici.act.edu.au](mailto:attendance@merici.act.edu.au) . An SMS message regarding absent students will be sent to all parents if their child is absent. Parents must opt out of this service if it is deemed not necessary.

Students are responsible for catching up on work missed due to illness or other circumstances. Excessive absences without explanation may prevent the awarding of grades in a semester and in extreme cases the awarding of Year 10 or 12 Certificates.

As indicated on the Assessment Outlines, all absences (without prior advice) on the day that assessment is due must be, in the case of seniors, notified to the subject teacher or Studies Coordinator and covered by a parental note or doctor's certificate. In the case of juniors, absences are to be covered by a note from the parent to the teacher concerned indicating that the parent/guardian knows that assessment was due on the day of absence.

All absences for senior students must be explained within 7 days of the return to school. Failure to do this may lead to the student voiding the unit (in line with BSSS policy) and possibly placing their academic package in jeopardy. Parents of Senior students are sent regular reports showing the total of Explained and Unexplained absences. Students are not entitled to have holidays during term time.

As the College is legally responsible for students during school hours, parents must provide written permission for junior students to leave during the day and the Sign Out processes must be completed. Junior students are expected to show their note explaining the reason, time of departure and mode of transport to their Pastoral Care Teacher at the beginning of the day and have it signed.

All Senior students are required to be at school from 8.45am. Senior students may sign out during the day, when they do not have scheduled classes, by signing out at the Student Services. A parent's note is not required for seniors in non-scheduled class time but they must sign in and out. A senior student may not sign out until after recess to ensure they maximize their non-scheduled class time studying.

We would ask that family holidays be scheduled during the allocated breaks. Requests for extended leave must be made in writing to the Head of Junior School (Years 7 – 9) and Head of Senior School (Years 10 – 12)

## **FIRST AID**

The First Aid Room is situated adjacent to the Student Services Office and supervised by a member of staff with current Senior First Aid Qualifications. If a student becomes ill, a teacher will refer her to Student Services.

If a student is too ill to remain at school her parents/guardians will be contacted to make necessary transport arrangements. Students are not permitted to make their own arrangements with parents to leave school when ill.

In an emergency, the College will make every effort to contact parents, but if they cannot be reached and/or the situation is urgent, the College may make the decision to call an ambulance. There is no charge made for the ambulance from the College to hospital, but parents are responsible for any other costs.

In keeping with ACT Schools Authority policy, it is not possible to dispense analgesics (such as paracetamol) to students.

If your child is unwell it is strongly advised you do not send her to school sick. We cannot provide space for students to spend lengthy periods of time lying down.

## **BUSES**

The College is serviced by 3 bus companies: ACTION for ACT students and Q City and Transborder for NSW students. This means that students from all areas of Canberra and outlying districts are generally able to access dedicated school bus transport to and from Merici. For students from the south side of Canberra, dedicated services to Merici are provided from the Woden Interchange and route buses are available to link with these services. Up to date information on bus routes and timetables is available from the following websites:

[https://www.action.act.gov.au/school\\_services.html](https://www.action.act.gov.au/school_services.html)

<http://qcitytransit.com.au>

<http://www.transborder.com.au/>

To apply for a NSW Travel Pass please complete online application form at:

[transportnsw.info/school-students](http://transportnsw.info/school-students)

Each year, senior students are appointed as Bus Prefects and are given the responsibility of monitoring student behaviour on buses and reporting concerns to the Deputy Principal Development.

## CANTEEN AND WASTE FREE LUNCHES

The emphasis in our canteen is on providing healthy and nutritious snacks, meals and drinks. Canteen facilities are available to staff and students before school, from 8.00 a.m. until 8:45 a.m., and at recess and lunch times. Junior students are not permitted to purchase from the canteen during class time. Senior students may purchase from the Canteen throughout the day.

Students complete their purchases by swiping their Charge Card. The Charge Card can be loaded with cash before school and at recess Monday to Friday and lunchtimes Monday and Thursday.

In an effort to support sustainability and reduce unnecessary waste we request that students bring waste free lunches to school. Students will need to take home all wrappings and non re-usable to recyclable items.

## UNIFORM AND PERSONAL PRESENTATION

The College uniform is compulsory. Each student is required to wear the correct uniform for the season, to and from school. It is advised that all garments be marked with the student's name.

### Uniform requirements for Years 11 and 12

Summer	Winter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pleated navy skirt regulation length and style – knee length or below knee</li> <li>• College white blouse</li> <li>• Sheer or opaque black tights or plain white fold-over ankle socks or higher</li> <li>• <b>Sturdy lace-up plain black polishable leather school shoes which cover the whole foot (no Mary-Jane style shoes, no ballet slippers, no heels greater than 4cm and no backless shoes)</b></li> <li>• Ribbons and scarves to be in school colours (navy, gold, maroon, black, white)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as Summer uniform plus Merici navy vest or wool jumper</li> <li>• Sheer or opaque black tights</li> <li>• College blazer (compulsory)</li> <li>• College school bag or satchel (compulsory)</li> <li>• Regulation navy trousers</li> <li>• <b>Sturdy lace-up plain black polishable leather school shoes which cover the whole foot (no Mary-Jane style shoes, no ballet slippers, no heels greater than 4cm and no backless shoes)</b></li> <li>• Ribbons, scarves, beanies and gloves to be in school colours (navy, gold, maroon, black, white). Scarves, beanies and gloves to be worn ONLY to and from school due to very cold mornings and late afternoons - NOT to be worn during the school day</li> </ul>

### Uniform requirements for Years 7-10

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer Dress – knee length or below knee</li> <li>• College navy wool jumper</li> <li>• Plain white fold-over ankle socks or higher</li> <li>• <b>Sturdy lace-up plain black polishable leather school shoes which cover the whole foot (no Mary-Jane style shoes, no ballet slippers, no heels greater than 4cm and no backless shoes)</b></li> <li>• Merici College school bag or satchel (compulsory)</li> <li>• Ribbons and scarves to be in school colours (navy, gold, maroon, black, white)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winter wool skirt- knee length or below knee</li> <li>• College white blouse</li> <li>• Sheer or opaque black tights</li> <li>• College navy wool jumper</li> <li>• Regulation navy trousers</li> <li>• College jacket (optional)</li> <li>• <b>Sturdy lace-up plain black polishable leather school shoes which cover the whole foot (no Mary-Jane style shoes, no ballet slippers, no heels greater than 4cm and no backless shoes)</b></li> <li>• Merici College school bag or satchel (compulsory)</li> <li>• Ribbons, scarves, beanies and gloves to be in school colours (navy, gold, maroon, black, white). Scarves, beanies and gloves to be worn ONLY to and from school due to very cold mornings and late afternoons - NOT to be worn during the school day.</li> </ul>
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Sport	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College sports shirt (new blue shirt compulsory for all Year 7 to 10 students and Senior PE).</li> <li>• College PE shorts with school logo.</li> <li>• Plain white fold-over ankle socks or higher</li> <li>• Suitable sports shoes</li> <li>• College tracksuit (compulsory for all Year 7 to 10 students and Senior PE)</li> <li>• College cap or wide brimmed hat</li> <li>• Ribbons, scarves, beanies and gloves to be in school colours (navy, gold, maroon, black, white).</li> <li>• Sport uniform items cannot be mixed in with the regular school uniform</li> </ul>	

All bags are to be kept in the lockers provided for each student. They are not to be taken to class, with the exception of PE bags/Dance bags.

#### The College Uniform is Available from:

- **Lowes**, Queanbeyan, Gungahlin and Belconnen Branches
- **MacDonalds Children's Wear & School Wear**, Jamison Shopping Centre and Gungahlin Shopping Centre

#### Second-hand Uniforms

The College has established a notice board adjacent to Student Services for students and parents to advertise for themselves any items that they would like to sell. You can also buy and sell preloved items such as school uniforms.

If, for an exceptional reason, a student is not able to wear an item of uniform for a day, an explanatory note should be brought from a parent/guardian, and presented to her Pastoral Care Teacher prior to the beginning of the school day. A uniform pass will be issued for the day, and is to be kept with the student. Alternative clothing must be appropriate for school wear. If school shoes cannot be worn for a valid reason, students must wear suitable alternative footwear such as runners (no slippers, thongs, sandals or backless shoes). This is for occupational health and safety reasons and unless mandated by a medical certificate, parents of students wearing inappropriate shoes will be called to bring appropriate footwear to the school. In keeping with the College ethos, the College expects the support of parents in this matter.

Other grooming requirements include:

- **Nail polish**, if worn, is to be of a neutral shade.
- **Make-up**, if worn, is to be invisible in Years 7 to 10 and discreet in Years 11 and 12.
- **Hair** is to be tidy at all times. Extreme styles or colour changes are not acceptable.
- While at **school** the only alternative clothing, which should be worn, is the sports uniform for PE and appropriate casual clothing for Dance.
- **Jewellery**: Students may wear a simple ring, a simple bracelet, a silver or gold chain necklace. Students who wear excessive amounts of jewellery will be required to remove it. The College will take no responsibility for its security.
- **Piercings**: Students may have a **maximum** of two pairs of small sleeper/studs in the lobe of the ear – no other piercings are permitted. If you allow your daughter to wear a piercing elsewhere this is

to be done in the 6 week long holiday to allow for the stud/s to be removed at the commencement of the school year. Piercings obtained at other times must be removed regardless of the cost you have incurred. Clear studs are not permitted.

## SCHOOL FEES

A one off non-refundable enrolment fee of \$50 is payable when a place is offered and accepted at Merici College.

System based tuition fees and diocesan building fund contribution are both set by the Catholic Education Commission (CEC) with the approval of the Archbishop and are revised annually.

The amounts for both of these for 2018 will be known in November 2017.

In addition to the tuition fees set by the CEC, catholic secondary colleges set their own local fees to cover various other costs. For Merici College, these fees consist of: a **general fee, parent levy and resource fee** (book hire). The Year 7 camp, Year 9 Urban Challenge, Year 11 conference and Year 12 retreat costs are also included in fees for these year groups.

The **general fee** covers costs associated with facilities such as information technology support, information-Centre (library) books, journals and online resources and the homework-hub. The general fee also covers transportation to school carnivals and all excursions up to the value of \$25; as well as sustainability initiatives, digital training programs, fitness centre upkeep, counselling services, and to support some of the costs associated with the College's ongoing building maintenance and renovation program. See our website for further break down of fees.

Total fees in 2017 *including* Building Fund Contribution were:

Year 7	\$7,328 including Year 7 camp
Year 8	\$6,833
Year 9	\$7,688 including Year 9 Urban Challenge
Year 10	\$7,093
Year 11	\$8,495 including Year 11 Conference
Year 12	\$8,495 including Year 12 Retreat

### Family Discounts

Family discounts apply automatically if you have more than one daughter at Merici College. Discounts also apply if you have other students at St. Francis Xavier College, St. Clare's College, MacKillop College or John Paul College, provided that the College is informed.

### Fee Concessions

In cases of financial hardship, parents are encouraged to apply for reduced fees. Forms are available from the Finance Office and the Fees Liaison Officer can assist in filling them out. Applications are approved by the Fees Review Committee with the family name changed to a code to preserve privacy. Arrangements should ideally be completed before the student begins school. Contact should be made with the College immediately if a problem with fee payment arises.

### Excursion Costs

All camps and retreats are included in fees, as well as excursions under \$25. Excursions that cost more than \$25 as well as extra-curricular are charged separately.

## Accounts

Accounts are sent out each term, and must be paid by the due date. Any queries should be directed to the Fees Liaison Officer. **Direct crediting/payment is the preferred method of payment.** Electronic, B-Pay and credit card facilities are also available. Fees may be paid in installments if this is convenient. The Fees Liaison Officer can assist you with the forms and with calculating the periodic payment amount.

If parents encounter any difficulties with the payment of fees or if payment has to be held over until the following term because of a temporary circumstances causing financial difficulty, please inform the Business Manager or Fees Liaison Officer immediately. In these cases, it is essential that families maintain communication with the College to make suitable arrangements. If accounts reach an unacceptable level and there is no communication with the College, the account is referred to the Fees Review Committee to decide the next action, which may include the services of a mercantile collection agency.

## Students who leave the school during the term

Persons responsible for paying school fees will be liable for school fees up until the end of term. Should payment in full not be possible at the time of leaving, please contact the Fees Liaison Officer as an arrangement for payment will need to be approved by the Business Manager.

## Students who are absent for part of or complete terms

Persons responsible for paying school fees will be liable for school fees for the whole term(s) while a student is officially enrolled. Fees must be paid by the due date. Should payment in full not be possible by a due date, please contact the Fees Liaison Officer.

## Students who are in Year 12 and who leave at the end of Semester 1

Year 12 full year fees are charged over three terms as the per annum fees relate fully to the Year 12 package. Year 12 fees are to be paid by 30 September each year. We strongly encourage all of our Year 12 students to complete the year with us to gain maximum benefit from their education package and the overall Year 12 experience. If the student elects to leave before the end of the school year, persons responsible for paying school fees are liable for the full per annum fees.

## Parent Levy

The parent association decided some years ago that instead of involving parents in fund-raising activities such as school fetes, a levy per family per term would be added to fees. The amount is set by the School Board each year after consultation with parents.

## Building Fund Contribution

A Building Fund Contribution, (\$163 per term in 2017) is charged by the Catholic Education for the maintenance and refurbishment of existing schools and the establishment of new schools. It is a family contribution paid at the school of the oldest child. It is a voluntary contribution. Requests to opt out of the contribution must be made in writing.

## Useful Forms

Please refer to the College website [www.merici.act.edu](http://www.merici.act.edu) under enrolments for current information on fees and copies of useful forms including:

- Direct Debit (DDR) Request
- Credit Card (BPOINT) Authorisation Form
- School Fee Concession Application
- Split Billing Form
- Details of Older Siblings at other CEO Secondary Schools

## PRIVACY POLICY

The CEO and System schools:

1. Manage personal information in an open and transparent way.
2. Take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to implement practices, procedures and systems relating to a school's or the CEO's functions or activities that:
  - a) will ensure compliance with the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)
  - b) will enable the school and the CEO to deal with inquiries or complaints about compliance with the APPs.
3. Have a clearly articulated up-to-date Privacy Policy about the management of personal information.
4. Only collect personal information that is reasonably necessary for the functions or activities of System Schools or the CEO.
5. Obtain consent to collect sensitive information unless specified exemptions apply.
6. Use fair and lawful means to collect personal information including health information of students, parents and staff.
7. Collect personal information directly from an individual if it is reasonable and practicable to do so.
8. If a school or the CEO receives unsolicited personal information, determine whether it could have collected the information under [APP 3](#) as if it had solicited the information. If so, APPs 5-13 will apply. If not, the information must be destroyed or de-identified.
9. At the time a school or the CEO collects personal information or as soon as practicable afterwards, take such steps (if any) as are reasonable in the circumstances to make an individual aware of:
  - a) why information is collected
  - b) who else the school or the CEO might give the information to
  - c) action and correction procedures.
10. Only use or disclose personal information for the primary purpose of collection unless one of the exceptions [in APP 6.2](#) applies. For example, for a related secondary purpose within the individual's reasonable expectations, consent for other use is granted or there are specified law enforcement or public health and public safety circumstances.
11. If the information is sensitive, the uses or disclosures allowed are more limited. A secondary purpose within reasonable expectations must be directly related to the primary purpose of collection.
12. Personal information will not be used for direct marketing, unless one of the exceptions in APP 7 applies. For example, the School has obtained consent or where the individual has a reasonable expectation of their information being used or disclosed for that purpose and the school or the CEO has provided a simple means for the individual to unsubscribe from such communications.
13. Before the school or the CEO discloses personal information to an overseas recipient it must take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to ensure that the recipient does not breach the APPs, unless an exception applies.
14. Take such steps (if any) as are reasonable in the circumstances to ensure the personal information the school or the CEO collects, uses or discloses is accurate, complete and up-to-date. This may require the school or the CEO to correct the information and possibly advise organisations to whom it has disclosed the information of the correction.
15. Take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to protect the personal information a school or the CEO holds from misuse, interference and loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.
16. Take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to destroy or permanently de-identify personal information no longer needed for any purpose for which the school or the CEO may use or disclose the information.
17. If requested, the school and the CEO must give access to the personal information it holds about an individual unless particular circumstances apply that allow it to limit the extent to which it gives access.

Note: This is a summary only and NOT a full statement of obligations.

The full CEO Policy is available on the school website under policies [www.merici.act.edu.au](http://www.merici.act.edu.au)