



# MERCEDES COLLEGE

COMPASSION LOYALTY JUSTICE INTEGRITY RESPONSIBILITY MUTUAL RESPECT

4 February 2016

Dear Parents/Caregivers

On behalf of the Junior School staff, I would like to warmly welcome our new families to the College. We are looking forward to a productive and exciting year ahead, and the opportunity to work and learn with your child/children. I look forward to working with you in the role of Acting Head of Junior School this term while Mrs Julie Hann is on leave.

The purpose of this letter is to outline some important practices and procedures that are essential in supporting the learning, safety and well-being of our students.

As you are aware, Mercedes College has a reputation of high standards and quality learning. To maintain and strengthen these, we require your support with some of the organisational and routine procedures to ensure consistency across the Junior School.

## **Supervision**

To ensure the safety of all students, supervision is provided from 8:20-8:35am at the Rose Garden (under the Marquee on wet days). All other areas, including class locker areas, are out of bounds. Parents and caregivers are very welcome to gather and greet others in front of the Strathspey Building. The 8:35am bell (first bell) signifies movement to lockers to unpack and then line up outside the classroom until the 8:40am bell sounds.

We understand and appreciate that many parents have work commitments or that siblings may have morning sport or music commitments. To accommodate families, our OSHC service opens from 7:20am - 8:20am. Please contact Debbie Goss on 8372 3248 for bookings. Students arriving earlier than 8:20am will be escorted to OHSC. Payment for this service will be required.

## **Punctuality**

Students are expected to be at school by 8:35am for an 8:40am start. This ensures each child is prepared and ready for the day ahead. It is well known that students feel more successful and settled when they are part of the morning procedures and are aware of the day's lessons and events. It also establishes good routines for the future. We understand that on the odd occasion, circumstances result in arriving late. Should your child arrive after 8:50am he/she will need to go directly to Strathspey Reception to collect a late slip for our student records and to be marked present for the day.

## **Absenteeism/Appointments**

Please contact the College office on 8372 3200 by 9:00am on the first day of absence. Where possible, please indicate the possible length of absence so that teachers are able to support students upon their return and to ensure the dissemination of any communication material. If your child has an appointment during the day, please notify the classroom teacher in advance by the diary or email. Please collect your child from the classroom and ensure that he/she is signed out at Strathspey Reception for our student records.

## **Kiss and Drop / Parking**

The Delamere entrance is specifically for the Junior School families. The Fullarton Road entrance is for Middle School and Senior Students only.





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Student safety is of paramount importance. To assist with effective traffic flow, especially at pickup time, and to keep our children safe, please ensure that:

- The visitor's car park and western parks around the roundabout and the parks on the left as you exit the College are filled first before lining up at Kiss and Drop.
- Parents of our very young children are given first priority with parks after school as their parents often have prams and/or toddlers. It is encouraged that Kiss and Drop and the parking areas are for R-3 students (and their siblings). If your child is in Year 4 or 5 and you are concerned they are not ready to wait by the teacher on Delamere Avenue, please continue to use Kiss and Drop. Mornings are not an issue, and all R-5 students may be dropped off at Kiss and Drop.
- At no time should a vehicle overtake cars waiting in the line for Kiss and Drop. Remaining in the left-hand lane is imperative as students will be accessing the crossing.
- A reduced speed is observed near the three student crossings (Delamere Avenue and inside the College).
- Staff on duty are treated with respect and their directions adhered to.
- If your child is slow to come to Kiss and Drop, do not wait in the Kiss and Drop zone. Please either come later or park in the Visitor's Car Park or Delamere Avenue.
- If you choose to walk through the Visitor's Car Park, monitor your child carefully. As car parks can be dangerous, it is preferable that the crossing is used. This also supports safe practices for your child in the future.
- Extended family members know the rules and expectations.
- You read the additional rules and expectations in the College Handbook.

Please treat all our children as if they were your own.

## Pepper Tree gate

For the safety of children, this gate will be locked from 9.00am to 3.15pm daily.

## Photographs

Please be mindful that when you are taking photographs of your child, do not photograph other students.

## Independence

The development of independence is critical for your child's learning, success and development. We appreciate the many things you teach your child and your intent to work in partnership with us. We encourage you to continue to:

- Let your child learn to take risks so they develop confidence and a range of skills and strategies.
- Support your child to consider a range of perspectives and to problem-solve so they develop resilience, effective life skills and a good sense of responsibility.
- Expect your child to self-manage, even if it initially takes longer. For example:
  - Pack and unpack their bag
  - Dress and undress themselves
  - Manage their own belongings
  - Help clean up / set up etc





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## Friendship Issues

From time to time, students will experience friendship issues. This is normal and part of learning about ourselves and others. Sometimes Class Teachers are unaware of such issues as they are more likely to occur during break times. If your child expresses an issue to you, the following steps would be helpful for an efficient and positive resolution:

- In the first instance please support your child with positive strategies to deal with the issue, including looking at the issue from different perspectives. This will help empower your child and develop effective strategies for the future.
- It is important to 'nip things in the bud' so if the issue remains unsolved or of a serious nature please send a short email or message with a brief description to your child's Class Teacher so he/she can investigate further. Alternatively, a short email or message requesting a return phone call as soon as possible would be appropriate. Please be aware that as teachers are teaching and may also have yard duties, this may not be possible until the end of the day or the following day.
- Issues are followed up as soon as possible by Class Teachers in the first instance. Where necessary, other staff members may be called upon to ensure the best possible resolution. Follow up with parents, where relevant, takes place in a timely manner.
- Please refrain from contacting parent(s) of other students involved in the issue. From experience, this often only serves to intensify the issue. All issues are best dealt with at school in a supportive and objective manner.

## Issues/Concerns

Should there be any issues or concerns throughout the year the Class Teacher is the first port of call. If it is related to a specific Specialist area, please contact the relevant Specialist Teacher in the first instance.

## Assembly

Assemblies will be held in **even** weeks on **Fridays** at **9:00am** in the Junior School Hall. You are very welcome to join us. At times, an assembly may need to be rescheduled (eg. Good Friday). Families will be notified by email. I invite you to our first assembly on Friday 12 February.

## 2016 Buzz Book

We invite you to register your details in the 2016 MP&FA Buzz Book. The Buzz Book is a list of student and parent contact details intended for social use only for activities amongst families. Inclusion is optional.

Register your details today online at [www.mercedes.catholic.edu.au](http://www.mercedes.catholic.edu.au). The Buzz Book link is located under 'Quick Links' on the right hand side of the homepage.

Registration closes Friday 19 February, 2016. Buzz Books will be distributed to all families from Reception to Year 12 in Term 1.

Please note that information provided from previous years is not retained. Details must be submitted each year, and all information provided will be printed in the Buzz Book.





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## Party Invitations

We would like to remind you that birthday party invitations may not be distributed at school at any time. All invitations are to be posted directly to the homes of the guests. Please refer to the Mercedes College Buzz Book for addresses.

## Nut allergies

We have a number of children who suffer from anaphylaxis, including an allergy to all *nuts*. For these children the allergy is severe to the degree that even if they come in contact with someone who may have traces of nuts on his/her hands, or if they inhale nut particles or fumes, they may react unfavourably to the extent that it could be life threatening.

We are requesting that no whole nuts or whole nut products, be brought to school during your child's transition visits this term (and for their future schooling). This would include peanut paste sandwiches, Nutella, bags of nuts, and cakes or chocolates containing nuts. Many products now carry warnings that they may contain *traces of nuts*. Whilst it is not possible to avoid all of these products, please avoid whole nuts and whole nut products.

As some of these children are still relatively young it is hard to expect them to be totally responsible for avoiding contact with other children who may have traces of nuts on their person. We would like all of our children to feel safe at school by removing potential dangers. It may also allay some of the anxiety their parents endure on a daily basis.

Please refer to the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy website for further information: <http://www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/anaphylaxis-resources>.

## Policies and Procedures

Please refer to the College Handbook on the Mercedes College website for a range of information about policies and procedures to further support your child and the College.

## Parent Information Sessions

I urge you to attend the relevant Parent Information Sessions for your child/children. The purpose of each session is to inform parents/caregivers about teaching and learning programmes, and classroom routines and procedures. Each year is different and thus, it is important that our students are supported effectively both at school and at home. The sessions will take place on Wednesday 17 February in your child's classroom at the following times:

<b>Reception – Year 2</b>	<b>6:00 – 7:00pm</b>
<b>Years 3 – 5</b>	<b>7:00 – 8:00pm</b>

## Junior School Bulletin

Every Friday, Anne Watson, Junior School ESO will email you a Junior School Bulletin with up to date information of what is happening in the Junior School.

On behalf of the staff, I thank you for your support; it makes a significant and positive difference and ultimately benefits the children.

Yours sincerely

## Shane Murphy

*Acting Head of Junior School  
Assistant Principal*