Learning and Teaching at St Mary’s College

Learning and teaching at St Mary’s College reflects our Vision and Mission Statements which aim to promote a quality education which is holistic, dynamic and responsive to the needs of our students and the community we serve, striving for excellence in all aspects of learning and teaching.

Approaches to contemporary learning and teaching

The curriculum is dynamic and adaptable to the specific needs of St Mary’s College and the Maryborough community. In particular, it is responsive to technological change and is responsive to the needs of learners at the various stages of development. Whole school approaches to curriculum development and delivery ensure alignment between the varying elements of the curriculum: pedagogy, assessment and reporting, and lead to the creation of supportive learning environments.

The College believes in the uniqueness of all children the need for their sense of self-awareness, self-worth and personal identity to be acknowledged, enriched and supported. The College believes that all children are entitled to an education that will enable them to develop their full potential, be that spiritual, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, creative, emotional or social. In embracing the Strategic Renewal Framework for Catholic Schooling 2012-2016 to Teach, Challenge, Transform we are called to put personalized learning at the heart of our learning and teaching.

The College is committed to promoting a culture of excellence by identifying and supporting all students to achieve their potential for excellence providing them with creative, flexible and future oriented learning experiences and opportunities that enhance their gifts and talents. This is achieved through:

- Staff commitment and professional learning to develop all students’ full potential
- Contemporary learning experiences that stimulate, engage, challenge, inform, excite and encourage through partnership and dialogue with teachers and other students
- Opportunities beyond subject teaching, including preparation for future life and community roles
- Continuation of these provisions from P-12 through close links with St Mary’s Primary School

At St Mary’s College the organisation of students as far as the curriculum is concerned is into two groups of Junior Phase and Senior Phase.

- Junior Phase Years 7 – 9.
- Senior Phase Years 10 – 12.
Junior (Years 7-9)

The teaching philosophy for the Junior Phase supports fewer teachers across learning areas to maximise the teacher student relationship for each student and consequently pastoral support. Approximately two thirds of the students learning is conducted in general learning areas. For the rest, access to specialist facilities is a priority to facilitate learning in the specialist areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Areas in general learning areas</th>
<th>Learning Areas in Specialist Facilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Religious Education</td>
<td>• Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>• English</td>
<td>• Visual Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Maths</td>
<td>• Industrial Design and Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>• History</td>
<td>• Home Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Geography</td>
<td>• Drama</td>
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<td>• Health and Physical Education</td>
<td>• Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Business</td>
<td>• LOTE</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Digital Technologies</td>
<td>• Library/resource</td>
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This model is dependent upon student access to a 1:1 computer program with Digital Technologies integrated across the curriculum and also taught as a compulsory subject.

In the Junior Phase consideration is given to:

• providing students with relevant support in managing the personal, social, physical and intellectual demands of this significant period of growth and development
• using research based evidence to develop a contemporary, responsive curriculum
• strengthening linkages with St Mary's Primary School
• Strengthening physical representation of the College’s religious identity, in symbols and icons
• Providing a greater evidence on collaboration between teachers within the Junior Phase classes to ensure greater consistency in learning and teaching of and relationships with students
• Flexible learning spaces that support individual, small group and whole class work
• Break out areas that provide opportunities for use of digital technologies for recording sound and images
• Larger learning areas that support team teaching, exploratory learning, collaborative learning and creativity
• Flexible furniture and furniture arrangements to support these flexible, contemporary learning approaches
• appropriate ICT infrastructure to accommodate portable devices
• Access to specialist facilities that provide opportunity to engage in the full range of learning across all KLAs
Senior Years (Year 10-12)

The Senior Years general learning areas are designed as a work place of learning. They require flexibility.

In the Senior Years consideration is given to:

- facilities that reflect a focus on work oriented programs together with academic programs with flexible timetables, greater freedom and responsibility and part-time campus attendance
- facility design that allows for supervision and transparency into buildings as students develop independent study and project work time across flexible school hours with early starts, working through break times and after school tutorials
- recognition of the need for and facilitation of 1:1 technology and accessibility to specialist facilities.
- offering a wide range of courses by offering composite classes in the majority of elective subject
- providing highly visible spaces for small study groups to work with minimal supervision by teachers

Library / Resource Centre

Library / Information resources are organised in a centralised facility with easy access by all students. Learning spaces facilitate whole class, groups and individual student work in both electronic and non-electronic means and formal and informal modes of learning within an indoor format. Within this facility there is a small break out room which can be used for voice recording.