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# Focus on MECS

## Mount Evelyn Christian School



### MECS Vision

Seeking the  
Kingdom of God  
in Education



### Our Mission

We provide Parent-governed, Christ-centred schooling with learning experiences that challenge each student to actively live for God in His world, while partnering with Christian parents in the nurture of their children at a price affordable to those who are committed.



# Welcome

Thanks for looking through this 'window' into the life and identity of Mount Evelyn Christian School – 'MECS' as we like to call it. I hope that you will get a glimpse of our values and vision through this document, and trust you will discover our determination to make a difference for your child.

I'm sure you have great aspirations for your child. Come journey with us for a few moments to see whether the educational and life aspirations you have for your child fit with those we have at MECS. You will discover that we see each child as created in God's image, and as being a unique individual gifted in their own way. For us, education is about the development of the whole child, and is built on a solid biblical foundation. I invite you to discover our learning community and consider becoming a part of it.

**Paul Oldman**  
*Principal*

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# Christian Education for your Child

We believe Christians can make a difference to our society and we want MECS students to be a part of that. The heart of our vision is "Seeking the Kingdom of God in Education." This means that every area of life, including our school, is part of that - His kingdom. We believe that Christianity is not solely about church on Sunday. Instead, we believe that our relationship with God impacts and transforms the way we act in all areas of life, including education. Pursuing the vision of seeking God's will transforms the way we do education; hence we see what we do as transformational education.

At MECS, we recognise that we have the special task of guiding each student in discovering and understanding the meaning and structure of the world. It is then our role to move them beyond discovery to a real and well thought out response that equips them to recognise their place in the world and to understand how they can serve God in all of life.



Direction

# Working Together

Today's society seems to be one in which the role of parents is diminishing. We want our approach to education to empower parents to bring up their children with a strong Christian perspective on life. We believe God gives to parents the significant responsibility of nurturing their children.

MECS has a long and rich history of sacrificial service by parents who have made it the distinctive educational community it is today. We want to build a strong relationship with parents and 'partner' in meeting the educational needs of children. There are many ways in which parents can be involved in MECS: assisting in classes, helping on camps, caring for our beautiful facilities, and having great

interaction with teachers. More than a checklist of things to do, though, we see partnership as being best defined in terms of relationship and attitude. This is particularly embodied in the ownership of the school. MECS is owned by an association of Christian parents and teachers. Parents in the Association embrace and work on building the MECS Christian education vision. Some commit to serving on the governing Board. A parent of a MECS student is not disconnected or isolated from their child's education. Instead, they partner with staff in a vibrant school community committed to developing Christian education.



## Partnership

# Equipping for Life

Many Australians think that schooling is primarily about 'skilling up' a child in preparation for adult and work life. We say a Christian education is so much more than that. It's about every part of life. As Christians, we believe this is God's world and our job is to follow Jesus in everything we do. We want our students to understand this notion of discipleship, maturing in their understanding of who they are in God's world and the purposes He has for them. Students who are encouraged and equipped by gifted and committed Christian staff to live lives of responsive discipleship can not help but make a difference in their worlds.

Often times schools can treat students as 'bottoms on seats', assuming everyone learns in the same way. MECS understands that each child is a unique and special individual who bears the fingerprint of God. We believe each person is created in God's image, recognising and catering for students' individual needs. We want every student to develop their gifts and have multiple opportunities to shine. Each gift area and each vocational

orientation should be celebrated. This focus on 'each child' doesn't mean 24 individual learning programs in a class. Lots of learning will occur communally and cooperatively and in diverse age learning groups. Good learning caters for the individual and, at the same time, builds community.

Through the use of their gifts, each child should be encouraged to pursue excellence. This is not the sort of excellence that just means first place, but the excellence of being stretched and doing their best for the Lord with the skills He has given them. MECS also places a high value on providing a variety of learning approaches for students so that their educational experience is broad and well rounded, equipping them for a life of meaningful service both while at school and beyond. At each stage from Kindergarten to Year 12, MECS fosters an attitude of self responsibility and ownership for learning. As students mature they should increasingly take charge of their learning tasks and develop a habit of discerning life-long learning.



## Discipleship

# Distinctively MECS

MECS is celebrated for our unique approach to teaching and learning. As an independent school seeking to be faithfully Christian, we have a school-based curriculum. Traditionally, most schooling divides knowledge up so that it is taught in subject areas. While this is a well developed approach, it does set strict parameters around what a school might do. In contrast to this, MECS uses an integral approach which assumes that knowledge doesn't just start with a rationalistic or scientific base but that its meaning is already evident when we start from the 'whole' or the way in which that 'slice of life' exists within God's creation. We then delve in and look at the complexity and interconnections within that 'slice'. This integral approach allows much more freedom to develop distinctive and faithful Christian approaches to curriculum.

At MECS we have the wonderful opportunities to shape the many aspects of learning through the curriculum, the pedagogy and the educational methodologies. Here, many key terms are rich in meaning. 'Hands-on' learning means that students learn best experientially, and 'real life orientation' means that learning is best done when immersed in real contexts that undertake 'concrete'

actions, hence camps are a significant part of our syllabus. Focus on 'multi-age groupings' reduces standardisation and encourages diversity, while 'cooperative learning' fosters team-based, relational learning. That our programs are 'child-oriented, Christ-centred' means the child is close to the centre but that it's our service to the Lord that drives the program, and 'purposeful responding' means that knowledge creates a responsibility for response.

These features of our programs do not mean that students at MECS don't learn skills in Maths, English, Science or other areas. They do, and the standardised comparative tests show fine outcomes. The MECS well rounded and holistic approach to learning more than adequately covers these subject-based skills but at the same time is much broader, deeper and richer.

There are many other unique features of the MECS program. The Library is a vibrant resource and research centre linked to every section of the curriculum. Hands on learning is accommodated in the Year 9 Open Village program and in the VET program in Senior School, allowing students whose gifts are more practical to develop their potential and feel affirmed.

While the integral curriculum has most prominence in the Primary and Middle Schools, the Senior School has its own unique aspects. Students undertake perspective subjects designed to assist them in developing thinking and discerning skills. Year 10s pursue Worldview and Aboriginal Studies, with the Year 10 Warlpiri program and Centre Trip typically identified as students' highlights.



## Distinctive

# Learning Environment

MECS gains a real sense of community because we have all years from Kindergarten to Year 12 on the one property. Each part of the school – the Kindergarten, Primary, Middle, and Senior schools, has its own space. Students at MECS are not overlooked or lost in the throng; instead, they soon develop a sense of belonging. One of the ways we achieve this is by maintaining small class sizes and ensuring that teachers are the primary source of pastoral care for students.

Visitors exploring MECS are impressed with our wonderful learning environment, the result of decades of community building, careful planning and creative design and construction that suits our natural bush setting. It's our belief that an educational community that seeks out the beauty in children, in learning and in the environment can not help but respond to God's goodness in thankfulness and care.

## Your Next Step

Thanks for taking the time to focus on MECS. You probably have questions. Please ask us or check out our FAQ section on the website. We hope that you would like to come and explore. To take the next step call us on (03) 9738 6000 or visit [www.meecs.vic.edu.au](http://www.meecs.vic.edu.au)



Community

