



MERCY COLLEGE

2009 COURSE INFORMATION



Mercy

COLLEGE

Years 7 & 8



Year 7 & 8

The Year 7 and 8 course information booklet provides an overview of the curriculum at Mercy College. The booklet is designed to inform students and parents of the requirements and expectations of studying Years 7 and 8 at Mercy College. All Year 7 and 8 learning is underpinned by the Pastoral Care program led by the Director of Students, Year Level Coordinator and their pastoral care support team. Education of the whole person for a life long commitment to learning is a priority implicit in all areas of the curriculum. We journey with students as they discover 'what is powerful learning' and 'what it is powerful to learn'.

Students in Year 7 and 8 at Mercy College undertake a comprehensive course of study over two years. The learning program that each student embarks upon endeavors to provide both a breadth and depth of curriculum experiences inclusive of all of the Key Learning Areas (KLAs). Students are immersed in a wide range of subjects within the KLAs, each of these subjects is based on the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). Student learning focuses on the development of skills and knowledge, some subjects are studied for an entire year and others for one semester.

Assessment at Mercy College is undertaken in all subject areas, the format and style of assessment is tailored to enable students to demonstrate their mastery of the identified learning standards of each subject. Students are challenged to extend their knowledge and understanding of key concepts as well as develop expertise in the application of skills. Harnessing the capacity to learn and to explore the depth and breadth of how students as individuals learn best is integral to Year 7 and 8 curriculum experiences.

Reporting to parents and students regularly is a critical aspect of ensuring learning is a partnership between home and school. The formal reporting process takes place at the end of both Semester One and Semester Two in the form of a semester report for each subject studied as well as a Pastoral Care report. Mid semester reporting also takes place in Terms One and Three and provides an indication to parents of student work achievement and application in the learning process. Parent – Student and Teacher Meetings are also an important aspect of home and school communication and reporting and are an opportunity to ensure that individual learning pathways for each student are managed through a parent and teacher learning partnership. Year 7 students also undertake the NAPLAN, National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy. These tests provide a valuable insight into literacy and numeracy strengths and areas for development. On demand testing facilities are also utilised in order to gain a deeper understanding of student learning development.

The specialist subject areas that students are introduced to in Years 7 and 8 are further explored through both the compulsory and individual program units offered in both Years 9 and 10. Learning experiences during Years 7 and 8 enable students to identify, consolidate and further develop their capacity to be independent learners able to confidently explore and discover learning across the curriculum. A breadth of learning experiences empower students and parents to make important course planning decisions during post compulsory schooling.

The experience of learning in Year 7 and 8 opens wide a world of skill, knowledge and understanding and develops in students the confidence to discover the unknown.

Elizabeth A. Monahan
Principal

Subjects Studied

YEAR 7		YEAR 8	
YEAR LENGTH SUBJECTS			
Subject Name	KLA	Subject Name	KLA
Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education
English	English	English	English
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
Science	Science	Science	Science
Physical Education	Physical Education	Indonesian	LOTE*
Indonesian	LOTE*	Italian	LOTE*
Italian	LOTE*		
SEMESTER LENGTH SUBJECTS			
Subject Name	KLA	Subject Name	KLA
Drama	The Arts	Dance	The Arts
Food Technology	Technology	Design & Technology	Technology
Geography	Humanities	- Textiles	
Health	Physical Education	Food Technology	Technology
History	Humanities	Geography	Humanities
Information Technology	Technology	Health	Physical Education
Music	The Arts	History	Humanities
Visual Arts	The Arts	Information Technology	Technology
		Music	
		Physical Education	The Arts
		Visual Arts	Physical Education
			The Arts

* NB: Students select either Indonesian or Italian as their LOTE study at the end of Year 7 for study in Years 8 & 9.

YEAR 7 SUBJECT DESCRIPTIONS

Religious Education

The Religious Education Program at Mercy College is based on the Archdiocese of Melbourne Religious Education Framework (Coming to Know, Worship and Love) and the mandated text book series To Know, Worship and Love. As well as the classroom curriculum students are involved in the preparation and celebration of class liturgies and participate in the Retreat program

In the first semester, students examine the role of the Mercy tradition and the history of their new school, Mercy College. They then reflect on the Christian Life and the experiences and rituals of the Church's Liturgical Year with a special focus on Lent and Eastertide. The Word of God as expressed in the Hebrew Scriptures is then examined, focussing of the Exodus story.

Second semester commences with students exploring the key stories and people of the Christian Scriptures. They then examine elements which contribute to Catholic identity and apply Catholic values to decisions involving conscience. The year concludes with a study of prayer in the Catholic tradition with a focus on the Rosary.

Learning Activities

- Small and large group discussions
- Short written responses
- Brochure
- Research assignments and presentations
- Tests
- Liturgy preparation

English

In English, students learn to appreciate, enjoy and use language and develop a sense of its richness and its power to evoke feelings, to form and convey ideas, to inform, to discuss, to persuade, to entertain and to argue. English is centred on the conscious and deliberate study of language in the variety of texts and contexts in which it is spoken, read, viewed and written.

English involves students in reading, viewing, writing, comparing, researching and talking about texts. English teachers encourage students to explore the meaning of texts and how meaning is conveyed. Critical approaches to the ideas and thinking contained in texts is introduced, students are supported in the development of a critical understanding about the ways writers and speakers control language to influence their listeners, readers and viewers.

They come to understand that different kinds of texts are appropriate for different occasions and learn to appreciate the variety of English usage in different times and places. Students learn to control language by applying their understanding of the grammatical structures of English, by learning to spell accurately and use punctuation.

Learning Activities:

- Language Writing Task
- Creative Response
- Creative Writing Task
- Research/Oral Presentation
- Writing Folio
- Collaborative Group Work
- Wide Reading Report

Mathematics

Year 7 Mathematics is a comprehensive course where students build on skills developed in primary school. Students will consolidate basic mathematical skills in the areas of Number, Space, Measurement, Chance and Data, Working Mathematically and Structure. During the course, students will use scientific calculators as well as computer applications.

During Semester 1, students complete units of work on basic operations, decimals, measurement and angles. They use their knowledge from basic operations to complete a Prime Numbers project. Students work on understanding place values in decimals and use basic operations to simplify expressions. They investigate types of angles and angles in various shapes. Students complete activities by measuring various lengths around the school enabling the application of Mathematics theory to practical scenarios.

During Semester 2, students complete units of work on geometry, fractions, algebra and statistics. They work on the meaning of fractions, equivalent fractions and operations on fractions. Students complete a folio of work on geometrical models and designs. Pronumerals, flowcharts and expressions are introduced in algebra, graphs, tables and surveys and explored in statistics.

Learning Activities:

- Problem solving tasks
- Projects
- Folio of work
- Skills based exercises
- Tests

Science

As students work towards the achievement of Level 5 standards in Science, students become familiar with the science laboratory. They have the opportunity to develop scientific skills and design and pursue investigations: observe, predict, generalise, infer and conclude. Students learn to be cautious about the safe disposal of hazardous chemicals and become aware of the effect it may have on their environment.

The curriculum focuses on VELS level 5 and on building understanding of:

- living things through the study of classification and the interactions between living things and non living things through the study of ecosystems
- chemical properties and uses of substances and their relationship to the structure of those substances
- the forces present around us and the effects of these forces on objects
- Earth and its place in space and the universe.

Students are encouraged to become curious about the world in which they live. Students display the results of investigations in tables, charts and diagrams and begin to critique and question the evidence they collect. They are given the opportunity to identify and practice the underlying values, skills and attributes of science.

Learning Activities:

- Experimental design
- Research Portfolio
- Topic Tests
- Concept Maps
- Visual learning tools

Physical Education

This unit aims to encourage life-long participation in physical activity. Students will develop and refine a range of movement and manipulative skills through participation in a variety of team and individual games and activities, including swimming and water safety classes and gymnastics.

Learning is achieved through the monitoring and analysis of the performance of self and others, and the development of strategic thinking and tactical knowledge in both individual and team situations.

Learning Activities

- Fitness testing and assignment
- Aquatic activities
- Aquatic Safety presentation
- Gymnastics activities and presentations
- Skill activities
- Games and fitness activities
- Modified sports

Indonesian

The Year 7 Indonesian course introduces the basic elements of the language and culture of Indonesia. Students read, speak and write in the language on topics related to greetings, personal identification, family and describing people. Activities include PowerPoint presentations and role-plays, written tasks and listening and reading comprehension tasks. The intercultural knowledge includes general knowledge of Indonesia, traditional music and Balinese lifestyles.

Learning Activities

- Reading and responding
- Listening and responding
- Writing skills
- Oral skills
- Cultural studies
- Language tests

Italian

The Year 7 Italian course develops the students' understanding and use of simple patterns of language. Students read, speak and write in the language on topics related to greetings, introductions, likes and dislikes. Activities include PowerPoint presentations and role-plays, written tasks and listening and reading comprehension tasks. The intercultural knowledge includes the study of Patron saints and name days, school life in Italy and soccer. Students participate in an external poetry recitation competition which allows them to explore poetry and language.

Learning Activities

- Reading and responding
- Listening and responding
- Writing skills
- Oral skills
- Cultural Studies
- Language tests

Drama

Drama, a strand within The Arts learning area, explores the communication of ideas, feelings and beliefs. It provides the opportunity for intellectual, physical and emotional development, understanding and enjoyment. Through Drama, students learn to develop skills in improvisation, scripting, dramatic interpretation and presentation, and explore and develop their ideas. Students learn to analyse and interpret performances by others as well as themselves and to appreciate drama as part of their cultural heritage. Students will develop skills in the 'basics' of Drama; gesture, voice and movement.

Learning Activities

- Mime and movement exercises
- Vocal exercises and games
- Group activity
- Script writing
- Rehearsal and performance of devised play
- Workbook record and reflection

Food Technology

This unit of work is an introduction to practical skills and nutritional knowledge. Students learn appropriate terminology, equipment names/use, kitchen safety and hygiene. Time is spent ensuring that every student gains the skills and confidence to perform basic skills such as chopping, slicing and dicing and these are practised through individual and group practical sessions. By the end of the unit every student should understand how the school domestic and commercial kitchens operate, have good foundation skills and have a firm knowledge basis for future study.

Learning Activities

- Practical food preparation skills
- Kitchen/home safety assignment
- Hygiene/safety awareness
- Introduction to nutrition worksheets
- Tests

Geography

Using a variety of geographic tools and skills, together with an inquiry-based approach, students investigate the characteristics of the Asia-Pacific region, including Australia. Students learn to represent the Earth's surface at different scales and from different perspectives using a range of maps, photographs and satellite images. They extend their knowledge and understanding of physical phenomena including natural hazards and of the physical processes that produce them.

Learning Activities

- Mapping and graphing activities
- Role play and kinesthetic games
- Class discussion and debates
- Video/slide shows
- Model making
- Internet based activities and CD Roms
- Tests and research tasks

Health

This unit aims to explore factors which promote the health and well-being of the individual. Students explore their changing roles and responsibilities as a result of the transition into adolescence and enhance their understanding of their growth and development during puberty. They examine relationships, taking into consideration strategies for managing the impact of their transient nature. Students learn to identify and manage potentially harmful situations, and, as with all concepts explored in this subject, will develop and refine critical thinking and problem solving skills.

Learning Activities

- Class discussions
- Brainstorming and sharing ideas
- Classroom and homework activities
- A-Z of Friendship
- Role plays scenarios
- Adolescent Development test

History

The History course offers students an introduction to the role of the historian and the various ways in which history can be explored and recorded. Students examine the ancient societies of Sumer, Egypt, Greece and Rome. The course focuses on strengthening analytical, empathy and research skills. Over the semester students develop an understanding of primary and secondary sources, timelines, note taking and an awareness of how ancient societies functioned. Students develop analytical skills to identify the similarities and differences between the way people lived in the past and how we live today.

Learning Activities

- Construction of timelines
- Role plays and oral presentations
- Model making
- Referencing and notetaking
- Concept mapping
- Empathy exercises
- Analysis of representations
- Tests and research tasks

Information Technology

This course is designed to introduce students to the Information Technology skills they will require during their time at Mercy College. The course will teach them how to access the College network, manage their own network storage space and basic word processing skills related to the format and layout of text and images. A theory unit of the course will cover input and output devices, design techniques and Internet terminology. Students will also explore the ethical issues associated with Information Technology and look at how modern inventions have drastically altered our modern community. Advanced Internet search techniques will also be covered to assist in the students' effective and efficient use of the Internet. Microsoft PowerPoint is used to communicate a story where the students learn how to apply features such as animations, transitions and slide designs.

Learning Activities

- Analysis of ICT theory
- Designing Word document portfolios
- Concept mapping
- Creating visual representations of data
- Researching ethical issues in ICT

Music

This course introduces students to a variety of skills; playing, composing, listening to and notating music. Playing skills concentrate on accurate performance both individually and as part of an instrumental ensemble. All students in year 7 learn to play an orchestral instrument.

Learning Activities

- Reading and writing traditional notation
- Listening to music through the elements – pitch, tempo, dynamics, duration, texture and timbre
- Study of the instruments of the orchestra
- Performance using orchestral instruments
- Written test
- Aural work
- Practical performance, both individually and as a group

Visual Arts

This course provides students with an introduction to the world of art, practical and theoretical, and encourages students to create and appreciate a variety of works of art.

The course focuses on the elements of art through drawing and painting and an introduction to ceramics. There is an Art History component in which students develop an appreciation of Australian painting, through viewing works of Art in a variety of forums.

Learning Activities

- Ceramic skills
- Drawing skills – emphasis on line
- Colour theory and colour application
- Landscape painting techniques
- Grid drawing skills
- History of Australian landscape painting

YEAR 8 SUBJECT DESCRIPTIONS

Religious Education

The Religious Education Program at Mercy College is based on the Archdiocese of Melbourne Religious Education Framework (Coming to Know, Worship and Love) and the mandated text book series To Know, Worship and Love. As well as the classroom curriculum, students are involved in a Creation Retreat Day and also the preparation and celebration of class liturgies.

Students commence the first semester by examining the importance of Creation and stewardship. They also study the place of saints in Church Tradition, and examine Eucharistic Signs and Symbols. The second semester commences with a detailed study of the First Christians, and an exploration of the different ways of being Catholic. The students then examine the Parables of Jesus and how they relate to daily life. The year concludes with the exploration of living the Christian life.

Learning Activities

- Small and large group discussions
- Written responses
- Artistic representations
- Research assignments and presentations
- Tests
- Liturgy preparation
- Reflection

English

Students learn to appreciate, enjoy and use language and develop a sense of its richness and its power to evoke feelings, to form and convey ideas, to inform, to discuss, to persuade, to entertain and to argue. English involves students in reading, viewing, writing, comparing, researching and talking about texts. They are introduced to critical approaches to the ideas and thinking contained in texts and are supported in the development of critical understanding about the ways writers and speakers control language to influence their listeners, readers and viewers.

Students develop an understanding of the way purpose, audience and situation influence the structures and features of language and learn to apply their knowledge in their reading, writing, viewing, speaking and listening. Students learn to control language by applying their understanding of the grammatical structures of English, by learning to spell accurately and use punctuation effectively and by imitating good writers and speakers.

Learning Activities

- Language Writing Task
- Creative Response
- Creative Writing Task
- Research/Oral Presentation
- Collaborative Group Work
- Wide Reading Report

Mathematics

The Mathematics course aims to introduce new concepts and builds on the knowledge and skills that students have already developed. Students will consolidate basic mathematical skills in the areas of Number, Space, Measurement, Chance and Data, Working Mathematically and Structure. During the course, students will use scientific calculators as well as computer applications.

Students complete units of work on directed numbers, geometry, probability and circles. They work on understanding the concept of numbers, both positive and negative, including operations. Students' knowledge of angles is used in parallel lines and polygons. Work is completed on the perimeter and area of circles and theoretical and experimental probability, and students complete projects in the topics of probability and circles.

Units of work on ratio, algebra, linear graphs, linear equations and networks are also undertaken. Pronumerals and flowcharts are further explored in algebra. Students expand and factorise basic algebraic expressions, solve equations using inverse operations and they explore the graphical representations of linear equations.

Learning activities:

- Problem solving tasks
- Projects
- Skills based exercises
- Tests and examinations

Science

Science at year 8 contributes to the development of students into scientifically and technologically literate citizens who will be able to make informed decisions about their lives and about the physical and social environments in which they wish to live.

The curriculum focuses on VELS level 5 and on building the understanding of:

- the particle model to explain structure and properties of matter, chemical reactions and how different substances are created through chemical change.
- the similarity and diversity of living things and their relationships with one another and their environment with a focus on what is needed for living things to survive, thrive or adapt, now and in the future.
- concepts of energy and force as a way of explaining physical phenomena
- the history of our changing earth.

Students learn to be curious and to use scientific processes to find answers to their questions. They continue to design and pursue investigations; generate, validate and critique evidence; analyse and interpret ideas and link them with existing understanding; work and reason with scientific models and communicate their findings and ideas to others. They identify and practise the underlying values, skills and attributes of science.

Learning Activities:

- Experimental Design
- Investigations presented as an Oral Presentation or as a Display.
- Topic Tests
- Library/Internet research

Indonesian

Year 8 Indonesian expands the students' understanding and control of language through the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students learn the language in varied and interesting ways through topics such as fashion, food, animals and their environment and school. Students will be expected to display understanding of topics through the completion of related activities, and should develop confidence in speaking with the proper pronunciation and intonation. They will also gain further insight into Indonesian culture and lifestyles through the study of batik, Indonesian food, folk stories and school life in Indonesia.

Learning Activities

- Language tests
- Reading and responding
- Listening and responding
- Writing skills
- Oral skills
- Cultural studies

Italian

Year 8 Italian expands the students' understanding and control of language through the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students learn the language in varied and interesting ways through topics such as family, animals, colours, musical instruments, sports, countries and nationalities. Students will be expected to display understanding of topics through the completion of related activities, and should develop confidence in speaking with the proper pronunciation and intonation. They will also gain further insight into Italian culture and lifestyles through the study of the Latin origin of words, Ancient and Modern Rome, music and the regions of Italy.

Learning Activities

- Language tests
- Reading and responding
- Listening and responding
- Writing skills
- Oral skills
- Cultural studies

Dance

Students are introduced to the conventions of dance as an art form and social convention. Students are asked to reflect on the different reasons why people dance, focusing on social dance of the 20th and 21st centuries. Students will be encouraged to look at how these dance forms can be used as inspiration for their own dances, both social dances and dance art. Safe Dance Practices, the Elements of Movement and expressive intention are all explored. Students learn technique exercises and a dance piece for the end of semester performance. This unit also addresses positive self image and confidence as expressed through movement. Students are required to purchase a black dance costume in order to participate fully in Dance.

Learning Activities

- Technique exercises
- Learnt Dances (including at least one for public performances)
- Composing dances individually and in groups
- Watching videos as examples of dance as a form of expression
- Written analysis of the Elements of Movement
- Reflective writing on learning experiences

Design and Technology - Textiles

Students are introduced to the use of the sewing machine through the construction of a simple garment, either shorts or pants, that would be suitable for casual weekend wear. They will cover a variety of developmental machine exercises together with appropriate seam and hand sewing finishes. All students will cover basic construction skills such as seam neatening, application of a waistband or facing and a variety of hemming techniques. Students will also use a variety of resources to research teenage fashion to develop a personal profile and a relevant design brief. A journal is kept to outline each student's skill development and examine any problems encountered. This will form the basis of an evaluation report which will be submitted on completion of the student's garment.

Learning Activities

- Practical garment construction skills
- Construction of a pair shorts/pants
- Development of a design folio incorporating fashion trends and a range of design options

Food Technology

Year 8 Food Technology encourages students to develop an interest in food by increasing their understanding of preparation techniques, cooking processes and the properties of food. They will also develop an understanding of the food required for every day needs and general good health. Students will develop an appreciation for food by investigating and working with food and analysing how different food preparation techniques influence the properties of food. Following productions students will evaluate the food made, using correct terminology and have the opportunity to make suggestions for modification of food for different outcomes.

Learning Activities

- Investigating key foods
- Development of production plans in response to design briefs
- Researching nutritional issues
- Practical food presentation skills

Geography

Using a variety of geographical tools and skills, together with an inquiry-based approach, students investigate the characteristics of the Asia-pacific region, including Australia. They explore how and why, over time, human and physical interactions produce changes to the characteristics of regions. Students investigate a number of smaller regions to develop an appreciation of the differences in culture, living conditions and outlooks of people.

By investigating environmental issues such as global warming students can begin to evaluate existing policies and design new policies for managing the impact of these issues and ensuring the sustainability of resources.

Students continue to use sources of spatial information along with collecting and processing data to present a summary of results using a range of techniques, such as graphs and maps.

Learning Activities

- Mapping and graphing activities
- Role play and kinesthetic games
- Class discussion and group work
- Debates and research tasks
- Model making
- Internet based activities and CD Roms
- Music and dance activities
- Tests and reports
- Web quests

Health

This subject aims to help students gain a better understanding of the whole being by examining their increasing independence and subsequent responsibilities with regard to decision-making processes. Students explore personal values and their impact on individual health choices, focusing on personal food intake, drug use, peer and media influences, and potential health-based support networks within the local and broader community.

Learning Activities

- Class discussions
- Brainstorming and sharing ideas
- Classroom and homework activities
- All About Me assignment
- Healthy snack presentation
- Smoking pamphlet

History

Humans are shaped by their past. The structure of our society today has evolved from the changing power structures of Western Europe. In Year 8 History we attempt to equip our students with the ability to research, interpret documents and to empathise with people and events of other times. These skills will help them understand the different power structure within the Feudal System, the rapid changes of the Renaissance and Reformation, leading to the dawn of the Industrial Age and modern society.

Learning Activities

- Game making
- Role plays
- Empathy work
- Extended written pieces
- Analysis of representations
- Tests and research tasks
- Debates
- Referencing and notetaking
- Concept maps

Information Technology

This course is designed to build on the Information Technology skills and knowledge already developed. Specific computer theory related to the operations performed by different computer components will be explored, for example the CPU, RAM and ROM. Students learn how to design and develop their own web pages using Microsoft FrontPage. As part of the website production, students are introduced to a variety of image formats and simple image manipulation software such as Ulead Photo Impact and webpage animations. Students work with Microsoft Excel to develop skills in applying formulae to perform simple calculations, and with Microsoft Access to become familiar with the basic concepts of relational databases. This course also makes students aware of the need for computer security and privacy and the threats of computer hacking and viruses.

Learning Activities

- Website Publishing project
- Creating integrated Word / Excel assignment
- Storyboarding
- Programming and designing a computer game
- Developing image portfolio using Photostory

Music

Year 8 Music aims to broaden the students' experience and enjoyment of music. It builds on the skills and concepts developed in Year 7. Students continue to be actively involved in music making through listening to, writing and performing music. Singing and playing of keyboards and percussion instruments will enhance a broader knowledge of music styles, terminology and theoretical understanding as students are encouraged to compose their own music. Students also undertake a research project in groups on Rock Music.

Learning Activities

- Creating Gregorian Chant manuscripts
- The Evolution of Rock and Roll project
- Reading and writing music in the treble and bass clef
- Performance using keyboard and percussion instruments
- Test – written and aural work
- Practical performances, both individually and as a group

Physical Education

This unit aims to encourage life-long participation in physical activity. Students will develop and refine a range of movement and manipulative skills through participation in a variety of team and individual games and activities, while exploring the relationship between activity, fitness and health. Learning is achieved through the monitoring and analysis of the performance of self and others and the development of strategic thinking and tactical knowledge in both individual and team performances in games including softball, netball and soccer.

Learning Activities

- Fitness testing and assignment
- Skill activities
- Games and fitness activities
- Sport profiles
- Player profiles

Visual Arts

This course aims to provide students with the opportunity to continue the acquisition of skills and the development of personal forms of expression through a variety of Art topics. This course is mainly practical in content, covering areas of ceramics, drawing, painting and printmaking. There is an Art History component in which the students develop an appreciation of art, respond through personal criticism and become aware of the historical context.

Learning Activities

- Ceramic skills
- Lino printing skills
- Freehand drawing and rendering skills
- Portrait drawing
- Monochromatic painting
- Art history journal