



Mater Dei Catholic College

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Principal's Welcome

Welcome to Mater Dei Catholic College. Although the College was only founded in 2004, it builds upon the traditions of the Wagga Catholic community, giving it both a rich history and an exciting future. At the heart is the Church's education mission, making connections between life, faith and culture.

In partnership with the home, the College initiates teaching and learning activities in the Catholic tradition to nurture students' holistic development. We seek to create a learning community where all members feel welcome and valued.

To keep faith with the College name, the motto "LIVE GOD'S MESSAGE", gives clear links to the example provided by Mary, Mother of God. Mary, from the very beginning of her adult life, is shown in the Gospels as hearing God's call and responding in a faith-filled way, an example to which we each can aspire. Community members are called to respond as best they are able to God's call and to use their talents to build the capacity of the College as a Catholic Professional Learning Community.

This Information Handbook is designed to answer your many questions, to provide you with information about our College, and to share the joy and enthusiasm we have for the Catholic education of all students who attend Mater Dei.

Information is also available on the College website and intranet, which is accessed through the Mater Dei splash page.

An Orientation Program will support students transitioning into Mater Dei. If you have any questions about any aspect of the information contained in this Handbook, please do not hesitate to seek clarification through the Homegroup teacher or the College reception.

Mrs Val Thomas
Principal

Motto

To keep faith with the College name, the motto “LIVE GOD’S MESSAGE”, gives clear links to the example provided by Mary, Mother of God. Mary, from the very beginning of her adult life, is shown in the Gospels as hearing God’s call and responding in a faith-filled way, an example to which we each can aspire. The motto appears within the College crest.

Community members including staff, students and parents are called to respond as best they are able to God’s call and to use their talents to fulfill their unique role in life. It is intended that students will adopt a strong sense of social justice and of service during their time at this College.

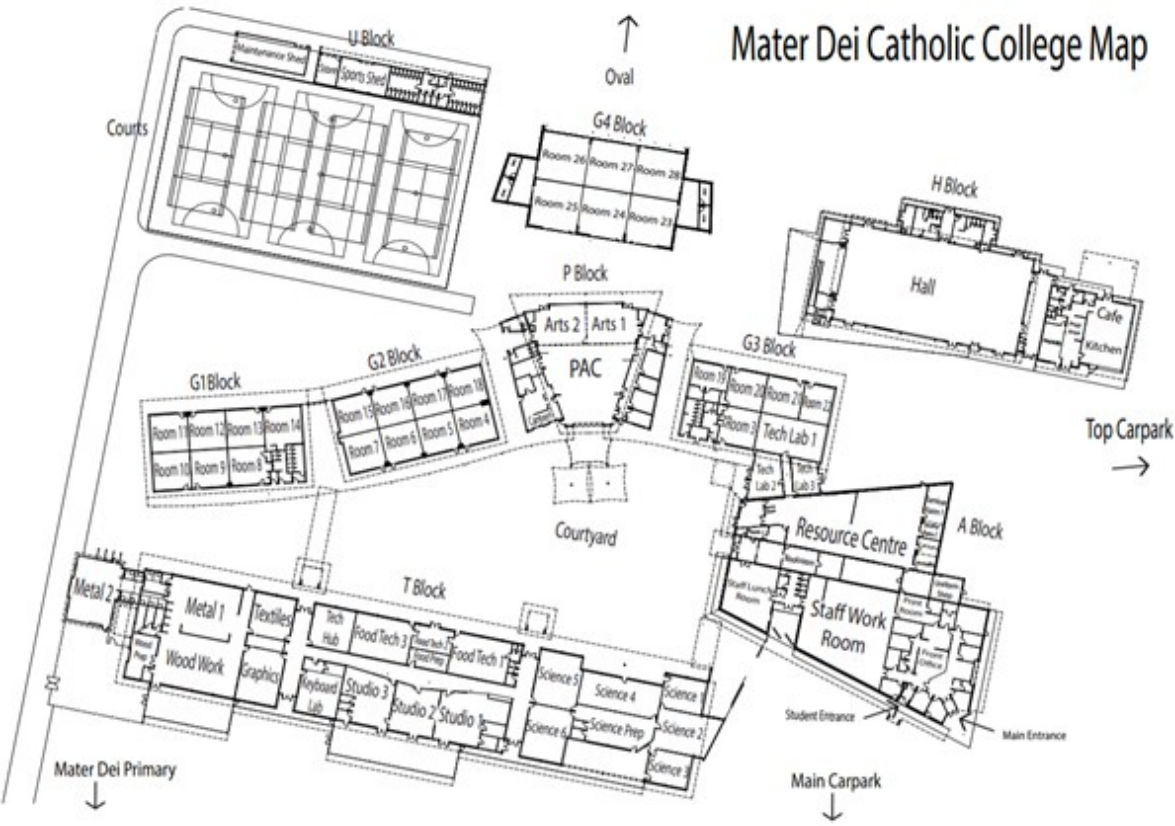
Charisms and Foundation of the College

As well as clear Marian links through the College’s name, there is a further link with the two founding Religious Orders who have been associated with Catholic Education in Wagga. The Presentation Sisters, founded by Nano Nagle and the Christian Brothers, founded by Blessed Edmund Rice, are both Marian Orders and give expression to the College’s mission and ethos through the House system and Catholic life of Mater Dei.

Details of the founders and their respective charisms are available on the College Website, together with details about their icons, which are a visual representation of their stories. The icons are housed in the Administration Building at the College.

College Map

The College map can be found below or by clicking [HERE](#).



Mater Dei Catholic College

Mission Statement

Vision

In keeping with the vision statement of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga, Mater Dei Catholic College strives to be a nurturing community which;

- Is founded in Catholic faith, justice and love
- Is inclusive
- Is learner centred
- Seeks excellence and wisdom

Mission

“The person of each individual human being, in her or his material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ’s teaching; this is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic School.” JP11 (#9)

As nurturers,

We are called to;

- Care for each individual, affirming their dignity and uniqueness
- Foster the right relationships with God, creation, self and others
- Provide particular attention to those most in need
- Build a welcoming, safe and supportive school environment

“The Catholic School fosters a particular climate where students, teachers, parents, clergy, non-teaching staff and the wider community feel welcomed and valued.”

(Barry Dwyer)

We are entrusted to;

- Nourish our spiritual life and ministry
- Connect with the Parish, Diocesan and wider community
- Strengthen relationships and communicate between members of the education community
- Make present the spirit of Nano Nagle, Edmund Rice and Mary, Mother of God

“...knowledge set in the context of faith becomes wisdom and life vision.” JP11 (#14)

As faithful we are called to;

- Strive for an understanding of ourselves and others as dignified and loved by God
- Value the unique contributions made by each person
- Practice justice through tolerance, empathy and service
- Pray, celebrate and evangelise with a Catholic perspective
- Build hope in a faith filled future

“...all human values find their fulfillment and unity in Christ.” JP11 (#3)

“...there is no separation between time for learning and time for formation, between acquiring notions and growing in wisdom.” JP11 (#14)

As learners we are encouraged to;

- Develop the values, knowledge and skills necessary to undertake lifelong personal, spiritual and intellectual growth
- Strive for excellence through programs which cater to the needs, interests and abilities of the individual

Aboriginal Education Student Support Services

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga recognises and values the importance of educational policy and goals that improve the educational outcomes for Aboriginal students and is our committed to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, supporting the Church's commitment to Social Justice.

As an expression of this commitment, the College values and fosters an expression of the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander staff, students and parents in the development of protocols that foster a deep respect of Wiradjuri culture and people and its relationship with the traditional lands upon which the College is built.

The College employs a full time Aboriginal School and Community Worker (ASCW) who provides leadership and stewardship for these processes at a College level. The ASCW is a member of the Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Team and provides support and advice to staff, students and parents across the breadth of College life. Some areas include building cultural knowledge and understanding, embedding protocols, supporting student learning needs, supporting student attendance, pastoral and wellbeing needs, liaising with families.

Further information is available on the College website and from the Diocesan "Firestick" document located on the Schools Web.

Accidents, Injury, First Aid and Medication Procedures

Illness During Class Time

Students who are ill during class time are to advise their class teacher and report to the Office before being admitted to the Sick Bay. Students will generally be sent home if their parents are able to collect them. Parents/Carers will always be contacted in the case of serious illness.

Injury

Staff Members are qualified to administer first aid. In the event of serious injury, an ambulance will always be called and the student will be taken to hospital. A Staff

Member will accompany the student to the hospital and wait until a Parent/Carer arrives. Parents/Carers will be notified immediately and given full details.

Medication

If a student is required to bring any form of medication to school, the student must have a signed note from the Parent/Carer giving full details. This note must be endorsed by the College Office and is then retained by the student. Any student who does not have a covering note will have the medication confiscated until Parents/Carers have been notified. If a student is allergic to any medication or suffers from any chronic illness, this information should be included in the student's Enrolment form.

Medication is generally handed to the Office Staff and accessed there during the school day. Students carry their own EpiPen with them throughout the school day if required. In the case of an anaphylactic reaction there is an EpiPen stored in the College office to be used in emergency situations. In the case of a student requiring Ventolin (for asthmatics) it is available for use in the College sick bay. Students reliant on injections are given access to a private room for such medication.

Administrative Details

Attendance, Absence and Leave

The College follows the Diocesan Student Attendance Policy and Procedures:

Parents/Carers commit to supporting regular attendance and to students attending all compulsory College activities (including Retreats/Camps/Reflection Days and Cross Country/Swimming/Athletics Carnivals) as a part of the Partnership Agreement signed at the point of Enrolment.

Parents/carers are required to notify the College and provide a reason for any student absence. This can be done via email, Skoolbag App or phone call.

If a student is partially absent or late he/she must report to the College Office to be signed in.

It is a legal requirement that students are at school unless prevented by illness or on approved leave. If an absence of more than 3 days is unexplained, contact will be made with parents/carers.

If a family is applying to take extended leave the appropriate paperwork must be completed and signed by the Principal and parent/carer as required by Government legislation. An Application for Exemption from Attendance at School form is to be submitted to the College Office prior to the leave. Absentee notes can be downloaded from the College Website under the tab of Student Services.

Partial Absence - Early Departure During the School Day

Parents/Carers are requested to avoid making appointments for their daughters/sons during school hours. This includes sport and activities for Years 7 to 10 which is integral to the Curriculum. If an appointment is unavoidable during school time, the parent is to complete the absentee note which can be found on our College Website. Any student leaving early must present their parental permission and the parent or carer is required to come to the office to collect their child. The roll is then adjusted by the Office staff. If applicable, upon returning, students are to return to the Office to sign back in.

Punctuality

School commences at 8.45 am and students are expected to be on site prior to the commencement of the school day. Any student who arrives at the College after 9.00am must report to the Office with a note for being late and receive a late note which needs to be handed to their teacher. Consistent lateness impacts student learning and will be followed up with parents/carers.

Anti Bullying and Fostering Respectful Relationships

The College actively promotes and fosters the building of respectful relationships. In the event of interpersonal conflict, a restorative approach is used. Rather than adopting a punitive response, this involves supporting students to rebuild relationships with the aim of strengthening community spirit.

The College follows the Diocesan Anti-Bullying Policy, which is available on the College website and has documented College Guidelines and procedures in place. Concerns about student wellbeing should be directed to the relevant Homegroup or House Leader.

Assemblies and Award Ceremonies

College Assemblies are held during each term in addition to special ceremonies throughout the year.

These assemblies are an opportunity for staff and student groups to address the school community on significant issues and any community concerns.

Both general information and specific issues are addressed. Students and staff are encouraged to use these forums to report to the student body details of any particular event.

Additionally special ceremonies during the year recognise high achieving students and students who have secured laudable improvements in all aspects of schooling. Parents/carers are invited to attend Academic Assemblies and special gatherings.

Award Ceremonies

Term 1 Wk 1: Academic Assembly for Year 12 of the previous year (Dux)

Term 3 Wk 1: Semester 1 Awards

Term 3 Wk 10: Year 12 Awards and Mass

Term 4 Wk 7-8: Sports Awards Evening

Term 4 Wk 9-10: Annual Awards for Years 7 – 11

Bell Times

Students receive their timetable at the commencement of the school year. The College has a fortnightly timetable alternating between A and B weeks. The weeks are labelled on the College Calendar. All students will be emailed a copy of their timetable at the commencement of the College year.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.45am - 9.00am	Homegroup	Extended Homegroup to 9.10am	Homegroup	Homegroup	Homegroup
9.00am - 10.00m	Lesson 1	Lesson 1 9.10am to 10.05am	Lesson 1	Lesson 1	Lesson 1
10.00am - 11.00am	Lesson 2	Lesson 2 10.05am	Lesson 2	Lesson 2	Lesson 2
11.00am - 11.30am	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
11.30am - 12.30pm	Lesson 3	Lesson 3	Lesson 3	Lesson 3	Lesson 3
12.30pm - 1.30pm	Lesson 4	Lesson 4	Lesson 4	Lesson 4	Lesson 4
1.30pm - 1.50pm	Lunch 1	Lunch 1	Lunch 1	Lunch 1	Lunch 1
1.50pm - 2.10pm	Lunch 2	Lunch 2	Lunch 2	Lunch 2	Lunch 2
2.10pm - 3.10pm	Lesson 5	Lesson 5	Lesson 5	Lesson 5	Lesson 5

Bursaries

It is important that applications for Bursary assistance are made at the same time as applications for enrolment in the College. Financial assistance is available only to students from Year 7 onwards and only when the funds will allow it. The commitment

from the College is to sustain the Bursary for the duration of a child's secondary education. Financial assistance from the Bursary Fund is given on an individual student basis. In the interests of sharing this assistance among as many families as possible, the presumption should be that a family is likely to receive only one Bursary.

In the interest of accountability, a family must re-apply annually for Bursary assistance, in accordance with the timelines specified, and re-submit the most current financial documentation so that their eligibility for a Bursary can be reviewed. The obligation of strict confidentiality is incumbent on both the recipient family and the College Executive overseeing management of the Bursary Fund.

The College grants a Bursary to a student on the understanding that it is a debt of honour. In other words, it is expected that the recipient will do all in his power to repay that debt sometime in the future and give another young person the chance to have a Bursary place at Mater Dei Catholic College.

Bursary Application Process

The provision of complete supporting financial documentation is necessary before any application, or renewal of Bursary, can be processed. This will include:

- Copies of tax returns for the past two years;
- A Statutory Declaration from the applicant's parents attesting to their financial positions(s).

If you are interested in applying for a Bursary for the following year please forward the above financial documents with a letter addressed to the Principal requesting consideration. Within your letter please provide the reasons why you have sought a place at the College for your child and outline how you believe that your child's qualities and gifts will contribute to the College.

Calendar

The College Calendar is available on google calendar. The College calendar is a confirmation that these events have been scheduled, unless marked tentative.

Parents/carers and students are advised to check the Calendar on a regular basis as it may be updated during the year to reflect changing College needs.

Camps and Retreats

Staff are allocated to be involved and associated with at least one activity related to the Spiritual Development of each Year group.

- Year 8 and 12 involve off-site camps of 3-4 days duration
- Year 7, 9, 10 and 11 are single days for Reflection and Spirituality

Catering

Canteen

The Mater Dei Catholic College Canteen offers fresh, healthy food options for students and staff. Dietary requirements can be accommodated. Boarders' lunches are made available from the Canteen each day.

The Canteen is open from 8:30am to 8:45am and during recess and lunch each day.

The College appreciates the assistance of parent volunteers at the Canteen and enquiries about volunteering can be made to the Office.

Cafe

The Pear Tree Café, which overlooks Lake Albert, is open each school day from 8am until 2pm. Members of the public are welcome to enjoy morning tea or lunch. The menu is seasonal with slices and light meals cooked on site. Staff and senior students access the café during recess and lunch.

Child Protection - Safeguarding Children and Young People

The College follows the policies, processes and protocols of the Diocese of Wagga's Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable people, which is available on the Diocesan Website. This provides information regarding complaints, policies, safeguarding services, external agencies, public documents and support services.

College Yearbook

A Yearbook is produced each year towards the end of Term 4 by the College Promotions Officer. A copy is provided for each student at Mater Dei.

Communication with Staff and Families

The College has policies and process in place to ensure regular communications with parents/carers.

The Lines of Communication flowchart below assists parents/carers and members of the community with contacting the College community by directing them to the initial and follow up points of contact in the areas of Pastoral Care and Wellbeing, Learning, Mission/Faith, School Fees/Finance and Co-Curricula (Sport and Performance Music).

The College publishes a fortnightly newsletter by email for parents/carers. Email and text communication is used to contact families. Information is available on the College website and via social media.

Contact with students during the school day can be quite difficult and time consuming to locate students, it is requested that telephone messages for students be restricted to urgent matters only.



Mater Dei Catholic College Lines of Communication

This information is provided to you to facilitate communication between home and the College. Most issues at a large College like Mater Dei Catholic College can be resolved very quickly if directed to the correct staff member. To assist you and your daughter/son, the flowcharts below details the lines for effective communication within the College.

Please note that the college office/reception hours are 8.00am - 4.00pm Monday to Friday

Student Wellbeing and Academic Care

First:
Issues relating to student wellbeing, illness and notes, issues at home, uniform and appearance requirements, issues with public transport, student health and day to day arrangements are directed to your child's **Homegroup Teacher** in the first instance.

Next:
The relevant **House Leader**.

As Well:
At this stage you may wish to involve the **College Psychologist** (Mrs Anne Hodgkinson).

Then:
The **Leader of Students** (Mrs Catherine Banks), who works with the House Leaders, for serious issues in relation to student academic care and wellbeing, discipline issues, detentions, student progress, absences etc.

Then:
The Principal
All appointments with Mrs Thomas are via Mrs Cindee Mallise the Principal's Personal Assistant.

Academic

First:
Issues relating to specific subjects, learning and teaching, which include assignments and tests, homework, resources and equipment, are directed to the **class teacher** in the first instance.

Next:
The relevant **KLA Leader of Learning**.

As Well:
If it is a **specific learning difficulty question** you may wish to consult with the **Leaders of Inclusive Education** (Mrs Janine Olsen for Year 7 and Year 8 or Mrs Amanda Bruce-Goodlet for Year 9 to Year 12 and **Disability Provisions**).

Or:
If it is a specific question to **Careers, Year 10 Work Experience or University Entrance** you may wish to consult the **Careers Advisor** (Mr Richard O'Connell). If it is a **VET Related Question** such as TAFE or work placement, the **KLA Leader of VET** is the College contact.

Then:
The **Leader of Curriculum** (Mr Laurie Fitzpatrick), who works with the KLA Leaders of Learning, for issues in relation to College curriculum, student illness and misadventure, student assessment, NESA requirements, reporting etc.

Then:
Assistant Principal Mr Daryl Lawrence who works in conjunction with the **Leader of Curriculum** on all areas of College learning and teaching. All appointments with Mr Lawrence are via Mrs Jenine Driscoll, the Assistant Principals Personal Assistant.

Then: The Principal.
All appointments with Mrs Thomas are via Mrs Cindee Mallise, the Principal's Personal Assistant.

Mission

The Leader of Mission (Mrs Rebecca Gill) is the contact person for Catholic Faith and Mission, Reflection Days, Camps and Retreats.

Finance

The College Finance Manager (Mrs Rebecca King) is the contact person for matters related to fees and finance.

Co-Curricular Activities

Sport

Mr Nathan Irvine is the contact person for matters relating to sport.

Music

Mrs Kayleen Murphy is the contact person for matters relating to music lessons, instruments and music administration.

Performance Music

Mr David Saxon is the contact person for matters relating to Performance Music.

Complaints and Suggestions

The College welcomes suggestions and encourages parents/carers to raise concerns appropriately so a response can be made. Mater Dei follows the Diocesan Complaints and Suggestions Policy, which is located on the College website.

Corporal Punishment Not Permitted

Mater Dei Catholic College expressly prohibits corporal punishment as a method of student discipline.

The College does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.

Curriculum

Learning and Assessment

At Mater Dei Catholic College we put learning first. Students are encouraged to seek excellence in all that they do. Our learning environments strive to be engaging and dynamic spaces that facilitate meaningful learning opportunities where expectations of students and staff are high and in which a culture of feedback for success is nourished.

Curriculum and Assessment is overseen by the Leader of Curriculum. The College Policy is comprehensive and has relevant links within it to comply with NESAs and the College. Students are provided with Stage appropriate Assessment Handbooks which outline course requirements in accordance with NESAs.

Subject Selection

The Leader of Curriculum, supported by the KLA Leaders of Learning, has oversight for the subject selection processes. Students select two electives for Year 9 and Year 10 and one interest elective that is studied in year 9 only. Students are guided in this process through information talks and a Subject Selection Handbook.

During year 10 students and parents/carers are involved in the subject selection for the Higher School Certificate Course, which is studied over seven terms in year 11 and Year 12. Students and parents/carers are guided through this process by a

Subject Selection evening, information talks and a parent/student subject selection interview in Term 3 of year 10.

Departure From the College - Student Clearance Process

When a student leaves the College at the end of the year they are required to submit a completed Clearance Form which has been signed by both parent/carers, bring in laptop to be removed to from college network and all textbooks before they leave.

When a student leaves the College Under the age of 17 years of age it is a legal requirement that parents/carers provide the name of their new school on the Clearance Form.

Students who have completed Year 10 but who are under 17 years of age have the choice of continuing their study with a registered training organization, seeking full-time paid employment or a combination of study, training and paid employment, such as a registered Apprenticeship or traineeship. Forms and associated documentation indicating this path must be completed and submitted to the College prior to departure.

Detention

A lunchtime detention facility operates every day for students who infringe the College Uniform and Appearance Policy. After School Detention may be used as a mechanism to allow students to 'catch up' or complete work that has not been completed in usual class time or by an assigned date e.g. assessment tasks. Students who choose not to engage in learning may be placed on afternoon detention after a discussion with parents.

Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown Procedures

The College has clear procedures in place to support students and staff in the events of an emergency that required either evacuation or lockdown of the site. The Evacuation and Lockdown Plan is provided in each learning area for reference. In accordance with WHS requirements, drills are held regularly and evaluations and feedback utilised to strengthen future processes.

Enrolments and Induction

The College follows the Diocesan Enrolment Policy and has an enrolment process for Year 7 that begins in Term 1 and concludes with an orientation day for incoming students in Term 4. Applications for other year groups are welcome and students are usually placed on a Waiting List for the following year. Places are offered as they become available in accordance with the Enrolment Policy. Full details are provided on the College Website on the Enrolment page.

Exams

Formal exams are held during the following months:

Month	Year	Exam
March	12	Mid-Course Exams
May	7 and 9	NAPLAN
May	9 – 10	Mid-Course Exams
August	12	Trial HSC
September	11	End of Preliminary
October/November	12	HSC Exams
November	9 and 10	End of Year Exams

Exclusion, Suspension and Expulsion

The College follows the Diocese of Wagga policy and procedures regarding student exclusion, suspension and expulsion. These are based on procedural fairness and transparent processes that recognise and affirm the dignity of all involved and are grounded in procedural fairness. Further information is available from members of the Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Team and on the Diocesan website.

Excursions

Excursions are an important and valuable part of student education. Where excursions involve the students leaving the school premises or being absent from normal classes, the Diocesan Excursion Guidelines are followed. The College has developed clear procedures for the organisation and leading of excursions. This includes parents/carers granting permission for students to participate in off site learning. Most excursions are a component of an elective course. Where a excursion is a compulsory element of the curriculum, such as the Year 8 Camp and Year 12 Retreat, financial support for families is available upon application through the Leader of Mission.

Houses and Homegroups

As a reflection of the College's mission as a Catholic School, learning is supported by a House based Pastoral Care system that focuses on student wellbeing. House Leaders, with the support of Homegroup Teachers, are responsible for approximately 140 students across Years 7 to 12. Each House has 7 or 8 Homegroups who meet on a daily basis at the commencement of the school day to say the prayer, mark the roll and read the daily notices. The important functions of Homegroup are to support learning and to build a sense of community. An emphasis is placed upon Homegroup Teachers knowing their students well, supporting them with their learning and all aspects of school life and liaising with parents as required.

The five College Houses are:

Carroll House – Patron: Archbishop Francis Patrick Carroll

Kennedy House – Patron: Mr Graham Kennedy

Rosarie House – Patron: Sr Rosarie Connell

Sherrin House – Patron: Br Carl Sherrin

Webber House – Patron: Sr Barbara Webber

Information about each of the Houses, their Patrons and Leaders is available on the College Website.

House Days

Each of the Houses is assigned a day during the year to celebrate and engage in activities as a way of promoting House spirit, engagement in fun activities, and usually, to raise some money for a designated charity such as Caritas and Catholic Mission.

These events are organised by the House Leader and House Captains.

Homegroups 2018

Homegroups 2018			
House Leader	House	Teachers	Room
Virginia Baggio	Carroll 1	Carol Ewin & Kurt McPherson	Computer 2
	Carroll 2	Michael Kanck	Textiles
	Carroll 3	Sophie King	Food 1
	Carroll 4	Scott McAuliffe	Graphics
	Carroll 5	Don Huckle & Amanda Bruce-Goodlet	Food 2
	Carroll 6	Nicole Lane	Food 3
	Carroll 7	Matthew Hope	Studio 3
	Carroll 8	Bianca Steman	Computer 1
	Detention	Mark Gleeson	
Peter Simpson	Kennedy 1	Michelle Lumsden	Science 1
	Kennedy 2	Charles Anderson	Science 2
	Kennedy 3	Rod Buik	Science 3
	Kennedy 4	Sharon Chandler	Science 4
	Kennedy 5	Nathan Irvine	Science 5

	Kennedy 6	Anne Smith & Rebecca Saxon	Science 6
	Kennedy 7	Kate Nolan	Studio 1
	Kennedy 8	David Saxon & Jacinta Hyde	Studio 2
Ruth Fraser	Rosarie 1	Monique Graham & Jackie Walker	Room 29
	Rosarie 2	Bridget Lutze	Room 30
	Rosarie 3	Stacy Curran & Craig Britton	Room 23
	Rosarie 4	Nick Fahey	Room 20
	Rosarie 5	Ian McGrath	Room 24
	Rosarie 6	Shaun Ellis	Room 25
	Rosarie 7	Bianca Fonte	Room 27
	Rosarie 8	Courtney Freebody	Room 28
Steve McCormack	Sherrin 1	Courtney Langtry	Room 15
	Sherrin 2	Richard O'Connell	Room 16
	Sherrin 3	Genelle Keough	Room 17
	Sherrin 4	Trish Fellows & Sharon Ruthven	Room 18
	Sherrin 5	John Preston & Bernadette Priest	Room 4
	Sherrin 6	Mel Cramp	Room 5
	Sherrin 7	Amanda Ryan	Room 6
	Sherrin 8	Pat Noonan & Janine Olsen	Room 7
	Webber 1	Stephen Wheeler & Tess Lawrence	Library 1

Pauline Streckfuss	Webber 2	Kristen Fuller	Tech 3
	Webber 3	Michael Ryan	Library 2
	Webber 4	Amelia Bright & Jason Jolley	Tech 1
	Webber 5	Emma Thompson	Room 3
	Webber 6	Janelle Baggio	Tech 2
	Webber 7	Karina Rudd	Room 22
	Webber 8	Amy Hazelwood	Room 21

Inclusive and Diverse Learning

The College is committed to equity and excellence for all students and follows the Diocesan policies and procedures for inclusion. As well, the school policy and procedures ensure that the curriculum is made accessible for all students through adjustments.

The Inclusive Education Department, which comprises two teacher leaders and a number of Teacher Assistants, oversees the provision specific support for students with a diagnosed disability. This support involves adjustments to learning according to the individual needs of the student.

Liturgies and Masses

Liturgies and Masses are celebrated during the school year. They are coordinated by the Leader of Mission. Students are asked to assist at various times e.g. reading at Mass, leading Prayers of Intercession.

Whole School Masses are celebrated to open the year, for Founder's Day and at the Feast of the Assumption. Year Groups celebrate special milestones; Year 12 Commitment Mass and Graduation Mass and class masses.

Whole School prayer services are incorporated into College Assemblies and celebrate the significant Religious Days of the year, community days and the College's heritage.

Mobile Phone Policy

At Mater Dei Catholic College we value and promote the *responsible use* of mobile phones. The following guidelines are examples of *responsible use*:

- Mobile Phones may be used in the classroom for the purposes of learning at the discretion of the teacher; however, they are not a replacement for laptops.
- As per NESA expectations, they cannot be taken into any examination.
- When taking pictures and/or video the permission and consent of participants must be obtained. Using pictures and/or video which cause embarrassment to others is not responsible use of a mobile phone.
- Text messaging, on a needs basis, can take place at recess or lunch.
- Students are not to make or receive calls during the school day.

Mt Erin Boarding School

Students from Year 7 to Year 12 have the option of Weekly Boarding at the Mt Erin Boarding School (MEBS), which is located in Edmondson Street.

Staff at Mount Erin strive to make the students' time there a happy and positive experience and to provide a climate in which they can strive to reach their full potential. There are periods of supervised study each evening and with tutors on hand to assist students with their homework and assignments. During the school week boarding students are able to attend music lessons, orchestra practice, sport and sports training, practices for school productions and so on. The boarding students also enjoy the use of the after school facilities at Kildare Catholic College.

For transport to and from home each weekend, there are four Boarders' bus runs travelling via Adelong to Tumut, via Temora and West Wyalong to Lake Cargelligo, via Rosewood to Tumbarumba and via Darlington Point to Griffith. This allows students from these areas to continue their Catholic education through to Year 12. There is also transport available on normal school buses to the following areas: Lockhart, Galore, The Rock, Gundagai, Junee, Tarcutta, and Coolamon. Boarding students are able to avoid lengthy daily bus trips, enjoy the benefits of a Catholic education in a safe and caring environment without sacrificing their family life at home.

Students are transported to and from Mater Dei by the MEBS bus each day and a packed lunch is provided for them and made available at the Mater Dei College Canteen. An early/late bus pick up ensures that Boarders have access to before and after school activities at Mater Dei such as tutoring, sports training and musical ensemble lessons and practice. Students returning from excursions are also collected from the College and transported by MEBS staff to the Boarding School.

The College has in place processes and procedures to support the learning and wellbeing of Boarders. These include:

- Daily feedback from the Director of Boarding on student focus and achievement in evening study is provided as an online report to all members of staff
- Fortnightly family newsletter, which is made available to staff and outlines student achievements in the preceding fortnight.
- Clear and consistent processes for communication between the Director of Boarding and the Principal/Leader of Students to ensure that student academic care, wellbeing and progress is monitored. These include joint processes to manage student enrolment, academic care and illness/injury, with the involvement of parents/carers as deemed appropriate.
- The College Pastoral Care and Discipline Policies, which are aligned to MEBS policies and practices, provide a framework for the provision of a safe and supportive learning environment for Boarders while they are engaged in learning at Mater Dei.

Parent/Carer Information and Support

The Diocese provides information on topical parenting issues in the form of an interactive program through School TV. Details are available in the Wellbeing page of the College website, in the Parent Information section. As well, a number of articles and programs are provided on a range of teenage areas for parents/carers.

Parent/Teacher/Student Interviews

Interviews are usually held at these times throughout the year:

<i>Year 12:</i>	May (3.30pm – 7.30pm)
<i>Year 11:</i>	June and October (3.30pm – 7.30pm)
<i>Year 8, 9 and 10:</i>	May (2 nights over 2 weeks – A-K and L-Z [3.30pm – 8.00pm]) and October (2 nights [3.30pm – 7.00pm])

Parking and Vehicles

Licensed senior students are permitted to drive to school and park in the main car park adjacent to the bus bays. Students are not permitted to access other parking areas at the College.

As well as following all driving regulations, students who drive to school are required to exercise great caution to ensure the safety of pedestrians and other drivers arriving and departing the College.

Student drivers are not permitted to transport other students without the permission of parents/carers.

Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

The Leader of Students has overall responsibility for Student Pastoral Care and Wellbeing and is supported by the members of the Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Team which is comprised of the House Leaders, College Psychologist and Aboriginal School and Community Worker (ASCW).

The College has in place a House based Pastoral Care system. Each House is led by a House Leader who is supported by a team of Homegroup Teachers.

An allocation of staff to Houses and Homegroups is included in this Handbook.

Students are allocated into a vertical Homegroup with their siblings. Homegroups meet for 15 minutes each morning and an additional 5 minutes on Tuesdays. During this time the Homegroup prayer is said, notice read and the attendance roll marked.

As well, time is allocated to Homegroup and House activities that build a sense of community and support student learning.

Student Representative Council

The College Leadership Team, in consultation with the House Leaders, elects the Student Representative Council, connecting the student body to College structures. Along with the newly elected College Captains, one Student from each House from years 8, 9, 10 and 11 is elected to the SRC, 32 students in all.

Successful candidates will have the opportunity to serve a two year tenure, and demonstrate through an application process a clear understanding of their contribution to a framework of learning, faith and servant leadership. At Mater Dei, our Student Representative Council is shaped around the following goals:

- Educational – students develop skills in leadership and communication
- Democratic – every student has a voice
- Responsibility – students solve real problems and make real decisions
- Sharing – students share with the College Leadership Team, teachers and the College community in the decision-making
- Caring – students care about their College and what happens in it and to it
- Inspiring and rewarding – students experience enjoyment through successful participation

The SRC will work to support the initiatives of their Year Group, House and across the wider College. Meetings will be held twice a term at lunchtime and are chaired by a member of staff, and supported by the College Leadership team.

The SRC will initiate, plan and conduct activities that may promote and build leadership skills in the areas of;

- *Building community spirit*
- *Health and well-being*
- *Environmental sustainability*

Social Justice Working Party of the SRC

The Social Justice Working Party comprises students from Years 9, 10 and 11 who have the opportunity to nominate for a role within the SRC. Successful candidates will have the opportunity to serve a two year tenure.

Areas of service include:

- *St Vincent De Paul charitable works*
- *Social Justice Initiatives*
- *Green Team*
- *Caritas - Lenten Project Compassion*
- *Catholic Mission fundraising*

There are many ways in which we fulfil our role of being a voice of social justice in the world.

Our Social Justice group supports the good works of St. Vincent de Paul in Wagga Wagga. Regular initiatives that take place each year are the Easter Egg Raffle which raises around \$1000 for Edel Quinn (St. Vincent de Paul). The group also support the Christmas Food and Gift appeal in Advent, aiding the local St. Vincent de Paul societies to provide for the people of need in Wagga Wagga. Leadership from our social justice group also led to our inaugural Winter Warmth Appeal which began in 2010 and is now an annual event. The Winter Warmth Appeal is one example of being authentically Christian, it demonstrates our desire for justice in the world in selfless love for others, especially the poor.

The Melbourne Street Retreat continues to grow as an important social justice experience with students keen to participate. The Street Retreat, shown in the photo, is aimed at helping the homeless and students very quickly realise how blessed they are to have food and a roof over their heads. Students help out at the Vinnies soup van, they entertain women at McAuley House (formerly known as Regina Coeli) and they visit the Olympic Village Exodus Community, assisting them with a yard clean up. Students become inspired to continue their involvement in volunteer work back in the Wagga Wagga community.

Each of the five Houses at the College has a Catholic Mission fundraising day. These days raise funds that go to Catholic Mission each year to support the spiritual, pastoral care and building programs, overseas and in remote Australia.

During the season of Lent, the College community supports the Caritas Project Compassion appeal with money being collected in Homegroup each morning. All who struggle to find meaning in their life are challenged to recognise the extraordinary in the ordinary.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

The College values the voice of students in establishing expectations about behaviour and attitude towards learning. Ideal Classroom Norms and Ideal Learning Environment Norms are developed on an annual basis by all students in a collaborative process and frame the rights and responsibilities of students at Mater Dei:

General Student Expectations

- Mobile phones can be used for learning purposes in class.
- No iPod/MP3 players used in class, unless teacher allows
- No food/drink in classrooms or the Resource Centre. A water bottle is permissible.
- Zero tolerance for swearing and harassment
- Zero tolerance for games on computers

Photography/Video Publication Consent

Parents/carers are required to give permission for the publication of their children's name and images in photos and videos created or used by the College. It includes class photos, yearbook, newsletters, digital displays, College website and social media outlets. As well, promotional material may include print, billboard, brochures, newspaper and television advertising.

In addition to the above students may be required to produce photos or video as part of curricular activities. Images produced for this purpose are only used within the College for that purpose. Failure to do so may affect educational outcomes. If those

images are to be published beyond the curricular requirements, parent consent will be sought by the College.

Performance Music

The goal of the Performance Music program is to provide opportunities for students to join one or more ensembles for the purpose of performance. A number of peripatetic teachers visit the College each week. The College currently offers Choir, Concert Band, Jazz/Stage Band and Strings for students from Year 7 to Year 12. As well as community performances, various ensembles take part in a local Eisteddfod. Opportunities for performance are also available as a part of the College Musicals, which are held every two years.

Prayer

At the heart of Mater Dei Catholic College is a vibrant community of prayer. It is one of the defining characteristics of the College community. Each morning students and staff engage in Homegroup Prayer that is meaningful and relevant to our young people today. Prayers are offered for those in need and in communion with the rhythm of the wider Church.

Prayer begins all formal gatherings, including College Assemblies. Assembly prayers are shaped by influences such as the Liturgical Year and the College's heritage.

Policies and Procedures

A selection of Diocesan and College policies are available to parents/carers and students on the College Website in the Publications section of the Welcome Page.

Privacy Legislation

Mater Dei complies with relevant legislation regarding the gathering, use and retention of personal information. This includes requests from the Minister for additional information for a report to Parliament, which are referred to the Schools Consultant for response and action.

The Diocesan Privacy Policy and Privacy Manual located on the Publications page of the College website outline the processes and procedures required for handling confidential information.

Psychologist

The College Psychologist is on site each day and is a member of the Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Team. She works with the Leader of Students and staff to foster student wellbeing and build resilience.

Resource Centre

The Resource Centre is open from 8.00am to 4.30pm on Monday to Friday. Students may also access the Centre at recess and lunchtime for individual and group learning, reading and recreational activities. As well, board games are available and Year 12 students may access the Resource Centre during Study Lessons and other times when classes are not programmed.

An extensive Resource Centre webpage is accessible to students from the College splash page.

Reports

Reports are usually sent out:

Year 12	Mid Course Reports	May
Year 7-11	Mid Course Reports	June
Year 12	End of HSC Reports	August
Year 11	End of Preliminary Reports	October
Year 7-10	End of Year Reports	December

Reports are emailed out throughout the year. Year 12 final report and Year 7-10 End of Year Reports are printed. Year 12 are posted and Year 7-10 are handed out in Homegroup at the End of Year Liturgy Awards Evening.

Scholarship Information

Details of the scholarships and bursaries and the respective application processes are available on the College website and are additionally published in the College

newsletter during Term 2. Applications are made in Term 3 and results are published in Term 4.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga are committed to valuing effort, achievement and excellence in learning. The provision of academic scholarships is one way of making explicit this value placed on the pursuit of excellence. Families are invited to apply for the following scholarships, which will be offered for Year 7 students and Year 11 students commencing at Mater Dei in the following year.

Academic Scholarships

Academic Scholarship will be awarded to two Year 7 students and two on the basis of academic merit. These scholarships have tenure of four years. Two Year 11 students will also be awarded an academic scholarship for the tenure of their two years at the College. These scholarships are for the remission of 50% of the tuition fees for each year of the scholarship. It is expected that scholarship holders will demonstrate a high level of commitment to their studies and be positively involved within the College.

Applications for the Academic Scholarships close mid August (date will be confirmed) and must reach the College by close of business on that date. The Scholarship Examination will be held at the College on the first Friday in September. It is not possible for students to undertake the examinations on any other day or at any venue other than the College.

The scholarship tests are external, conducted by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).

Music Scholarships

Music Scholarships are offered to two Year 7 students which will apply for four years for Year 7 to Year 10.

The scholarship will consist of 50% of tuition fees for the school year, the College's membership fee and instrument hire (if required). The scholarship will apply for four

years and will be reviewed each year according to a recipient's aptitude for improvement as well as their application to their music group(s).

The recipient of a Music Scholarship will be expected to study elective music in Year 9 and 10 and become a member of music performance groups as deemed appropriate.

The Principal and Coordinator of Performance Music will shortlist applicants with a view to holding interviews and auditions in October. Notification of both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be made in writing during Term 4.

Kerrie Matthews Scholarship

The generous support of the Matthews family enables the College to offer the Kerrie Matthews Scholarship. The scholarship recognises commitment to study and contribution to College life. Details of the scholarships and bursaries and the respective application processes will be published in the College newsletter and emailed to parents during the month of July.

The Kerrie Matthews Scholarship will be offered annually to one Mater Dei student and covers 50% of tuition fees for their final two years of schooling. It is expected that the scholarship holder will demonstrate high levels of effort and application to their studies and be positively involved in College life.

School Hours Supervision of Students on Site

School hours are 8.45am to 3.10pm. Staff supervision is provided in the central courtyard of the playground from 8.30am until 8.45am when Homegroup commences. After school, supervision is provided at the bus bays for students departing by bus.

The College Resource Centre is open from each school day from 8.00am to 4.30pm for student use.

Year 12 students who attend the College on their fortnightly RDO are not supervised on site except in the Resource Centre during the school day.

Students are not permitted on site outside supervised hours.

Security

Students are responsible for the care of their own property and school bags and laptop bags are carried to class. Students are strongly discouraged from bringing expensive items to school. The College is not responsible for the damage or loss of personal items such as mobile phones. All clothing should be labelled with the student's name and appropriate identification.

Students are reminded that it is essential to respect the property of other students and the College. This is a core requirement of the Partnership Agreement signed by students and parents at the point of enrolment.

Student Sponsorship Policy

Students are periodically selected to represent the state in national competitions, or represent Australia in international events. The College seeks to recognise and support such outstanding achievement.

The College will provide funds to contribute towards the cost of payment of some of the costs incurred by the families of students who have been selected for and then attended State or Australian National Sporting Trials for sports with a pathway through Diocesan competitions. Sponsorships will also be available to students representing the College at a co-curricula or curricula event (such as Music, Arts, Science, Politics or Leadership) where selection has been at a state or national level.

Applications may be made to the Principal by families for financial support as per these guidelines. Families would need to provide:

- Details of the representative activity and the selection process
- Proof of attendance at a State or Australian trial/competition or learning opportunity.
- Evidence of payment (eg receipt, bank transfer) for student to participate in trial/event.

The College will support individual students with a maximum sponsorship at the following levels:

- State Representation for Sport, Curricula or Co-curricular - \$250
- National Programs - \$300

- International Programs - \$500

Sport

The Sport Program is scheduled as a part of PDHPE practical lessons and is held on site.

Sports Carnivals

The Swimming Carnival, Athletics Carnival and Cross Country are held during Term 1. Attendance is compulsory for all students and forms part of the Partnership Agreement signed by parents and students at the point of enrolment.

Mater Dei International Football Association (MDIFA)

In Term 3 a significant whole school soccer competition takes place at lunchtimes. The competition usually takes several weeks to complete. Teams consist of staff and students and are given names of countries of the world. Students are encouraged to be involved.

Representative Sport

Mater Dei Catholic College prides itself in offering many sporting opportunities in the areas of Rugby League, AFL, Cricket, Basketball, Netball, Touch Football, Tennis, Hockey and more. Many of the sporting teams are entered into NSW State Competitions providing students with the opportunity to compete against schools from across the State and Country.

Locally, students are also provided with the opportunity to compete in the Combined Wagga Wagga High Schools Sports Associations competitions, which enables them to compete against all schools in Wagga Wagga. Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country Carnivals occur each year, providing students with the pathway to Diocesan, NSW Combined Catholic Colleges (NSWCCC), All Schools and National selection.

Mater Dei Catholic College has great facilities that provide students with the opportunity to train with their team at the College both before and after school. The Sports Coordinator has oversight for the Representative Sport Program and is

supported by staff who volunteer their expertise and time to coach College sporting teams.

The Representative Sport Policy and details of College competitions are provided in the Learning page of the College website in the Co-curricula section on Sport.

Student Leadership

Mater Dei is committed to the development of the leadership potential of each student. Through compassionate service students are encouraged to share their gifts and challenge unjust structures. Leadership skills are taught and students are encouraged to exercise these skills in a variety of ways, both formal and informal. The College considers all leadership to be that which emulates Jesus Christ's model of 'servant leadership'. All students, no matter their year group, are encouraged to lead others in a positive and encouraging way.

The Student Leadership Program seeks to provide opportunities for students to:

- develop their God-given talents
- appreciate that they have a responsibility to use their capacities for the benefit of others
- develop their understanding of leadership and act as responsible mentors and role models to the school community.

The College has a Student Leadership structure in place that offers opportunities across all year groups. Students are appointed as House Captains, Members of the Student Representative Council and Social Justice Ambassadors.

College Captains and House Captains

All 11 students participate in a Leadership Program in Term 2 and as a part of this experience, may choose to nominate for the role/s of College Captain and House Captain.

Appointments are made at the end of Term 3 and commence from the start of Term 4 for a twelve month period.

Student Representative Council

The College community elects the Student Representative Council, connecting the student body to College structures. It consists of students democratically elected by their peers in Years 8 to 11. The SRC works within the College and the wider community to raise awareness of identified issues within their Year Group, House and across the College. It initiates, plans and conducts activities that promote;

- *Community*
- *Relationships*
- *Fitness*
- *Environment*
- *Nutrition*

Social Justice Ambassadors

Senior students have the opportunity to nominate for the role of a Social Justice Ambassador and if successful, will be appointed for a one year term.

Areas of service include:

- *St Vincent De Paul*
- *Justice Matters*
- *Green Team*
- *Red Cross Blood Donation*

Sunsmart and Excessive Heat Statement

The College follows the Diocesan Guidelines for the protection of students from the damaging effects of the sun. The College also implements the following: “No hat no play” in the playground. Sunscreen is given to every student at Swimming and Athletics Carnivals Sunscreen is available in all classrooms.

Technology

The College provides all students with their own laptop and all learning spaces are equipped with interactive televisions and wireless access to the internet. Technology is used regularly to support student learning across the curriculum.

Students are expected to be respectful digital citizens, utilising College provided technology according to the Diocesan Acceptable User Protocols that are agreed by all students.

Any unacceptable and illegal use of technology during school hours or involving school accounts, including cyber bullying, will result in user sanctions.

As well as involving parents/carers, any such conduct by students outside school use may be referred to external agencies such as the Policy Youth Liaison Officer and the eSafety Commissioner if it comes to the attention of the College.

Laptops

All students receive a College Laptop at the commencement of the year and their acceptable use is outlined in the New Student Orientation Program. Laptops are required to be fully charged and brought to school each day, carried at all times in the provided bag. Information on acceptable use and parental responsibilities for laptop repairs, can be downloaded from the policy section of the College Website.

Uniform and Appearance

All students are expected to follow the uniform and appearance expectations. Summer Uniform must be worn during Terms 1 and 4, and Winter Uniform must be worn during Terms 2 and 3. If the uniform is unable to be worn on a particular day, students must bring a note and have it signed by their Homegroup teacher. parents/carers will:

- Ensure that students dress in the approved school uniform on the required days
- Support the school's Uniform and Personal Appearance Policy
- Ensure each student's uniform is clean, pressed and in good condition
- Instruct each child to wear the full and correct uniform between home and school at all times

- Clearly and permanently mark all clothing with the child's name
- Ensure that the sports uniform is worn only on designated sports days
- Remind children that the school hat is worn for all outdoor activities
- Ensure that jewellery is limited to two items of jewellery in line with the Mater Dei Appearance Policy
- Ensure that the child's hair is well-groomed in line with the Mater Dei Appearance Policy.

Uniform Shop

The Uniform Shop is open on Wednesdays from 11:00am – 3:30pm and Fridays from 8:30am – 12 noon during the school term. Holiday hours will be notified in the newsletters leading up to the conclusion of each term.

Email address: mdcc-uniformshop@ww.catholic.edu.au

[Uniform Price List](#)

[Returns and Donations Policy](#)

Payment by cash, cheque (payable to Mater Dei Catholic College) and credit card/eftpos is available.

Volunteering at the College

Parent volunteers are always welcome to assist at the College Canteen. A current Working With Children Clearance is required. Initial enquiries about volunteering in the Canteen are made to the College Manager through reception.