creative students
catholic values
What is important at Mercy College Mackay?

Mercy College Mackay is a unique educational facility, specifically catering for the first four years of high school.

We build on the excellent foundational work done in our feeder primary schools and go on to extend and challenge young learners, preparing them for a variety of pathways in senior school and beyond.

We value a broad based curriculum that allows students to discover new interests and abilities. In addition we work with them to make transitions to higher levels of literacy and numeracy.

Overarching this academic and vocational focus, is the environment of friendship and service that is so important to developing our students into productive future community leaders.

Supported by our staff and the wider community, we have an outstanding sporting and cultural profile with new experiences and a personal challenge available to all our students.

Parents and their support is vital to the success of learning programs at the College. Insisting on good work routines at home and setting reasonable rules and expectations, greatly assists in sustaining their child’s commitment and effort.

Mercy College Mackay is built on Catholic values and strives to develop student capability and creativity.

Mr Jim Ford
our college

The College was established as St Patrick’s Convent High School for girls, in 1930, located at the River Street site, then in 1968 Our Lady of Mercy Convent High School was opened in Penn Street later changing to Our Lady of Mercy College (OLMC).

In 1987 both St Patrick’s College and OLMC became co-educational with another name change for OLMC to Mercy College.

With a current enrolment of approximately 900 students, the College offers a unique middle school experience (Years 7 – 10).

Although we do not have many direct links with the Sisters of Mercy today, the Mercy values are firmly fostered within the College and we believe the spirit of Venerable Catherine McAuley is alive in our College, as we follow in her footsteps encompassing:

- Compassion
- Hope
- Justice

Vision Statement
To serve Christ in humanity and grow in wisdom

Mission Statement
We build foundations of optimism, faith, knowledge and creativity
We strive to achieve our greatest potential
We fashion a better world in keeping with God’s plan
Mercy College Mackay students have the opportunity to participate in specialist cultural programs throughout the year, such as concert and stage bands, choirs and various theatrical productions.

The College provides an excellent stage and practice facility enabled by the College Hall. This includes a capacity for instrumental music, drama, dance and technical support.

The Art Department provides a variety of resources to enable our students the full range of activities within the creative arts.
computer program

Education is changing and it is our intention that Mercy College Mackay students gain maximum benefit from the change. All students carry a personal iPad to all classes each day. They have full wireless capability across the campus to enable them to access College electronic resources from home. Students of the modern era need to use computers as an everyday tool and have access to a world of resources provided by the College.

The College employs full-time IT (Information Technology) staff to support and maintain the technology infrastructure operation. We encourage the use of the website by parents/guardians and students as a useful source of information and to enable direct contact with staff.

computer technology

Mercy College Mackay has an extensive computer network that provides support for the educational and business needs of the College.

Every student has access to considerable network resources including four full sized computer labs; access terminals in the Library and Curriculum Resource rooms; multi-media PCs with data projectors and sound systems in all classrooms; full high speed internet and secure email access; multi-media equipment such as scanners, digital cameras, laser printers and video capture equipment.

Many resources, including texts, are now electronic.
Community Service is also highly valued at Mercy College Mackay. Students are offered an excellent range of community service opportunities to develop a heightened sense of community and social responsibility.

Where possible, these are integrated throughout the curriculum. Some of these activities include:

- Visits to St Francis of Assisi Home for the aged
- Relay for Life
- Clean up Australia
- Bikeathon
- ANZAC day commemoration
- Student Committees
  - SRC (Student Representative Council)
  - Yearbook
  - Social
  - Well being
  - School Radio
  - Sport
  - Indigenous
  - Interact
  - St Vincent de Paul
  - Cultural
  - Book Club
  - Environment & Culture
  - Mass Band
vocational education & training pathways

Whilst having a strong academic focus, Mercy College Mackay caters for a diverse range of student interests and skills. The Careers & VET (Vocational Educational and Training) Program offers work education subjects and supports students in undertaking work experience and school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.

The skills and knowledge acquired prepares them for either VET at St Patrick’s College, TAFE or other institutions, or for the workplace.

sporting

Mercy College Mackay is centrally located enabling students easy access to tennis courts, hockey, soccer, rugby league, swimming pool and lawn bowls.

A modern hall allows sports such as basketball, netball, badminton, indoor soccer, dodge ball, futsal and volleyball to be played in all weather conditions.

Additionally, a large undercover area provides shade over two basketball courts, which may also be utilised for other sporting activities.

A large open area is available for outdoor sports such as soccer and football. This grassed area is bordered with shady trees, popular with students during lunch and recess.
Mercy College Mackay is a Catholic Christian learning community which specialises in delivering a ‘middle school’ experience for students in Years 7 to 10. At Mercy, curriculum is our ‘core business’. Here, appropriately qualified staff engage with students to foster effective learning through the acquisition of knowledge, attitudes and skills that will assist them in developing a sense of self-worth and a capacity to contribute positively to their society. Central to this teaching and learning is the desire to equip students with Christian values which we believe will enable them to face the challenges of an ever changing world.

Mercy is at the centre of the learning pathway (Years 7 to 10). Our aim therefore, is to offer a vital and well-structured four year program for each student which provides the fundamental pedagogy required for senior studies, as well as the diversity necessary to allow students to make valid and informed choices.

The provision and delivery of a varied curriculum, that is both relevant and appropriate to a middle school philosophy, provides all students with the opportunity to experience successful learning within a safe and supportive environment. We recognise that the needs of young adolescents are unique and our focus on physical, cognitive, social and emotional growth is embedded into both our curriculum and our pastoral programs.

Our curriculum seeks a balance between innovation and tradition. It is responsive to all National, State and Diocesan directives and guidelines while also maintaining elements which enhance learning for middle school students. These elements include a unitised semester based curriculum and a flexible choice of subjects catering for the needs, interests and abilities of our students. Recognising the individual nature of each student and offering a flexible structure which includes studies in careers, leadership, assignment writing and consolidation and extension opportunities, ensures that the distinctiveness of each student’s needs is provided.

As a middle school it is important that the curriculum facilitates the development of resilient young people. As such, cultural, sporting, spiritual and social learning is considered important along with academic knowledge. As well as a broad and dynamic co-curricular program, numerous units are offered which support this philosophy.

Quality teaching staff who engage in on-going learning, are seen as crucial in the learning journey of students. Teaching excellence and continued reflection on practice is cultivated and encouraged so that all students may benefit from quality teaching and learning.

Curriculum at Mercy College Mackay is embedded within community. It involves students, teachers, non-classroom staff, parents, parish, community and leadership working together as a learning community. As members of this community, we strive to enable the emergence of resilient young learners who are socially competent, have good problem solving skills, have a sense of autonomy and self-worth and have a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives.

Our curriculum is also built upon social justice principles, with the promotion of the dignity of every human person at the heart of our Christian beliefs. Implicit in this, is the need for every person to have access to the possibility of full growth regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, material poverty, social disadvantage, or physical or mental difficulty. Enrolment into the College, human and physical resourcing and unit offerings are reflective of this core belief.
subject areas

There are 11 subject areas from which students may choose.

These are:
- Religious Education
- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Humanities
  - History
  - Geography
  - Civics & Citizenship
  - Economics
  - Business
- Health and Physical Education
- Visual and Performing Arts
  - Dance
  - Drama
  - Media
  - Visual art
  - Music
  - School band
- Design and Technology
  - Woodwork
  - Metalwork
  - Textiles
  - Food
  - Graphics
  - Robotics
- Languages
  - Indonesian
  - Japanese
  - French
- Careers and VET (Vocational Education)
  - Skills for Learning
  - Work Education
  - Work Options
- Inclusive Curriculum
  - Assignment writing
  - Individual support programs
teaching excellence

Mercy College Mackay is currently embarking on an ambitious but highly important Teaching and Learning Improvement Program. The aim of the program is to embed ‘reflective practice’ in all that we do at the College.

Initially there will be a period of gathering data and investigating current teaching and learning practices, as well as a broad in-servicing of staff on the most recent developments in 21st century pedagogy.

Over the next two years (2015 – 2016) the College, under the direction of the Head of Curriculum and the Teaching and Learning Coordinator, will evaluate and assess areas of improvement and development. This will allow us to address specific goals to ensure the delivery of exciting, consistent and necessary curriculum, specifically targeted to the needs of the middle school learner. All stakeholders – the College Board, P&F Committee, staff, students and parents will take part in various stages of this improvement.

The ultimate purpose is to provide students with a learning experience that will effectively prepare them for the final stage of their senior learning pathway and ongoing into their future lives.

development of the whole student

As a middle school it is important that the curriculum facilitates the development of the whole student.

As such, cultural, sporting, spiritual and social learning is considered important along with academic knowledge. Numerous units are offered which represent this philosophy.

Examples of these include:

• Excellence in Sport – Rugby League, Netball, Futsal, Touch Football
• Festival of Fashion
• School Musical
• Year 10 Graduation
• Band
pastoral care at the college

Transition from Year 6 to Year 7

It is extremely important that the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 be as smooth as possible.

At the College, Pastoral Care responds to the needs of the school community and the individual. We create structures to bring about the best possible result for all. It is an integral part of every school activity and the responsibility of all students, parents and staff, as it helps us to effectively listen and build good relationships within our community.

Pastoral Care takes into account all aspects of the student’s development. Members of the College community are encouraged to set an example and behave in light of Gospel Values and the College Mission Statement.

All staff encourage students to believe in themselves and have hope in their future.
Mercy College Mackay focuses on its students and realises that individually, their care and well-being is important to the College and its community.

The College is divided into six House groups with a staff member designated as House Coordinator of each. The House Coordinator has an overall pastoral responsibility for each member of his or her House. Each House has its own emblem, and members are encouraged to develop loyalty to their House by engaging in friendly rivalry with other Houses through competitions such as sporting, academic, cultural and recreational activities. Students are awarded points for their Houses through attendance and performance at the various inter-house sporting events held throughout the year.

The Houses are named after varieties of sugar cane grown in this district and the Burdekin in bygone days.

Students are allocated to a House and Homeroom when they enter the College and remain there until they leave.
Student protection and wellbeing are paramount in all Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton. By the very nature of their mission and ethos, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Rockhampton place the highest priority on the safety and care of the children and young people who are their students. All students have a right to expect that the school will always do all that is possible to protect them from any kind of harm and create safe learning environments.

Mercy College Mackay is committed to best practices in student protection and the development of proactive approaches to equip people with the skills and knowledge to identify risks of harm and respond appropriately.
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