



2021

YEAR 8 CURRICULUM HANDBOOK

MERCY COLLEGE



From our Principal

Lila McInerney

Year 8 is a time for your daughter to expand her horizons and embrace new and exciting challenges. Each student is unique, with her own developing set of competencies, strengths and values.

As students are well adjusted into the familiar setting of Mercy College and secondary education, Year 8 offers a comprehensive and balanced selection of subjects that allows all students to excel. These subject offerings are designed to challenge our learners to explore and consider deep questions, and big ideas.

A Year 8 learning program that exposes students to both a breadth and depth of ideas, concepts and strategies for contributing to society is valued and promoted in student course planning. Each of the Key Learning Areas (KLAs) offers subjects within the curriculum that are based on the Victorian Curriculum. Experiences within these subjects enable students to develop their knowledge and understanding of key concepts and skills, in preparation for further compulsory and post compulsory studies.

The Mercy College Year 8 Curriculum Handbook is an important part of the course planning and future subject selection process. The handbook is designed to inform students and parent/guardians of the requirements and expectations of studying Year 8 at Mercy College as well as providing an overview of the individual subject program that students study to complete their compulsory schooling.

After a year of finding their feet and learning to excel in the secondary environment, it is expected that Year 8 students will begin to forge a pathway of passion and interest.

Mercy College is committed to the principles and practice of Australian democracy and the values for Australian schooling.

All learning experiences are designed to enable students to explore issues, questions and problems in ways that are meaningful, strongly engaged with Catholic beliefs and in a global context.

We look forward to working in partnership with you as together we prepare our students to realise their potential and maximise the achievement of future pathway goals.

Lila McInerney

College Principal

"Deep learning ... unfolds as a process that respects the diverse cultures, worldviews and backgrounds of students and actively engages them with Catholic beliefs and values relevant to their learning."



Catholic Education Melbourne "Horizons of Hope Pedagogy" page 5

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Year 8 Subjects

Students undertake a range of compulsory subjects. Compulsory subjects are either for a full year (two semesters) or semester length (two terms).

At Mercy College, Year 8 students undertake five compulsory year-long subjects and twelve semester length compulsory subjects.

Compulsory Subjects

All Year 8 students will study the following:

Compulsory Full Year Subjects	Compulsory Single Semester Subjects
Religious Education	History
English	Geography and Commerce
Mathematics	Italian
Science	Indonesian
Student Wellbeing Program	Physical Education
	Food Studies
	STEM
	Health
	Textiles
	Drama
	Music
	Visual Communication Design

Religious Education

Religious Education in Year 8 focuses on the student's ability to develop their interpretative skills. Students investigate what life was like for Jesus at the time he lived in Palestine, they identify the components of Parables and trace the development of the Christian community from its foundation until today. Through investigating the literary structures of scripture passages and the impact of settings, styles and viewpoints of authors, students begin to understand how readers of both Old and New Testaments have interpreted the meaning and message of Scripture passages over time. They deepen their understanding of Catholic Social Teaching and its application to personal and global issues. Students also develop skills of discernment and discuss how to create and maintain respectful relationships, throughout their lives.

Duration of Study:

All year

Topics Studied:

- Background to the Gospels
- Parables
- Jesus and The First Christians
- The Sacraments of Initiation in Judaism and Christianity
- Living the Christian Life
- Right Relationships

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Group projects and presentations
- Inquiry Learning
- Class Test
- Journal writing

English

The English curriculum is built around the three interrelated strands of Language, Literature and Literacy. Together the strands focus on developing students' knowledge, understanding and skills in listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating. Students engage with a variety of texts for enjoyment. They listen to, read, view, interpret, evaluate and perform a range of spoken, written and multimodal texts in which the primary purpose is aesthetic, as well as texts designed to inform and persuade. Students develop their understanding of how texts, including media texts, are influenced by context, purpose and audience. Students create a range of imaginative, informative and persuasive types of texts.

Duration of Study:

All year

Topics Studied in Semester One:

- Viewing & Creating: *Bend it like Beckham* film study
- Analysing & Presenting Arguments - Persuasive language
- Reading & Comparing – Picture Story Book Analysis
- Analysing & Presenting Arguments – Persuasive Oral

Topics Studied in Semester Two:

- Reading & Creating: *Fever 1793* novel study
- Analysing & Presenting Argument - Study of a current issue
- Reading & Creating - Playwriting Unit

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Writer's notebook personal response
- Analytical text response essay
- Oral presentation
- Comparative response
- Creative response to a novel
- Persuasive letter to the editor
- Writing a script for a play
- Wide reading

Mathematics

The Year 8 Mathematics course is made up of three content strands: Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. Each of these is further enhanced by the proficiency strands of Understanding, Fluency, Problem Solving and Reasoning. Students continue to work with the scientific calculators.

Duration of Study:

All year

Topics Studied:

- Integers
- Lines, Shapes & Solids
- Fractions, Decimals & Percentages
- Measurement
- Algebra
- Ratios & Rates
- Equations
- Probability & Statistics
- Straight Line Graphs
- Transformation & Congruence
- Algorithmic Thinking

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Tests
- Summary notes
- Modelling tasks
- Problem solving tasks
- Investigations
- Calculator skills

Science

The Year 8 Science course teaches students to identify the relationship between the characteristics of different rock types and the geological processes that formed them. Students learn to explain the properties of solids, liquids and gases in terms of the movement and arrangement of particles. They then define the composition of these particles as elements, compounds and mixtures. They also explore the concepts of energy, explaining energy conservation and transformation into natural and constructed systems. Students explore cells and the chemical reactions that occur within the human body and in the world around them. They link form and function at cellular level and conceptualise the organisation of body systems in terms of flows and matter between interdependent organs. Students use experimentation to isolate relationships between components in living systems and explain these relationships through increasingly complex representations.

Duration of Study:

All year

Topics Studied:

- States of Matter
- The Stuff we're Made of (cells)
- Energy in our lives
- Chemical Change
- We Will Rock You

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Unit tests
- Practical investigations
- Inquiry investigations

Physical Education

Year 8 Physical Education aims to encourage the benefits and importance of being physically active. Students will develop and refine a range of movement and manipulative skills through participation in a variety of team and individual games while exploring the relationship between physical activity, fitness and health. Learning is enhanced 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 Netball, Basketball, Soccer and Softball.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- Benefits and Importance of being physically active
- Game Sense and Skill Development of various sports such as: Netball, Basketball, Soccer and Softball

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Participation and observation of skills/technique
- Demonstration of knowledge and understanding of rules, tactics and strategies associated with each sport
- Evidence of teamwork and group cooperation
- Problem solving within practical activities
- Game sense and tactical thinking

STEM

Learning in Digital Technologies focuses on further developing understanding and skills in computational thinking such as decomposing problems and prototyping; and engaging students with a wider range of information systems.

Students will have opportunities to create a range of non-digital and digital solutions, to a real world problem with exploring simple machines and puzzles, understanding the problem solving in construction and making associations with the Mission to Mars project. Students build and code the 'Roli Robot' using a Cartesian plane and longitudinal/latitudinal coordinates.

They predict and evaluate their developed and existing solutions, considering time, tasks, data and the safe and sustainable use of information systems. Students plan and manage individual and team projects with some autonomy. They consider ways of managing the exchange of ideas, tasks and files, and techniques for monitoring progress and feedback.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- Puzzles and Rube Goldberg simple machines
- Mission to Mars - Roli Rover coding

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Enquiry based assessments and designs

Student Wellbeing

This course adopts the *Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships* program and learning materials, which are aimed to develop students' social and emotional skills, and positive relationship skills.

Duration of Study:

All year

Topics Studied:

- Emotional Literacy
- Personal Strengths
- Positive Coping
- Problem Solving
- Stress Management
- Help Seeking
- Gender and identity
- Positive Gender Relations

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- A range of different individual, group, and whole-class activities
- No assessment tasks

History

In this subject students focus on the period between the end of ancient civilisations to the beginning of the modern world. They investigate significant social, cultural, economic and political changes and continuities throughout Medieval Europe and causes and effects of the Black Death. Students develop an understanding of significant developments and achievements throughout Renaissance Italy. They consider various theories about the expansion of the Polynesians across the Pacific Ocean and challenges they faced in doing this.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- Medieval Europe (including the Black Death) (c.590-c.1500)
- Renaissance Italy (c.1400-c.1600)
- Polynesian expansion across the Pacific (c.700-1756)

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Source analysis
- Research tasks
- Extended response
- Annotated visual display
- Presentations

Geography and Commerce

In this subject students build on their understanding of the geographic concepts of space, place, interconnection, change, environment, sustainability and scale. They conduct an inquiry into landforms and landscapes, including their geomorphology and significance to people. Students investigate the rights and responsibilities of consumers and businesses under Australian Consumer Law. They also focus on the changing human geography of countries and the process of urbanisation including the high level of urban concentration in Australia and issues related to the management of this in the future.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- Landforms and Landscapes
- Consumer Law
- Changing Nations

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Annotated visual display
- Test
- Presentations
- Extended response
- Map construction and interpretation
- Graph construction and interpretation

Languages: Indonesian

In Year 8 Indonesian, students continue to develop their cultural knowledge and language skills through a storytelling approach. Students listen, read, write and speak in the language on topics related to hobbies, telling the time, and family. Students are introduced to both traditional and contemporary pastimes of Indonesian teenagers. They also compare and contrast family structure in Indonesia with that of their own culture.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- Hobbies and pastimes
- Telling the time
- Family and pets

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Listening comprehension
- Reading comprehension
- Viewing comprehension
- Writing role-play/story/diary entry/email
- Speaking interview/conversation

Languages: Italian

The Year 8 Italian course develops the students' understanding and control of language through the various macro skills. Students gain further insight into Italian culture and lifestyles. Grammar structures are consolidated and students embark on their understanding of direct object pronouns, irregular verbs in the present and prepositions. Activities include exchanging personal information, creating presentations and reading a variety of texts.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- Friends and celebrities
- Sport
- Pastimes
- Food and origins

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Listening comprehension
- Reading comprehension
- Viewing comprehension
- Writing role-play/story/diary entry/email
- Speaking interview/conversation

Visual Communication Design

In Year 8 Visual Communication Design students will explore the Design Elements and Principles of Visual Communication Design. They will investigate and demonstrate a number of drawing methods such as observational and presentation methods. Students will develop an understanding and application of The Design Process through creating and evaluating their own responses to a design brief.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- The Elements and Principles of Design
- The Design Brief
- Design Drawing Techniques

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Activities based on the exploration of design elements & principles
- Design folio task
- Back to basics

Food Studies

This unit of work incorporates the ongoing development of both food preparation skills and the principles used within the design process. Students also develop an awareness of how food can foster and maintain good health through the principles applied using Australian Dietary Guidelines and the Australian Guide to Health Eating.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- Kitchen Chemistry
- Feeding the Family
- From Paddock to Plate

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

This subject is practical in nature and most or all lessons will have a practical component. Students will complete tasks including analysis and evaluation of products made.

- Analysis and evaluation of products created

Textiles

In Year 8 Textiles students are introduced to the processes of design through the study of garment construction. Students develop an understanding of the element and principles of design, investigate the characteristics and properties of fibres and fabrics and safely use the sewing machine to work through simple construction tasks.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- Textiles Basics
- Applying the Textiles Basics

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Production tasks
- Workbook tasks

Music

The Year 8 Music course builds on and expands basic music skills including: music literacy, performance, listening skills, composition and analysis. After investigating the historical and cultural context of the Blues, students compose, notate and perform their own '12 Bar Blues' piece. Students explore the musical elements of beat, lyrics, instrumentation, structure and style. They discuss these elements in presentation on a song of their choice. Students demonstrate their understanding of chords and harmony by arranging, rehearsing and performing a pop song of their choice.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- Class Choir
- Music from other Cultures
- The Twelve Bar Blues
- The Elements of Music
- The harmonic structure of pop music

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- 12 Bar Blues composition
- Music is BLISS task
- Pop song arrangement

Drama

In Year 8 Drama students will be able to understand, interpret, and analyse conventions of drama and the performance styles of Mime, Melodrama, and Commedia dell'Arte. With a focus on the use of expressive skills, students will develop the ability to create and realise character on stage. Using collaborative ways of working kinaesthetically, students learn improvisation through the use of games and workshops to be able to support their character development.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- Mime
- Melodrama
- Commedia dell'Arte

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Mime performance
- Melodrama assessment
- Commedia dell'Arte performance
- Commedia dell'Arte stock character assessment

Health

In Year 8 Health students investigate various topics relating to Healthy and Active living specifically looking at areas of promoting of physical fitness, healthy body weight, psychological wellbeing, cognitive capabilities and learning. In addition students will investigate the transition of adolescence focusing on puberty, cyber safety, and independence.

Duration of Study:

One semester

Topics Studied:

- Topic 1 : What is Health
- Topic 2: Factors affecting health (Environmental Factors/Social Media)
- Topic 3: Growing Up (Puberty/Reproduction)
- Topic 4: Managing Yourself and Supporting Others (Body Image, Eating Disorders)

Examples of Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks:

- Annotated visual display
- Presentations
- Oral presentations

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