



Mackay Christian College Newsletter

2026 Term 1-1

'Christian Education on Purpose'

News from the Principal

Dr Lesley Tunnah

We are now halfway through Term 1 of 2026! Time continues to race by, reminding us that we have a learning and assessment schedule to adhere to while also providing students with a wide variety of activities that utilise their gifts and talents safely and appropriately.

Our Seniors of 2025 have moved on to university study, apprenticeships and traineeships, and further employment and service opportunities, an excellent testimony to our mission of providing multiple, alternate pathways that lead to success for all students as they venture into adulthood.

To increase learning opportunities, this year the College has introduced a pilot program specifically targeting alternate pathways for Years 11&12 students called **Shepherd's Gate**, under the guidance of Ms Ulla Hansson. This program provides an alternate full-time educational program for students who find the traditional schooling route difficult to navigate. Students may select from broader offerings beyond the usual QCAA subject choices. This means students can achieve a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) with a combination of QCAA subjects, TTC trade pathways and a range of certificate qualifications. Study is done more independently with on-line offerings available. Watch for details of *Shepherd's Gate* being sent out soon to our Year 11 & 12 students.

The Accounts Team will soon be issuing your **fees for 2026**. You may find that a small portion of your fees may not have been paid by the last week of school last year, so this will have rolled over to your 2026 account. When you are calculating your payment plan, please take this into consideration. Your annual fees consist of tuition fees, levies, camp fees and budgeted excursions. Occasionally, additional learning opportunities and excursions may become available at an additional cost.

Communication with our families is usually via the **Parent Lounge or Orbit App**. If personal information or medical details need updating, please do so through these digital portals.

We're also excited about implementing a secure, age-appropriate, digital assistance AI platform, initially to be trialled with Years 7 & 9, called **TrekAI**. This educational resource aims to assist students with learning and homework projects. As part of this implementation, we inform you that some data may be securely stored offshore in the United States. The storage and usage of this secure data will be governed by **TrekAI's** privacy policy which can be found at [AI & Data Policy](#)



Mackay Christian College continues to hum along with innovative approaches to curriculum and co-curricula activities including the Creative Academy music program and the Sports Teams programs. The goal for students is to get involved and test your talents!

Bless you,
Yours in Christ,
Dr Lesley Tunnah

News from the Board Chair

Mr Ben Patterson

Late last year we briefly outlined some exciting development projects due for completion in 2026. I'm happy to confirm that those projects remain on track.



Construction of the new Outside Hours Care Facility will commence in the April holidays. Construction of a Multipurpose Undercover Sports Facility for our primary school will commence later in the year. Renovations to the Faith Centre remain ongoing while plans for future projects are being fine-tuned as part of our masterplan update.

Thank you to all those who have voluntarily contributed to our College's building fund over and above the prescribed minimums. It's great to see students, parents and staff supporting the vision, and helping our College become all it can be.

News from the Early Learning Centre

Mrs Jalaa Manning

Greetings from Kindy!

It has been wonderful to welcome our 2026 families. The children are settling in nicely, new friendships are forming, and strong collaborative partnerships are building between our families and educators.



Over the Term break, the Maintenance Department and Contractors worked wonders in our Kindy playground. Our sandpit received a massive makeover with support structures being replaced with new, more robust materials and an improved design. The sandpit works were topped off with many truckloads of new, high-quality sand. The fort had some maintenance work done on it and the grounds surrounding it were re-worked to support better drainage.

New sand was also delivered to serve as soft fall and a garden was installed along the fenceline. A highlight was the day when the sandpit re-opened, seeing the children engage in the space with such enthusiasm and joy.

Blessings,
Mrs Manning.



News from the Head of Secondary

Ms Deb Wright

Wandering around the school, it's wonderful to see students busily engaged in their learning tasks and serving together to help others. Our Student Council have moved quickly to start mini tuckshop as one avenue to gather funds for student-lead projects around the school and the Mackay community. It's great to see growing interest from younger students to make a difference.

Jesus says in Matthew 25:40, 'The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' With all secondary students as witnesses, our College student leadership team made their commitment to serve the student body in action and as role models. Several senior students also made character pledges as a result of the Men of Honour and Women of Worth programs. We were very proud of them as they made their declarations.





Mrs Hanna Atherstone, our Senior Coordinator, has been busy organising senior events. The Senior Mocktail is the event at the forefront of the activities and auditions were recently held for the Mocktail talent show.

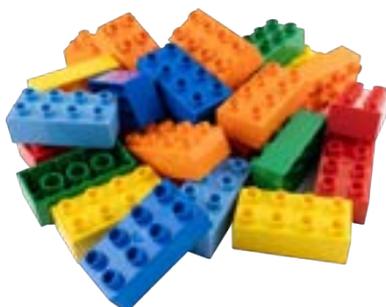
Mrs Jeanette Van Schalkwyk along with Mrs Marianne Davidson are in full swing preparing for the weeklong Year 9 Camp “Confident for Challenge” at Camp Fairbairn Outdoor Education Centre. This will be held in Week 2 next term. In the

last couple of years, camp feedback from students and teachers has been excellent. Challenging activities stretch their personal comfort zones and build confidence. The trained team support our students well. Stronger connections also develop between students as they work to solve problems together. This is a camp not to be missed!

Our teachers have been continuing to give freely of their time to offer different extra-curricular activities for students to develop their skills in different interest areas. The Debate Club involves preparing for competitions throughout Term 2. This has generated interest for both Senior and Middle School students.

Thank you to our dedicated staff for providing the following opportunities:

- Lego Club – Mondays to Thursdays
- Cattle Show Team – Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays
- U15 Boys Soccer Training - Mondays
- Maths tutoring – Tuesdays
- Yr 7-9 Netball training - Tuesdays
- Debate Club – Tuesdays
- U15 Girls Soccer Training - Tuesdays
- Chess Club – Wednesdays
- Photography Club – Fortnightly Wednesdays Week A
- Drama Club – Thursdays
- Cross Country training – Thursdays*
- Media Club – Fridays
- Robotics Club
- F1 in Schools
- Creative Academy Bands and Instrumental lessons





We were blessed with incredible weather for our swimming carnival and the students represented us very well in conduct and enthusiasm. Staff and students enjoyed the day and **Young House** Family were thrilled to win.

The HPE team are now busy preparing the Cross-Country event in Week 8. Students are encouraged to run competitively. They may surprise themselves! If not running competitively, students will be jogging/walking the short 3km course. All students crossing the finish line within the allocated time will earn House Family points - along with a sense of pride that they did their bit to contribute.



Students will have the option to dress in a given theme. The more creative the House Family dresses, the more points they will gain. Ultimately a lot of fun is had along with those who seize the opportunity to see what their best efforts may achieve.

Be blessed!

Ms Debbie Wright

Head of Secondary

News from the Christian Education Coordinator

Mrs Catrien Oosthuizen

It has been a blessed start to the year with the introduction of **Biblical Studies** as a subject from Prep to Year 12. All our students have been participating in one lesson per week, where our aim is to build strong, foundational Biblical knowledge, teach students how to navigate, read, and understand the Bible, and encourage them to grow in their personal faith. Our teachers have loved the opportunity to delve more deeply into Scripture with their classes and to engage in meaningful conversations about their faith.

I have been particularly encouraged by **Luke 13:18–20**, where Jesus compares the Kingdom of God to a small mustard seed that grows into a large tree. By faith and obedience, we sow small seeds that may seem insignificant to some, yet through God's faithfulness they grow

into something strong and resilient. In the same way, as Christian teachers, our purpose is to continually sow small seeds of truth and hope into the lives of our students, trusting that the Lord will protect and nurture these seeds as they grow into strong, faith-filled children of God.

We are grateful to partner with our parents and carers on this wonderful journey of Christian education.

Blessings,

Mrs Catrien Oosthuizen



News from the Head of Primary

Mrs Michelle Brownsey

'Taste and see that the Lord is good;
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.' Psalm 34:8 NIV



Welcome to another year of learning together. On Primary, we enjoyed a lovely smooth start to 2026, with the sun shining all the way through the early weeks, allowing consistency of routine and much valued outside playtime.

We are again blessed to have a full team of experienced Christian teachers across the Campus, with classes humming along like well-oiled machines from day 1. With the new addition to the girls formal uniform this year, it is great to see many young ladies taking up the option, looking super smart and enjoying the practical elements a skort provides.

There is much to enjoy across Term 1, including Creative Academy, Chess Club, Book Fair, Fun Run, Cross Country, Harmony Day, House Family gatherings, a school dance, Wet and Messy Day, Swimming Carnival and dare I say NAPLAN.

Teaching the value of serving others, it brings joy to my heart to see our Year 6 students reconnecting with the **Aged Care Community** with visits to Resthaven on Quarry. This Student Leader initiative, fuelled by the passion and commitment of Mrs Rebecca Naumann, is bound to see students highly benefiting from the wisdom and experiences of their broader community while having the opportunity to build meaningful intergenerational connections through simple, structured activities. This program reflects our College's commitment to Christian outreach by encouraging students to live out the values of compassion, service and respect for the dignity of every person. Through a consistent, caring presence, students practice faith in action—serving others, listening with kindness and building relationships that honour the life experience of older members of our community.

Pictured below are our Year 6 cohort having a little fun during professional photo time. Our two Primary Vice Captains look very smart in their new skort and blouse uniform option. Also, our students spending time with a Resthaven resident.



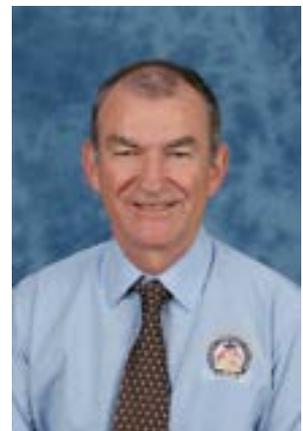
Have a blessed term,
Mrs Michelle Brownsey



News from the Head of Academics

Mr Doug Graham

As a teaching team, we are committed to provide *Christian Education on Purpose*. As part of this focus, we have introduced **Biblical Studies** as a subject in Years 7-10. The same Biblical Studies program is also taught in the Years 11 & 12 subject CLEAR. I am excited by this initiative. Rather than integrating biblical truths only within subjects that are part of the Australian Curriculum, focussed study on the Bible elevates it to its rightful position of great importance. The Bible is God's living word. Through studying the Bible, students can learn about who God is, what God has done, how they can connect with Him and His plan for their lives individually and for others.



Our Christian Education Coordinator Mrs Catrien Oosthuizen and her team of teachers are in the process of developing a program for this year that focusses on the structure and key themes of the Bible. 2026 is a foundational year with all year levels from Years 7-12 doing a similar program using the textbook *30 days to Understanding the Bible* by Max Anders. In future years, this program will be used by Year 7 students with other year levels studying further aspects of the Bible in greater depth.

The **first point of contact** for queries or concerns about subjects taught at the College should be the subject teacher but the following teachers are **curriculum leaders** who are key points of contact should you have queries about specific subjects:

Mrs Hanna Atherstone – English and Humanities Coordinator
Mrs Karen Graham – Cultural Arts and CLEAR Coordinator
Mrs Amy Harrison – Health and Physical Education Coordinator
Mr Chris Lee – Mathematics, Science and STEM Coordinator
Mrs Catrien Oosthuizen – Christian Education Coordinator
Mr Warren Tysoe – Trade Training Director and Technologies Coordinator
Ms Leisa Stevenson – Agriculture Supervisor

Information about the following can be accessed on our College website via the links shown:

1. **Assessment** <https://mcc.qld.edu.au/assessment-information/>

- MCC Assessment Policy
- Application Form for an Extension to the Due Date of an Assignment
- AARA Medical Form
- Assessment Calendars

2. **Accessing your child's reports** and other essential information

<https://mcc.qld.edu.au/mobile-parent-orbit-school-app/>

- Parent orbit app information flyer
- How to download the Parent Orbit App
- Parent Meet and Greet – IT information for Parents

3. Information relating to **Senior studies** at MCC <https://mcc.qld.edu.au/senior-studies-at-mcc/>

- 2026 Senior Information Night presentation



I continue to wish all our students much success in their learning journey this semester.

The following Bible verse is our focus Bible verse for the second half of Term 1.

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."

God bless
Mr Doug Graham

News from the Secondary Pastoral Care Co-ordinator

Ms Ulla Hansson

A Fresh Start and a New Space for Support

Welcome back to the 2026 School Year. We hope your family enjoyed a restful break, but that is but a distant memory, as we are heading into Week 6 already. We have begun with renewed energy and optimism, new routines, new goals, and new opportunities for growth.

This year we are excited to share a wonderful update within our Pastoral Care Space. Over the break, our amazing Maintenance team redesigned our pastoral care area in AD3 to support our students. The refreshed space now includes offices for:

- College Chaplain – Angela Wilkins
Offering spiritual guidance and mentoring as students navigate friendships, challenges and faith
- College Nurse – Rachael Potgieter
Supporting students' physical health needs and helping them understand how caring for their bodies supports learning and wellbeing, recognising that their bodies are gifts from God and worthy of wise stewardship
- Learning Enrichment Coordinator – Cindy Bowman
We welcome Cindy into this role. She brings wisdom and compassion in supporting diverse learners so that each student may grow and thrive according to God's purpose.

As a pastoral care team, our heart is to walk alongside families, not just when things are challenging, but in the everyday journey of growth.

We are reminded in Galatians 6:2

“Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.”

We look forward to walking alongside your family in 2026, celebrating growth, supporting challenges and building strong foundations for the year ahead.

In His Service,
Ulla Hansson



News from the ICT Manager

Mr Brett Hobbs

Keeping You Connected

Welcome to 2026! If you're new to our College community, we're excited to have you. Please take a moment to download and install the MCC Orbit app and enable notifications. For setup instructions, please visit the College website at mcc.qld.edu.au, navigate to learning, and select



Mobile Parent Orbit School app from the drop-down menu or browse to <https://mcc.qld.edu.au/mobile-parent-orbit-school-app/>



Key features of the parent Orbit app:

- Instant Notifications: Stay up to date with the latest announcements and important alerts on your smartphone (be sure to enable Notifications)
- Events and Payments: Easily approve excursion attendance or make a fee payment
- Medical Details: Keep your child's medical details up to date
- Attendance Tracking: Easily track your child's attendance
- Event Calendar: Stay informed about school events, meetings, and important dates
- Parent-Teacher Conferences: Schedule parent-teacher meetings and receive reminders
- Academic Reports: View and download your child's school reports

The ICT Team has been hard at work over the break, installing, updating, and configuring a range of digital resources for our students. The classroom Wi-Fi upgrade project is almost complete with all learning spaces now with higher capacity wireless access points installed to ensure faster speeds and better connectivity for all students. As part of this project, we will soon see Wi-Fi extend out of the classroom into open learning areas such as the Trade Training Centre and the Meeting Place.

2026 also sees the continuation of the one-to-one laptop program for Years 5, 6 & 7. The ICT team has been highly anticipating 2026 with many ICT building blocks starting to connect. We hope that it will build an excellent digital learning environment for our students and teachers.

Thank you for your continued partnership as we look forward to an exciting 2026 and the positive changes ahead.

Bless you, Brett Hobbs

CLEAR TECHNOLOGY

@ MACKAY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

- C** care for your computer
- L** leave a lovely digital footprint
- E** enjoy the e-adventure with excellence
- A** always avoid danger
- R** reliable resources rule



News from the MCC Parent Association

Mrs Alison Beresford - President



Welcome to Term 1!

The PA has loved connecting with so many families already this year! We kicked off with the Providence Zooper Dooper **Meet & Greet** at Book Pick-Up Day, followed by two fantastic Coffee & Cookies mornings in the Powerhouse foyer — especially wonderful to meet our Kindergarten and Year 5 families. We hope everyone is settling in well!

We also fired up the BBQ for the Kings Park Meet & Greet and recently held our very **first hybrid PA meeting** — joining both in person and via Teams.

Want to join us online? Email parentassociation@mccmky.qld.edu.au and we'll add you to the list!

Meet Your 2026 PA Executive Team

- Alison Beresford – President
- Ryan Morse – Vice President
- Christa Buckler – Treasurer
- **Secretary – Vacant (could this be you?)**
- Kristy Mansfield – Event Coordinator

We're excited to have such a strong team leading the way! Welcome Ryan and Kristy.

Coming Up in Term 1

 **Next PA Meeting: Wednesday 11 March, 6pm — in the Library and online via Teams (email us for the link)**

 **Providence School Disco: 27 March**

 **NAPLAN Breakfast: 11 March (both campuses) — a healthy start for healthy minds in years 3,5,7 and 9.**

 **Easter Hot Cross Bun Fundraiser: Supporting local business and the PA**

 **Parent Association School Survey: Keep an eye out for the link — your feedback helps guide us as we serve our school community**

 **ANZAC Day Community Service – Water Distribution: Details coming soon**





Mackay Christian College
'Faith Lift for Faith Centre'
Faith Centre Fund Appeal 2026



Renovations and upgrades continue in Faith Centre. We have experienced some delays with the engineering company who must first declare the building stable before repairs to the support beams can begin in earnest.

We are missing this valuable space used for our student Assemblies, Chapels and as a Performance Space for showcasing College activities.

Please pray for this restoration to be completed in a timely manner. Thank you to our staff who are being extremely flexible as they continue College programs without access to this great venue.

If you would like to contribute to the **Faith Centre Fund**, you may donate via the following direct deposit details:

Bank: ANZ
BSB: 014 023
ACCT: 838 333 773
Name: MCC Building Fund
Reference: FCF your name

Donations over \$2 are fully tax deductible.
Thank you for blessing the College with your gift.



MACKAY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

C

Christlikeness means I choose to

- be confident in Father God's love for me
- follow the example of Jesus, serving others with care and kindness
- speak the truth at all times

L

Learning means I choose to

- have a positive, persistent attitude to my studies
- complete learning activities to the best of my ability
- explore and discover God's created world with wonder and joy

E

Excellence means I choose to

- be well organised and prepared to achieve my personal best
- honour God with my words and actions
- represent the College with high standards of behaviour and dress

A

Attitude means I choose to

- develop greater resilience, allowing mistakes to teach me wisdom
- act safely, apologise if I hurt others, and forgive others
- honour those in authority by obeying their instructions

R

Respect means I choose to

- get along with others, accepting them as unique and of great value
- carefully consider my words before speaking out loud
- care for resources and equipment, both mine and others'



Christian Education on Purpose

