



**MARY
MACKILLOP
CATHOLIC
COLLEGE**

15 January 2021

75 Highfields Road, Highfields Q 4352

Dear Parents & Caregivers

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Welcome back to Mary MacKillop Catholic College, and welcome for the first time to new families. It is lovely to be back. Thank you very much to the families and students who sent me loving and positive messages last year. It was very much appreciated at what was a challenging time. Alma came home from hospital on 12 December and is now a pretty healthy weight. Thank you very much to Ms. Cridland who acted as Principal and ensured that the College year ended positively.

There is a lot of information in this letter – some of it reflecting on 2020 and other elements advising of developments for 2021.

Year 12 Results:

For the first time in our history we can advertise our year 12 results and destinations. Despite the significant challenges of 2020, our inaugural graduating class have performed very well. The headlines are;

- The highest scoring ATAR was 98.35
- Half of those attempting an ATAR score achieved above 90 (the average score for the College was 87)
- All students achieved a Queensland Certificate of Education
- All students who applied for university have been offered a place. First round offers are;
 - Joshua Brooks: USQ: Bachelor of Science - Computing
 - Nadia Eastaugh: USQ: Diploma of Science
 - Grace Kaiser: USQ: Bachelor of General Studies
 - Caitlin Lang: The University of Queensland: Doctor of Medicine (MD)
 - Connor McKerrow: USQ - Bachelor of Engineering Science
 - Daniel Verches: Queensland University of Technology: Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)

This is in addition to Holly Hutchison who will be joining the ADF. These really are fantastic results and I want to offer these students, and their families, a really sincere congratulations. Senior schooling has become progressively more intense over the last decade or so as the curriculum gets increasingly crowded and courses are being enhanced. On top of this there was the new ATAR system which was a momentous change to the educational culture of Queensland schools. Thank you very much also to the senior school staff, in particular Mr. Naiker and Ms. Cridland, who did so much foundational and ongoing work in making sure the College was ready for these changes.

Staffing Changes:

As sometimes happens in schools, there have been some staffing changes because of movements and resignations over the summer break.

Mr. Coren (year 6 teacher) will not be teaching at Mary MacKillop in 2021. He has been offered a position to teach Maths for a year in a senior setting at St Mary's College. This opportunity enables the building of significant capacity in our system and I was happy to support it. Mr Coren will be replaced by Ms Nicole Wittman. Ms Wittman is delighted to be joining the MacKillop Catholic College community. She has been teaching for 24 years and has been fortunate enough to teach in schools in Australia and a multitude of countries including England, Poland, USA, China, Vietnam, South Korea

and Russia. One of Ms Wittman's referees described her as someone who 'engages students and ensures they meet their learning targets through innovative teaching strategies'.

Having previously taught for the Diocese, she is happy to be returning to the Darling Downs. She has family here and loves the area. Ms Wittman will be in contact with parents from her class as soon as possible.

In addition, Mrs Vivienne Holman resigned shortly before Christmas. Actions to replace that post are ongoing.

Strategic Plan:

With huge thanks to those community members who contributed, we are now able to launch our new Strategic Plan. We have tentatively booked 4 February as a date to launch it with an evening event at the College. I say tentatively due to the current vagaries around COVID in Brisbane. I will communicate to you as soon as possible with details.

COVID-19 Constraints:

I was very much hoping that I would stop writing COVID updates to staff and parents this year. It seems that we are not through the woods yet! This year, we will place on the College website a standing page that outlines the current state of alertness and what that means operationally for the College. So, if you are curious about why a certain event either needs to be altered or cancelled, you can see how we have applied the Chief Health Officer's guidance for schools.

We will also maintain guidance on the sharing of food for celebrations, which I know is an important thing for many Junior school parents. The guidance that comes to you will explain in greater depth, but in short, we are looking to enable this.

BACK TO SCHOOL CHECKLIST

1. Back to School – Books & Uniforms

Visit the [2021 Welcome Pack](#) section of our website for all your back-to-school needs.

2. Class Allocations

Junior School Class Allocation emails will be sent out on Monday, 18 January.

3. Book Drop Off – Junior

Our Prep to Year 6 students have the opportunity to take their books to their classroom on Thursday, 21 January 2021 between **8:30am to 9:15am**. Please take your child's books to the port racks or door of their classroom, maintain social distancing, and adhere to any current government issued health guidelines. This book drop off session is not compulsory.

4. Medication Drop Off: Thursday, 21 January 2021 – 8:30am to 9:15am

Parents/guardians must complete an Administration of Medication at School Record Form and provide this form and medication to the College administration. Please refer to the Medication Procedures document available via the link below for further information on administration of medication at the College.

<https://www.highfields.catholic.edu.au/current-parents/student-protection-wellbeing>

The College WH&S Coordinator, Mrs Jayne Tyrrell will be available to discuss your child's medical requirements and receive all medications on **Thursday, 21 January 2020 – 8:30am to 9:15am** in the **Junior Reception**. If you have any questions please email Jayne.Tyrrell@twb.catholic.edu.au.

5. Staggered Start Days

Wednesday, 27 January 2021

- ALL Prep - Year 7 students commence - FULL DAY
- ALL NEW Year 8-12 students commence - HALF DAY (8:30am-12:30pm)

Thursday, 28 January 2021

- ALL students return.

6. First Day Drop Off & Parents coming on site

Parents are welcome to attend classrooms in line with the Queensland Chief Health Officer's guidelines. Please maintain social distancing and wear a mask if you are required to do so.

7. Highfields Road Access

We are awaiting further clarification from Toowoomba Regional Council. At the time of writing, the Junior school is not accessible from Highfields Rd. We envisage this changing next week, and we will issue information as soon as possible.

8. School hours

Times	Comments
8:00am	Supervision for Junior students only in The Café area for those who have ordered breakfast.
8:15am	Supervision commences in Junior
8:30am	School commences
10:50 -11:30am	First Break
1:30 – 2:00pm	Second Break
3:00pm	School finishes

9. Collection of Outstanding Junior Report Cards

If you have not collected your Semester 2, 2020 report card as yet, these are available for collection from the College Administration Office (Senior School), accessible via Kratzke Road.

Kind regards

Chris Gabbett

Principal