

ST COLUMBA'S HIGH SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK



General Information

Principal's Message

It is my great pleasure to introduce you to St Columba's High School, Springwood.

We want all members of the school community to stretch themselves and achieve beyond their expectations.

St Columba's cares for its students. The student care programme is holistic and focuses on knowing the students well. Students will be encouraged to stretch themselves in all aspects of school life. We have asked them to consider how good they can be. We want our students to serve others, take pride in personal presentation, respect others, be committed to learning and to achieve personal best in all that they do. I know St Columba's will continue to offer high quality Catholic education in the Blue Mountains.

Everyday at St Columba's is a celebration of the achievements of its community members. From sporting achievements to academic excellence, the students at St Columba's are engaged in a broad range of activities. I am constantly amazed at the level of engagement our students achieve-whether it's essay competitions, musical productions, stunning artwork, social justice fund raisers, sporting prowess or academic work, our students are offered opportunities and take them. Nothing could happen without the highly competent and committed staff, both teaching and administration. I feel so privileged to serve this community. We want all members of the school community to stretch themselves and achieve beyond their expectations.

St Columba's values the parent-school partnership and this is further supported by the Parent Community Support Group (PCSG). Staff and parents enjoy social occasions like the annual Music in the Quad evening.

Inspired by the example of St. Columba, scholar, prophet and lover of God's creation, we seek to form young people in the Catholic faith and tradition whose transmission is our core purpose, so that together we will 'Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God'. (Micah, 6:8).

Mrs Delma Horan,
Principal.

Our Vision and Mission Statement

At St. Columba's High School, established to provide Catholic education for families in the Blue Mountains, we strive for the full human development of our students, grounded in the teachings of Jesus Christ. In working to bring faith and culture into harmony, we aim to produce graduates who take a hopeful, critical and constructive role in the service of Jesus within our society.

Inspired by the example of St. Columba, scholar, prophet and lover of God's creation, we seek to form young people in the Catholic faith and tradition whose transmission is our core purpose, so that together we will 'Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God'. (Micah, 6:8).

Therefore, as members of this Catholic school:

We commit ourselves to act justly

- we place Jesus at the centre of all our decisions and actions
- we strive for equity and excellence in teaching and learning
- we reach out to the poor and the marginalised
- we expect honesty and courage in our words and actions
- we foster respectful relationships particularly through listening and forgiveness

We commit ourselves to love tenderly

- we work in partnership with families
- we respond to the needs of each individual student
- we encourage and celebrate the contributions of every community member
- we act out of a spirit of generous service
- we believe that challenge and expectation are expressions of love

We commit ourselves to walk humbly with our God

- we recognise our dependence on God and on each other
- we celebrate the gift of life and praise God as its source
- we give expression to our relationship with God through a rich prayer and sacramental life
- we promote a program of formation in faith which enables active participation in the life of the church

Our Story

Our history and heritage are unique. St Columba's was originally built as a seminary for candidates of the priesthood in 1909.

Although our architecture reminds us daily of our links to the past and our connection to St Columba, the staff and students are an active part of the contemporary world in terms of academic studies, vocational education and faith development.

In 1979 St Columba's High School was re-established as a Years 7 to 10 Catholic School by the Catholic Education Office. It was restructured as a Years 7 to 12 school in 1993.

Always a vibrant community, our students are noted for their involvement in all aspects of school. From the fun and enthusiasm of the swimming and athletics carnivals to entertaining the community with drama, music performances and lending a hand to the less well off members of society, the students of St Columba's are always full of energy ready to involve themselves in extra-curricular activities.

1839	William Lawson acquired the land Later Sir Henry Parkes owned the land
1884	S Lees purchased the site
1908	Cardinal Moran bought the property
1909	St Columba's Seminary opened
1910	26 seminarians begin studying
1923	Brauer Hall extensions
1933	Main Porch Extensions
1957	North Building opened
1960	Chapel opened (Doc Joiner Library)
1977	St Columba's Seminary closed
1979	St Columba's High School opened
1982	First Year 10 Class
1992	Cregan Building opened
1994	Dunne and Kelly Buildings opened First Year 12 Class
1996	Doc Joiner Library opened
1997	Iona Chapel opened
2003	'B' Block Building Demolished
2004	25th year Anniversary – St Columba's Launch of the School Mission Statement Launch of the School Song
2009	30 th year Anniversary – St Columba's

Principals

1979 – 1984	Sr Anne Henson
1984 – 1992	Mr Jim McCartan
1992 – 1998	Mr Geoff Hicks
1998 – 2001	Mr Alan Moran
2001 – 2005	Dr Anne Wenham
2005 –	Mrs Delma Horan

St Columba - Our Patron Saint

Saint Columba, patron saint of the island of Iona and patron saint of St Columba's High School, Springwood, was born on the 7th of December 521 AD near Lough Gartan in Donegal.

He came from royal Irish blood and could have been king of Ireland had he not turned to the church. His birth was foretold by Saint Patrick and his disciple, Maucta, and an angel came to his mother in a dream on the night of his birth to tell of "one who would be reckoned as one of the prophets of God who should lead innumerable souls to the heavenly country."

Columcille – The Saint

Columba, the latinised version of his name by which he is best known, may well be the archetype of the Celtic saint.

He is a mass of contradictions:

- ↘ spending his life for the Iona mission to Scotland, yet with his heart secure in Derry;
- ↘ he was a bringer of reconciling Gospel to the Irish of the Dalriada colony and the Picts, but his pride and arrogance caused a bloody battle in his native Ireland;
- ↘ he was gentle to the weak and hospitable to the stranger, but his discipline was hard on himself and his community
- ↘ he forswore his won noble heritage to become a wanderer for Christ, but continually involved himself in the politics of Scotland and Ireland.



Stained glass depicting St Columba

From his community of Iona the Gospel traveled to the pagan Angles of the south and across the disintegrated remains of the Roman Empire. Columba, in an odd fashion, may be the patron saint of countless small churches which flagrantly violate copyright laws in copying music and documents.

The story of Columba's exile (or at least one version of the story) has its roots in a conflict between Columba and Finnian of Clonard, his master.

The conflict centered on one of the most precious items in Ireland at the time - a book. As books were inscribed on animal skins (papyrus not being suitable to the damp Irish climate), and as cattle was the basic form of currency (the value of a person in the social order was not infrequently reckoned in cattle), a book was a symbol of wealth as well as prestige. Further, a book of Holy Scripture had particular value. Finnian owned a Psalter, the Book of Psalms.



Iona Abbey – A 13th Century Benedictine Abbey

Columba snuck into Finnian's study each night to copy Finnian's treasured possession. When Columba was discovered he was brought before the local high king, unfortunately a rival to Columba's own powerful clan. King Diarmid, hearing the case, pronounced the judgment that still echoes in our litigious time: "To every cow its calf, to every book its copy."

Columba was humiliated and when Diarmid violated the law of monastic sanctuary in order to arrest and execute a kinsman of Columba, the saint took the opportunity to rouse his own clan, the Ui Neill, to battle. Columba's clan won the day - and by chance the Psalter as well, but three thousand men lost their lives in the process.

Columba was excommunicated for a time - the normal penance for a monk who takes up arms, and was sent into exile. It wasn't a particularly effective exile as Columba did return to Ireland sometimes, once to defend the bards when the nobles, tired of the bards' political satire, sought to have the order suppressed. However, Columba's exile had enormous repercussions for the Church in England or the result of the exile was the founding of the Iona community.

From that community Celtic monks travelled through the remains of the old empire and beyond, living and sharing the life of the Gospel. From that community, less than forty years after Columba's death, an Irish monk named Aidan was sent to the kingdom of Northumbria to bring the Gospel of the people of King Oswald.

While Columba created a vibrant Christian community, and served as a sort of Patron Saint of the Celtic tradition in England, the year of his death also saw the arrival of one whose values would ultimately triumph over the Celtic style, Augustine of Canterbury. The continental pattern of the Church, based more on structure and order than on passion and relationships, found its foothold in the southeast of England. In less than a century after Augustine's landing, the way of Columba and Aidan was rejected by the Anglo-Saxon kings in favor of the way of Augustine and the old imperial church. Yet Augustine's



Stained glass depicting the Cathach is the battle standard of the O'Donnells and contained a psalter said to have been written by the hand of Columba himself

mission needed the vitality and community orientation of Celtic Christianity, the tradition of Columba, to penetrate and convert the Saxon kingdoms.

The institutional breakdown of the current era creates a climate where passion and relationships speak more powerfully to the contemporary soul than order and structure. Columba's foundation at Iona has been restored in this century. God grant his style of discipleship with return to the Church as well.

Columba died on June 9, 597.

Facilities

Physical Facilities

St Columba's High School is located on 600 hectares in bushland surroundings at the base of the Blue Mountains. The school's heritage buildings and more recently constructed facilities are situated in a unique and extensive bushland setting. Facilities and resources have been developed to support a full range of subjects within all Key Learning Areas such as:

- ↘ the Chapel – a sacred space for prayer, reflection and worship
- ↘ two dedicated computer labs
- ↘ IT-enabled classrooms
- ↘ versatile library with open and quiet work spaces
- ↘ six fully equipped Science laboratories
- ↘ four art rooms with digital media facilities and a dark room for photography
- ↘ drama and performing arts space with stage
- ↘ two hall for meetings, performances, dances, displays and gatherings
- ↘ food technology room and commercial kitchen
- ↘ expansive woodwork and metalwork workshops
- ↘ agriculture labs, produce gardens and lush pastures for our animals
- ↘ two music rooms
- ↘ radio telescope
- ↘ large playing fields plus basketball, volleyball courts and cross country track
- ↘ Electronic media lab for junior and senior Entertainment classes
- ↘ Textiles room with new sewing machines
- ↘ Career Information Centre
- ↘ Historic bell tower
- ↘ Healthy School Canteen
- ↘ Uniform Shop

Digital Education Revolution and St Columba's High School

Since the federal government made grants available for information and communication technology in schools, your school purchased 268 Apple Macbooks from Round 1 funding; allowing for 16 laptops between every two learning spaces.

The good news now is that new funding will allow us to purchase another 333 laptops and provide every learning space with a bank of 16 laptops.

Also, the Catholic Education Office has spent \$268,000 on our school's network infrastructure, giving students access to new learning technology when and where they need it.

Students have now been issued with a 16 gigabyte flash drive, enabling them to transfer files between home and school without difficulty.

And from the start of Term 2, Year 8 students will trial Ipad touches as a personalized learning device.

The NSW Department of Education took a different approach by allocating netbooks to individual students in Year 9. St Columba's High School did not follow this direction for the following reasons:

- ↘ Access to technology is important for all students through Years 7 to 12,
- ↘ Learning opportunities provided by a full featured laptop outweigh those of netbooks,
- ↘ Maintenance and security of laptops are best managed at school,
- ↘ Macbooks come with a three year warranty,
- ↘ No additional funding will be available from the federal government, and
- ↘ St Columba's is planning to replace this technology as it reaches its 4th year.

St Columba's Information and Community Technology (ICT) Policy

At St Columba's High we have an acceptable use of ICT policy that student's must adhere to if they are to use our school network and ICT facilities.

The following document explains the school's policy on acceptable use of ICT.

The last page of the document has a letter of agreement that should be signed by the student and their parent/ guardian.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Expectations of all at St Columba's High School

The Student Management Policy of St Columba's High School aims to develop self discipline in students and to promote 'full human development' (St Columba's Mission statement).

The school community recognises each person is formed in God's image and likeness. Therefore, we take Jesus as our model in our relationships with all people and 'believe challenge and expectations are expressions of love' (School Mission Statement).

We believe in a loving God, present among us, whose son, Jesus, offers blessing to us as individuals and as a community when we do two things – love God and love each other as we love ourselves.

Therefore, we promote these value-based aims:

At the individual level:

- ↘ Respect for others
- ↘ Respect of others' property
- ↘ Respect for authority (justly exercised)
- ↘ Awareness of right and wrong
- ↘ Ownership of behaviour – self discipline
- ↘ Co-operative behaviour – actively
- ↘ Other-centeredness rather than self-centredness; service
- ↘ Forgiveness and compassion
- ↘ Truthfulness and the search for truth
- ↘ Integrity
- ↘ Willingness to stand up for the good of other people
- ↘ Celebration of the good in individuals
- ↘ Justice

At the level of community:

- ↘ Active development of a sense of community
- ↘ Creation of a safe, encouraging and effective teaching/learning environment
- ↘ The holistic development of all who share that environment
- ↘ An atmosphere of reconciliation and rebuilding
- ↘ Care for the environment of our school as a gift from God
- ↘ Celebration of the good in our community
- ↘ Compassion and action on behalf of the poor (materially and/or spiritually poor)

Rights and Responsibilities of students at St Columba's High School

Every student has the right to a safe and effective learning environment. It is the responsibility of all students to ensure that this environment is maintained at all times.

- ↘ The right to feel safe
- ↘ The responsibility to not threaten the physical or emotional comfort of others
- ↘ The right to learn
- ↘ The responsibility to behave in such a manner that promotes good learning and teaching
- ↘ The right to be valued
- ↘ The responsibility to value the qualities of myself and others
- ↘ The right to be heard
- ↘ The responsibility to listen

Office Hours

The Main Reception office is open from 8.00am to 4.00pm and the Student Services office is open from 8.00am to 3.30pm each school day.

Our Uniform Shop is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 8.00am and 2.00pm for all of your uniform needs as well as some stationery and second hand textbooks.

Home room / House Colours

Homeroom groups are organised along house lines.

In each year group 7-12 there are six homerooms, each representing a house group.

The house groups are:

- ↘ Bradman (Black and White), Chisholm (Green), Gilroy (Yellow), Henson (Red), Lawrence (Blue) and Mackillop (Purple).
- ↘ Students are placed in homeroom groups and remain with the group for the duration of their time at the school.
- ↘ Students attend homeroom each morning during which time the role is marked, administration notices read and student achievements are recognised.
- ↘ Homeroom groups come together, on occasions such as retreats, pastoral days, liturgical celebrations, various pastoral program activities and social events.

Staff Development Days

Staff development days are set aside once each term for the spiritual and professional development of staff. Focus may be on curriculum development, planning, school policy development, reflection and spirituality.

Supervision

Students are supervised in the playground from 8.15am and until 3.45pm each school day. Please do not leave students at school earlier than 8.15am or later than 4.00pm. Any students who arrive at school before 8.15am must sit quietly.

Uniform and Grooming

Student Expectations

All students are to adhere to the school's uniform requirements.

The full correct uniform is worn each day.

- ✎ Boys' shirts are tucked in at all times.
- ✎ The blazer will be worn as the outside garment when travelling to and from school during Terms 2 & 3, in Homeroom and on all formal occasions.
- ✎ T-shirts of any colour are NOT to be visible under the blouse or shirt.
- ✎ Runners/joggers are not to be worn (except on Sports days or during PDHPE practical lessons)
- ✎ Only the regulation St Columba's cap or hat is to be worn. The cap is not to be worn in class or outside of class in the back to front fashion.
- ✎ All articles of clothing are to be marked with the student's name.
- ✎ Facial make-up or nail polish is not to be worn.
- ✎ Eyeliner must not be worn.

Students who are unable to present in full school or sports uniform are to bring a note signed by their parent/caregiver. This should only exist for a short period of time and should indicate the nature of the problem.

Personal Grooming Policy

Hairstyles - General Requirements

- ✎ Styles known as spikes, steps, undercuts, dreadlocks, multiple braids (with or without beads) are all unacceptable.
- ✎ Hair should be clean, neat, tidy and of a natural colour.
- ✎ Students are expected to be neat and well groomed at all times.
- ✎ Hairstyles must be appropriate for the wearing of the School uniform. Students who are unsure about what is acceptable should consult with their Year Co-ordinator before going to the hairdresser.
- ✎ The suitability of any hairstyle is at the discretion of the Assistant Principal.
- ✎ Long hair should be tied.
- ✎ Faces must be clean-shaven; beards, moustaches and sideburns are not permitted.

Jewellery

- ↘ Visible body piercing, including tongue studs, spacers and covers are not permitted. One set of studs, sleepers, or small hoops in the lower ear lobe may be worn.
- ↘ One ring only is permitted.
- ↘ Bracelets, anklets, leather thonging (around neck, ankles or wrists) are unacceptable.
- ↘ A single fine neck chain may be worn provided it is out of sight and has a crucifix or religious medal attached.

School Uniform

Summer (Terms 1 & 4)

Girls

Blue checked skirt
Poly/cotton short sleeve blouse, v neck collar, v peak at bottom
Junior navy blue tights or junior navy blue ankle socks
School blazer with crest, if weather is cool
Shiny black leather lace-up shoes with flat heels

Boys

Short sleeve, sky blue shirt with crest
Long grey trousers and short grey crew socks
School blazer with crest, if weather is cool
Shiny black lace-up shoes with flat heels
Black leather belt

Winter (Terms 2 & 3)

Years 7-10

Girls

Blue checked skirt
Sky blue blouse
Compulsory: School blazer
Optional: School jumper with crest. Navy scarf, gloves and school overcoat

Years 11-12

Girls

Blue checked skirt
White shirt
Compulsory: School blazer
Optional: School jumper with crest. Navy scarf, gloves and school overcoat

Years 7-10

Boys

Long grey trousers
Black leather belt
Sky blue shirt
Blue junior tie
Compulsory: School blazer
Optional: School overcoat
Navy scarf and gloves
School jumper with crest

Years 11-12

Boys

Long grey trousers
White shirt
Senior tie
Compulsory: School blazer
Optional: School jumper with crest. Navy scarf, gloves and school overcoat

Sports Uniform (Wednesdays)

Jogger style shoes must be worn. Gym shoes or other canvas shoes are not acceptable.

Girls

Junior navy blue mesh, basketball shorts, or school track pants (school issue)
Polo shirt with school crest
School tracksuit
Sports socks (predominantly white)
Representative Teams
Touch Football Shorts & socks

Boys

Junior navy blue mesh, basketball shorts or school track pants (School issue)
Polo shirt with school crest
School tracksuit
Sports socks (predominantly white)
Representative Teams
Touch Football/Rugby League Shorts & socks
Rugby Union & socks

Other

- ↘ St. Columba's bag, or a blue or black school bag
- ↘ School hat or cap should be worn for all outside activities.
- ↘ Students may wear one small stud or sleeper in each ear, and one small ring on the hand
- ↘ Only blue ribbons or bands to be worn in hair
- ↘ Hair must be clean, tidy and not outlandish, of one naturally occurring shade. Long hair must be tied back
- ↘ All students are encouraged to wear a hat. There are five different styles available from the Uniform shop
- ↘ All students are encouraged to wear sunscreen whenever they are in the school yard.
- ↘ Articles of uniform are only available from the school uniform shop. Some pre-loved clothing is available from the school uniform shop which is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 8.00 am and 2.00 pm

Uniform Shop

The school uniform is available for purchase only from the school Uniform Shop. The shop access can be located at the front of the main building to the left of the archway and ramp.

Hours: 8.00am to 2.00pm Tuesdays and Thursdays

Procedures

Accidents and Emergencies

In the event on an emergency or accident resulting in the need of immediate medical attention, an appropriately qualified staff member will attend to the affected student. First aid will be administered if appropriate. An ambulance will be called immediately if required. A staff member will endeavour to contact parents and an accurate and succinct explanation of the circumstances involving the accident will be relayed, including where the student has been transported.

Attendance

All students must be present at school by **8.45am**.

Late Arrivals

- ↘ If a student is late and their homeroom class has already gone in they must go to the Student Services Office and receive a "late slip". If they have no note from a parent/caregiver, they will receive 2 copies: 1 is for their teacher to sign and one is taken home for their parent/caregiver to sign. Students show the slip to their homeroom teacher who will sign the slip. The student must return the slip to the office immediately. This late arrival will be recorded as a partial absence.
- ↘ If a student arrives during a lesson they must go to the Office first, receive a late slip, go to their subject class, then the subject teacher will sign the slip. They must return the late slip to the office immediately after the teacher has signed their slip. This partial absence will be recorded.

- ↘ It is an expectation that a parent letter (on separate paper) or a signed late slip is provided to explain late arrival at school. **All partial absences are recorded on school academic reports at the end of each semester.**

Need to leave school early to attend an appointment.

- ↘ Parent letter (on separate paper or on pro-forma slip in diary) addressed to the homeroom teacher indicating the reason and time of leaving school.
- ↘ Homeroom teacher to sign this letter.
- ↘ Year Co-ordinator must also sign this letter.
- ↘ Student keeps letter and presents this to the Student Services Office staff when signing out.
- ↘ Parents must collect students from school.

Need to contact home during school time.

- ↘ The student must see the Year Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator will sign their diary (only if the call is urgent). Show this to the Office staff in order to use the phone. Do not ask the office staff to use the phone unless you have seen the Year Co-ordinator first.
- ↘ *Mobile phones are not to be used during school time.*

Parent/guardian wanting to contact a student during school time.

- ↘ Parents should ring the school office and leave a message with the office staff. The message will be delivered to your child in class. ***Parents must not contact students during school time via mobile phones.***

Absence

No need to ring the office unless your child's absence will be for 3 days or more. A note from a parent/Caregiver (on separate paper) must be brought to school within two days of the child's return. The note must clearly give the date and reason for the absence.

There is also a pro-forma absentee form in the diary that can be torn off and given to homeroom teachers.

Request for extended absences from school must be made in writing to the Principal.

Change of Address and Contact Information

Parents must notify the school in writing as soon as possible with any changes to address or contact details. Please give the note in to Student Services or your child's Homeroom Teacher.

Collecting Students from School

Students should be collected promptly after school. In the interest of safety, parents are reminded to use the turning circle to pick up or drop off students. If you expect to be late at any time, please telephone the school and a message will be given to your child/ren.

Custody Arrangements

Please advise us in writing of any special custody or access arrangements concerning your children in relation to school. Copies of court orders/private agreements should be provided where appropriate. All matters of custody are treated confidentially by school staff.

Emergency Procedures

Students are involved in emergency drill procedures so they are prepared in the event of a critical incident, e.g. fire. The safety of the students is enhanced if they do not panic but follow procedures that have been repeatedly practiced. A copy of the procedures can be found in the Student Diary.

Money Collection

School fees and excursion fees, must be deposited at the school office before school. Students should not bring to school more money than is needed for the day, and must accept responsibility for its use and whereabouts. If, for some exceptional reason, a larger sum of money than usual is brought and needed after school, it must be lodged (in a sealed, named envelope) with the School Secretary for safe-keeping and claimed at the end of the day.

Lost Property

To help prevent loss, permanently and clearly label all equipment and clothing.

Students report the loss to Student Services or their classroom teacher. Check the Lost Property box in the Sickbay Clinic.

Media Events

There are occasions when St Columba's High School or the Catholic Education Office may wish to include your child's name or photograph in the School, CEO or other publications such as local papers. If you would prefer not to have your child's name or photograph included at any time, please notify the school in writing.

Parking and Site Traffic

Visiting parents are requested to park their vehicles in the car park provided. Parking at the School is limited and will therefore be allocated on a 'first in basis'. Drivers are requested to observe the speed limits displayed around the School grounds and to not park in spaces designated for disabled drivers.

Learning and Teaching

Excursions

At St Columba's High School, all excursions form part of the curriculum and are related to the teaching and learning program offered at the school. A learning experience may encompass sporting activities.

It is recognised that excursions and incursions may interrupt the normal learning routines of students and that they can attract additional costs for parents/caregivers. In all excursion and incursion proposals, the cost to parents is weighed against the anticipated value of the learning experience. All excursions and incursions are organised with the legal and moral responsibilities for the welfare of all students involved in them. Risk assessments are conducted for all school excursions.

Attendance and participation are expected and families are given advance warning of these activities via a letter home. If an excursion letter is misplaced, students may ask for another copy at the Student Services office, or by asking the organising teacher.

Homework

High school students are expected to study, that is, make sure they know what is being taught in class. This is best done by revising work covered in the last lesson. As a matter of course, teachers say, "Finish off today's written work for homework". This allows for the varying paces at which students work. Careful students usually need more time to organise and present written work. Homework provides the required extension. Sometimes, unsatisfactory work has to be corrected in part or re-done. Assignments set to be done over four or five days should be worked on each night. This is the point of the exercise. One extended session on the night before the assignment is due can be self-defeating for the student in terms of acquiring research, study and organisational skills. It is expected that Years 7 and 8 students spend approximately one hour each night doing homework; Years 9 and 10 students two hours; and two to three hours in Years 11 and 12. All homework and assignment work should be recorded in the diary.

It should be noted that in order to receive the award of the School Certificate and H.S.C., the school must testify to each student's satisfactory progress in all subjects. Failure to complete set work or homework may result in a student failing to make satisfactory progress. Additionally each subject requires a mandated period of time that it is studied. Unexplained absences may place the award of School Certificate or High School Certificate in jeopardy.

Library

The school library is centrally located at the eastern end of the main quadrangle. It is open every day of the school year, from 8.15am to 3.30pm. Students are able to borrow resources throughout the year (including holiday periods). Internet access and photocopying facilities are available in the library. Students are actively encouraged to make full use of the diverse resources available in the library in their studies and recreational reading. Library staff are welcoming of all student queries and help with assignments and research projects is always available. A friendly, informal yet studious atmosphere is encouraged in the library.

Religious Education

St Columba's offers parents strong support in their serious parental responsibility to educate their children in the Faith. We do not undertake to do this instead of you; we assist you. You are required to take an active interest in your child's Religious Education program and to co-operate with the school's efforts. All students are expected to attend Retreats.

Liturgy and Prayer:

At St Columba's, nurturing an atmosphere where prayer is a natural response to an abiding awareness of God's loving presence goes hand in hand with the development of an appreciation of the Eucharist as source and summit of our Catholic Christian life. To this end:

- ↘ The Religious Education curriculum strives to help students to become people of prayer, by introducing them to a range of prayer forms and giving them regular opportunities to engage in prayer.
- ↘ Homeroom commences each day with prayer and the P. A. system is used once a week during Homeroom time to call the whole school to prayer. Each day ends with a final prayer led over the P.A.
- ↘ Staff pray together during weekly briefings, staff meetings, faculty and homeroom meetings;
- ↘ Whole-school Eucharistic liturgies and prayer services are held at specific times, e.g. Lent, Easter, St Columba's Day and Advent;
- ↘ Year groups celebrate liturgies during retreats:
- ↘ With the assistance of our pastors, students prepare for and participate in the celebration of class-based Masses and (where possible) Reconciliation services.

Retreats:

The aim of the St Columba's Retreat Program is to provide students with an opportunity to understand further, appreciate and develop their relationships with God, family and friends, and to reflect on what it means to be a young person living a life based on Christian values. Each of the Year level retreats contributes to fostering this broad aim:

Students in Years 7 to 10 attend retreat days which reflect the themes particular to their Year level Religious Education programs. Because of the centrality of faith formation to the mission of St. Columba's, students' attendance at year-level Retreats is compulsory. Year 11 students experience a retreat focused on the challenge to be agents of the justice proclaimed in Jesus' vision of the Kingdom of God The Year 12 retreat flows thematically from the Religion: Catholic Studies program, concentrating on the decisions facing young adults and on how they might develop the prayerful discernment through which they can respond more wholeheartedly to God's action in their lives;

Retreats are directed by members of the School's Religious Education Department, assisted by the Homeroom team for each Year group and, where possible, involve our pastors. Thus the faith formation of students becomes the shared responsibility of all staff members:

Pivotal to each retreat is the invitation to enter ever more fully into the celebration of faith through Eucharist and/or an extended prayer service.

Pastoral Days are social activity days, distinct from Retreats, but complementing them by facilitating students' greater contribution to (and enjoyment of) their respective Year groups.

Curriculum

St Columba's High School offers a broad Curriculum that caters for a wide range of student interests and abilities. The Curriculum at the School is designed to foster in each student a love of learning and a desire to reach their full academic potential. Ideally it is well balanced, diverse and flexible, allowing students to proceed at their own pace, accelerate, if judged appropriate, and choose courses that allow them to consolidate their knowledge and skills.

The School strongly values the development of the whole person. As a Catholic School, Faith development is of high importance. As part of this development, all students undertake courses in Religious Education in each year of their schooling.

In order to do this, the School has devised a curriculum structure that delivers to students a solid knowledge and skill base in a broad range of subjects during Year 7 and 8.

In Year 7, students will study subjects in the following Key Learning Areas:

- ↘ Religious Education ↘ Human Society and Its Environment
- ↘ English ↘ Creative and Performing Arts
- ↘ Mathematics ↘ Technology
- ↘ Science ↘ Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

These Key Learning Areas are continued in Year 8 with the addition of studying 'Languages Other Than English' – Japanese.

During **Year 9**, each student undertakes a range of mandatory and elective subjects to further develop knowledge and skills in the Key Learning Areas. In **Year 10**, students continue this pattern of study, leading to the award of the **School Certificate** credentialed by the Board of Studies.

During **Years 11 and 12**, students are able to select a pathway of study that leads to the awarding of the **Higher School Certificate** by the Board of Studies. In the past, the Higher School Certificate (HSC) was structured to prepare students for University only. Today the HSC has many purposes and the recent HSC reforms have structured courses to meet changing demands and the different expectations of the wide range of students going on to the HSC. Our students are able to select a pathway of study that prepares them for University, TAFE, Private Schools or the workplace.

St Columba's High School aims to offer a variety of educational experiences to a diverse range of students. The School recognises the importance of offering different pathways of study and a broad range of subjects catering for the academic and vocational needs of our students. There are different types of courses that students can select in Years 11 and 12. These courses are known as:

- ↳ Board Developed Courses
- ↳ Board Endorsed Courses
- ↳ Vocational Education and Training (VET) Courses
- ↳ TVET, and
- ↳ Distinction Courses.

The Curriculum structure for **Years 7 to 10** is outlined in the following pages. Also outlined are the **Year 11 and 12** courses and subjects currently offered by St Columba's High School. In addition to the courses and subjects listed, students are able to study Community Languages through Saturday School from Year 7 to 12 or at the Open High School in Year 11 and 12.

School Curriculum – Stage 4 – Years 7 and 8

Key Learning Area	Year 7 Curriculum	Year 8 Curriculum
Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education
English	English	English
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
Science	Science	Science
Human Society and its Environment	Geography / History	Geography / History
Technological and Applied Studies	Rotation of: Textiles and Design, Agriculture Woodwork, Metalwork and Food Technology	Rotation of: Textiles and Design, Agriculture Woodwork, Metalwork and Food Technology
Creative and Performing Arts	Rotation of: Visual Arts and Music	Rotation of: Visual Arts and Music
Languages Other Than English	NA	Japanese
Personal Development, Health and Physical Education	PDHPE	PDHPE

School Curriculum – Stage 5 – Years 9 and 10

Key Learning Area		Year 9 Curriculum		Year 10 Curriculum
Religious Education	MANDATORY	Religious Education	MANDATORY	Religious Education
English		English		English
Mathematics		Mathematics		Mathematics
		Course 1		Course 1
		Course 2		Course 2
Science		Science		Science
Human Society and Its Environment		Australian Geography / History, Civics and Citizenship		Australian Geography / History, Civics and Citizenship
Physical Development, Health & Physical Education	PDHPE	PDHPE Careers		
Sport	Representative Sport	Representative Sport		
	Internal Sport	Internal Sport		
ELECTIVES				
Human Society and Its Environment		Commerce		Commerce
Languages other than English		Japanese		Japanese
Creative & Performing Arts		Visual Arts or Design or Music or Drama		Visual Arts or Design or Music or Drama
Technological and Applied Studies		Industrial Technology Metal or Wood or Multi Media or Info & Software Technology or Agricultural Technology or Food technology or Textiles and Design		Industrial Technology Metal or Wood or Multi Media or Info & Software Technology or Agricultural Technology or Food technology or Textiles and Design
PDHPE		Physical Activity & Sports Science		Physical Activity & Sports Science

School Curriculum – Stage 6 – Years 11 and 12

Table 1 - List Of Board Developed Courses On Offer		
Key Learning Area	Preliminary & HSC Courses 2 Units in Year 11 and 12	Extension Courses 1 Unit course Preliminary and HSC
Religious Education	Studies of Religion 1 or 2	
English	English – Standard English – Advanced	English – Preliminary. English – Extension 1 English – Extension 2
Mathematics	Mathematics - General Mathematics	Mathematics – Ext. 1 Mathematics – Ext. 2
Science	Biology Chemistry Physics Senior Science	
Human Society and its Environment	Ancient History Business Studies Geography Legal Studies Modern History	History – Extension.
Technological and Applied Studies	Design & Technology Engineering Studies Industrial Technology – Cat. B Information Processes & Tech. Software Design & Development Primary Industries Agriculture	
Creative and Performing Arts	Music 1 Music 2 Visual Arts Visual Design	
Languages Other Than English	Japanese Beginners Japanese Continuers Saturday School Languages	Japanese – Extension.
Personal Development, Health and Physical Education	PDHPE	
Total Hours	240	60