



11 July 2023

Dear St Joseph's College Families

### Choices

The process of subject selection for Year 11 will commence early this term. In the lead up to this, we will hold an assembly with the Year 10 students, looking at their options and what will be best for them moving forward. This is a critical time in your child's education, in many ways, VCE/VCE VM and VPC will have a profound impact on your child's future. We believe we are particularly well positioned to provide the best possible opportunities for your child to achieve their potential in Years 11 and 12.

Some key questions you might consider discussing with your child in the lead up to this important period.

- What are their aspirations and hopes for the next five years?
- Where would they like to be after that time?
- What is the best way to attain this plan?
- What would help you achieve your goals in Years 11 and 12?

Other critical questions to consider:

How do you ensure your child has the best opportunity to get where they want to be in the future? What will St Joseph's College offer to help your child achieve their goals in Years 11 and 12 on their pathway to success?

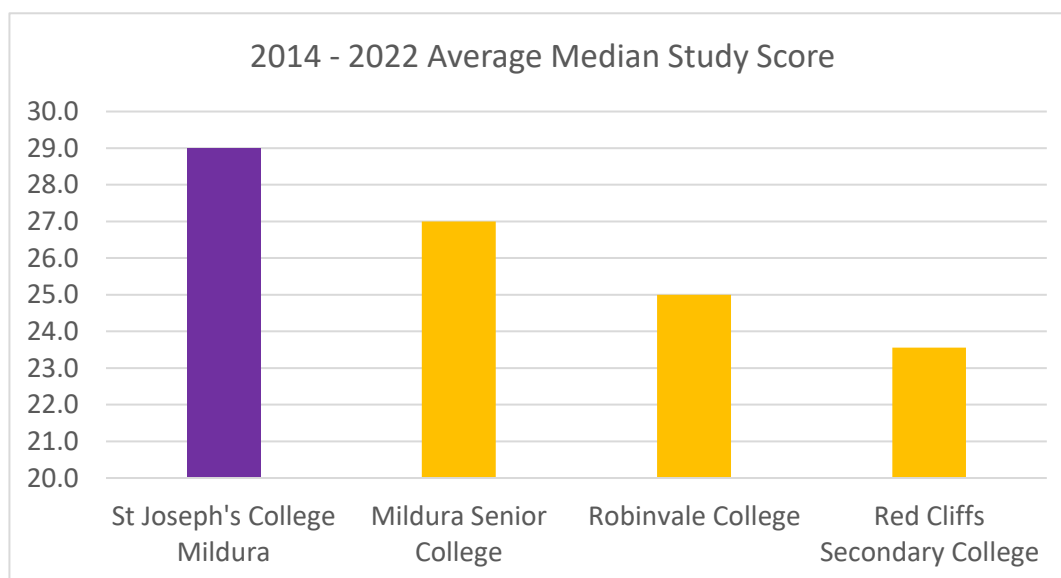
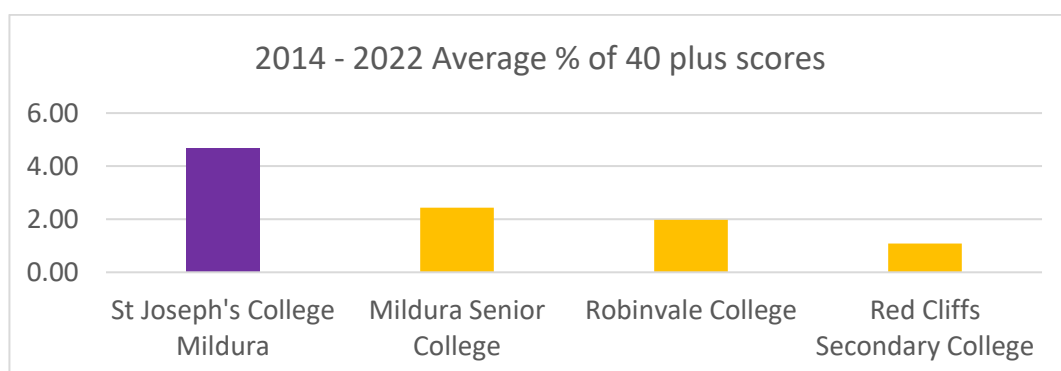
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small Classes in Years 11 and 12</li><li>• Dedicated teachers</li><li>• Great academic results</li><li>• Outstanding facilities and learning environment</li><li>• Excellent Wellbeing support</li><li>• Extended library open hours</li><li>• Academic Support Officer</li><li>• English and Maths tutoring</li><li>• Provided laptop</li><li>• Edrolo online academic support</li><li>• Leadership opportunities</li><li>• Pastoral care programs</li><li>• Teachers know their students (relationships built up over the full six years of secondary education)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Debutante balls</li><li>• After school catering in study areas</li><li>• Year 11 Seminar Day</li><li>• Year 11 and 12 Common Rooms</li><li>• Photocopying allowance</li><li>• Year 11 Snow Camp</li><li>• Year 12 Retreat</li><li>• Novus VCE/VCE VM Head Start Program</li><li>• Study Periods – early departure</li><li>• A dedicated and passionate VCE VM team with unique student offerings</li><li>• Large variety of subjects offered at VCE – did you know we timetable more subjects than Scotch College (Melbourne) at Year 12?</li></ul> |
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## Academic Data

Below we have included some important data highlighting what St Joseph's College can do to provide the best possible opportunity for your child to achieve their potential in Years 11 and 12.

### Local Secondary Colleges Better Education Ranking Based on 2014 - 2022 VCE Results

School	Better Education Rank 2014 – 2022 Average
St Joseph's College Mildura	249
Mildura Senior College	373
Robinvale Secondary College	452
Red Cliffs Secondary College	494

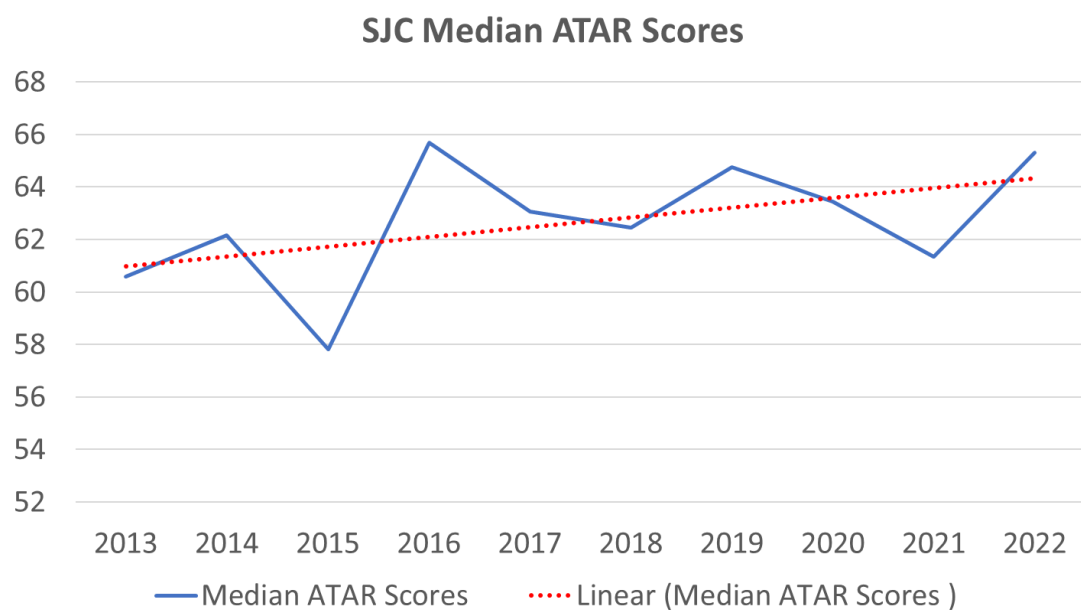


The results above are not a one off, they are a pattern that has existed for a while, as you can see when you look at the results over an extended period of time.

**Other schools in the Ballarat Diocese average Better Education Rank results since 2014**  
(The lower the rank, the better the results)

School	Better Education Rank	scores of 40+ 0%	Median VCE Score
St Joseph's College Mildura	249	4.69	29
St Patrick's College, Ballarat	240	4.90	29
Monivae College, Hamilton	273	3.69	29
Trinity College Colac	293	3.98	28
Emmanuel College Warrnambool	296	4.26	28
St Brigid's College Horsham	311	3.24	28
Damascus College Ballarat	321	3.80	28
Mercy College Camperdown	365	1.68	27
Marian College Ararat	377	2.87	27
Mildura Senior College	373	2.43	27
Robinvale College	452	1.97	25
Red Cliffs Secondary College	494	1.09	24

Our data continues to show growth, as seen in the following graph.



### **Small Class Sizes**

The average class size at Year 12 in 2023 is 12 students per class, and the average class size at Year 11 in 2023 is 16 students per class. Smaller class sizes lead to more one-on-one attention from the teacher. With smaller class sizes, teachers can get to know a student individually, working with them to enhance their strengths and improve their weaknesses, and students get to know each other better.

Instead of your student just being another face in a huge crowd, they will be more likely to develop deep and lasting relationships with the other students around them. That also has academic benefits: if your student has a question about the homework, they will be more likely to know whom to call for a quick chat.

Teachers can tailor instruction more individually. In a small class, the teacher is more likely to be able to tailor the instruction so that it stays on their level. With fewer students, the top and bottom students in the class usually aren't quite so far apart, and the teacher can work with each of them to ensure that they're getting the instruction they need.

There is less disruption. In a large class, personality conflicts are more likely to occur, and to occur in extremes. Discipline begins to take up more of the class period than actual instruction. There is more time for instruction. In a smaller class, less time is required for administration duties, so a teacher has more time to instruct and be well-prepared for lessons. They are quieter, allowing the student to focus on their learning.

### **Increase in Teaching Time**

In 2024, St Joseph's College will move to a timetable that provides increased teaching time for each subject in Year 11 and Year 12. Subjects will go from 215 minutes per week to 240 teaching minutes per week. This will further provide support to our students in their academic endeavours.

### **Impact of Moving Schools**

What does the research say? In terms of academic development and learning, research clearly shows that moving schools generally negatively impact a student's learning.

John Hattie became known to a wider public with his two books *Visible Learning* and *Visible Learning for Teachers* and has been called 'possibly the world's most influential education academic'. *Visible Learning* is a synthesis of more than 800 meta-studies covering more than 80 million students and the result of 15 years of research about what works best for learning in schools.

Of the 256 factors that John Hattie's research considered, 'Moving Schools' had a negative effect - 0.34. That is, it has an effect of lowering achievement below average expected achievement. On average, according to John Hattie's meta-analysis, students generally will effectively go backwards in their learning and achievement when moving schools.

When you think about this, it is not totally surprising. Valuable time and effort are required to become familiar, comfortable and understand the new learning environment – this is time that could be better spent undertaking academic pursuits. Teachers at the new school will not be as familiar with the student, so they may not understand what works for individual students, and there is no transfer of information about a student's learning style, strengths and weaknesses to the teachers at the new school. If they stay at their current school, this information is readily available.

In terms of academic development and learning, John Hattie's research clearly shows that moving schools generally hurts a student's learning, something to be kept in mind. The information below comes from another recent study.

### **Academic Support**

St Joseph's College invests heavily in academic support for students. The Haenan Library is open every afternoon as a place of study. The college also provides an Academic Support Officer, Dr Larry O'Connor, in the library every afternoon for students to access. Dr O'Connor is available to work with individuals or groups between 3.30pm and 6.00pm Monday to Thursday and between 3.30pm and 5.00pm on Fridays. Also, the college provides an Academe program, which is supervised study time scheduled within the timetable, for our senior students.

### **Laptops and their Maintenance**

St Joseph's College provides all our students with impressive, powerful, and up to date touch screen laptops. A full-time operational IT Help Desk ensures that no matter the circumstances, students are not left without a laptop, guaranteeing no downtime in their academic studies. In most schools, families are expected to provide their child with a laptop and chase up warranty and maintenance issues. At the college, we follow up on warranty and maintenance issues - this effectively means less hassle for parents/guardians.

### **Save the Date**

The Senior Pathways Information Evening will be held on **Tuesday July 25, at the Mercy Campus**. This is an important event to ensure students select subjects best suited to their goals and interests. A Year 11 Snow Camp Information Session will also be held in conjunction with the subject selection market. All teachers will be available, so this is a great opportunity to have one-on-one conversations with the teachers of specific subjects.

### **Careers Team**

Our Careers team are dedicated to providing an array of options to our students that will best prepare them to achieve their chosen pathway, be it educational, vocational or further study.

Career education is a carefully planned program of events, activities and workshops to support students, highlighting the connection between the importance of school and their future, thus, enabling students to have a clearly defined pathway beyond Year 12.

The Careers team work closely with students, offering individualised support to assist students and their families make informed decisions about subject selections and career pathways. Numerous opportunities exist, including:

- NOVUS Year 10 Headstart Camp.
- Careers Expo Camp.
- Guest Speakers from University, Industry and Vocation.
- Careers Newsletter - fortnightly publication to keep our college community well informed of opportunities, upcoming dates, and events.
- VET Courses and School Based Apprenticeship (SBAT) opportunities.
- Structured Work Placement (SWPL) and Work Experience with industry employers.
- Future employment referral, advice and pathway options.

Our Careers team is overseen by Mr Mel Ficarra – Head of Senior Pathways. Mr Ficarra works closely with Ms Fiona Dimasi – Careers Practitioner, Ms Hayley Wilson – VET Coordinator and Mrs Eliza Burford – VCE and VASS Assistant.

### **Community/Pastoral Care/Relationships**

The college staff take great pride in forming positive relationships with our students. We understand that for students to flourish and achieve their best results, they need to feel safe and that they are valued and respected. The purpose of the Homeroom and vertical Pastoral Care system is to allow students to build positive relationships with students from different year levels, some they look up to and others they are role model for. The role of the Homeroom teacher is invaluable in a student's educational journey at the college, apart from being the parent's first point of contact, they really get to know the students and how best to support them pastorally and academically.

The college focuses on positive relationships, which are built on genuine care and respect, allowing our students to thrive in a supportive faith community.

### **Wellbeing Support**

The safety and wellbeing of students at St Joseph's College are our highest priority, and we strive to create an environment where students feel a sense of belonging and connectedness. The college employs four qualified wellbeing members, Mrs Jane Sparks, Mr Sam De Luca, Ms Aimee Webster and Miss Rebecca Dea, whom our Deputy Principal Students, Mr Heath McClaer, oversee. The college also employs a full-time registered nurse, Mrs Louise Clohesy, to ensure we meet all students' wellbeing and safety needs in our care.

### **Scholarships**

St Joseph's College presents scholarships annually to Year 10 students who respect and display our Mercy Core Values: Hospitality, Compassion, Service, Community, Justice, Excellence and Spirituality. The college will offer up to nine internal scholarships of \$1,500 to Year 10 students transitioning into Year 11 at the college. These internal scholarships will recognise students who have shown excellence in their academic and personal school life. Further information regarding the scholarships and bursaries on offer can be found on our [college website](#).

We also offer [Mercy Academic Internal Scholarships](#). St Joseph's College is committed to valuing effort, achievement and excellence in learning. The provision of academic scholarships is one way of making explicit this value placed on the pursuit of excellence. Principled, hard-working individuals with a love of learning provide an outstanding model for their peers and younger students. Scholarship provision also reflects confidence that the college provides the high standard of teaching and learning required to allow highly academic students to realise their full potential.

The Mercy Academic Scholarships are offered on the basis of academic merit to students continuing Years 11 and 12 at St Joseph's College in 2024 and 2025. These scholarships have a tenure of two years. The scholarships are for the remission of 50% of the school fee for each year of the scholarship.

We value our relationship with the students, we value them as individuals and as a group, and we look forward to helping them achieve their goals.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with us at the college on 5018 8000 or email [gkluske@sjcmda.vic.edu.au](mailto:gkluske@sjcmda.vic.edu.au) / [hmcclaer@sjcmda.vic.edu.au](mailto:hmcclaer@sjcmda.vic.edu.au).

Yours sincerely



**Mr Greg Kluske**  
Deputy Principal, Learning & Teaching



**Mr Heath McClaer**  
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