Year 7 Program 2013

Personal Best
Integrity
High Expectations
Respect
Responsibility
Dear Students, Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the Mordialloc College Year 7 Program. We are excited and enthusiastically looking forward to working with you in 2012.

The Year 7 Learning Program provides students with a highly engaging and busy year within a caring and safe purpose built environment staffed by a dedicated team of quality teachers.

We seek to nurture and develop the great potential of each and every one of our new young students and, in doing so, provide for them the very best introduction to secondary schooling possible.

The following handbook provides information about: the development of the Year 7 program, Victorian curriculum requirements, student learning across the learning centre program and learning within specialist subject areas.

We hope you enjoy your time as a part of the Year 7 Learning Community in 2012. Parent support of the program and the school rules is vital to the development of happy and successful secondary students.

Best Wishes.

The Year 7 Learning Team
The Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS)

This curriculum implemented by the Victorian Government aims to refocus student learning on the learning process itself - learning how to learn - while enabling students to develop real skills and knowledge and independent and collaborative proficiencies.

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards identify the learning that is important for students to succeed in school, at work, in their personal lives and in the community.

The curriculum, developed by the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority, reflects a new approach to student learning and standards in Victorian schools. These standards have the support of all educational sectors and apply to all schools in Victoria - government and non-government.

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards are set in three linked main strands or areas:

**Physical, Personal and Social Learning:**
Skills such as being active and healthy, developing self confidence, managing personal learning, organisation, planning and working with others.

**Discipline-based Learning:**
Knowledge and understanding from the learning areas of English, Science, Mathematics, Humanities, Languages and The Arts.

**Interdisciplinary Learning:**
Essential skills that apply across the curriculum such as thinking, design, problem solving, and using ICT (information, communications and technology).
YEAR 7 LEARNING PROGRAM

INTERGRATED LEARNING

In Year 7, Mordialloc College provides each student with a comprehensive education. They will experience a balanced program within the Learning Centre across curriculum areas based on the State Government’s Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). Student learning is focussed on attaining skills and knowledge across the following three stands of the VELS:

- Disciplinary Learning
- Interdisciplinary Learning
- Personal and Social Learning

Each week during collaborative learning time in the Year 7 Quality eLearning Centre, students will be involved in the integrated study of:

- ENGLISH (Literacy)
- MATHEMATICS (Numeracy)
- HUMANITIES (History–Geography Economics)
- SCIENCE
- INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING that includes: Communication, Information and Communications Technology, Thinking.
- PERSONAL & SOCIAL LEARNING which includes: Interpersonal Development, Personal Learning & Civics and Citizenship

In addition, all students will have many other opportunities to enrich their education through involvement in College productions, music programs, competitions, clubs, leadership opportunities and representative teams in many areas.
DISCIPLINARY LEARNING

LITERACY

The Literacy component of the Year 7 integrated curriculum continues to develop and expand the skills introduced in primary years and is characterised by a wide range of activities in the areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Students are encouraged to read widely and participate in a reading program each morning.

Early focus is on the three set texts purchased by parents. However, once these texts have been read, students are encouraged to extend their reading by bringing a novel of their own choice to school each day or selecting one of the many provided in the Year 7 library resource area.

The set texts provide a common background for analysis and discussion, while wide reading schemes encourage the power of discrimination.

Students are also encouraged to participate in group and class discussions and planned and spontaneous speaking and listening activities such as performance, poetry readings, text response, prepared and impromptu talks, public speaking and debating. Regular Literacy sessions involve small group work on issues in the media and writing various text types.

Writing skills are developed with an emphasis on the process of drafting, composing and editing. Students will be encouraged to experiment with a variety of styles and modes and will write for various purposes and audiences.

NUMERACY

The Numeracy component of the Year 7 integrated curriculum has been developed to encourage students to build their numeracy skills and knowledge through participating in learning that is firmly linked to real life situations. Numeracy can be fun, interesting, stimulating and vigorous for all students.

All Year 7 students are actively involved in numeracy, as problem solving and project work is an integral aspect of the program. In addition, Numeracy workshops are also run four times per week to provide specialised assistance in this area. Students learn not only how to do the mathematics, but also how to apply numeracy in real life situations using imagination and creativity.

Students develop skills in Number, Space, Measurement, Chance and Data, Structure and Working Mathematically.

Students are encouraged to enter the Australian Maths Challenge and Australian Maths competition. Use of technology, in the form of computers and calculators, is introduced during Year 7.
**SCIENCE**

The science component of the Year 7 integrated curriculum encourages students to develop their skills as scientists. Students discover many new scientific concepts through their involvement in the development and design of practical work and research projects. Year 7 students also participate in lab sessions in our new state of the art Discovery Centre.

Students expand their knowledge of science to include abstract concepts, theories, principles and models drawn from biological, chemical, earth, environmental, physical and space sciences.

They also explore how scientific work has led to the discovery of new knowledge and understanding about the natural world and changed our understanding of ourselves and our possible destiny. Students also have the opportunity to gain their Bunsen Burner and Microscope licences and participate in a wide variety of experiments.

**HUMANITIES**

**Geography – History – Economics**

The Humanities component of the integrated Year 7 curriculum encourages students to investigate the behaviour of people in all their different environments throughout the ages. Students develop research, process and interpreting skills to enable them to analyse events and issues, construct hypotheses and make informed judgements.

**GEOGRAPHY**

Students use a variety of geographic tools and skills, together with an inquiry-based approach, to investigate the characteristics of the Asia-Pacific region, including Australia.

They explore how and why, over time, human and physical interactions produce changes to the characteristics of regions, for example, settlement patterns and agricultural and urban land use.

**HISTORY**

Students develop knowledge and understanding about ancient societies and their role in providing the foundations of modern society. This enhances students' knowledge and use of historical concepts such as time, change and continuity and cause and effect, and develops a broad historical map.

**ECONOMICS**

Students build skills in budgeting, develop an understanding of the government’s role in the our economy and learn how different events and circumstances influence how people spend money.
INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

Interdisciplinary Learning integrates and embeds the skills and knowledge of the associated areas of Communication, Information and Communications Technology and Thinking in the wider Year 7 curriculum.

Communication

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) focuses on providing students with the tools to transform their learning and to enrich their learning environment. ICT enables students to focus on the task to be accomplished rather than on the technology they are using to do the work. Through the selection and application of appropriate equipment, techniques and procedures, they process data and information skillfully to create information products in forms that are meaningful for themselves and their audience.

Students are provided with tools and strategies to monitor learning patterns and problem-solving strategies. They gain an understanding of Internet protocols and strategies for exchanging information, which enables them to share and challenge their own and other peoples ideas and solutions with a global audience. In the eLearning Centre there are 48 wireless laptops and 7 Flip Cams for all students to use.

All Year 7 students participate in a variety of rich and rewarding specialist subjects outside of the Learning Centre.

During semester 1 & 2 each week students will have specialist classes in:

- PHYSICAL EDUCATION
- SPORT EDUCATION
- FRENCH (Language Other Than English -LOTE)

and weekly for one semester, specialist classes in a combination of the following subjects:

- PERFORMING ARTS (Music and Drama)
- TECHNOLOGY (Wood, Food, Fabric and Plastics)
- VISUAL ARTS (Art and Graphic Communications)

Thinking

The development of critical thinking skills is crucial to the successful learning progress of our students and their ability to become ‘Life Long Learners.’ At Year 7, thinking skills are not taught as a separate component of the Year 7 integrated curriculum. They are embedded into all aspects of the curriculum. Students are challenged and supported to develop deep levels of thinking and application. They will learn how to use a variety of quality learning tools to support them to plan and develop their learning.

They will be supported to develop reasoning, processing and inquiry skills and to think creatively. Each student will create a Learning Portfolio that contains evidence of their learning journey that identifies their ability to reflect, evaluate and improve their achievement.
As an integrated component of the Year 7 curriculum, Personal and Social Learning focuses on three areas of development crucial to the adolescent learner and his/her ability to experience personal success. These three areas are:

**The Individual Learner & Managing Personal Learning**

Students identify their individual strengths and weaknesses and analyse how emotions affect their learning. They use an expanded repertoire of learning strategies. When learning with peers they develop effective relationships, providing and responding to constructive feedback.

Students learn to set realistic short and long-term learning goals within a variety of tasks and describe their progress towards these. They organise and complete tasks within set time frames, plan and prioritising their available time, demonstrating motivation, and considering both their own and others needs when making decisions about suitable learning processes.

**Civics and Citizenship - Civics Knowledge and Understanding & Community Engagement**

Students are encouraged to participate in school events, or with the school in local or community events. They explore democratic processes through research and use appropriate information-gathering techniques, including interviews. They work with others and participate in decision making.

**Interpersonal Development - Building Social Relationships & Working in Teams**

Students learn skills that they can utilise as a team member. They support other members to share information, explore the ideas of others and work cooperatively to achieve a shared purpose within a realistic time frame.

They reflect on individual and team outcomes and act to improve their own and the team's performance.
SPECIALIST SUBJECTS—Semester 1 & 2

TECHNOLOGY

Materials Technology
Food/Fabric (1 TERM OF EACH, 1 SEMESTER IN TOTAL)
In Year 7 students spend one term in each of these areas. They familiarise themselves with basic materials and learn to use specialised equipment and machines safely and carefully. In Fabrics, students will be making a soft toy using hand embroidery and machining.

In Foods, student learn organisation, time management, hygiene, nutrition and basic skills and methods. They produce mouth watering, interesting meals, cakes and biscuits.

Plastics

In Year 7 students are introduced to a variety of techniques and processes used to shape and finish acrylic materials. They produce interesting projects such as key rings, photo frames and name plaques. Students are encouraged to develop an awareness of design and to evaluate their finished products. They are introduced to machines such as scroll saws, drills and buffers within a safe and cooperative learning environment.

THE ARTS

Performing Arts
Students participate in a range of activities such as acting and role-playing, music, script development and stagecraft. These activities involve both independent and group work and as such support the student to develop creativity and confidence. In Drama students will develop confidence while exploring different dramatic skills such as improvisation, mime, character building and playmaking.

There are a number of different performance opportunities throughout the year that students are encouraged to take part in. Students reflect on their experiences in the drama classroom by keeping an analytical journal.

Annually the College presents a full scale Production. All students are encouraged to participate in the excellent extra curricula events on offer. In 2008 the College was the proud winners of the 2008 Rock Eisteddfod Grand Final. In 2011 the College produced a high quality full production of the “Bye Bye Birdie”.

Instrumental music is available to all students at the school and, with our many music specialists, students are able to choose from various different instruments. They will also have the opportunity to join the school bands and participate in a range of musical events within, and outside, the College.
Art
At Year 7 students complete a comprehensive Art course that is designed to develop the student’s painting, drawing and designing skills. A variety of media is taught such as water colour, pastels, pen and ink, pencils and paint.

Year 7 students will be encouraged to transfer the creative skills and knowledge they acquire in art classes to their integrated learning and projects within the Quality eLearning Centre.

LOTE (Language Other Than English)

French - Le français
Students study French until the end of Year 8. Foreign language study then becomes an elective at Year 9. Emphasis is placed on studying the four linguistic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Language teachers use a variety of approaches to encourage their students to progress as far as possible in French, including games, projects, ICT, conversations, plays, cultural event days and story writing.

Physical Education
In Year 7, Physical Education classes enable students to learn the importance of cooperative behaviour and participation through activities such as: athletics, volleyball, cricket, role playing, fitness, swimming, soccer, gymnastics, decision-making activities, hockey, football, basketball, netball, softball, dance, indoor games and tennis.

Participation in these activities allows students to meet the challenges provided by varied experiences and to develop positive social skills for the future.
SPORT EDUCATION

Sport Education is compulsory at Year 7 and runs for one period each week. The aims of the program are to introduce students to a range of sports and to increase the activity levels and health of students. Students are required to wear their PE uniform for Sport Education.

Sports covered include: cricket, tennis, badminton, table tennis, football, soccer, hockey, netball, minor games, gymnastics, basketball, volleyball, futsal, baseball, softball, rugby, handball, ultimate Frisbee, lacrosse, lawn bowls, super 8’s cricket and ten pin bowling.

Students have the opportunity to compete against other schools in the district in a round robin format each term. Successful teams at district level can proceed to zone, and then on to state finals.

This new framework recognises the global changes and directions that will shape the future of today’s child by delivering a state-wide curriculum that encourages the development of the whole child.

The $1,000,000 Leading School Fund grant provided to the College has been used to fund:
- the research and development of cutting edge curriculum based on VELS
- refinement of Quality processes that the College has been involved in for the past five years
- the building and staffing of the Year 7 Quality eLearning Centre in 2006
- the development of an innovative new program for Year 8 students implemented in 2007

In this exciting learning centre students participate in:
- Curriculum that builds life long learning skills and knowledge built upon Quality processes
- Rich ICT resources and support
- A flexible learning environment that supports self direction, builds strong relationships, cross peer collaboration and positive community values, behaviours and connections

The success of the innovative Year 7 program has been evidenced by:
- Improved Literacy and Numeracy results
- A 23% decrease in student absences
- Improved student engagement and connectedness to school
- Improved student motivation and learner qualities
- International and national recognition through the winning of educational awards

In early 2005, the College was successful in attaining funding through the Victorian Blueprint for Government Schools initiative, The Leading Schools Fund.

In addition, 2005 was the year that the government introduced a new curriculum framework to replace CSF II for all primary and secondary Victorian government schools - the Victorian Essential Learning Standards, known as VELS.
FAMILY GROUPINGS

The Year 7 program focuses not only on ‘what’ students learn, but also on ‘how they learn best.’ Having acknowledged current educational research and the importance of the strong relationships that students form within the primary setting, Mordialloc College is committed to providing the personal support students need to achieve their best.

Therefore, each Year 7 student is carefully grouped into a class sized team; this team is called their ‘Family Group.’ Every group is attached to a significant adult who is a high quality teacher. Students will identify their individual teacher as their ‘Family Guide.’ Students will meet with their Family Guide every morning until recess.

Collectively, the Family Guides form the Year 7 teaching team and, with the exception of specialist classes, they work with all the students in this level within the Centre until lunchtime each day.

Your student’s Family Guide is your main contact and support adult at the school. Family Guides are responsible for:

- Developing strong and supportive relationships with their family group of students
- Building a comprehensive portfolio with each child and charting their learning journey throughout the year
- The assessment, monitoring and reporting for each of the students in their family group
- Communication regarding their student’s learning and behaviours to parents and carers

Young people need a broad range of knowledge and social, personal and thinking skills to be successful. The Standards will enable young people to develop through their schooling and will prepare them for their final years of study in the:

- Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)
- Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)
- Vocational Education and Training (VET) which can be undertaken as part of either VCE or VCAL

(VELS Parent Information Brochure Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2006).
**ASSESSMENT**

Students will participate in a variety of assessment practices and tasks during Year 7. Assessment tasks may include: tests, assignments, essays, oral presentations and individual and group projects.

Student learning within the Quality eLearning Centre will be assessed in line with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS).

Students will be encouraged to be actively involved in their learning and assessment processes. With the support of their Family Guide, they will learn to identify short and long term goals and plan strategies for improvement.

Parents will receive a detailed report of their student’s achievement at the end of semester 1 and again at the end of semester 2 in line with Victorian Government guidelines and the Victorian Essential Learning Standards.

**STUDENT LED PARENT CONFERENCES**

During Term 1 and 3, parents and carers of Year 7 students will be invited to attend the Learning Centre to attend a Student Led Parent Conference. The conference runs for 30-40 minutes and is scheduled during school hours.

Student Led Parent Conferences have been extremely successful and have proven to be very effective in improving student learning, motivation, organisational skills and self confidence.

The conference provides parents/carers with the opportunity to participate in a very meaningful and comprehensive learning experience with their child. As the conference is designed and led by the student it gives parents and carers the unique opportunity to explore the Centre and learning process through their child’s eyes.