

Information for Teaching Positions Mount Evelyn Christian School

Mount Evelyn Christian School (MECS) has a vision to “Seek the Kingdom of God in Education”. MECS is one of the eighty-seven Christian Education National (CEN) schools throughout Australia, and has been operating in its current bush setting in the outer suburbs 40km east of the Melbourne CBD since 1973.

MECS has over five hundred and seventy students from Kindergarten to Year 12. The school is governed by a Board of Directors whose members are elected by parents who are members of the School Association. The school community endeavours to have all areas of life within the school actively respond to the revelation of God in the Bible. The school helps young people develop their gifts and find their purpose in life, as well as to prepare them for service in whatever pathway God is calling them to. The school assists parents to raise self-disciplined, responsible and adaptable citizens who are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the society in which they live. The school seeks not to be exclusive but to provide places for the children of every family, particularly Christian families, who seek a Christian education for their children.

Over the years MECS has developed its own approach to the educational task. The curriculum to Year 9 is integral rather than subject-based. The school keeps to a minimum the practice of grouping children in single-age classes, preferring learning groups that span two or three years. The school has a heavy emphasis on learning beyond the classroom, which includes excursions, camps and the work place. Research skills, confidence and the use of the 30,000 item resource centre is more important at MECS than textbooks. The staff seeks to exercise discipline that is formative of the responsible individual rather than merely conforming to a set of rules. The school has a dress code rather than a uniform. The school is structured to deter teachers from working in isolation and encourages teamwork.

MECS seeks in its curriculum and teaching methods to take seriously what is revealed in the Bible about God, his creation, the nature and purpose of mankind, community, the effects of the fall, and the life, death, resurrection and Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. As a Christian teaching community we approach the popular principles and practices of humanist and rationalist educators very cautiously, seeking to evaluate them in the light of the Biblical revelation. This means that members of our teaching team need to be committed Christians and active in their respective churches. They need to share the same basic evangelical Christian beliefs as the school, as stated in the school's [Educational Creed](#) (download from our website www.mecs.vic.edu.au).

It also means that the teaching team needs to possess skills and insights to equip it for this work. To this end, all members of our teaching staff agree on appointment to undertake specialist studies through the National Institute for Christian Education. Usually teachers take up these studies after a year of settling into the school. The school provides financial support and generous study release time to encourage teachers in fulfilling this obligation. Teachers who have fulfilled the obligation receive an additional increment to their salaries.

The school is divided into three sections, each with its own Coordinator. These sections are: **Primary School** (K to 6) 220 students with eleven class teachers plus specialists in Phys Ed and Music. **Middle School** (Yrs 7 to 9) 190 students with nine full time class teachers plus additional specialists in Phys Ed, Art/Craft, Maths, Music, English and Science and **Senior School** (Yrs 10 to 12) 140 students with a number of full time and part time teachers.

The school is not bound to the VELS, although these are used as a general reference. Instead we have a school-based curriculum. We call it “integral” as it attempts to reflect the reality that all things created by God have reference in all the so-called subject areas.

We believe that when the child explores the creation, it is better not to artificially divide that study into separate categories, which are more appropriate for adults. We try to relate the skills work done to the topic the class is exploring in its core studies, at any given time. Such an approach to curriculum allows great freedom but demands creative and cooperative work from our teachers.

Senior School, (Yrs 10 to 12), functions within the larger school as a sub-team led by the Assistant Principal - Secondary. It comprises the three year levels, with Year 10 being introduced to Senior Secondary education and undertaking some early VCE units. Year 11 generally undertakes Units 1 & 2 VCE units and Year 12 Units 3 & 4. VCAL is also offered to Year 10 to Year 12 students, and all senior school students can undertake VET units through the local VET cluster. Teachers in the Senior School work within a team of approximately 12 teachers (mostly full time) who teach within the Senior School. Teachers not only are expected to professionally and competently teach their allocated subject load, but are also expected to serve in a pastoral and devotional leader role. All teachers new to Mount Evelyn Christian School are involved in an Orientation and Induction process early in the school year.

The SS curriculum whilst teaching within the prescription of the VCE also seeks to developed and guide the biblically informed mind. Teachers are expected to develop biblically informed 'perspectival' insights into their subject areas and ensure that impacts their teaching. Such insights are not developed alone, but within the school staff team context. Further to teachers guiding 'perspectival insight', students are compelled to undertake 'Christian perspectives' based subjects in each of the three year levels. All sections are supported by a library staff of 1.5 teacher/librarians, library technician and library assistants. A full time equivalent of approximately eight literacy, numeracy, integration and laboratory aides also support the teaching team. Further to this, we encourage teachers to partake of the school's computer network facilities, which are supported by our ICT Department.

Application Procedure

1. Make yourself familiar with the school's [Educational Creed](#) and the outline of the school as described through the questions and answers on the website at [About MECS – FAQ](#)

Your application must include the following documentation:

- Teacher Application Form.
- Resume (Curriculum Vitae) should include the following information:
 - a) Personal details (name, address, telephone numbers).
 - b) A summary of the work you have completed, beginning with the most recent. Include dates and give details of the type of tasks that were required in each job.
 - c) Details of your involvement in Church activities.
 - d) Your education and training achievements. Include any education you are currently undertaking.
 - e) Any activities you have undertaken outside of work which are relevant to the application.

2. Covering Letter

The covering letter is an introduction to your application. You may wish to summarise your application and emphasise your strongest points and achievements. Also outline how your Christian faith affects your work.

3. Referees

Referees should be contacted for approval before listing them in your application.

Provide names, work addresses and contact telephone numbers of referees.

Referees who are able to comment on your work experience and church involvement should be included.

4. Provide a written response to EITHER Option 1 or Option 2:

Option 1:

Write a response (no more than 1000 words), making specific reference to the role that you are applying for, considering the [Educational Creed](#) and [MECS Focus on Identity](#) documents, and show how you believe you would “fit” into the Mount Evelyn Christian School teaching community.

Option 2:

Respond to at least two of the following questions:

- i. What do you think is the purpose of the Christian School?
- ii. How might a Christian School develop a distinctive curriculum practice?
- iii. What is the role of the Christian teacher?
- iv. What role does the Bible have in the Christian School?

5. Once the above materials are received, they will be processed by the application panel.

6. **Forward your application**

Email your application to Michelle Smith, HR Administrator; msmith@mecs.vic.edu.au.

Job Description for Teacher

Mount Evelyn Christian School has the following understanding concerning the role of a teacher within the school. Here we describe the various commitments and duties that we expect from our teachers.

Commitment to a Biblically-based Faith and Worldview

MECS teachers are committed Christians and active members of a local church fellowship (we recognise that such fellowships come in all shapes and forms). They are familiar with the school's Educational Creed and other foundational documents. They seek to be role-models of Jesus and they engage in the faith expressions of the community. They are willing and ready to share their faith with students, particularly as it relates to areas of teaching.

Commitment to the Calling to Teach

MECS teachers view their job as a calling before the Lord. Their ministry of service is one that God has gifted and skilled them for. They seek out ways to engage in personal development so that they are invigorated and stimulated for their task. They think in terms of a career path that brings about personal freshness and vigour for the educational task.

Commitment to Transform Teaching in the Development of Christian Education

MECS teachers seek to transform their teaching so that all areas of the curriculum and the school's life are shaped by a shared biblically informed understanding of the Christian educational task. They undertake further corporate study for the purpose of developing Christian education. They participate in the process of collaborative reflection, review, renewal and appraisal.

The commitment to transformation is the reason why MECS has always provided the unique opportunity of 'workbreak' time for staff. The school invests a significant amount of resources into these 'student-free' weeks for strategic purposes. Workbreaks create the space needed to develop a distinctive and innovative curriculum. Workbreaks are extended times set aside for the purpose of working on the 'out of the ordinary' areas which do not get attention during normal 'day to day' pressures of school operation. These include: staff development and training; long term planning; curriculum development and documentation of developing Christian education. MECS teachers know that workbreaks are not times for ordinary general preparation and planning support.

Commitment to Curriculum Development and Documentation

MECS teachers understand that they belong to a community that is committed to a school-based curriculum. They know that this means they are curriculum developers. They also know that effective curriculum development requires them to practice good documentation.

Commitment to Professional Development

MECS teachers actively participate in the process of the school's and their own professional development. They complete a professional development plan as a part of their appraisal program. They also appreciate the requirements the school has in terms of study with the National Institute of Christian Education (NICE). NICE professional development activities are balanced with other valuable professional development options.

Commitment to Professional Expertise

MECS teachers are well versed in their own particular field of knowledge. They create rich learning environments where students have the freedom to question and grow. They manage and interact with students in ways that stimulate and enhance learning. They are familiar with the school's 'Standards for Teaching Practice'.

Commitment to Professional Conduct

MECS teachers understand what it means to act and conduct themselves in a professional manner. They are well organised and comply with administrative and documentation requirements.

As employees working with minors in a trust-based partnership with parents, there is a very strong onus on teachers to conduct themselves professionally in all circumstances. MECS teachers know that this goes beyond simply meeting government requirements.

By professional conduct we mean a high quality approach to a whole range of areas of life in the school. These areas include: dress according to the staff dress code, language, conversation, personal space, being alone with a child, physical contact with a child, anger, preparation, marking, records, follow-up, punctuality, personal behaviour & conduct, knowledge of curriculum requirements, professional development & reading, competent classroom management, objectivity/fairness/equity, good judgement, expectations of students, and approachability for students and parents (further details may be found in the MECS Staff Code of Conduct policy).

Commitment to Student Learning

MECS teachers work hard at discerning how students are progressing in their learning. They use effective assessment methods that not only measure learning outcomes but also enhance learning itself. They communicate with parents about the progress of students both in particular cases and in the parent teacher interviews that occur twice yearly. Teachers ensure that all parents/guardians attend interviews for their children.

Commitment to Student Welfare

MECS teachers actively pursue the welfare of students. Student Welfare relates to all the school does to promote the well-being of its students. Teachers aim at ensuring that the school creates and maintains a caring environment in which the experience of teaching and learning is enhanced for all students.

MECS teachers provide the primary pastoral care for students. It is one of the reasons we limit class sizes and provide our teachers with professional support through the school welfare officer. That officer also offers pastoral care for children with more complex care needs. Of course, because we are in partnership with families, teachers communicate promptly with parents if there are significant pastoral concerns that may arise in the context of the school. Parents, students and teachers working together usually deal very effectively with most pastoral concerns.

MECS teachers are fully aware of their child protection obligations under the law (see MECS Mandatory Reporting of Children in Need of Protection policy). They also understand their Duty of Care toward students. This is one reason why they have rostered duties for the supervision of students at recesses and lunch times (see MECS Duty of Care policy).

Commitment to Staff Welfare

MECS teachers seek to create a balance between professional and personal life. While expectations are placed on teachers to be committed and dedicated members of the school community, MECS also encourages teachers to be balanced and pro-active in their personal life, allowing for the development of their faith, family, friends and interests. At times, some teachers may feel pressured and unsure if they are able to meet specific deadlines. In this situation, teachers should consult with their Coordinator so support may be given. Sharing of needs and concerns with the team leader will also avoid unnecessary pressure. The Principal and other members of the Leadership Team are also available to support staff in any area that may be causing concern.

MECS teachers participate in the morning staff devotion and prayer times as a significant aspect of their well-being.

MECS teachers care about the spaces into which they can withdraw from the classroom – the various staffrooms. The staffrooms are cared for by the staff themselves.

MECS teachers belong to the Staff Association. This group is mandated by Board policy.

The Staff Association provides a forum for hearing the opinions of staff and advising staff on any issues deemed appropriate to the welfare and care of staff.

Commitment to Communication

MECS teachers understand that vital communication happens in a variety of ways.

They take the time to read the various written notices, both specific and the weekly staff newsletter. They actively use their school based email. They also participate in staff meetings and teachers' meetings. They know that attendance at teachers' meetings is mandatory for all teachers on duty on the day which the meeting is held.

MECS teachers also take time to initiate communication with parents, other colleagues, and the School leadership team.

Commitment to School Facilities

MECS teachers take seriously the need to care for our facilities. That is why they fulfil their duties to keep rooms clean and tidy and lock up at the end of the day. They also participate in and supervise students in various activities to keep the grounds clean.

Commitment to Serve

MECS teachers serve in face-to-face teaching, preparation for that teaching, and many other normal and specially assigned duties. In the Primary section, full time teachers teach face-to-face for approximately 22 hours per week. In the Middle and Senior sections, full time teachers teach face-to-face for approximately 20 hours per week. MECS teachers understand that at times their face-to-face load may be slightly higher or lower than this norm to meet timetabling requirements. MECS part time teachers can establish their expected face-to-face teaching time requirement by multiplying the normal full time teaching load by their full time equivalent (FTE) fraction. The part time teacher's associated preparation periods are calculated as a pro-rata amount of the four teaching periods a full time teacher is formally allocated for preparation (e.g. a Primary school teacher on 0.6 FTE is expected to do approximately 13.2 hours of face-to-face teaching [0.6 x 22hrs] and have 2.4 periods for preparation).

MECS teachers also serve in a myriad of small but vital aspects of school life. These "extra duties" are either volunteered for by staff or allocated to staff. A wide range of tasks are needed to be covered and it is very helpful when all share the load over the year and across the duties.

Commitment to the MECS Community

MECS teachers understand the vision, mission, ethos and character of MECS. They work in true partnership with parents, and collaboratively with other teachers in teamwork settings.