Transition to Secondary

Life in Secondary

It is normal for students to feel some trepidation about starting High school. However at St Mary’s College we endeavour to provide our new students with the necessary tools to face these challenges. Some of the challenges include getting used to having a greater number of teachers and finding your way around different classrooms. To address these challenges we have designed specialty Year 7 classrooms. Students will have a core classroom where they will complete most of their core subjects including, English, Maths, Religion and History. These classrooms cater for the young adolescent learner with specialty furniture for break out areas and group work. Specialty rooms are used for Science and rotation activities including Home Economics, Drama, Music and Design Technology. Students will also have the same teacher for multiple subjects to alleviate any stress related to having too many teachers.

First week of Secondary

An extensive transition program at the beginning of the school year has been developed to ensure students feel happy and safe in their new environment. This enables them to concentrate on their learning alongside a group of like-minded students. Included in this transition program are a range of activities such as: getting to know you ice-breaker activities, laptop distribution, digital licence which incorporates school portal, workspaces, Google Drive and student emails plus assessment calendars and ‘Bounce Back’ a program that focuses on making friends, resilience and self-esteem.
Peer Support (Buddy) Program

Fostering positive relationship within the College is testament to our culture at St Mary’s. Each Year 6 student will be matched (buddied) with a student from our current Year 9 cohort, this relationship is a key feature of our Peer Support Program. Our Peer Support Program is designed to provide opportunities for Year 10 students to show initiative and leadership while mentoring their buddy in Year. Each year opportunities are provided for the Year 10 students to design and run sessions in Extended Pastoral Care lessons. Some of these sessions include:

- “Getting to know you” activities and
- *Project Rockit* - an online anti-bullying program.

The nature of the program and the interaction between students achieves positive results by helping to develop self esteem, self acceptance, confidence, and the ability to make sound decisions.

Year 7 camp

St Mary’s College transition program culminates in a Year 7 camp ‘Warrawee’ at the end of term 1. Camp Warrawee is a YMCA survivor camp at Joyner, Brisbane. The students work in tribes and use all their skills to earn points to win the final survivor award. This camp offers opportunities for students to bond with their peers, demonstrate leadership and develop healthy relationships whilst participating in team building and survivor type activities.