

LIGHT OF FAITH

ALUMNAE INSIGHTS

Official Newsletter of the Mary MacKillop College Alumnae

Principal's Report



Dear Alumnae,

We are delighted to welcome you back to our Mary MacKillop College community through a bi-yearly Alumnae newsletter! Your continued connection and support mean the world to us, and we are excited to share some wonderful updates with you from the first semester of 2025.

We so value your support because at Mary MacKillop College we believe in the transformative power of an all-girls education. Adolescence is a time of significant growth and change, and friendships play a crucial role in this journey. Our school environment supports girls in forming strong, healthy relationships, which are essential for their overall well-being. The social arena during adolescence corresponds with brain development, making peer affiliations a priority. While social media presents challenges, our focus remains on guiding our students to develop resilience, compassion, and a sense of community. Together, girls flourish, learning to navigate the complexities of friendships and emerging as confident, capable young women.



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Principal's Report

Visit from Dr. Mary Kaspar

We were thrilled to welcome Dr Mary Kaspar, author of *The Popular Girls*, to Mary MacKillop College. Dr Kaspar's visit included a captivating talk about her book, which explores the complexities of teenage friendships and social dynamics. She highlighted the importance of relationships for our daughters' emotional and physical health, and the role of social dominance and popularity in peer interactions. Her insights resonated deeply with our students, emphasising the value of authentic connections and the courage to navigate social challenges.



ICGS Conference

I am excited to share that I will be attending and presenting at the International Coalition of All Girls School (ICGS) Conference in Philadelphia, USA this June. This prestigious event brings together educators from all over the world to discuss and share best practice in girls' education. I can't wait to share all our remarkable work with colleagues.

- **Showcasing Our Achievements:** I will be presenting on the innovative programs and initiatives we have implemented at Mary MacKillop College. This is a fantastic opportunity to highlight our successes and share our experiences with a global audience.
- **Learning and Growth:** The conference will provide valuable insights into the latest trends and research in girls' education. I will attend various workshops and sessions, gaining new ideas and strategies that can be implemented at our College to further enhance our educational offerings.
- **Networking:** Engaging with other educators and experts will allow us to build connections and collaborate on future projects, bringing fresh perspectives and opportunities to our school community.

I am committed to bringing back knowledge and experiences that will benefit our students and staff, ensuring that Mary MacKillop College continues to thrive and excel in providing a top-quality education for our girls.

Principal's Report

Exciting Campus Developments

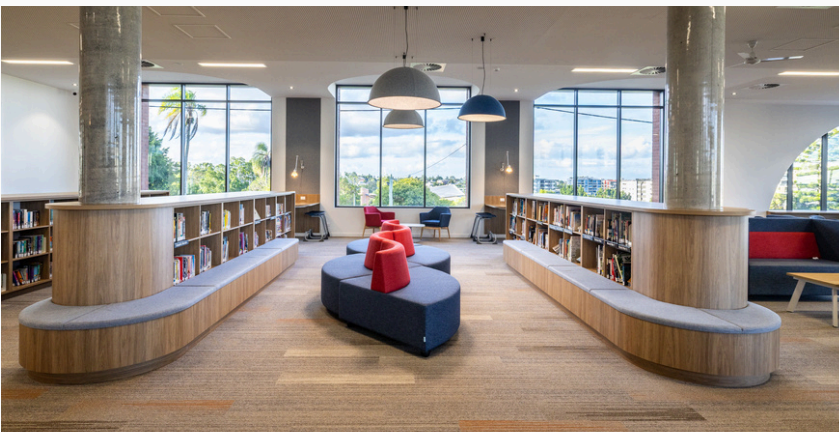
We are thrilled to announce the opening of our McCormack Building, the newly upgraded Maryvale classrooms, and our brand-new car park, after two years of dedicated construction. These enhancements are a testament to our commitment to providing the best possible learning environment for our students.

The architecture tells the story of Mary MacKillop College, welcoming students into a calm and inspiring learning environment.



The McCormack Building features:

- State-of-the-Art Library
- Flexible Learning Spaces
- Large Undercroft
- Lift & Accessibility Features
- Modern Amenities



"Find
happiness
in making
others
happy"

St Mary of the
Cross MacKillop

Principal's Report



The girls are absolutely thrilled with the new facilities, which offer state-of-the-art resources and a more comfortable, modern space for their studies and activities. We are excited about the positive impact these improvements will have on our school community.



We are proud of our commitment to fostering a supportive and empowering environment for all our students. Thank you for being a part of our community!

With every blessing,

Erin Wedge
College Principal

2025 College Captains

Year of Courage

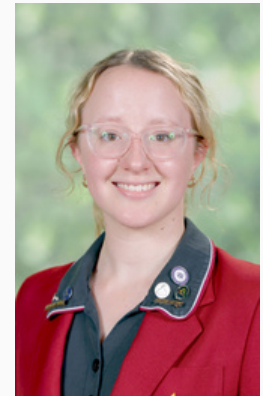
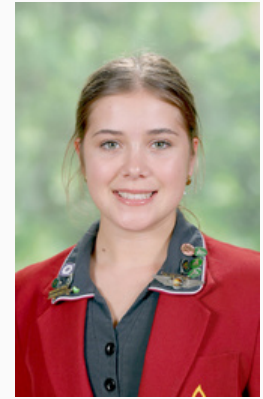
Courage is the person who shows up consistently and always chooses to do the right thing, even in the face of adversity. When imagining what traits a young woman should have, rarely is courage part of that picture. So, at Mary MacKillop College we encourage all to stand up for what they believe in and to know that strength, resilience and bravery should not be qualities that are silenced.

Therefore, we associate our Year of Courage with the slogan, 'Drive to Thrive in 2025'. It represents that every effort you put in this year, whether that be participation or simply being kind to someone else, will reward you back tenfold. Courage isn't about large gestures, it's about putting yourself outside your comfort zone, big or small. We encourage our girls to put their hands up to try new things, meet new people, and forge new connections within our school community.

Leading off this we have launched new activities including the Courage Cup which aims to improve inter-grade connections and to encourages girls to step outside of their comfort zone to represent their grade!

We are eager to inspire the College to pursue academic, sporting, cultural and social justice excellence, seize opportunities and enjoy the high school experience. We are proud to lead MMC in 2025 and look forward to a remarkable year!

Issey Jones & Ruby Payne



Staff Spotlight

Donna Griffiths

It is with great pleasure that we celebrate the career and retirement of Donna Griffiths.

Donna arrived on our campus in January 1983 to commence her 42 years of teaching in our College community, which was then named Corpus Christi College, having just completed two years of teaching at Our Lady of Mercy College in Mackay. After marrying John in 1989 she continued to teach, and even take on extra roles such as Year 10 coordinator, during the years when her three precious children were born.

Throughout the decades since 1983, Donna has stood out as an extremely dedicated and eternally energetic teacher of Junior Mathematics, Maths Methods and Specialist Maths, Junior Science and Physics. She always included the latest valuable technological innovations in her teaching. Having crafted a range of inter-disciplinary courses over the years, in 2022 she also implemented a new subject for the College's technology department: Engineering.

Donna Griffiths' standout length of dedicated teaching at MMC was recognised and celebrated in May 2024 at a community breakfast attended by former students with their families, and colleagues. Donna noted that she had thoroughly enjoyed working with many professional colleagues over the years but specifically it has been the compassion and creativity of her students that has inspired and motivated her to produce her best teaching efforts.

We are beyond grateful for Donna's contribution to the College and wish her the very best for wherever the next chapter takes her.



Where are they now?

Wayne Chapman

What you did when you were at MMC?

My role at MMC was Deputy Principal: Director of Studies. I was responsible for learning and teaching across the College, leading a very dedicated team of Curriculum Leaders to implement high quality teaching practices.

What were some significant memories of this time period?

There were a number incredibly significant events that happened during my time at the College.

Firstly, the Sisters of St Joseph wanted to change the name of the school from Corpus Christi to Mary MacKillop College. This was a massive undertaking with changes in branding, signage, school colours and so on. It took us quite a long time until we were no longer finding Corpus Christi signs and the like in various places around the school!

I remember when this announcement was made to the student community at the end of a Cross Country carnival in Kalinga Park. Many students, particularly older ones, were not happy about their school name being changed, but they grew to love it over time!

Part of the change involved the design of the new school uniforms, to what the young women wear today! Mrs Narelle Dobson (Deputy Principal: Director of Students) worked very hard through this lengthy process.

Another significant event was the handing over of the governance of the College from the Sisters of St Joseph to Brisbane Catholic Education. This was a carefully mapped out and detailed process. Effectively, it involved the school starting with many new systems and processes on the first of January of that year. Whilst the students and parents would not have noticed much difference, there was significant changes and challenges for staff in implementing the new systems.

Year 7 came into secondary school during this time as well. It was exciting to grow the school with the addition of an extra Year Level. I wonder what the Year 7 students of today would think of doing an extra year in primary school?

Do you have a favourite memory of the College?

When I think about happy memories of MMC, my mind goes to the people. There were so many wonderful young women who moved through the school and so many dedicated staff who worked 'over and above' for them! I also fondly recall strong connections with the Sisters and really valued their gentle presence in support of our work.



What you have done since leaving MMC?

I left MMC in Term 4 of 2016 after almost nine years in the Deputy Principal position. I spent two years working at BCE head office in a role which supported all of the secondary schools (including MMC) to transition to the new QCE system.

Following this I spent four years as Principal at Mt Maria College, Petrie and I am currently Principal at Clairvaux MacKillop College at Upper Mount Gravatt.

A lovely part of my current role is re-connecting with the Josephite Charism and bringing it to life for our students. It is a beautiful, authentic and grounded spirituality.



Celebrating the Class of 2024

Prize of Honour: Mia Silver-Thomas

Congratulations to Mia Silver-Thomas, the Mary MacKillop College Prize of Honour recipient for 2024.

The Prize of Honour recognises a student who has consistently showcased exceptional conduct, unwavering dedication, and outstanding performance throughout her journey at the College, and Mia's commitment to MMC was truly remarkable.

A 2024 College Captain, Mia was top of her cohort in Psychology and received a MacKillop Medallion for maintaining an A standard in all Senior subjects. She notes it was her amazing MMC teachers who helped her achieve her ATAR goal and encouraged balance in her academic and co-curricular schedule. Mia represented MMC in sporting, cultural, justice and services pursuits, including AFL, basketball, netball, debating and percussion ensemble. In 2022 she was named Junior Public Speaker of the Year and was a valued member of the Lord Mayor's Youth Environmental Leadership Program. She also participated in Mooting at Bond University and QUT.

Mia is currently studying a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and Behavioural Science (Psychology) at QUT with the aspiration of becoming a children and family lawyer. Mia also works with the Brisbane Bullets and is currently coaching the Year 10 & 12 MMC debating teams and assisting the College with special sports carnivals such as the Vicki Wilson Cup.

In Mia's words *"MMC helped me embrace and overcome challenges... and taught me the value of giving everything a go. I learnt the importance of putting in my best effort to reach my full potential. The welcoming and supportive community made MMC feel like home - everyone knew each other, and there was always a sense of belonging and mutual support"*.

Mia embodies our MMC values with integrity and is a worthy recipient of the Prize of Honour. We wish Mia all the very best for her career and future.



—
'The welcoming
and supportive
community made
MMC feel like
home'
—

Celebrating the Class of 2024

College Dux: Saanvi Prasad

Congratulations to Saanvi Prasad, the 2024 Mary MacKillop College Dux.

This prestigious academic award recognises the Year 12 student who has achieved the most outstanding results across their chosen subjects. Saanvi was top of her cohort in Chemistry and Physics, and received 90% or greater in her Chemistry and Physics internal assessments.

Saanvi also received the Australian Defence Force Future Innovators Award for motivation and innovation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); and a MacKillop Medallion for maintaining an A standard in all Senior subjects.

Saanvi received an outstanding ATAR result of 96.85 is currently studying a Bachelor of Pharmacy Honours at UQ and notes the College was instrumental in helping her achieve her goals. In Saanvi's words *"having such a helpful and enthusiastic group of people behind me, especially during my senior years, undoubtedly made learning at MMC such an enjoyable experience"*.

We are extremely proud of Saanvi's commitment to academic excellence and look forward to following her career.

‘The ongoing support from MMC staff and students encouraged me to achieve my goals’



Celebrating the Class of 2024

Principal's Honour Awards

We honour the remarkable academic results of our 2024 Graduates who achieved an ATAR of 90.00 or above, placing them in the top 10% in the state for their senior academic results.

Special congratulations to Jessica and Isabella, who received a QCAA Certificate of Academic Commendation for achieving an A in at least six subjects.



Saanvi Prasad
ATAR 96.85
Bachelor of Pharmacy
(Honours) at UQ



Isabella Young
ATAR 95.8
Bachelor of Architectural
Design at QUT



Eliza Muntz
ATAR 94.2
Bachelor of Business
Management & Bachelor
of Arts at UQ



Holly Tronc
ATAR 94
Bachelor of Business &
Bachelor of Law
(Honours) at QUT



Harini Mariappan
ATAR 93.6
Bachelor of Advanced
Science (Honours) at UQ



Jessica Knight
ATAR 93
QCAA Certificate of
Academic Commendation



Sharon Singh
ATAR 92.9
Bachelor of Speech
Pathology ACU

Celebrating the Class of 2024



Lili Woulahan
ATAR 92.5
Bachelor of Laws
(Honours) at QUT



Ruby Millward
ATAR 92.25
Bachelor of Advanced
Science (Honours) at UQ

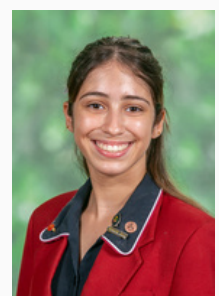


Nadarneo Kaur
ATAR 91.2
Bachelor of Engineering
(Honours) at UQ

BCE Excellence Awards

We celebrate our 2024 Graduates who were awarded a Brisbane Catholic Education Student Excellence Award, which commend students who received 98 or greater out of 100 in one or more of their general subjects. Congratulations to Isabella, Eliza, Lucia, Jade, Lili, Georgia and Natasha.

Special congratulations to Lucia and Eliza, who received a QCAA Subject Achievement Commendation for achieving the highest result in at least one general subject or general extension subject.



Moments at MMC

Opening Mass & Badge Ceremony

At the beginning of Term 1 we gathered as a community to celebrate our Opening Mass & Student Investiture Ceremony.

It was a pleasure to be joined by Derek Sandy who shared his knowledge and spirituality through a Welcome to Country, Fr Joe McKay who led our mass with enthusiasm, and our Vocal Attack choir who beautifully led us in song. We also welcomed special guests Mary Hilton, past APRE of MMC and Sr. Lyn Stabler, SOSJ.

We also officially welcomed our Year 7 and new MacKillop Women to MMC, and presented them with their College badges. We inducted our 2025 Seniors and Student Leadership Team who will steadfastly lead MMC throughout our Year of Courage.



Moments at MMC

Mother's Day Breakfast

In May we celebrated and honoured the remarkable women who raise us at our annual Mother's Day Breakfast held in our Tappeiner Centre.

It was a joy to welcome mothers, grandmothers, aunts, mother figures and daughters to MMC for this special celebration and thank them for their wisdom, guidance, and unwavering support.



Alumnae Achievements

Jorja Drew

Past College Captain and alumnae, Jorja Drew (2022) is currently studying a Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation) / Bachelor of Law at ACU on a Ramsay Scholarship, and has just completed an internship at the Australian Embassy to the Holy See in Rome.

It was a pleasure to welcome Jorja back to the College as Guest Speaker at our Academic Assembly & Principal's Honour Awards. It was wonderful to have Jorja share her overseas experiences and empower our MacKillop Women to be courageous in their pursuits.



Alumnae Achievements

Maddie Dickie

Past College Captain and alumnae, Maddie Dickie (2023) is currently studying a Bachelor of Occupational Therapy at the Australian Catholic University. We asked Maddie to share her thoughts on her degree, studies and future:

“The degree is centred on helping people do the things that matter most to them, whether that’s returning to work, managing daily routines, or reconnecting with hobbies and interests after illness or injury. I have really enjoyed learning how I can make a meaningful difference in everyday life.

This year, I was selected and offered a part-time position working for ACU in their Access to Higher Education program as a student ambassador and facilitator. It’s been a great opportunity to connect with prospective students, share my experiences, and help others feel more confident about transitioning into University life.

On top of that, I’ve been fortunate to be accepted into a short-term overseas study program. At the end of June, I’ll be heading to Rome to study at the Australian Catholic University’s Campus di Roma for a few weeks. I’ll continue my studies alongside students from across Australia, gaining insight into how health and wellbeing are understood in different cultural settings.

I’m especially excited to experience life in such a vibrant and historic city. Outside of class, I’m looking forward to exploring Rome’s famous landmarks, enjoying the food, soaking up the atmosphere and exploring so much more of Europe. I think studying in this kind of environment will be a great opportunity to grow both personally and professionally.

Looking back, I’m really grateful for my time at MMC. It gave me a strong foundation, not only academically but in terms of values and confidence. The encouragement and sense of community I experienced at school definitely helped prepare me for opportunities like this one. I’m excited to take on this next chapter and see where it leads.”

We wish Maddie the very best for her studies and travel.

‘ [MMC] gave me a strong foundation, not only academically but in terms of values & confidence ’



Alumnae Achievements

Eireann Pettman

Corpus Christi & Mary MacKillop College alumnae Eireann (2013) discovered her love of the sciences under the tutelage of Mr Dennis O'Connor. We asked Eireann to share her science journey:

“Having decided to pursue medicine I selected biology and chemistry as my senior sciences and went on to win a distinction in the National Chemistry Competition in my senior year. Following excellent advice from our then guidance counselor Ms Culpepper, I selected a Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science at QUT as a back up choice for medicine. While this was my back up choice, I soon found I had a real passion for the field of medical science and ultimately decided I much preferred the science of what happens behind the scenes rather than pursuing further study to become a doctor.

In the four years of my degree I studied multiple units in each of the major medical science disciplines: haematology and immunology, microbiology, biochemistry, molecular genetics, cytology and histology. It is the last of these, histology, that I found spoke to me most and this is the field that I have been employed in since graduating in 2017.

My various roles have seen me work directly with some of the most well regarded pathologists in the state, and for a time I was responsible for liaising with doctors recognised as industry leaders not only in Australia but also globally.

I currently work as a histopathology scientist in a specialist skin pathology laboratory and my role directly assists in the early detection of skin cancers as well as their treatment and ongoing management.”

We are very proud of Eireann’s achievements and look forward to partnering with her in the future!



Staff Achievements

BCE Excellence Awards

Congratulations to our remarkable MMC staff who have been nominated for the 2025 Brisbane Catholic Education Excellence Awards:

- Adam Munro – nominee for The ACU Award for Excellence as an Early Career Teacher in Secondary School
- The MMC Integration Transforming Learning Team (Amaya Marson, Kathleen Ross, Sharon Sweeney & Carla Wells) – nominee for The ADF Award for Excellence in Learning and Teaching by a School Team

The awards showcase the exceptional achievements of BCE staff, as well as shine a spotlight on the impactful and innovative programs, projects and work taking place in our College. We are extremely proud of Adam, Amaya, Kathleen, Sharon and Carla's commitment to inspiring curiosity in the classroom and supporting our MacKillop Women in all that they do. We wish our remarkable staff all the very best!



Upcoming Events

Annual Alumnae Event



Annual Alumnae Event

Breakfast & McCormack Building Tour



7:30am - 9am

Thursday 16 October 2025

7:30am Tea, Coffee & Light Breakfast

8:15am McCormack Building Tour

\$10 per person

RSVP by Monday 13 October

Book at www.trybooking.com/DCQCX

Enrolment Information

Ready to start an application for Enrolment?

Visit our MMC website for full enrolment details:

www.mmc.qld.edu.au

MARY MACKILLOP COLLEGE

Applications open for:

Year 7
2027 & 2028

Year 8 - 12
Limited opportunities

ENROL NOW

TRULY Remarkable WOMEN

RAD WOMEN WORLDWIDE

Reconnect with MMC

Keep your contact details up to date
to ensure you stay connected to Alumnae news & events.

Update your details

Email: mmc@mmc.qld.edu.au

Phone: 07 3266 2100

Join the Mt St Joseph's, Corpus Christi and Mary MacKillop College
Alumnae Facebook Group here:



Alumnae News

Have an achievement, news or event you'd like to share
with the MMC Alumnae Community?

Email full details to mmc@mmc.qld.edu.au