

29 January 2025



Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Welcome all to the commencement of the 2025 school year. I hope that you had a very happy and safe Christmas and New Year holiday season. I also trust that all are ready for:

- a fresh beginning,
- to be open to new experiences, and
- are looking to continue your journey to human growth and fullness of being in 2025.

I would like to take this opportunity of welcoming our new Year 7s and students who have joined the Merici community in Years 8 through to Year 12.

This year our College theme is *Joy*. Our theme colour is *pink*. As we move into 2025, we draw inspiration from the biblical quote,

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

knowing that this feeling of lasting delight, rejoicing, enchantment and spiritual radiance resides in all of us as our birthright and as beloved children of God.

Celebrating our 2024 Achievements

Congratulations to our Year 12 Class of 2024 for their exceptional academic achievements.

2024 results include:

- IB Median: 84.625
- BSSS Median: 79.4
- Overall Median: 79.90
- Highest ATAR: 99.5
- 19% of students over 90
- 49% of students over 80
- 85% of students over 70
- 100% of students over 60

100% of BSSS attained their Year 12 Certificate

We are very proud to announce that Merici College is the highest ranked Catholic school in the ACT for Year 12 2024 results.

We encourage all students to keep in touch and let us know where their future journey of learning and adventure may take them. A destination survey was sent out and we look forward to receiving their responses. Please register to be a member of our Alumni by sending an email to Ros Parisi at ros.parisi@merici.act.edu.au.

Staffing

We welcome the following staff members for 2025:

Ellie Jones – Design and Technology Coordinator (Term 2 start)
Teena Zorzi – Sociology and Psychology
Dr Cleo Karrim – RE (started Term 4 2024)
Amanda Flynn – PE/RE (started Term 4 2024)
Brielle Papas – Dance/Visual Arts (Started Term 4 2024)
Karen Rowe – Drama, TOK and Media
Emma Hillsdon – Inclusive Education and IH
Tanisha Elliot – Maths and Science
Yilei Zhou – Maths and IT
Jessica Buchanan – RE
Emma Goodwin - Science
Olivia Bundic – Textiles and Visual Arts
Dion Oxley – English
Gaelle Pajot - French

Current Staff Changes:

Dayne Spencer – Acting Creative and Performing Arts Coordinator
Bianca Porcheddu – Acting Balgo House Coordinator
Stephanie Spiller – Senior Studies Coordinator
Kath Morris – Transitions Facilitator

Long Service Leave:

Fabrice Boon
Kerry McDonnell

Uniform expectations: Wear our uniform with pride!

Our Merici uniform is highly recognisable in the Canberra community and a symbol of our collective identity. Our smart blazers and navy uniform are highly regarded by members of the Canberra community, and they know a Merici Student when they see one.

Every Merici Student is an ambassador for our College and there is an expectation that uniforms will be worn in a responsible and respectful manner, to the highest standard of presentation.

Please familiarise yourselves with the uniform guidelines and support the College in its efforts to ensure the uniform is worn with pride and respect,

<https://www.merici.act.edu.au/resources/uniforms/>. We will be working closely with students and families to follow up on any uniform concerns to reinforce our belief that the uniform helps create a sense of belonging and contributes to our strong school spirit.

Communication and Use of Mobile Phones

We understand that mobile phones and technology are now a key part of modern life. Most students own a mobile phone with access to the internet and for safety reasons students will carry a mobile phone to contact home after or before school.

Here at the Merici, we strongly encourage our students to develop socially and emotionally. This development is just as important as any academic progress or grades. Improving social skills and emotional development can best be done by talking to each other, interacting and developing real connections at break and lunchtime, as opposed to using their mobile phones.

For these reasons, the use of mobile phones on the school site, during school hours is as follows:

During the school day, during lesson time, students must not, under any circumstances, use mobile phones to make calls, send text messages, access the internet, access social media sites, take photos or use other applications.

Students can access their phones to check messages and respond briefly via text message during morning tea and lunch while at their locker. Students are not to use their phones in any other part of the school grounds during morning tea and lunch.

During class time, students must store their mobile phones in a secure locker (**Years 7-10**) or switched off (**Years 11-12**) unless given specific permission from their teacher, or if approval has been given by the College, for example to manage medical conditions.

Any student in Year 7-10 seen using their mobile phone during school hours, including break and lunchtimes, will have their phone confiscated.

Parents are asked to contact Student Services if there is a need to get a message to your daughter during the school day. Please do not message or call your daughters directly during the school day. If it is urgent and/or an emergency, we ask that you call reception on 6243 4100, they will find a trusted adult that will deliver the message to your daughter and support her. If your daughter is not feeling well, she is to go to Student Services where parents will be contacted by the College if necessary.

If contacting a staff member, I ask that you please be patient. Most of our teaching staff are full time teachers and therefore cannot access their emails or the phone message system until they are free to do so. They will contact you within a 48-hour period.

Important Communications re: Site Works

Many have noticed building hoardings in various sites around the College. We are pleased to announce that four new classrooms are ready to be used from the start of 2025. They are situated on the far end of the oval (Wise Street).

Merici News

Updates to the calendar events, news and photos can be found on <https://merici.news>. You are also invited to follow our Facebook, Instagram and X accounts.

I look forward to seeing you all at upcoming school events such as our Community BBQ, Information Evenings, International Women's Day event and St Angela Merici Feast Day celebrations. Once again, welcome to the 2025 academic year.

With kind regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anna Masters".

Anna Masters
Principal

For your information, please find below information on the College's Annual Improvement Plan, as aligned to the College's Strategic Plan.

Annual Improvement Plan 2025

As part of the 2025-2027 Strategic Plan, the Annual Improvement Plan focuses solely on the goals and tasks allocated and/or created for 2025. This plan will ensure a continued commitment to providing a positive and nurturing learning environment that supports our school's mission and vision for the future.

Mission Statement

Merici College empowers women to love life, have hope, be faithful and build futures more wondrous than they dare to dream.

Vision Statement

Merici College endeavours to be a vibrant, faithful learning community that fosters excellence, and takes positive action to build a shared global future.

Purpose Statement

To educate women so that they are empowered to love life, have hope, be faithful and build futures more wondrous than they dare to dream.

Values

Fidelitas
Integritas
Communitas
Spes



1. **STRONG FAITH - ASPIRATION: TO BUILD A STRONG AND POSITIVE CATHOLIC IDENTITY, WHERE FAITH IS NURTURED AND ALL ARE EMPOWERED TO SERVE OTHERS.**

Domain: Catholic Identity
Strategy 1.1: Enrich charism and Catholic culture in the College
Domain: Mission and Service
Strategy 1.2: Realign the Christian Service Learning Program (CSLP) with the Middle Years Programme (MYP)
Domain: Faith Formation
Strategy 1.3: Formalise Professional Learning and Religious Education Accreditation for Staff.

2. **POWERFUL LEARNING - ASPIRATION: AN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT THAT FOSTERS LEARNING, ENABLING EVERYONE TO ACHIEVE INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE.**

Domain: Learning Frameworks
Strategy 2.1: Every student is engaged in learning
Strategy 2.2: Build low-variance, knowledge-rich curriculum
Strategy 2.3: Proactively educate students on career pathways

3. **THRIVING COMMUNITY - ASPIRATION: A CONNECTED COMMUNITY THAT CULTIVATES COMPASSIONATE RELATIONSHIPS, WELLBEING AND THE WHOLE PERSON**

Domain: Staff Culture
Strategy 3.1: Develop a collegial culture that reflects College values

Domain: Student Engagement and Wellbeing
Strategy 3.2: Promote student engagement and support mechanisms to ensure safe and orderly environments.
Strategy 3.3: Enhance student wellbeing programs and processes that support student engagement
Domain: Student Engagement and Wellbeing
Strategy 3.4: Parents/carers are actively involved in the learning of Merici students

4. SUSTAINABLE FUTURE - ASPIRATION: ETHICAL PRACTICES ENSURE SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE STEWARDSHIP OF ALL RESOURCES.

Domain: Facilities and Infrastructure
Strategy 4.1: Capital works to maximum learning and wellbeing
Domain: Financial Sustainability
Strategy 4.2: Ensure the financial sustainability of the College
Domain: Kinship and Environment
Strategy 4.3: Merici College cares for our common home