



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2020



**BUILDING
FUTURES**

Merici College Braddon

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Principal

Mrs Anna Masters

Section One: Message from Key Groups in our Community

Principal's Message

2020 had a significant effect within to the Merici College school community due to the impact of fire, drought, hail, death in the community and a pandemic; however, it was also a time of great community spirit, growth and resilience.

The College remained focused to the strategic plan and aspirations:

- **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, well-being and the whole person.
- **SUSTAINABLE FUTURE:** ethical practices ensure shared responsibility for the stewardship of all resources.

A major focus for the year was on innovation through remote learning, communication with parents and students and mental health and well-being. This report outlines the great work the committed staff, students and parents and carers did to ensure this community remained a safe environment to learn and succeed in.

Parent Body Message

What a year 2020 has been. The school did a wonderful job with remote learning. This was a difficult time for all and the School Board would like to congratulate the school on how well they did to keep the students engaged and being flexible for the students that did attend the campus during this time.

With this year being like no other, the school has done a wonderful job with award ceremonies being streamed live which allowed families to attend virtually. It was very effective. Another event that was done differently this year was the virtual Open Days and virtual online marketing campaign for enrolments. Added to that were the corflute signage and radio advertising.

At the end of 2020 the College also took the opportunity to thank and farewell Loretta Wholley – Principal of Merici College since 2013. It has been a pleasure watching Merici College grow under her leadership. She is an inspiration to girls' education. We wish her every success at her new school in Melbourne.

Student Body Message

2020 has been full of hardship and hope. From bushfires to global pandemic, this year was not what we were expecting. Building Futures, our theme for 2020, meant seizing opportunities, making an impact, creating positive changes to yourself and the world around you, and growing into your best self with a bright future.

The year started off with a series of activities including the Swimming Carnival and Donate Life Walk. When Covid-19 hit and school went into remote learning, we thought it was important to do what we could to stay connected and create the Merici Feel Good Page. This MS Teams group was designed to keep our student family connected and positive during isolation. Challenges were also set to encourage and engage students and staff to get out of their comfort zones and have some fun at home. Challenges included recreating childhood photos, making album covers and taking selfies.

We would like to thank everyone for trying to make the most out of this year and we would like to wish the Captains for next year the best of luck. We would also like to thank Mrs Wholley for being a wonderful principal and wish her all the best at her new school.

Section Two: School Features

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.
- is an IB World school offering the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Diploma Years programmes.
- 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.
- 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.
- provides support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through the Narragunnawali group
- offers a wide range of co-curricular activities in sporting, cultural and social experiences, placing emphasis on broadening education and leadership opportunities.
- 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 classrooms and gardens
- has an excellent sustainability, kitchen garden and healthy eating initiatives.
- received the 2020 ACTSmart Sustainable High School Student Leader of the Year.

Section Three: Catholic Identity and Faith Formation

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

Religious Life & Religious Education

STRONG FAITH: to build a strong and positive Catholic identity, where faith is nurtured, and all are empowered to serve others.

2020 was the year of *Building Futures* at Merici College. It was a year like no other but one that has contributed to our formation and it plays an important role in our theme of Building Futures. We have learnt so much this year about the power of prayer. Our 2020 Scriptural focus was Jesus challenging us to build our lives on strong, sure foundations, to dig deeply so we can withstand life's storms. Jesus challenges us to live out the importance of a strong heart, built on love.

In 2020 Merici College has:

- prayed and sung together in celebration and during times of grief and sadness of the loss of a staff member and current student; both remotely and in person where possible.
- remote opportunities for prayer were developed and shared with the Merici community which also included student and parent input e.g. Mother's Day Prayer, Easter Reflection, Grandparent's Day.
- various platforms for communication were utilised e.g. Microsoft Teams, YouTube - Merici.
- our Youth Minister had an expanded role in the latter part of 2020 at the College to further develop Angela's Angels (YM Group), provide spiritual guidance to students, working with some RE classes and assisted with liturgical celebrations, including the virtual events and CSYMA.
- stood up for the poor, powerless and hurt – fundraising and raising awareness on social justice issues (e.g. Caritas Lenten Appeal, Catholic Mission, Vinnies Winter & Christmas Appeals, Vinnies School Sleepout, Gift of Life's Donate Life Walk, Share the Dignity, specific House-based charities.
- embraced the Christian Service Learning Program (CSLP) and developed it into an area that ensures students are brave enough to act and assist others in need. Year 10 Service Week and Reflection Morning. The CSLP and St Angela Merici Day Awards were livestreamed to members of the Merici community due to COVID restrictions.
- planned for a future overseas and Indigenous Immersion e.g. Cambodia with Camps Int'l 2020 trip cancelled but will be offering in the near future when practicable.
- implemented the new Religious Education guidelines.
- solidified our connections with local parish, Catholic Youth Ministry teams and primary schools, e.g. Marist-Merici Year 7 days and St Gregory's Eucharist Retreat cancelled 2020 (COVID) but to be reinstated for 2021.
- filled the corridors, gardens and classrooms with symbols of our faith to remind us of the love of God e.g. audit of crosses in the College and making changes where appropriate, dedicated outdoor courts in memory of teacher and renamed. Planting of rose bush in memory of Year 12 student.

Section Four: Student Profile

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 2020:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
671	0	29	671

* Language Background Other than English

Student Retention

Of the students who completed Year 10 in 2018, 64% completed Year 12 in 2020.

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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.

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.

Destination Data	University	TAFE / Other institutions	Workforce entry	Destination not reported
Year 12, 2020 Graduating Class	75%	1%	5%	19%

Section Five: Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2020:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
58	28	86

* This number includes 43 full-time teachers and 15 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	2%
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Professional Learning

In 2020 we:

- created a new timetable allowing students to choose a variety of curriculum offerings
- involved staff in professional learning plans that improved student results and outcomes
- achieved authorisation as an International Baccalaureate school for the Middle Years and Diploma Program
- developed and implemented a remote learning timetable incorporating online learning technologies
- ensured all staff met compliance in first aid, students with disabilities and code of conduct training to ensure the safety of students and staff.

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
5	36	3

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. As NAPLAN was not undertaken in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic there is no NAPLAN data available for this report.

Student Credentialing

ACT Year 10 Certificate

All 137 students received a Year 10 Certificate.

ACT Year 12 Certificate

83 students received their Year 12 Senior Secondary Certificate. 60 students graduated with a tertiary package.

Highest ATAR – 98.95

- 12% of tertiary students achieved an ATAR over 90.
- 38% of tertiary students achieved an ATAR over 80

Students have chosen to study at:

University of Canberra 51%

Australian Catholic University 6%

Australian National University 20%

Canberra Institute of Technology 8%

Other (NSW, VIC, QLD) 15%

Section Seven: School Review and Improvement

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 2020

The following Annual Improvement Plan goals for 2020 have been achieved:

Action 1.2: Increased visibility of Catholic signs and symbols throughout the College

Action 1.4.3: Align Christian Service Learning Program with MYP Service in Action Program.

Action 2.1: Achievement authorisation, develop and implement the International Baccalaureate for MYP and DP Programs

Action 2.2.1: Implement a research-based approach to inquiry learning as a whole school approach to curriculum delivery.

Action 2.3.1: Establish interdisciplinary tasks for each junior year group, varying in complexity.

Action 4.2.1: Facility upgrade program, commencing with partial refurbishment of Penola and Brescia classrooms

Action 4.4.3: Develop a Waste Management Plan that engages the community towards:

- Zero food waste (e.g. bin monitors, SAM, nude food days);
- Reducing paper usage; and minimising waste recycling.

Priority Key Improvements for 2021

In 2021 the following strategies are outlined in the Annual Improvement Plan:

Powerful Learning

Action 2.1.2: Formalise a Teacher Professional Development Program that includes MYP and DP curriculum requirements for design and delivery, Approaches for Teaching and Learning (ATL).

Action 2.5.1: Develop a self-assessment framework to support student reflections on their learning style and abilities.

Action 2.5.2: Train and trial the use of a new Learning Management System that allows for formative and summative feedback.

Action 2.6.1: Over three years (commencing 2021) all teachers will have the opportunity to participate in the Catalyst / High Impact Teaching Practice Program.

Action 2.7.1: Consolidate NCCD plan and process timeline and model.

Action 2.7.2: Update and Implement a community-based Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan.

Section Eight: School Policies

Student Welfare and Behaviour Management

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.

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. In addition, we do not sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons to enforce discipline at our school.

Student Welfare and Behaviour Management Policies were reviewed in July 2017..

The full text of the School's Student Welfare and Behaviour Management Policies may be accessed at <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/school-policies/behaviour-management-students> ..

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>.

Section Nine: Community Satisfaction

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

46% of the parent population responded to the annual satisfaction survey, up from 41% in 2019.

Merici enjoys a very high rating across most of the measures. All parent items received a rating of 2.1 - 2.5, which is very high.

Items that scored the highest (2.4 - 2.5) included:

- School is a safe place for my child
- I would recommend our school to others
- Our school celebrates student achievements
- The school communicates clearly that it has high expectations for student attendance, engagement and outcomes
- The staff at our school take an interest in my child
- I am happy with the school's facilities
- Our school is well maintained, eg. clean, buildings painted, etc.

Items with potential for growth (2.1) included the following, however, these did improve from last year's survey rating of 2.0:

- Parent/Teacher conferences are helpful at our school
- Our school promotes and sets targets for improving student outcomes
- There is a strong partnership between the parish/Chaplain and our school.

Student Satisfaction

74% of the student population responded to the survey, up from 54% the previous year.

Items that scored strongly (2.2 - 2.5) by students included:

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

Items that had an average score of 1.7 - 1.8 were:

- I enjoy the prayer life at our school.
- I value the Religious Education taught at our school
- Our school helps me to be more involved in prayer

Whilst the items with a lower average score had a particular focus around faith and spirituality, we were heartened that the score has risen from 1.4 to 1.8 over the past 2 years.

The lowest scoring rating this year was for The homework we do helps me learn at 1.6.

- My lessons are interesting
- Our school takes students' opinions seriously

Teacher Satisfaction

89% of the staff population responded to the survey, which is in keeping with previous years. The survey very strongly reflects an appreciation for a strong, caring and respectful culture and sense of belonging at the College.

Items that scored strongly (2.4 - 2.7) by teachers included:

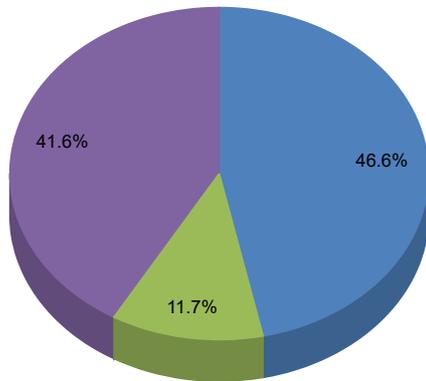
- Catholic religious identity is a strong focus in our school
- I get a lots of satisfaction from working in our school
- I am provided with opportunities to improve my teaching practice
- I would recommend our school to others
- Our school celebrates student achievements
- Our school communicates clearly that it has high expectations for student attendance, engagement and outcomes
- Our school encourages a climate conducive to staff professional learning and improvement in practice
- There is an explicit school-wide emphasis on differentiating learning within each classroom
- I have opportunities to enhance my students' learning through the use of technology

Items that had an average score (1.9) were:

- Our Staff Meetings are productive
- Parent/teacher conferences are helpful at our school

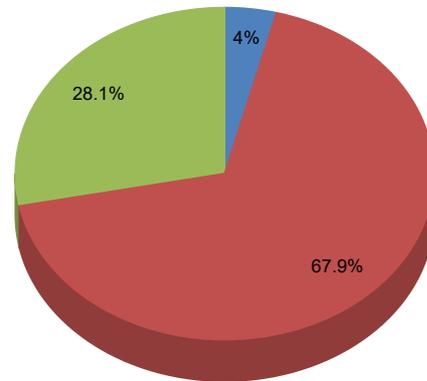
Section Ten: Financial Statement

Income



- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants (46.6%)
- Government Capital Grants (0%)
- State Recurrent Grants (11.7%)
- Fees and Private Income (41.6%)
- Other Capital Income (0%)

Expenditure



- Capital Expenditure (4%)
- Salaries and Related Expenses (67.9%)
- Non-Salary Expenses (28.1%)

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$6,691,763
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$1,684,908
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$5,970,315
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$0
Total Income	\$14,346,986

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$585,112
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$9,950,696
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$4,122,572
Total Expenditure	\$14,658,380

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.