



St Mary's Cathedral College SYDNEY



Parent Information Handbook 2024

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL COLLEGE: CELEBRATING 200 YEARS

A Catholic school has been a constant presence on the site of St Mary's Cathedral since 1824. Several religious traditions have led faith and learning on this site. The school was staffed by Benedictine monks from 1824–1882; by Marist Brothers from 1883–1910, assisted by Sisters of Charity (1883–1967); and by the Christian Brothers from 1911 to 2015. Since 2016 the College has been part of Sydney Catholic Schools.

One of the first priests to the NSW colony, Fr John Therry, established the initial school on the site as an elementary school accommodating both boys and girls. Lay teachers, paid from Government funding, worked alongside the Benedictine Monks until 1882 when Government funding was withdrawn and the Benedictines focused their mission elsewhere. Archbishop Vaughan invited other religious orders to run the school, and the Sisters of Charity and Marist Brothers answered the call, operating a girls and boys elementary schools respectively. In 1887 the initial secondary schools were opened alongside the primary schools.

In 1910 Cardinal Moran requested of Br Barron, the Christian Brothers' Provincial, that a group of Christian Brothers begin work at what was then St Mary's Parochial Primary School. The Brothers expanded the size of the buildings and scope of education.

The changing nature of education and the altered demography of the Sydney CBD in these decades had an important effect in shaping the school's population. As the residential population of the CBD declined, enrolments needed to be drawn from a wider geographical area. Christian Brother Gygar (Principal, 1938–1942) established and registered the school as a 'Cathedral Choir School', which allowed students to travel free on public transport from outside the city's centre. This not only solved the problem of declining enrolments but also helped develop the musical character of the education offered at the school. This music focus is best expressed in the annual Cathedral Concerts held in the Sydney Town Hall, and the extensive music programs offered to all students. While the school ceased to admit junior primary students from the mid-1970s, the College's connection to the Cathedral Choir continued with Years 3-6 primary classes offered for choristers.

The growing population of the school and the challenges of meeting the needs of a diverse curriculum meant that by the 1980s the school's 1912 building was no longer fit for purpose. Br Hoffman (Principal 1985–2000), supported by then-Archbishop Clancy, made the decision to demolish the existing building, and build a new school on the existing site. During the rebuilding phase (1987-1992), education of the boys continued at Waverton in the refurbished naval storage sheds. In 1992 students and staff returned under the new name of St Mary's Cathedral College. Young men from Years 3-12 were educated under the stewardship of the Christian Brothers until 2015. In 2016 the College became part of Sydney Catholic Schools, and was led by its first lay Principal, Mr Michael Kelleher, and in 2023 by its first lay female Principal Mrs Kerrie McDiarmid. The proximity to the Cathedral is more than a geographical significance. Students continue to serve as choristers and scholars, and many students are involved in altar serving and other aspects of the liturgy. The Catholic mission of caring for others is exemplified in the close relationship the College enjoys with the Matthew Talbot Hostel, Woolloomooloo, Plunkett Street Public School, and Vincentian Aged Care Service.

Our Mission

St Mary's Cathedral College is a community of faith, learning and leadership. We inspire our staff, students and their families through the virtues and values of the Gospels. We take forward two hundred years of tradition in teaching and learning, centred on knowing and loving Christ on the site of the Cathedral and beyond. Our students actively participate and develop their unique character and sense of service. We achieve this through fostering their spiritual, academic and social values and nurturing their wellbeing.

Our Vision

St Mary's Cathedral College espouses the evangelising mission of the Church through collaboration between our parishes and community. The college fosters the spiritual, intellectual, physical and emotional development of the whole person, preparing students for the challenges of today, tomorrow and forever. We are a thriving Catholic Community through excellent teaching and learning.

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL: YEARS 5-8

The Middle Years are a time of change and transition as students navigate the emerging opportunities and challenges that derive from the transition into adolescence. At this stage in their learning students are navigating social, intellectual and physical changes and are developing a greater sense of self. At St Mary's we have adopted a targeted approach to learning in Years 5-8 to enhance engagement and curiosity, promote independence and develop the attitudes and dispositions that lead to lifelong learning. A challenging and engaging curriculum promotes excellence and an excitement for learning. Students are explicitly taught foundational knowledge, understanding and skills that allows them to think critically, communicate effectively and solve important problems. They increasingly begin to appreciate the world in which they live and develop an understanding of the contribution they can make to it. We advocate for a rigorous approach to the core curriculum and students are positioned to be able to begin to articulate their growth in Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Science and the Humanities. We also prioritise an integrated approach to learning where students undertake learning experiences that cultivate curiosity, promote transfer and open hearts and minds to the wonders of our world. Cross-curricular projects that aim to solve real world problems while enhancing thinking habits and learning dispositions form the basis of our integrated learning.

All students deserve schools that help them become competent and confident individuals that are proud of who they are, have a sense of belonging and connection to the College and their peers, and are prepared to succeed with a well defined character in an ever changing world. To achieve this, St Mary's Cathedral College must provide students with an environment that provides significant opportunities in a challenging learning context.

THE SENIOR SCHOOL: YEARS 9-12

The Senior Years represent an important transition period in the learning and development of students. At this stage of learning students begin to act with more agency and are increasingly challenged by the social, intellectual and moral circumstances that they encounter. The Senior School seeks to empower students to be lifelong learners able to operate with confidence in a complex, information-rich and globalised world. At St Mary's we actively encourage and inspire student self belief, a love of learning and the pursuit of excellence. Students begin to make choices in relation to their pathway for learning and the core curriculum they engage with sets strong foundations for success across all subject areas. We encourage students to explore individualised pathways and become increasingly independent learners.

The Year 9 & 10 curriculum sets strong foundations for stage 6 success while providing students with the opportunity to engage in innovative and authentic learning opportunities. The emphasis on excellence and engagement ensures students thrive in a learning environment that equips them with agency, a sense of purpose allowing them to shape their own lives and contribute to the lives of others. The College's pathways learning program in Years 9 and 10 makes explicit the strengths of each student as experts from industry, the tertiary sector and the community are invited to enhance the learning experience and make visible post school possibilities for students.

The Stage 6 experience is varied and student centred. The offerings are academically rigorous that reflect the broad and diverse nature of the world around them. We aim to develop a skills and careers education strategy that facilitates an authentic pathway for students to further education and the world of work. This strategy will:

- focus on an approach that is immersive, experiential and collaborative
- make visible the pathways, opportunities and skills required to navigate and craft career opportunities
- engage students, teachers, industry and the community in the co-construction of learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom

SMCC Leadership Team

College Executive Team

Mrs Kerrie McDiarmid	Principal
Mr Christopher Maoudis	Dean of Senior Years
Mr David Timillero	Dean of Middle Years
Ms Belinda VanderGert	Dean of Liberal Arts
Mr Thomas Hunter	Dean of Mission
Mr Ashley Norman	Leader of Pathways and Partnerships
Mr Chao Dinh	Leader of Operations and Administration

Instructional Leaders of Wellbeing










Years 5 & 6	Ms Rosa-Lia Mascera
Year 7	Ms Marie Sheehy
Year 8	Mr Les Rolls
Year 9	Ms Clementina Getley
Year 10	Mrs Lisa Towson
Year 11	Mr Fady Ibrahim (Acting)
Year 12	Mr Ben Lynch

Instructional Leaders (IL) / Leaders of Learning

Leader of Pathways and Partnerships	Mr Ashley Norman
Leader of Operations and Administration	Mr Chau Dinh-Vu
Leader of Diverse Learning	Mr Steven Foulger
Leader of Music	Ms Alison Hunter
IL Co-Curricular (Sport)	Simon Shaw
IL Languages (3-12)	Ms Elyse Williams
Leader of Curriculum and Assessment (5-12)	Mrs Anne Ung
IL Visual Arts & Drama (5-12)	Ms Michele Marshall
IL RE Curriculum (3-6)	Ms Fiona Roy
IL Music (5-8)	Mr Stefan Roberts
IL Humanities (5-8)	Mr Nicholas Pui
IL STEM (5-8)	TBA
IL Religious Education (7-12)	Charlotte Claxton
IL Maths (9-12)	TBA
IL Science (9-12)	Mr Adrian Claydon
IL English (9-12)	Mr Andrew Kuchappan
IL HSIE	Mr Ashley Pereira
IL VET (9-12)	Mr Andrew Aslanidis
IL TAS	Mr Brenden Davidson
IL PDHPE	Mr Peter Bottrill

Senior Student Leadership Team 2024

The Year 12 Student Leadership team consists of the College Captain and Vice Captain who lead a team of seven.

College Captain			
Dusan Cavric			
			
Vice Captain	Liturgy Prefect	Mission Prefect	Academic Prefect
Tyler Mrmacovski	Ryan Carlisle	Zachary Sastradjaja	Charlie Abbey
			
Media Prefect	Events & Comms Prefect	Arts & Culture Prefect	Environmental Prefect
Alexander Pas	Sen Imseang	Joel Ruz	Dylan Tran
			

House System

Our College House groups are led by our House Prefects with the assistance of the four House Captains - Moran, Polding, Vaughan and Kelly.



Moran



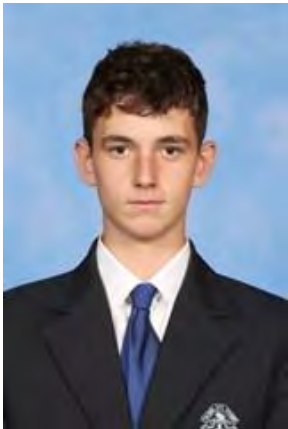
Polding



Vaughan



Kelly

HOUSE PREFECTS			
Vaughan Prefect	Kelly Prefect	Moran Prefect	Polding Prefect
<div>Hamish Marks</div> 	<div>William Kelleher</div> 	<div>Jack Avis</div> 	<div>John Oliveri</div> 

THE PHRONESIS (Practical Wisdom) PROGRAM

All students undertake our Phronesis Program which actively connects students to a deeper understanding of the connection between wellbeing and learning and their role in human flourishing. Students begin to develop a sense of learner agency and they are introduced to habits of thinking. They seek opportunities to be active, global citizens and apply principles of ethical reasoning to decision making. The program also prompts students to consider values of truth, beauty and goodness and how these connect to their learning. It is through an explicit approach to character development that a student is able to make informed decisions that enhance their spiritual, emotional, physical and academic growth.

Our Faith and Mission Engagement

1. **Our Cathedral:** Our college is proudly connected with St Mary's Cathedral. As a place of great architectural, artistic, musical and religious significance, students will have several opportunities to visit the Cathedral and be invited to participate in prayer and reflection.
2. **College Masses:** Several times a year our college community comes together to celebrate Masses in our Cathedral. These are opportunities for the community to reflect on significant days that relate to key Gospel values. Students and families are also invited to attend our 8am College Mass in the Cathedral Crypt every Wednesday.
3. **Charitable Outreach Initiatives:** Central to the religious life of our college is the person of Jesus Christ who came among us 'as one who serves' (Luke 22.27). Our college is committed to reaching out to help those indeed, through charitable outreach initiatives in an age appropriate manner. All outreach activities connect to the person of Jesus Christ and to the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. Drawing on the Catholic Social Teaching of the Church, we have a deep commitment to supporting a range of charitable organisations. Families will be invited to participate in these activities throughout the year.

Sacramental Program

Arrangements for the reception of Sacraments are organised by your local Parish. For more information on how to participate in your local parish/Catholic church sacramental program, please contact the college.

Choristers only can receive Eucharist and Confirmation through the Cathedral in conjunction with the Song School. Parents of music scholars should check with their local Parish.

Vision For Learning

Offering a comprehensive curriculum based on the teachings of the Gospel, which aims at creating 21st century learners who will become critical thinkers. The curriculum at the college is designed to empower the individual to become an autonomous, life-long learner and an active global citizen.

Learning at our College is purposeful, authentic and challenging. The staff at St Mary's are committed to academic excellence, achieved through quality pedagogy, which is attuned to the demands of a rapidly changing educational context and which recognises and supports the diverse learning of students.

BYOD

Students in years 7 to 12 are required to bring their own device. This means that the laptop computer must be one that is purchased or owned by the student and brought with them for school use. We ask that laptops are in good working order.

The designated laptop must be either a MAC or Windows PC. The device you choose must comply with the Sydney Catholic School [BYO Device Requirements](#)

Curriculum Expectations

Secondary school is a big change for all students. Moving from being in one class a day, with one teacher to a large year group, multiple classes, with up to eight teachers, and an Instruction Leader of Wellbeing (homeroom teacher).

We encourage parents/carers to spend time assisting their child in planning out the term to ensure they are fully aware of the academic obligations outlined by the college. We encourage that extra-curricular activities, such as sport commitments, are factored into your decision making processes.

The teachers will work collaboratively with our parent community to assist each student in preparing for exams and ensuring they are completing assessments by being actively engaged in their learning.

Curriculum

The College will distribute a student assessment handbook at the start of Term 1. This handbook will outline all the formal assessment tasks a student is required to complete for each of their subjects. It is common for a student to have 4 formal tasks for each course throughout the year.

Assessment tasks will be added to the college google calendar for you to view, please note that this can be synced to your own personal online calendar should you wish.

Parents and students are encouraged to consult the assessment handbook as well as the college calendar to assist in planning the week's study program.

More detailed information regarding each task will be distributed by the teacher as required.

Along with formal assessment tasks, students will be required to complete course work and activities which allow teachers to assess their level of understanding of the course outcomes and assist them in their learning. Where a student is failing to complete work as required, parents will be notified via a compass notification.

It is expected that students complete homework, revision and assignment work on a regular basis in order to stay on top of their workload and to assist in preparing for exams. This would typically take between 45-60 minutes a night, 3 to 4 nights per week.

Parents are encouraged to assist in establishing a consistent study pattern that will gradually build up over the six years of secondary school. An established study pattern will ensure students are adequately prepared for the rigors of the HSC as it currently stands.

A suggested progression would be:

- Year 7: 45 min - 1 hour
- Year 8: 1 hour – 1 hour 15 minutes
- Year 9: 1 hour 30 minutes
- Year 10: 1 hour 30 – 2 hours
- Year 11: 2 hours – 2 hours 30 minutes
- Year 12: 3 hours plus some time on the weekend

Patterns of Study

Students are currently required to undertake the following pattern of study:

Year 7	Year 8
Religious Education	Religious Education
English	English
History	History
Mathematics	Mathematics
Music	Music
PDHPE	PDHPE
Science	Science
TAS	Technics
Visual Arts	Visual Arts
	Italian

Academic Progress and Absences

Unnecessary and prolonged absence from school is one of the largest contributors to poor academic achievement levels. Such school absences should be kept to an absolute minimum and, where possible, should be arranged in consultation with the College.

Missing a Task:

- Students who are absent from school when a task is due, they will be required to provide a note from a parent/Carer explaining their absence. The Instructional Leader of Learning will decide the appropriate course of action following a missed task e.g. alternative task, estimated mark etc.

Request for Leave:

As outlined above, absence from school is one of the single biggest factors in limiting a student's ability to learn. Parents should consider this issue carefully before requesting leave during term time.

If a family holiday is to take place during term time, you will need to apply for leave by completing a leave request form and provide supporting documents that will then need to be approved by the college Principal, this is a NSW government reporting requirement. The College has a formal process the students must follow to ensure the relevant staff are aware of the student's absence.

Absence due to illness

If a student is to be absent from school due to illness it is expected that the parent rings the College in the morning to advise of the absence.

If the absence is for a prolonged period of time, where appropriate, the parents should contact the College to obtain work for their son to complete. In this instance the appropriate person to contact would be the Homeroom Teacher or Leader of Wellbeing.

In our experience it would be extremely uncommon for a student to have more than 2-3 days off school due to illness per term. If your son is requesting to stay home on a regular basis you are strongly advised to inquire further into the issue to ensure there is no underlying cause.

College Sports

Sports play an active role in the life of the College. All students either represent the College or engage in recreational sports. Each Thursday the students participate in the College Sporting Program. Full sports uniform is to be worn each Thursday.

If your son is chosen to represent the College then he will participate on the given days and will be expected to be present at all training sessions.

All students are expected to be present at and to participate in the two College sports carnivals. The Swimming Carnival in Term One and the Athletics Carnival in Term 3.

St. Mary's has a good reputation for the ability and sportsmanship of its students. Our expectation is that this fine tradition continues.

College Term Dates 2024

- **Term 1** - Tuesday 30 January - Friday 12 April
- **Term 2** - Monday 29 April - Friday 5 July
- **Term 3** - Monday 22 July - Friday 27 September
- **Term 4** - Monday 14 October - Friday 20 December

College Bell Times

Normal Day Structure			Day 10 Structure			Day 4 & Day 9 - Thursdays		
Warning Bell	8:40		Warning Bell	8:40		Warning Bell	8:40	
HR	8:45-9:00	15 mins	HR	8:45-9:00	15 mins	Period 1	8:45-9:45	60 mins
Period 1	9:00-10:00	60 mins	Phronesis	9:00-9:50	50 mins	Period 2	9:45-10:45	60 mins
Period 2	10:00-11:00	60 mins	Period 1	9:50-10:40	50 mins	Recess	10:45-11:10	25 mins
Recess	11:00-11:30	30 mins	Recess	10:40-11:10	30 mins	Period 3	11:10-12:10	60 mins
Period 3	11:30-12:30	60 mins	Period 2	11:10-12:00	50 mins	Lunch	12:10-12:40	30 mins
Period 4	12:30-1:30	60 mins	Period 3	12:00-12:50	50 mins	Assem/Buses	12:40-12:50	10 mins
Lunch	1:30-2:00	30 mins	Lunch	12:50-1:20	30 mins	Sport	12:50-2:10	80 mins
Period 5	2:00-3:00	60 mins	Period 4	1:20-2:10	50 mins	Dismissal	2:20	
			Period 5	2:10-3:00	50 mins			

Resource List

Subject	Exercise Book	Other Equipment
Religious Studies	128 Page A4 exercise book	
English	128 Page A4 exercise book	
Mathematics	128 Page A4 grid book (5mm grid, binder book)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geometry Set: must include compasses, protractor and set squares. • 30cm ruler - (non flexible or metal) • Calculator - Casio fx-82AU PLUS
History	128 Page A4 exercise book	
Science	128 Page A4 exercise book	
Technology (TAS)	Students will be notified by individual technology teachers as per class requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apron

Uniform and Grooming

The college uniform identifies students of St Mary's Cathedral College within the community. The uniform is to be worn to the college daily and must be worn to all college functions held outside normal school hours.

Hair should be neatly cut and clean, off the collar, of natural colour, of even grade, no shorter than a blade 3, and not extreme in style. Boys should be clean shaven with sideburns not exceeding half an ear length. Please see the College Planner for more details.

College Uniform

- Long navy blue trousers
- Dark blue or black socks
- Short sleeved blue shirt
- Striped college tie
- Black belt
- Black lace up shoes, to be polished at all times
- College pullover
- College Blazer - This is to be worn during Terms 2 and 3 to and from school and Terms 1 and 2 for all special occasions.

Special Note: The college blazer is to be worn during Term 2 and 3 and is to be worn traveling to and from school. The college pullover is not to be worn without having the college blazer on.

Sport Uniform

- College branded sport shorts
- House polo shirt
- College tracksuit

Direct link to Talebs: St Mary's Cathedral College uniforms can be purchased from Taleb Australia
<https://schooluniformshop.com.au/collections/st-marys-cathedral-college>

Canteen

The College canteen is open from 8:00am each day for all students. Lunch orders can be dropped at the canteen before school, and picked up at lunch time. Please write an order on a paper bag with name, class, and money. EFTPOS is available at the canteen.

Please note: Primary students are not permitted to purchase soft drinks.

Primary participate in the Healthy Kids NSW program of Crunch'n'sip as well they support Nude Food. Students are encouraged to bring fresh fruit, vegetables or a sandwich to eat at 9:00am each day and are encouraged to bring their lunch in reusable containers reducing the rubbish generated at the College. Water bottles are encouraged. No packaged foods or drinks.

Online canteen orders can be made via [Flexischools](#)

Mobile Phones

The College recognises that students may have a mobile phone. If this is the case it must be switched off (not silent) when entering the College. Phones should be kept in the students bag/locker. Phones will be confiscated if the student abuses this privilege.