Emmanuel
CATHOLIC COLLEGE
God is with us

Introducing

CURIOS

And

Discovering ME

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT



*Two New **Year 8** Initiatives for **2027***

Reimagining Learning.
Igniting Human Flourishing.

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Dear Parents, Guardians and Year 7 Students,

Adolescence is a critical inflection point in a young person's learning and development. It is a time of enormous growth, curiosity and possibility. Yet we also know that the middle years are often where engagement in learning begins to decline, not because young people lack ability but because learning can sometimes lack relevance, agency, connection and purpose. At Emmanuel Catholic College, we believe we can do better.

In recent years, particularly, we have listened carefully to our students. We have asked what engages them, what they value, what they remember and importantly, what actually makes a difference to their learning and wellbeing. Their message has been clear: young people want learning that feels real, active, connected and meaningful.

In 2027, we will respond by introducing two exciting new initiatives for all Year 8 students: *Discovering ME* and *Curios*. These initiatives will be trialled in 2027 and should they prove successful, we anticipate extending them into Years 7, 9 and 10 in future years.

We have deliberately chosen Year 8 as a starting point, taking a proactive approach to addressing possible future disengagement during the middle years of secondary education. Furthermore, our current Year 7 students have proven themselves to be an outstanding cohort, demonstrating a willingness to embrace new challenges and approaches to learning.

Curios and *Discovering ME* are not additional programs being placed on top of an already crowded curriculum. They represent a deliberate redesign of how some of our existing curriculum time is used, creating greater connections between subjects, reducing unnecessary fragmentation and giving students opportunities to apply their learning in authentic ways.

This direction sits firmly within Emmanuel's Strategic Directions 2027–2030: *Igniting Human Flourishing – Faith, Learning and Future in Action*. Our commitment is to reimagine learning so that students flourish intellectually, spiritually, socially, emotionally and creatively.

Discovering ME - Meaningful Engagement

Discovering ME will create dedicated space within the Year 8 timetable for students to better understand themselves, others and the world in which they live. Two periods each week will bring together an enhanced Pastoral Care experience, elements of Religious Education, wellbeing, service, relationships, digital citizenship, practical life skills and personal development.

Importantly, this does not diminish any subject, content or existing program. Rather, it provides new opportunities for aspects of the Religious Education and Pastoral Care curricula to be experienced

authentically through faith in action, service, ethical decision-making, Catholic Social Teaching, dignity, justice and purpose.

The program moves beyond a traditional pastoral care model. Students will explore themes including belonging and friendship, cyber safety, resilience, body image, service, racism and moral courage, faith in action, relationships, real-world skills, purpose and their future.

A central feature will be our Wellbeing Labs. Students will rotate through experiences built around Mind, Reflect, Move, Active, Outside, Create, Escape and Connect. Rather than simply talking to students about wellbeing, we want them to experience it, practise it and discover what works for them. The year concludes by asking students a powerful question: *"Who have I become?" Discovering ME* reflects a central commitment within our new Strategic Directions: "Flourishing is not accidental; it is designed." Our goal is a College culture where belonging is strong, relationships matter and every student feels seen, supported and capable.

Curios — Learning Without Limits

Our second initiative, *Curios – inspired by the latin term curiosus: careful attention, inquiry and desire to know,* will reimagine aspects of learning across Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, English and Religious Education. Rather than students always experiencing these disciplines as separate and disconnected subjects, *Curios* will create carefully designed cross-curricular modules around significant questions, problems and real-world contexts.

There will be a reduction of one traditional timetable period in each of the four core learning areas to create dedicated *Curios* learning time. This does not mean less curriculum or diminished academic rigour. Required curriculum content will continue to be explicitly taught. *Curios* creates the opportunity to take selected knowledge and skills from across learning areas and bring them together in richer, more authentic learning experiences.

Our Strategic Directions describe this approach simply:

Interdisciplinary where it matters.
Explicit where it counts.
Authentic where it engages.

Curios will be grounded in our Vision for Learning, Explore *Connect Create* and will deliberately develop the capabilities we believe young people need to flourish: Character, Communication, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Citizenship, Collaboration, Resilience and Independence. Through *Curios*, students will be challenged to ask questions, investigate problems, make connections between disciplines, work collaboratively, communicate their thinking, create solutions and apply what they know. The intention is not to make learning easier. It is to make learning matter.

Human Flourishing at the Centre

Together, *Discovering ME* and *Curios* represent an important next step in the evolution of learning at Emmanuel.

Our Strategic Directions define Human Flourishing as nurturing the whole person, spiritually, emotionally, socially and physically so that every individual can thrive. They also call us to develop adaptive problem-solving, ethical competence, creativity and an ability to understand, appreciate and act in the world.

That is precisely what these initiatives seek to achieve.

They are designed to:

- Significantly increase engagement across all ability levels;
- Give students greater voice, choice and agency;
- Connect learning to real-world application and meaning;
- Develop transferable capabilities for human flourishing;
- Strengthen wellbeing, belonging, faith and service; and
- Maintain academic rigour and meet all curriculum requirements.

Importantly, neither program is an alternative pathway designed for a particular group of students. This is a high-quality learning model for every Year 8 student.

We do not want to accept a model of education where student compliance is mistaken for student engagement. Nor should we assume that because schooling has traditionally been organised in a particular way, it must remain that way.

Our responsibility is to retain what is powerful about education while having the courage to rethink what can be better. As our Strategic Directions state, students thrive when *"they are known, when they are engaged and when their learning has purpose."*

Discovering ME will help our young people better understand who they are and who they are becoming. *Curios* will encourage them to remain curious about what they can discover, question, connect and create. Together, they represent our commitment to an Emmanuel education that is Christ-centred, future-focused and deeply human, an education that does more than prepare young people for their next assessment. It prepares them to flourish.

Following are various examples from the proposed programmes for both discovering ME and Curios.

If you have any queries or concerns and or you wish to make comment on these trial initiatives, please feel free to do so through Parent, Guardian and Student Feedback - Discover ME and Curios – Fill out form

Regards,



Mr Paul Watson
Principal

Emmanuel Catholic College

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Discovering ME

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT



WHAT IS DISCOVERING ME?

Discovering ME is a dedicated Year 8 program that creates space for students to understand themselves, build positive relationships, grow in faith and develop the skills to thrive in today's world and into the future.

Two periods each week bring together Pastoral Care and Religious Education in a dynamic, practical and engaging way.

ME stands for **Meaningful Engagement** — because when students are known, supported and connected, they flourish.



REAL TOPICS. REAL LIFE.

- **Belonging & friendship**
  Who are we? Building a positive community.
- **Wellbeing & mental health**
  Mind, move, reflect and be active.
- **Cyber safety & digital citizenship**
  Surf safe, make wise choices.
- **Identity & body image**
  Be comfortable in who you are.
- **Respectful relationships**
  Upstander, not a bystander.
- **Service & social justice**
  Faith in action. Making a difference.
- **Real-world skills**
  Money matters, future pathways and more.

THE WELLBEING LABS

- **Mind** — Can you control your attention?
- **Reflect** — What's going on inside your head?
- **Move** — Can movement change how you feel?
- **Outside** — What happens when you get away from the screen?
- **Create** — Can you make something that didn't exist before?
- **Escape** — Can stories change the way you see the world?
- **Connect** — How important are other people to your wellbeing?
- **Active** — Can challenge improve your wellbeing?

CONNECTED TO OUR FAITH

Discovering ME complements and enhances Religious Education by bringing faith to life through real experiences — including service, Social Teaching, justice, ethics and living out Gospel values in everyday life.

IGNITING HUMAN FLOURISHING

Discovering ME

Term 1 Weeks 1–11
Belonging & Identity

1. No class – Australia Day
2. Who Am I?
3. Belonging – People, Places, Communities
4. Wellbeing Lab 1: Mind
5. Cyber Safety – A Digital Life
6. Wellbeing Lab 2: Reflect
7. Body Image & Being Comfortable
8. Wellbeing Lab 3: Move
9. Service Taster – Emmanuel Day
10. No class – Easter Tuesday
11. Wellbeing Lab 4: Active

Term 2 Weeks 1–10
Relationships & Respect

1. No class – Pupil Free Day
2. Upstander vs Bystander
3. Wellbeing Lab 5: Outside
4. Service Rotation 1: Student Choice
5. Racism – "It was Just a Joke"
6. Wellbeing Lab 6: Create
7. Service Rotation 2: Student Choice
8. Wellbeing Lab 7: Escape
9. Wellbeing Lab 8: Connect
10. Community Challenge



Term 3 Weeks 1–10
Choices & Real-World Skills

1. Connection Challenge
2. What Matters to Me?
3. Failure Lab
4. Service Rotation 3: Student Choice
5. Food, Fitness & Wellbeing
6. Academy Trials / Student Voice Week
7. Faith in Action
8. Wellbeing Lab: Student Choice
9. Real World Survival Challenge
10. Wellbeing Lab: Student Choice

Term 4 Weeks 1–9
Purpose & Future Focus

1. Purpose – What Matters to Me?
2. What Would You Do?
3. Guest Speaker: Paul Litherland
4. Wellbeing Lab: Student Choice
5. Relationships Workshop
6. Community Challenge
7. Wellbeing Lab: Student Choice
8. Who Have I Become?
9. Alternative Week: My Wellbeing, My Way

KEY FEATURES

- ✓ Active, interactive and varied
- ✓ Mix of movement, discussion, practical learning, and service
- ✓ Student choice built in
- ✓ Gender-specific sessions where appropriate
- ✓ Real-world skills and future focus
- ✓ Connected to Catholic values and social justice

STUDENT VOICE

- ✓ Based on student feedback
- ✓ More experiences, less screen time
- ✓ Variety each week
- ✓ Relevant and engaging topics
- ✓ Opportunities to lead and contribute
- ✓ Space for fun, connection and meaningful learning

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- ✓ Stronger relationships and sense of belonging
- ✓ Improved wellbeing and resilience
- ✓ Greater confidence and practical life skills
- ✓ Increased social awareness and inclusion
- ✓ Active engagement in service
- ✓ A clear sense of purpose and values
- ✓ Students who positively contribute to their community

Emmanuel

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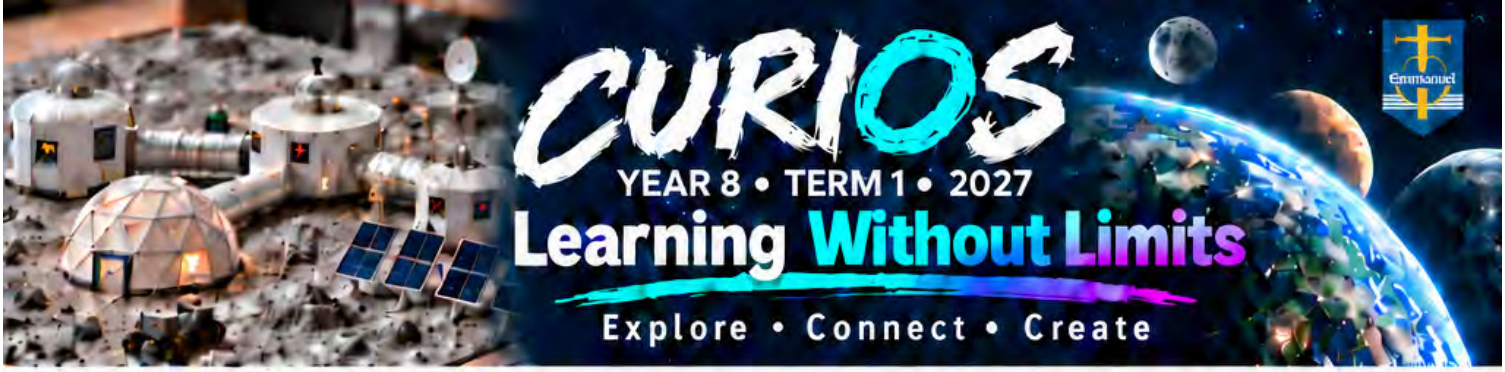


CURIOS

YEAR 8 • TERM 1 • 2027

Learning Without Limits

Explore • Connect • Create

CONNECTED LEARNING. REAL PURPOSE.

Students will design and test games and creative challenges, investigate and model a civilisation beyond Earth, and develop and pitch a solution to a real problem. They will research, calculate, build, collaborate and improve their ideas using feedback.

HOW IT CONNECTS WITH THE WEEK

One period from each of Mathematics, Science, HaSS and English creates dedicated Curios time. Specialist subject teachers explicitly teach required curriculum; students then connect and apply selected knowledge in Curios. Religious Education contributes faith, ethics and the Common Good. Full curriculum requirements and academic rigour are maintained.

01 CHALLENGE ARENA

Make. Test. Listen. Improve.



STUDENTS WILL

Design and engage with practical challenges that apply measurement, scientific testing and clear communication. Develop prototypes, evaluate solutions and use feedback to improve their designs, explaining the thinking behind their decisions.

CURRICULUM IN ACTION

English — Clear instructions, explanations and audience.

Mathematics — Measurement, shape and scoring data.

Science — Observe, test and use evidence to improve.

KEY CAPABILITIES

Creativity

Collaboration

Resilience

02 BEYOND EARTH

Could another world support a thriving civilisation?



STUDENTS WILL

Explore what it would take to build a thriving community beyond Earth. Investigate a moon or planet and develop a vision for a sustainable settlement, considering how people would live, meet their needs and care for one another. This challenge encourages students to think about what makes a community thrive.

CURRICULUM IN ACTION

Science — Energy transfers, heat transfer and efficiency.

Mathematics — Shape, area, cross sections, volume and capacity.

HaSS — Geographical information, migration and settlements.

English — Persuasive statements and arguments for an audience.

Religious Education — Human dignity, stewardship and the Common Good.

KEY CAPABILITIES

Critical Thinking

Citizenship

Character

03 MAKE IT MATTER!

A real problem. Your solution. A pitch that matters.



STUDENTS WILL

Identify a real need and develop a practical solution, considering who it will help and why it matters. With a set amount of money to fund their idea, students will make thoughtful choices, refine their solution and present a convincing case for its value.

CURRICULUM IN ACTION

English — Write, rehearse and deliver a persuasive speech.

HaSS — Supply, demand, resources, consumer choices and budgeting within a set amount.

Mathematics — Surveys, data, averages, percentages, ratios and measurement.

KEY CAPABILITIES

Independence

Communication

Creativity

Interdisciplinary where it matters.
Explicit where it counts.
Authentic where it engages.

The intention is not to make learning easier.
It is to make learning matter.

CURIOS
YEAR 8

BEYOND EARTH

The mission starts now. The decision comes in 2032.

THE MISSION

Could another world offer a better future than the Moon?

NASA is preparing to select a location for humanity's first long-term civilisation beyond Earth. The Moon is the leading candidate, but a better option may exist.

Students are recruited to investigate a moon or planet, compare it with Earth's Moon and make a convincing case for their chosen destination. The race is on to develop a proposal worthy of selection in 2032.

A CIVILISATION THAT CAN THRIVE

Student product and proposal must show evidence of how people will:

- Generate reliable energy and use resources wisely.
- Live safely in a challenging environment.
- Support health, wellbeing and a strong community.
- Build a sustainable, self-sufficient home for future generations.



STUDENT CHOICE: DESTINATION, DESIGN AND PRODUCT

Students choose the moon or planet they investigate and develop their own vision for the settlement.

PHYSICAL MODEL

A constructed model showing the settlement's layout, habitats and essential systems.

OR

VIRTUAL MODEL

A digital model showing how the civilisation is designed and how its systems connect.





BOTH INCLUDE A PERSUASIVE PROPOSAL

Research, calculations and clear explanations must show why their destination and design deserve to be selected.

Different designs. Shared expectations for evidence and learning.

FIVE LEARNING AREAS SUPPORT THE MISSION

ENGLISH

- Understand how we persuade for a purpose.
- Create persuasive statements to convince an audience.
- Write and deliver persuasive arguments for an audience.



SCIENCE

- Explore energy transfers and transformations.
- Investigate heat transfer and energy efficiency.
- Use evidence to explain design decisions.



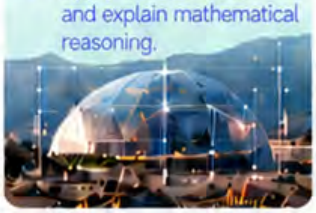
HASS

- Use maps and geographical information.
- Explain migration and why people move.
- Explore urbanisation and how settlements grow.



MATHEMATICS

- Apply shape, angle, perimeter and area knowledge.
- Use cross sections of 3D solids to determine dimensions and calculate volume and capacity
- Apply measurement and explain mathematical reasoning.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- Explore God's creation and human dignity.
- Understand community, Stewardship and the Common Good.
- Consider how choices care for people and our common home.



CORE KNOWLEDGE, APPLIED WITH PURPOSE

The project connects Year 8 SCSA curriculum content in English, Science, HASS and Mathematics, alongside Religious Education. Students build subject knowledge through explicit teaching and apply it through research, design and communication. Subject assessment remains part of the learning.

Student capabilities include:

Communication • Collaboration • Independence • Resilience
Critical thinking • Creative thinking • Citizenship • Character

NEW WORLDS. REAL IDEAS.

CURIOS

YEAR 8

BEYOND EARTH

SAME PEOPLE. BIGGER POSSIBILITIES.

80 PEOPLE. ONE NEW HOME. YOUR DESIGN.

Mission starts **NOW.** Decision: **2032.**

YOU'VE BEEN RECRUITED!

NASA needs a home beyond Earth. Is the Moon the best choice.. or can you find somewhere better?

Choose a moon or planet from your mission brief. Design a settlement for **80 people.** Go solo or team up.



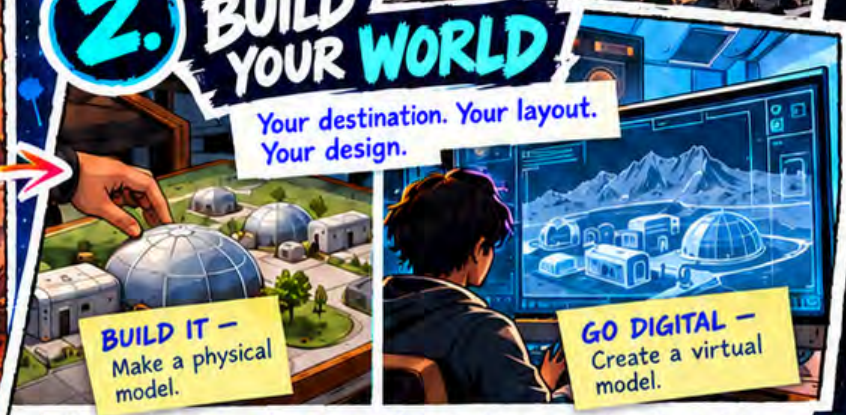
1. CRACK THE SPACE RACE

Solve challenges. Collect clues. Unlock materials.

- Compare worlds: gravity, temperature, atmosphere and radiation.
- Work out how much oxygen, water, food and storage your crew needs.

2. BUILD YOUR WORLD

Your destination. Your layout. Your design.



Both need a **persuasive proposal** backed by research and calculations.

3. POWER UP YOUR KNOWLEDGE

SCIENCE
KEEP YOUR CREW ALIVE

Energy, batteries, oxygen, water, food, plant growth and insulation.

MATHS
WILL IT ALL FIT?

Use cross sections and volume to plan space and storage.

For prisms: $V = A \times h$

HASS
PICK YOUR SPOT

Use topographic maps. Plan for new arrivals and future growth.

ENGLISH
MAKE YOUR CASE

Spot persuasive devices. Create your own. Convince your audience.

RE
MORE THAN A BASE

Leaders, rules and gathering spaces. Care for everyone and the common good.

4. READY TO PITCH?

Can your 80 settlers...

- ☑ Stay safe and survive?
- ☑ Get reliable power, oxygen, water and food?
- ☑ Fit their homes, supplies and storage?
- ☑ Learn, exercise, relax, gather and worship?
- ☑ Access medical care and contact Earth?
- ☑ Welcome future arrivals and protect resources?

REAL PEOPLE. REAL QUESTIONS. YOUR SOLUTIONS.

DON'T JUST BUILD A BASE.

CREATE A WORLD WORTH LIVING IN!

BUILD YOUR CAPABILITIES

Communication • Collaboration • Independence • Resilience
Critical thinking • Creative thinking • Citizenship • Character