Year 8 Program 2013

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

Welcome to the Year 8 program at Mordialloc College. The Year 8 teaching team consists of a highly skilled and motivated group of teachers and we are looking forward to working alongside you throughout 2013.

The Year 8 program at Mordialloc College sees students immersed in a comprehensive range of learning activities throughout the course of the year. They participate in a diverse range of core and specialist subjects, and utilise a range of flexible learning spaces throughout the college, basing themselves in the Year 8 Enquiry Zone. The program also includes an exciting mix of extra-curricular activities including an adventure camp, and a range of excursions and sports days.

The following handbook provides information about: the development of the Year 8 program, Victorian and Australian curriculum requirements, student learning across the Year 8 program and learning within specialist subject areas.

We hope you enjoy your time as a part of the Year 8 Learning Community in 2013. Parent support of the program and the school values is vital to the development of happy and successful secondary students.

Best Wishes.

The Year 8 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).

**The New Australian Curriculum – AUSVELS**

AusVELS is the Foundation to Year 10 Curriculum for Victorian government and Catholic schools for implementation from 2013. AusVELS outlines what is essential for all Victorian students to learn for F-10 and includes the Australian Curriculum F-10 for English, Mathematics, History and Science. It provides a single, coherent and comprehensive set of common achievement standards which schools use to plan...
YEAR 8 LEARNING PROGRAM

INTERGRATED LEARNING

Mordialloc College provides each student in Year 8 with a comprehensive education. Every student will experience a balanced program encompassing all learning areas. In addition, all students will be involved in Sport Education and will have many other opportunities to enrich their education through productions, the music programs, competitions, clubs and representative teams in many areas.

Each student’s learning program is divided into 5 main areas, Discovery (Maths and Science), Communication (English and Humanities), Active8 (integrated project time), specialist classes and Sport Education. The Active8 sessions will see students engaging in enquiry and project based learning including designated applied learning experiences.

Areas covered:
- **ENGLISH**
- **MATHS**
- **HUMANITIES**
- **SCIENCE**
- **ICT**
- **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**
- **SPORT EDUCATION**
DISCIPLINARY LEARNING

ENGLISH

The standards required in English at this level include:

- writing an argument and defining a personal position
- using correct spelling, grammar and punctuation
- critically evaluating the spoken language of others, asking clarifying questions and identifying important ideas while listening to other people
- responding to a variety of texts. Students are encouraged to read widely. The school provides some texts and others are purchased by parents through the booklist. 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.

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

English at our school is exciting and it invites every student to become fully involved as a writer, debater, actor and critic - but most importantly, a participant.

ESL students are also provided with special assistance within and outside the classroom.

MATHEMATICS

The Mathematics component of the Year 8 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 8 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.
**SCIENCE**

At Year 8 our students are encouraged to develop their skills as scientists. Students discover many new scientific concepts by their involvement in carefully designed practical work and research projects. Students also participate in lab sessions in our new state of the art Discovery Centre.

Students will study the following units –

- Simple Circuits
- Sound Waves
- Chemistry
- Body Systems
- The Earth and Beyond
- Ecosystems.

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.

**HUMANITIES**

*Geography – History – Economics*

The Humanities component of the integrated Year 8 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 location, economics and social and cultural characteristics of communities and countries.

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 medieval 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.

Students also examine key features of community life, how societies are ruled and by whom and the strengths and weaknesses of historical sources and historical information.
**ECONOMICS**

Students build skills in budgeting, develop an understanding of the government’s role in 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 Enquiry Zone there are 36 wireless laptops, iPods and Flip Cams for all students to use.

**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.
PERSONAL LEARNING

As an integrated component of the Year 8 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

All Year 8 students participate in a variety of rich and rewarding specialist subjects outside of the Learning Centre.

During semester 1 & 2 students will have specialist classes in:
PHYSICAL EDUCATION
SPORT EDUCATION
FRENCH (Language Other Than English -LOTE)

In addition to this students complete classes for one semester in:
PERFORMING ARTS (Music and Drama)
TECHNOLOGY (Wood, Food and Plastics)
VISUAL ARTS (Art and Graphic Communications)

TECHNOLOGY

Food
In Foods, students learn organisation, time management, hygiene, nutrition and basic skills and methods. They produce mouth watering, interesting meals, cakes and biscuits. In Year 8, students concentrate on food for the whole semester.

Wood/Acrylics/Metal
In Year 8 students develop knowledge and skills working with wood, metal bending and acrylic. They learn how to use tools to achieve a variety of timber joining methods and build on their knowledge of plastics. Projects include a pencil box, novelty clock and desk tidy. Students also complete investigation projects, design drawings and keep a journal of their work processes.

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’.

Mordialloc College
Inspiring tomorrow’s leaders
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 and Graphics

At Year 8, students are introduced to graphic communication, which looks at creative and technical drawing and technologically aided design. Instrumental drawing teaches the conventions used in industry and the design process looks at the creative development of visual communication.

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 8, 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.
**FAMILY GROUPINGS**

The Year 8 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 8 student is carefully grouped into a class sized team; this team is called their ‘Family Group.’ Every group is attached to two significant adults who are high quality teachers. Students will identify their individual teacher as their ‘Family Guide.’

Collectively, the Family Guides form the Year 8 teaching team and, with the exception of specialist classes, they work with all the students in this level within the Enquiry Zone.

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 8. 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) and the Australian Curriculum.

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, the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and the new Australian Curriculum.

STUDENT LED PARENT CONFERENCES

During Term 1 and 3, parents and carers of Year 8 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.