



# WHAT'S ON NEWSLETTER

Term 1 Weeks 2 and 3 (Monday 5 February – Sunday 18 February)

## IMPORTANT NEWS

### Principal's Welcome Letter

Please click [here](#) to find Mrs Masters's welcome letter to our community.

### School Hours

Please note that the College is open from 8:00am to 5:00pm on school days.

### Attendance and Absences

- If students will be absent from school, parents/carers are requested to notify the College in advance, or on the day of the absence, by emailing [student.services@merici.edu.au](mailto:student.services@merici.edu.au).
- If a student is absent, or late to school, and contact from a parent/carer has not been received, the College will send an SMS message to the parent/carer. Parents/carers are asked to respond to the SMS acknowledging receipt of the SMS and approving the absence.
- A medical certificate needs to be produced for absences exceeding three consecutive days.
- Applications for approved leave must be made in writing to the Principal, through the Assistant Principal Teaching and Learning prior to the leave being taken.
- Early Departure - Parent/Guardian are required to with notice email [student.services@merici.act.edu.au](mailto:student.services@merici.act.edu.au) advising student name, what time they will be collecting the student and the reason for early departure.
- Students are then required to come to Student Services and wait until their parent arrives to collect them.
- Late arrival – On arrival to school, students arriving late need to sign into Student Services kiosk.

For more information regarding the Attendance Processes at Merici College, please refer to the <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/school-policies/attendance>.

### Compass/SEQTA Clarification

Compass is the enrolment and parent portal for the Catholic Education Office and allows **parents only** to manage:

- Fees payments
- Parent relationships
- Contact details such as mobile and change of address
- Excursion permissions
- Medical consent forms

Unlike the primary schools, Merici College and their teachers does not use Compass for day to day class activities and communications with teachers. Those functions are covered by SEQTA.

Please access the Compass login portal here, <http://merici.college/go/compassaccount>.

SEQTA is the teaching and learning site for Merici. **Parents, all teachers and students** use SEQTA to:

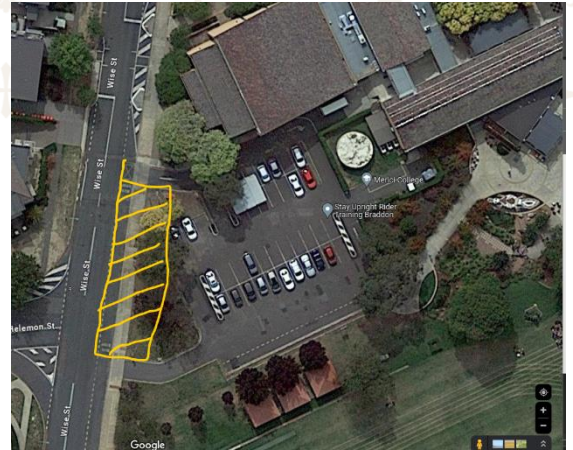
- Student daily access
- Student classwork

- Subjects, courses and learning material
- Pastoral care notifications
- Results and reports
- Attendance
- Online top/up for canteen and printing

### Temporary Arrangements during Building Works

During the renovation of the main entrance and administration office space at Merici College, which is expected to take all of Term 1, some changes are being put in place to accommodate safe movement of people onsite and those visiting.

- The front door to the College has been barricaded off. There is no access through the main entrance.
- The entrance through the Auditorium foyer remains open for now but will be closed later as building works progress.
- The main Reception Office, along with Student Services and Finance Office has been temporarily relocated to the classroom known as C2.
- Access to Reception is via the main carpark on Wise Street, right next door to the Auditorium building.
- Parents can park in the Wise Street carpark when visiting the College and enter using the external stairs that lead through the iron gates to the main quadrangle. You'll see entrance doors to Reception on the left. There is signage to assist.
- DROP OFF of students WILL NOT occur in the usual place in the carpark. Instead, drop off will be on Wise Street between the 2 red gates of the main carpark. Please DO NOT enter the Carpark for drop off as it will be too congested.
- PICK UP is at the same point on Wise Street i.e, between the 2 red gates, but pick-up will be restricted to between **3:10pm and 3:25pm**. Thereafter buses take over.
- Supervision by staff in hi-viz vests will be provided.
- If you attempt to park on Wise street to wait for your daughter you will be asked to move on, similar to airport pick up and drop off zone. Again, this is to avoid congestion and increased risk of mishap or injury.



These arrangements will be trialled for all of Weeks 1 and 2 and may change if it improves safety. Any change in arrangements will be conveyed to the community.

We thank all parents for your patience during these renovations and welcome any constructive suggestions or feedback which will help us manage safety better during this time.

### Uniform Expectations: Wear our uniform with pride!

Our Merici uniform is highly recognisable in the Canberra community and a symbol of our collective identity. Our smart blazers and navy uniform are highly regarded by members of the Canberra community, and they know a Merici Student when they see one. Every Merici Student is an ambassador for our College and there is an expectation that uniforms will be worn in a responsible and respectful manner, to the highest standard of presentation.

Please familiarise yourselves with the uniform guidelines and support the College in its efforts to ensure the uniform is worn with pride and respect, <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/my-merici/resources/uniforms>. We will be working closely with students and families to follow up on any uniform concerns to reinforce our belief that the uniform helps create a sense of belonging and contributes to our strong school spirit.

## WHOLE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

### Tullow House Week (Monday 12-16th February)

Tullow House will celebrate their 'House Week' from Monday 12-16 February. This is an opportunity to acknowledge, observe and explore the Brigidine Order on which Tullow House is founded. The Feast of St Brigid is commemorated on 1 February annually and is very important to the formation of the Brigidine Sisters. During this week students will participate in Tullow House activities during morning PC and lunchtimes. Our main celebrations will take place on Tuesday 13 February.

### Shrove Pancake Day Fundraiser

Tullow will be selling pancakes at lunchtime on Tuesday 12 February to raise funds for our charity organisation Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project (BASP).

Tullow students are encouraged to wear green accessories on Tuesday 13 February, Wednesday 14 February and Thursday 15 February.

### Guidelines for Tullow House dress

To ensure the Tullow House Week is as successful as possible, students are required to follow the dress guidelines below:

- wear green accessories with your full school uniform (green ribbon, green socks)
- please bring your full PE uniform for PE classes
- no accessories should be worn on Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> as we have our opening school mass

We are looking forward to a very successful Tullow House Week and appreciate your support of this special celebration. If you have any questions or require any further information, please contact either your daughter's PC Teacher or Emma Kennedy [emma.kennedy@merici.act.edu.au](mailto:emma.kennedy@merici.act.edu.au).

### Opening School Mass (Monday 12 February 10.00am)

A very special Opening School Mass will be held on Monday 12 February for all students and staff. Parents and friends are invited to view the Mass via livestream at <https://merici.college/go/livestream>.

### Co-Curricular Activities Expo (Thursday 15 February 12:45pm)

Merici offers a wide range of sporting, cultural, community service, creative and outdoor activities for students. All students are encouraged to become involved in these activities. A program of social and pastoral events is also provided to strengthen the community and house spirit within the college.

An Activities Expo will be held on Thursday 15 February at lunch time in the Auditorium. The Expo provides students with the opportunity to investigate and enrol in any of the activities. Activity facilitators will be present to answer any questions that students may have. Please follow the link <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/building-futures/cocurriculars> to find a list of current co-curricular activities.

## COUNSELLORS CORNER

Welcome back to all our returning students, and a warm welcome to the newcomers, parents and caregivers! As we head into another school year, transitions are often an uncomfortable yet shared experience, often accompanied by a range of emotions and feelings – such as excitement, and possibly a touch of apprehension.

Whether it is your first day of school or moving to a higher grade, common feelings like anticipation, nervousness, worry, and anxiety may arise. It is important to recognise and normalise these emotions, in order to embrace a smoother transition.

Parents and caregivers can play an important role in supporting their daughters through these transitions through open communication and actively listening to concerns. Additional practical strategies include:

- Reintroduce Routines: establish consistent bedtime routines for better sleep hygiene.
- Open Communication: talk openly about your daughter's feelings about returning to school. Is she excited? Nervous? Worried about anything specific? Validate her emotions and offer reassurance.
- Mind the Body: encourage healthy habits like regular exercise, balanced meals, and relaxation techniques to manage stress and promote emotional well-being.

Merici College offers School Counselling during school hours throughout the school year, this service is delivered by qualified mental health professionals with experience working with young people who present with a variety of mental health concerns. It is our role to foster conditions within the school context that maximise educational equity, student wellbeing and learning success for all students.

School Counselling is a short term, goal-focused therapy available to students to reduce the impact that their mental health may be having on their learning and life. It is important to know that School Counselling is not a long-term support service and is therefore not always able to provide the length or depth of support that some students may need to maximise their chance of recovery.

For more information about counselling at Merici, please access the Counsellors Corner on our website at <https://www.merici.act.edu.au/building-futures/counsellors-corner>.

Chelsea is available Monday-Thursday, and Xian's working days are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. If you feel your daughter may benefit from accessing school counselling or you would like to get in contact with the school counsellors you can send any enquires through to [counsellors@merici.act.edu.au](mailto:counsellors@merici.act.edu.au).

Xian, alongside the Pastoral Care Team will be presenting to Year 7 parents at the Aspiring to Achieve Workshop on Tuesday, 6 February. Xian will be discussing all things transitions and how to support your daughter through this exciting but tricky time.

We look forward to getting to know many of you throughout the year ahead.

*Chelsea & Xian, School Counsellors*

## YEARS 7, 8 AND 9 NEWS

### Year 7 Aspiring to Achieve Parent Workshop (Tuesday 6 February)

Please click [here](#) to find an invitation for all Year 7 parents and carers to attend our Aspiring to Achieve Parent Workshop. The evening will commence at 5.30pm in the canteen for light refreshments. The presentation will commence at 6pm with a Principal's Welcome, followed by two key sessions:

1. Year 7 Camp and Pastoral Care Support
2. Planning for Academic Success

Students are welcome but are not required to attend. To assist with catering, please RSVP your attendance to [ros.parisi@merici.act.edu.au](mailto:ros.parisi@merici.act.edu.au) by Friday 2 February.

## YEARS 10, 11 and 12 NEWS

### Senior Carpark and Senior Study Periods/Signing In

Please note that the senior carpark has now reopened. Senior students who wish to park in the senior carpark are required to complete a carparking application and letter found [here](#). Please return a hard copy to Reception. The letter also contains important information about senior study periods and signing in/out procedures.

## CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS NEWS

### Dance Troupe

**When** - Thursdays 3:30PM - 4:30PM (From WEEK 2)

**Where** - Auditorium Stage

**What** - Bring a change of clothes or your PE uniform + water bottle

**Who** - Anyone at all, those with dance experience encouraged!

**Questions** - Email Ms Fogarty, [alison.fogarty@merici.act.edu.au](mailto:alison.fogarty@merici.act.edu.au)

Please fill out the below form to register your interest! <https://forms.office.com/r/YuP2qhb4Tg>

### Wakakirri

Merici College is proud to announce that we will be participating in Wakakirri in 2024, showcasing the school's commitment to fostering creativity and collaboration through performing arts. Through this vibrant platform, students at Merici College have the opportunity to express their talents and passion, bringing stories to life on stage and celebrating the power of artistic expression.

Our theme: **Women Leading with Impact**

As we know that many of our students will be keen to participate, we will be holding auditions. All information can be found below.

**Auditions** - Wednesday lunch time WEEK 2.

**Rehearsals** - EVERY Monday and Wednesday Lunchtime.

**Important Dates** - Performance Shows: Canberra Theatre 29 - 31 July, Awards Show: Canberra Theatre, 9 September

**Where** - Aud Stage

**What** - Bring a change of clothes or your PE uniform + water bottle (students must be ready to go AS SOON AS THE BELL THE GOES)

**Who** - Anyone at all, those with dance/drama experience encouraged!

**Questions** - Email Ms Fogarty, [alison.fogarty@merici.act.edu.au](mailto:alison.fogarty@merici.act.edu.au)

Please fill out the below form to register your interest!

<https://forms.office.com/r/OfFRExA0iv>

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY FACULTY NEWS

### Introducing the Design and Technology Faculty

Merici College prides itself on high-quality STEM education and in 2024, our MYP Design and BSSS Technology subjects are coming together in our newest department, Design and Technologies. The former Global Studies department has been split, with Mrs Kyla Firman stepping into the Humanities Coordinator position and Mrs Stephanie Spiller moving across to Design Technologies. VET subjects continue to be looked after by our Careers and VET Coordinator, Mrs Kerry McDonnell. We are looking forward to an exciting year ahead with new equipment and updated courses to support our future engineers and designers.

Updated Department list:

Humanities (Kyla Firman)	Design and Technology (Stephanie Spiller)	VET (Kerry McDonnell)
Integrated Humanities Business and Economics Civics and Citizenship Geography History BSSS Legal Studies BSSS Ancient History BSSS Modern History BSSS Economics BSSS Business IB Global Politics	Y7 Design Digital Technologies Engineering Food Technology Information Technology Sustainability Textiles BSSS Design and Graphics	Y10 Business Services Y10 Hospitality Y10 Mentors Y 10 Sport and Recreation BSSS Design and Textiles BSSS Hospitality BSSS Sport and Recreation Careers

## iC NEWS

It is exciting to begin this school year with a revamped Information Centre (iC) space. Those students who are continuing will notice the rearranged furniture. This provides further study areas, greater collaboration space and a fully furnished senior study. The senior study is a calm, welcoming and inviting space for study.

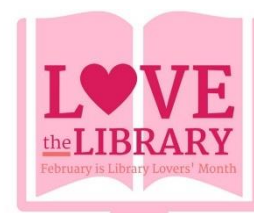
Our opening hours have extended starting from Week 2, 2024. The Information Centre (iC) is open Monday – Thursday 8:30am – 5:30pm, Friday 8:30am – 4pm. Students are welcome to stay after school, borrow books, study, or use the resources available.

Library Lover's Day is the 14<sup>th</sup> February where we celebrate all things library, such as reading, literacy, authors, illustrators, and the most important thing... the readers and those who use this facility. We are encouraging our students to come into the iC to see the display. We would love to hear from the students about what they love about our library, they can answer this survey.

We look forward to getting to know your daughters throughout the year, whether it be to help with researching and referencing, to find a great book, discuss an author, pull apart a character and story, participate in book club, join Kid's Lit Quiz group or chess club, play board games, or to complete a jigsaw puzzle.

Happy reading

iC Staff



## DEFENCE NEWS

I am Mrs Kate Friend, the Defence School Mentor (DSM), and my role is to support students from families with a parent or guardian currently serving in the ADF.

Defence families are always welcome to contact me with any information regarding a new posting or absences impacting your family. The next couple of weeks we will focus on welcoming any new students from Defence families to Merici College.

### Week 2 - Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February

All new Defence students are invited to Room 222 at lunchtime. We will then walk over to the OYC to meet your Defence buddies. BYO lunch and water bottles, snacks provided.

### Week 3 - Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February

All students from families with a parent who is an ADF serving member are invited to our 2024 Welcome lunch in the OYC. Please RSVP to [kate.friend@merici.act.edu.au](mailto:kate.friend@merici.act.edu.au) with any dietary requirements.

## CO-CURRICULAR NEWS

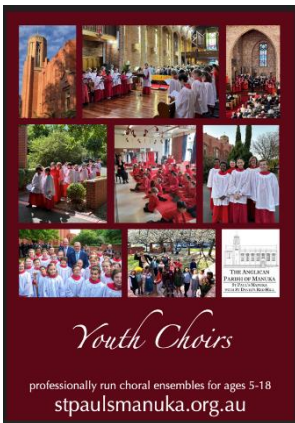
### Dance Troupe Performances

We welcome our community to come along and support our Dance Troupers who will be performing at the 2024 Multicultural Festival on Friday 16 February at 5:00pm on the Petrie Plaza stage.

### Merici/Marist Sailing

The Merici sailors will begin the 2024 season at the YMCA on Wednesday and Thursday of Week 2. Enquiries to [ed.mickleburgh@merici.act.edu.au](mailto:ed.mickleburgh@merici.act.edu.au).

## OTHER NEWS



### Youth Choirs Manuka

Catering for ages 5-18 and expertly run by professional music teachers, the children's choirs at St Paul's Manuka offer a unique opportunity in Canberra for free, quality music education.

The choirs achieve a very high musical standard, but there is also a strong focus on inclusivity: there are no fees or auditions, and all children are warmly welcome to participate.

Further information can also be found on the St Paul's website: <https://www.stpaulsmanuka.org.au/st-pauls-childrens-choirs/>