



MERCEDES COLLEGE

Unlocking Life Potential.

Strategic Plan 2008 - 2012



OUR VISION

As a learning community guided by our Catholic identity, Mercedes College proclaims hope for the future grounded in our faith in the gospel of Jesus.

As an internationally focused, co-educational school in the Mercy tradition, we aspire to develop global citizens, committed to living with responsibility, integrity, compassion, loyalty, mutual respect and dedicated to justice, whose passion is to make a positive difference in our world.



FOREWORD

The Principal and the College Council of Mercedes College are pleased to commend to you the Strategic Plan 2008-2012.

This Strategic Plan is the result of the extensive community feedback process that was adopted for the successful review of the College by the Council of International Schools (CIS) in 2006. This plan aims to build upon the College's achievements and distinguishing qualities of the past, as well as to position ourselves to best meet the challenges of the future. In this way we will continue to forge our reputation as a Catholic College of excellence that is committed to providing a quality Mercy education to all members of our community.

The Strategic Plan is organised under the same sections as the CIS Review, thus covering all areas of the College's work.

These are:

1. Philosophy and Objectives
2. Faith and Spirituality
3. The Learning Community
 - students
 - staff
 - wider community
4. Governance and Management
5. Staff
6. Student Support Services
7. Resources
8. Student and Community Life

For each of these sections a number of major goals have been developed which will guide the College's planning and decision-making during the next five year period. As appropriate, the major goals of this Strategic Plan 2008-2012 will be broken down each year into annual goals and proposed outcomes to ensure that each is appropriately progressed. Work on each of the major goals will progress at an individual rate as some are dependent on the progress of others. Therefore it should not be expected that each will have equal emphasis each year.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In fulfilling our Vision and in developing the Strategic Plan 2008-2012 the College community is mindful of the spirit and influence of Catherine McAuley and the following principles:

1. The maintenance of the traditions and heritage of the Sisters of Mercy, whose founder Catherine McAuley believed that education should provide enhancement and opportunities for the development of servant leadership.
2. The delivery of a quality Reception to Year 12 co-education by providing:
 - a values-centred Catholic education based on the Mercy tradition
 - a holistic education for the spiritual, academic, physical, social, emotional and cultural development and well-being of all students.
3. A commitment to being a leading educational institution in both the local and global community.
4. The ongoing development of the physical resources of the College in an environmentally responsible way and by supporting the historic and botanic nature of the grounds.
5. A commitment to supporting a positive learning environment through the creative learning partnerships of staff, students, parents and the wider community.
6. The maintenance of excellence by appropriately adapting to continuous social change.
7. The maintenance of a quality partnership with the wider Catholic Church community and being open to new models of Church.
8. A commitment to meeting the challenges associated with the rapid changes in the nature and use of information communication technologies.
9. A dedication to responding to changes in educational delivery that encompasses opportunities for 'any time, any place' learning.
10. The appropriate preparation of our students to meet the challenges created with increasing globalisation.



By remaining faithful to its Vision Statement and by adhering to the Guiding Principles the College will work towards the attainment of the following major goals over the next five years.

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

Mercedes College provides a strong values-centred Catholic education based on the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy. The key ideals of vision and respect drive school policy and practice.

In the next five years Mercedes College will promote this dimension by working towards the attainment of the following goals:

1. Ensuring that policy development and decision-making continues to be based on a community agreed concise statement of purpose and guiding principles.
2. Maintaining a commitment to promoting a values-centred education based upon the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy.
3. Maintaining a commitment to international education.

FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY

Within the Catholic tradition Mercedes College provides opportunities for students to develop their faith and spiritual selves. In a spirit of Mercy, individuals will engage and serve those least advantaged in the local and global community and reflect upon this experience. The students will be supported to develop a social conscience, to become socially critical and realise that individuals can make a difference.

In the next five years Mercedes College will promote this focus by working towards the attainment of the following goals:

1. Providing ongoing opportunities to assist the faith formation for our students, staff and wider community and nurture the spirituality of all.
2. Developing an openness to the views of others and thus recognising the dignity of the individual.
3. Ensuring that the College's Religious Education programme is contemporary, and relevant and integrated as appropriate throughout the whole curriculum.
4. Providing opportunities for all members of the community to experience a sense of Church within the College.
5. Providing opportunities for students to explore ways by which they can be of service to others in the local and global community.
6. Promoting within the community a strong sense of social justice and developing ways by which positive influence can be exhibited.

THE LEARNING COMMUNITY

FOR STUDENTS

Mercedes College is committed to providing excellent learning opportunities for its students within the framework of international and local curricula. It is committed to integrating all learning so that students develop as a whole person, spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally and as a culturally aware citizen of the future.

In the next five years Mercedes College will promote this dimension by working towards the attainment of the following goals:

1. Analysing the Reception to Year 12 curriculum with respect to refining and consolidating its vertical and horizontal articulation, thus maintaining excellent learning opportunities for all.
2. Consolidating a curriculum management structure that best reflects our mode of curriculum delivery, enabling staff to fully implement the principles of the International Baccalaureate and SACE programmes and ensuring we are well positioned to analyse future curriculum developments.
3. Remaining committed to providing a safe learning community that continues to provide high levels of age appropriate child protection for its students.
4. Developing child centred processes throughout the College, thus nurturing the pastoral needs of our students.
5. Ensuring that the College maintains appropriate levels of accountability to its local community as well as the wider education authorities.
6. Providing appropriate staffing allocations to promote quality delivery of all programmes.
7. Continuing to dialogue with the parent body regarding the modes and timing of student reports and learning reviews.



FOR STAFF

Mercedes College is committed to providing opportunities for its staff, through professional development in a supportive and collaborative community.

In the next five years Mercedes College will promote this dimension by working towards the attainment of the following goals:

1. Expanding upon the present support provided for teachers of Religion to assist them to gain formal qualifications in the teaching of Religious Education.
2. Providing coordinated professional learning opportunities that meet corporate and individual needs.
3. Developing with staff, comprehensive processes of induction, performance review and appraisal.

FOR THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Mercedes College is committed to providing opportunities for its parent body to support them to better understand the education process and issues confronting their children as they grow and develop.

In the next five years, Mercedes College will promote this dimension by working towards the attainment of the following goals:

1. Providing opportunities for relevant and informative parent education and information sessions.
2. Providing opportunities for the parent body to actively engage in the development of the education process at the College.



GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Mercedes College believes that appropriate stewardship is achieved through the maintenance of quality partnerships between parents, staff, students, the wider Catholic community and the international organisations with which it associates. Our identity is shaped within the Mercy tradition and the Catholic Church, the local society and through participation in the international education community. The College Council and the Executive Leadership Team under the leadership of the Principal are charged with the responsibility of ensuring appropriate stewardship.

By developing this Strategic Plan 2008-2012 and by remaining committed to a subsequent annual planning process, we are well placed to rigorously self-evaluate and monitor our performance against our stated goals and targets.

In the next five years Mercedes College will promote this dimension by working towards the attainment of the following goals:

1. Strengthening the process of induction of new College Council members and the Council as a whole, as the College enters a new era of governance.
2. Maintaining and enhancing collaboration between, and coordination of, the key bodies within the College community; the Council and its Standing Committees, the Executive Leadership Team, the Mercedes College Parents & Friends Association (MP&FA), Old Scholar's Groups, the Mercureans and other associated organisations.
3. Ensuring that the College financial planning is structured to enable the development of this Strategic Plan.
4. Meeting enrolment targets for both local and international students.
5. Continuing to follow the Council of International Schools' cycle of review and accreditation.



STAFF

Mercedes College values highly all its staff and endeavours to provide a working environment that is stimulating and safe. The College is committed to industrial justice and within the constraints of industrial agreements aims to appropriately recognise the commitment of all.

In the next five years Mercedes College will promote this dimension by working towards the attainment of the following goals:

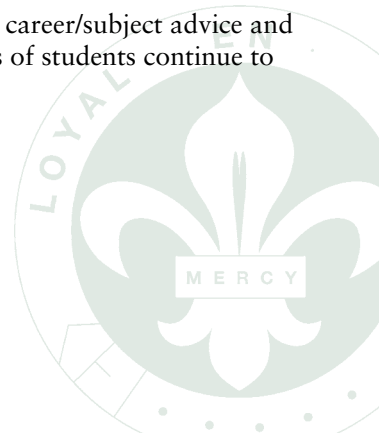
1. Developing dynamic information systems that are capable of providing all members of the community with needed information when required.
2. Furthering development of high quality HR practices for all staff processes, so as to maintain the collaborative atmosphere of the College.
3. Maintaining a high level of commitment to best OHS&W practice.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Mercedes College recognises that its student community is diverse with a variety of needs. We further recognise that students learn best when they are happy and have their individual needs met. To this end we are committed to developing quality student support services.

In the next five years Mercedes College will promote this dimension by working towards the attainment of the following goals:

1. Strengthening the support for the Inclusive Education programme so that we are better placed to meet the individual learning needs of all students and provide high quality intervention programmes when required.
2. Strengthening support of the International Student Programme (ISP) by consolidating specialist English learning programmes and by involving more staff in relevant professional development opportunities. This will more effectively cater for the English as a Second Language (ESL) learning needs of the students.
3. Strengthening the Student Support Service area so that career/subject advice and the personal counselling, pastoral and emotional needs of students continue to meet standards of excellence.



RESOURCES

Mercedes College believes that the learning and physical resources provided for its community must meet contemporary needs while remaining loyal to its heritage. Further it believes that its environs should be safe for all.

In the next five years Mercedes College will promote this dimension by working towards the attainment of the following goals:

1. Developing a new Master Capital Development Plan that will include projected future building and landscape needs.
2. Continuing the upgrade and expansion of information communication technology infrastructure to allow for new methods of curriculum delivery.
3. Ensuring that there is an ongoing programme of site improvement and that the level of funds available for this capital improvement be raised in relation to the capacity of the community.
4. Exploring ways that the College can be environmentally responsible in all its development.

STUDENT AND COMMUNITY LIFE

Mercedes College believes that students should be provided with diverse co-curricular experiences and that all skills will be equally valued. The College will have three strong levels of schooling structured to meet the specific social development needs of its students, while at the same time, preserving a strong Reception to Year 12 identity.

In the next five years Mercedes College will promote this dimension by working towards the attainment of the following goals:

1. Maintaining a diversity of co-curricular opportunities.
2. Exploring ways of actively promoting the integration of its international students so that both they and the local students are fully enriched by their presence in the College community.
3. Exploring ways of ensuring that equity principles apply when national and international tour opportunities are offered by the College.
4. Ensuring that the whole community takes seriously its commitment to the sustainability of its local and global environment.
5. Exploring ways of enhancing the quality of student leadership experiences at the College.

*“The simplest and most practical lesson I know . . .
is to resolve to be good today,
but better tomorrow”.*
Catherine McAuley





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