



# VILLA MARIA COLLEGE



LEARN TO  
PRIZE  
WHAT IS  
OF VALUE

## PROSPECTUS



ESTABLISHED 1918



“DOING  
ORDINARY THINGS  
EXTRAORDINARILY WELL”

# VILLA MARIA COLLEGE

*Tēnā Koutou Katoa! Cead Mile Failte!*

*Welcome to Villa Maria College!*

If parents are seeking quality education, academic achievement and wide co-curricular programmes - then Villa Maria College has to be on their shortlist. The College annually achieves academic results which are among the best in New Zealand.

For over 90 years the vision of Catherine McAuley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy, has been implemented, tested and challenged through Mercy education at Villa Maria College.

It is this Catholic character, the Mercy Character, which makes Villa different. We expect mutual respect in all areas of our community. In the words of the prophet Micah:

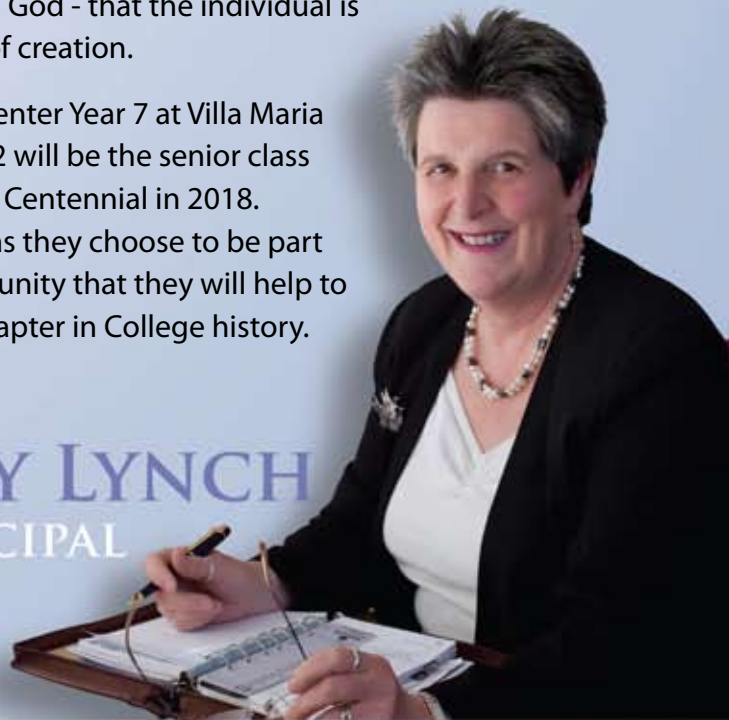
*"Hear then what Yahweh asks of you, to live justly to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God." - Micah (6:8).*

Justice is mercy/love distributed. Quality relationships are necessary for all learning and teaching and humility is knowing that one needs God - that the individual is not the be all of creation.

Students who enter Year 7 at Villa Maria College in 2012 will be the senior class for the College Centennial in 2018.

We hope that as they choose to be part of Villa's community that they will help to write a new chapter in College history.

MARY LYNCH  
PRINCIPAL



“LEARN TO  
PRIZE WHAT  
IS OF VALUE”



# OUR JOURNEY

Villa Maria College is a state integrated Catholic secondary school for girls in Years 7 – 13 and today has a total roll of approximately 780 students. Situated near the University of Canterbury in Upper Riccarton, Christchurch, Villa Maria College has been providing excellent education under the guidance of the Sisters of Mercy since 18 February 1918.

Villa Maria began serving the district as a parish school when boys were admitted in 1921. Later, the boys were transferred to St Teresa's and from 1941 the school reverted to being a school for girls.

The College roll continued to grow due to housing developments in the area and additional building was undertaken to

keep pace with growth. This included accommodation for boarders. The Boarding School was maintained until 1979 when Villa Maria once again became a day school.

In 1981 Villa Maria College was integrated into the New Zealand state school system and in 1992 the last Sister of Mercy Principal resigned and the first lay Principal, Mrs Mary Lynch, was appointed.

In 1995 the Sisters gifted the Villa Maria convent buildings to the College for use as classrooms.

Photographs and further information about the College history may be found at: [www.villa.school.nz](http://www.villa.school.nz)



# OUR SPECIAL CHARACTER

The Mercy charism is an integral part of Villa Maria College. It pervades all aspects of College life. The College aims to offer Catholic spiritual formation and pastoral care in the tradition of Catherine McAuley and the Sisters of Mercy.

At the heart of the College are the attributes of Mercy:

*Education that is grounded in the Gospel*

*Respect for the dignity, worth and potential of every human being*

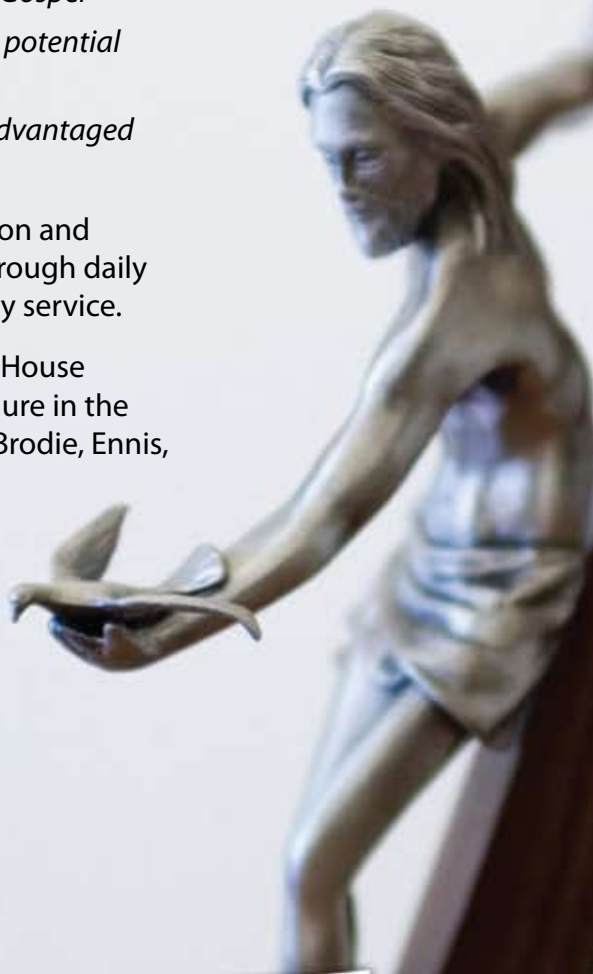
*Concern for the poor and the disadvantaged*

*Concern for justice*

All students study Religious Education and experience the Special Character through daily prayer, Mass, Retreat and community service.

All students belong to a House. The House names reflect an aspect of or key figure in the Special Character: Mercy, McAuley, Brodie, Ennis, Claver and Grace.

*The Villa Maria College mission statement is empowering each young woman to determine her potential, live Gospel values, confidently embrace life- long learning and as a Mercy woman be inspired to make a difference.*



# OUR PEOPLE

The College has an established, energetic and visionary Senior Leadership Team consisting of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal (Curriculum), Assistant Principal (Pastoral Care), Director of Religious Studies (DRS) and Executive Officer.

The Senior Leadership Team reports to both the Board of Trustees and the Proprietor (Villa Maria College Christchurch Limited). The Proprietor Board represents the Sisters of Mercy.

The College is also supported by an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Villa Maria College Foundation, which was established by the Proprietor, Board of Trustees and the Past Pupils' Association to provide a strong capital base for the long term development of the College.

A large number of the College staff have themselves been "Villa Girls" or have had children at the College. This demonstrates the value placed on belonging to the Villa community.

All Villa Maria College teaching staff have, as a minimum, a Diploma of Teaching and almost all teachers have a degree. A detailed staff list showing additional qualifications may be found on the College website.



From left to right: Megan Cassidy (Assistant Principal), Mary Lynch (Principal), Tony Shaw (Assistant Principal).

# STRIVING FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Villa Maria College aims to bring out the best in all students; they are encouraged to apply themselves and develop an appreciation for life-long learning. Our students are known for their integrity, self-assurance and compassion. Villa Maria College offers a broad choice of subjects at both the senior and junior levels. The smaller class numbers are a significant advantage to senior students and to staff who enjoy close working relationships with their students.

We are extremely proud of our academic record. The Ministry of Education data shows that Villa Maria College students consistently perform well above the national averages for all schools including other girls' schools.

High academic standards are emphasised. Students are guided, supported and encouraged to set goals to achieve their potential. Good study skills and appropriate examination preparation are taught and the broad curriculum base allows students to become independent learners, exploring ideas and problem solving. For more information on our curriculum see: [www.villa.school.nz/options/academic](http://www.villa.school.nz/options/academic).

The College has a specialist Learning Support Centre which operates to support both the gifted and talented and those with specific learning needs so that all students thrive during their educational years at Villa. The College Careers Development Centre assists students to manage their career

pathways by equipping them with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make informed choices and by facilitating contacts with the employment sector and tertiary educational institutions.

A Guidance Counsellor offers additional care and support to students.

Senior students study towards NCEA (the New Zealand National Certificate of Educational Achievement) at Levels 1, 2 and 3, Scholarship and also National Certificates at Levels 1 and 2.

The College motto 'that you may learn to prize what is of value' continues to be central to all our undertakings in every aspect of College life.

To view list of our academic achievements see: [www.villa.school.nz/achievers](http://www.villa.school.nz/achievers)



$$\int e^{5x} dx = \frac{e^{5x}}{5}$$

$$e^{3x} dx = 4$$



# LEARNING FROM LIFE

Beyond the classroom students are encouraged to participate in a variety of sports. We are proud to recognise that many outstanding sportswomen have started their sporting careers at Villa Maria College and have since gone on to provincial and national representation.

Villa Maria College teams and individual athletes have won South Island, New Zealand and international honours over the past few years in many sports including athletics, cycling, rugby, netball, rowing, cross country, karate, ice figure and synchronised skating, waterpolo, gymnastics and rhythmic gymnastics.

There are around 30 sports offered at Villa Maria College and students also take the opportunity to coach and/or umpire. Our student coaches are encouraged to work towards Achievement Standards in coaching. To view our list of recent and graduate sporting stars see [www.villa.school.nz/achievers](http://www.villa.school.nz/achievers)





## OUTDOOR EDUCATION

At Years 7 - 8 and 10 students participate in outdoor education at various camps, learning to be self-reliant and to challenge themselves beyond their expectations. Outdoor education is an important aspect of the College life and students are encouraged to develop an awareness of the uniqueness of the New Zealand outdoors.



## MERCY IN ACTION

College students are encouraged to exercise their entrepreneurial skills in fundraising via their Houses to support a nominated Catholic college overseas and also emergency aid appeals administered by Caritas. They also participate in Mercy Day and every second year, Villa Maria College students welcome young people with special needs from the community into the College. Mercy Action groups provide practical ways for individual students to engage further in community service.



## COMMUNITY SERVICE ABROAD

Villa Maria College encourages students and staff to "make a difference" in their community and in their world. It is therefore not surprising to note that a number of women, staff and students from the College community each year travel overseas to provide support to those in countries less fortunate. View profile stories of these 'Villa Girls' and staff at [www.villa.school.nz/achievers/community\\_service](http://www.villa.school.nz/achievers/community_service)



# CULTURAL CAPITAL

Music helps to build confidence and self-esteem. Villa Maria College has a strong Music Department and produces students of nationally recognised calibre.

Con Brio, our premier choir continues to be one of the top secondary school choirs in New Zealand. In 2006 Con Brio performed at a Papal Audience for Pope Benedict XVI.

There are numerous opportunities for students to perform in festivals and competitions both within and beyond the College including the Years 7-8 Choir, Harmonia, Con Brio, Jazz Combo, Instrumental Ensembles, Rock Band, Orchestra and trainee Orchestra.

At Villa Maria College participation in both College and community events is fostered. The Inter-House Choral Festival is always a highlight.

Each year students have the opportunity to take part in a major musical production, which is produced in conjunction with St Thomas of Canterbury College. Students have the opportunity to participate in "Stage Challenge" in alternate years.

Public performance opportunities are provided in speaking, debating, foreign languages, drama, music and musical theatre with Villa students achieving excellent results (see [www.villa.school.nz/achievers](http://www.villa.school.nz/achievers)).

Student exchanges are provided. The College hosts a number of exchangees from overseas each year in addition to enrolling up to 50 International Students. This contributes to the rich fabric of the College and encourages students to explore outside of their own culture.



*We acknowledge the crucial role we play in the education of our Māori and Pasifika students and are committed to strengthening the partnership that students, families and their communities have with teachers, principal, tertiary providers as well as local and central government.*

### **Kapa Haka**

*Toku reo toku ohooho - My language, my awakening.*

*Villa Maria College Kapa Haka group has performed at regional competitions with expert training and support from staff, parents and whanau. Kapa Haka at Villa Maria provides leadership opportunities for our students as well as the exploration and expression of Māori culture through song and dance.*



### **Pasifika**

*Taloha ni Kia orana, Malo e lelei, Fakaalofa atu, Ni sa bula, Kia ora, Talofa lava, Greetings*

*The Villa Maria Pasifika group encompasses Years 9 to 13 girls and provides a wealth of opportunities for friendships, support and leadership roles. An annual fixture for the group is their participation in and performance at the Christchurch Secondary Schools Pacific Island Festival, sPACIFICally PACIFIC.*



The Iho Pūmanawa Award is one way we recognise the high academic achievement of our Māori students. Awarded to the top academic student, the taonga was gifted to the College by Te Kaiwhakahaere o Ngai Tahu, Mark Solomon. Senior staff, and the College kaumatua, consider students' academic results and interview high achievers to determine the Iho Pūmanawa Award recipient each year.

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

A WARM KIWI WELCOME AWAITS YOU...

Villa Maria College's reputation as a quality institution with high academic achievement is well renowned both in New Zealand and internationally. A recent survey showed that most of our International Students come because of recommendations from a current or past International student.

High priority is given to the welfare of International Students and Villa Maria College strives to create a family-like atmosphere. A Director of International Students, supported by the International Assistant, heads the International Department and manages the pastoral care needs of International Students. A Homestay Co-ordinator oversees the welfare of students out of school hours.

All College staff members are committed to creating a supportive atmosphere for students. Qualified ESOL teachers are appointed to address English language needs and students are also given curriculum assistance from the International Assistant appointed to look after the specific needs of students during the school day.

The fact that Villa Maria College is a girls-only College is very appealing to International Students.

Villa Maria College has agreed to observe and be bound by the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students published by the Ministry of Education.

Nicola McCormick  
*Director of International Students*





Ying Zi Lin was one of Villa Maria College's top scholars. She won the award for Dux, the College's most prestigious award for high academic achievement.

Ying Zi Lin gained New Zealand Scholarships in Chemistry, Calculus and Statistics. In Physics she gained an Outstanding Scholarship making Ying Zi one of the top students in Physics in New Zealand.

Ying Zi Lin is now studying Engineering at the University of Canterbury and had these words to say about her time at Villa Maria.

*"I feel very privileged to have studied at Villa Maria College. I am from China and have always wanted to be an engineer; I wanted to attend a school that would help me get good grades and reach my dream. The teaching staff members at Villa Maria College were so welcoming and helpful. International students are especially cared for with their own dedicated teachers to watch over them and help in many different ways. It was like a big family which is why I felt so sad when I finished school. I liked the way I became friends with kiwi girls as well as many other international students from around the world; we still keep in contact and all agree that Villa Maria College is a very special place."*



*"My name is Oi Ying Kwong. I am now studying Fine Arts at the University of Auckland. I am glad that I went to Villa Maria College because the atmosphere of the College is very good for international students. I felt very welcome there and the International staff helped me with any problems or questions that I had. They didn't only care about students' grades, they also cared about students' lives at Villa."*



Yee Wah Hung was one of the top achievers in the 2006 NZ calculus Scholarship exam after sitting this as a Year 12 student and was one of five Year 13 Villa Maria students studying calculus at Canterbury University. Yee Wah is currently studying mathematics at the University of Warwick in England.

*"My name is Eva Yee Wah Hung. I am so glad to have had the opportunity to study at Villa Maria College for two years. The teachers and students there are so friendly, especially to International Students. They always provided us with extra support. The one thing that is very unique at Villa Maria College is that this College focuses not only on students' academic performance, but more importantly, on our discipline and our moral development. The moral education and the religious teaching at this college have helped me a lot when making decisions in life. I am very thankful to everybody at Villa Maria College for making me feel comfortable there and to making my two years in New Zealand so enjoyable"*



# OUR FACILITIES

Set in 4.8 hectares of grounds in the suburb of Upper Riccarton in the North West of Christchurch, the College is situated close to the University of Canterbury Ilam campus.

The College has four fully equipped and recently upgraded computer suites, a modern Library Information Resource Centre (opened in 2002) and modern technology equipment. The Arts Block, which includes a White Room for exhibitions and photographic work, was completed in early 2005 at a cost of \$1.46 million.

The auditorium and gymnasium were opened in 1998. The gymnasium is marked with numerous courts and has a well-equipped weights room. Outdoors there are sports fields and a swimming pool. The hockey, tennis and netball courts were opened 2007 and the courts provide the College with an all-weather facility for sporting codes.

The music area was developed, along with the building of the new auditorium in 1998 and allows for performance and teaching spaces as well as soundproofed practice rooms for students.

A stylish administration block, built in 2002, greets visitors to the College from the Peer Street entrance and provides pleasing surroundings for the Senior Leadership Team alongside comfortable staffroom and workroom facilities.

Visitor and staff car parks are available on-site. The canteen facilities were expanded in 2004 and there is a common room for Year 13 students. The boundary fence was replaced in early 2009 ensuring a safe, secure and aesthetically pleasing environment.

A new science block has just been completed providing state of the art laboratories and enabling our staff to deliver top quality teaching opportunities for our current and future pupils.



## COLLEGE UNIFORM SHOP

The College Uniform Shop was opened in 2006 and is now the exclusive outlet for all items required for the College uniform introduced in 2007. The Shop also sells items of College memorabilia. Run by a dedicated manager, the Shop is situated upstairs from the Student Office and is open on Mondays during term time and at other times by appointment. See [www.villa.school.nz/college\\_shop](http://www.villa.school.nz/college_shop) for more information about the Shop, uniform and memorabilia.

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The subsequent phases of the College's development plan will see, possibly by the College Centenary in 2018, a new Study Centre, Chapel and a central courtyard.





# VILLA MARIA COLLEGE

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