

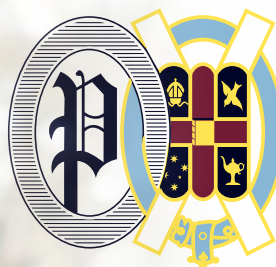


PENLEIGH AND ESSENDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Altior et Sapientior

December 2024





From the Principal

“In order to be irreplaceable, one must always be different.”

– Coco Chanel

At the end of the 2024 school year, our Vice Principal, Nina Bilewicz, will retire, closing a remarkable chapter of 20 years of dedicated service to our school. As we prepare to say farewell, we see that Nina’s unique contributions have undoubtedly made her irreplaceable in the life of our school.

Nina’s leadership has been defined by her deep commitment to fostering a culture of mutual respect, care, innovation, and excellence. Her vision has transformed our school, bringing new programs to life, strengthening our curriculum, and championing initiatives like the Culture of Thinking, which challenges us all to think critically and act boldly.

Her passion for education has shaped not just what we do but who we are as a community. She has stood for the wellbeing of every student, the growth of every staff member, and the endless potential that comes from creativity and collaboration. Whether through the excitement of events like One School Day, where her vision often added the element of surprise and delight, or through the quiet, steady encouragement she has offered to colleagues and students alike, Nina’s influence is woven into the fabric of our school.

As we reflect on this year’s theme, “What Do You Stand For?”, it’s clear that Nina has stood for progress, innovation, and the belief that education is not just about knowledge but about shaping individuals who will thrive in a changing world. Her work has created a foundation that will guide us for years to come, inspiring every member of our community to live out the values she has so strongly upheld.

To Nina, we say thank you—for your dedication, your leadership, and your vision. Whether you are a former student, a current family, or a prospective one, you have been touched by her legacy, which continues to inspire and strengthen our school.

As Nina embarks on her next chapter, we know that her influence will remain a part of who we are. In her own way, she has shown us the truth in Chanel’s words: being different is not just a strength—it is the key to being unforgettable.

Kate Dullard



Farewell from Nina Bilewicz

As I head toward my retirement, the end of 2024 brings a review of not just one year, but 50 years in education with the last 20 years here at PEGS. I would like to leave with you the things that I am most proud of in this unique community.

Earlier this year, Joe Brumm, the creator of Bluey, spoke to us at a Thinking Seminar about how the cornerstone of success is the team of people we surround ourselves with. He wasn't wrong. With such a wealth of experience and expertise, it has been a privilege and honour to work with so many of my colleagues on countless committees and working parties which, though each different in scope, all had one focus at their core – to enhance the educational and wellbeing experience for each student at PEGS.

I am firm in my belief that, as a learning community, every person in our community should continue their journey of learning. I make no apology for this expectation. I know that my own experience has been richer for learning from the staff and students at our school, and the knowledge, thoughtfulness and insight that they bring with them.

We have long stated that a good thinker is to be able to reflect on and manage their own thinking. To this end, teachers are providing learning activities that are not only accessible for all students, they are also providing them with opportunities for creative and critical thinking. I am proud of the many days when students are excited and challenged by their learning.

That learning extends well beyond the classroom and into cocurricular learning spaces which have expanded throughout the years. It is not taken for granted that we are able to provide an environment where each student can find their place. They may be playing chess, in the drama theatre, on the soccer pitch or fencing piste, with the Conservation Club, participating in Tournament of the Minds, or as part of one of 44 music ensembles. The possibilities and opportunities are almost endless.

These opportunities – both in and out of the classroom – provide our students with more than the enrichment that is brought to their lives. They have a chance to learn new skills, build confidence and experience growth as an individual. So many lessons are learned when we step beyond our comfort zone and our students do so, willingly, every day. The admiration and respect that this development engenders is palpable, and forms part of the scaffold that supports each student to be their best.

Supporting and encouraging learning has not been our only objective though. We recognise that fostering the development of positive relationships between all members of our community is vital for learning. Our standards for relationships are very high. As a base, our expectations are built on our Policy of Mutual Respect; each person is respected and offers respect in return. And we go further. The integration of the Bystander Code of Conduct means that, hand in hand with mutual respect, lies the obligation to step up in situations where respect is lacking. These two statements are non-negotiable elements of the character of our community.

I am proud of my small contribution to these values and practices, and enormously proud of being a part of this extraordinary community.

Importantly, there are many members of our community whom I would like to thank –
Those of you who have been engaged and excited by learning;
Those who ask for help, and those who have helped others;
Those who have created joy and laughter and those who have shared in it;
Those who have worked to make PEGS an exceptional school, the best possible place it could be;
And more personally, those who have supported and encouraged me.

Nina Bilewicz
Vice Principal

Kaberring Yirramboi Ngawan, Beyond Tomorrow's Sun

Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School is proud to announce the acquisition of an exceptional artwork, *Kaberring Yirramboi Ngawan, Beyond Tomorrow's Sun*, by local Indigenous artist Simone Thomson. This important piece, secured through our Reconciliation Action Plan group, embodies the school's commitment to reconciliation and honours the history, culture, and land of the Wurundjeri people.

The work is rich in symbolism rooted in Woi-Wurrung language and traditions. 'Wurun' represents the manna gum tree, and 'djeri,' the witchetty grub—together forming the name of the Wurundjeri. Flourishing gum leaves and wattle pay homage to the ancestors and Traditional Custodians of Wurundjeri Country, where our school is located.

The focal point of the artwork, the flowing waters of Steele Creek represent the school's ongoing dedication to environmental stewardship and connection to Country. Indigenous flora and fauna along the creek celebrate native species and reflect PEGS' diverse cultural community. "U" shapes along the waterways symbolise the school community gathered in respect and unity.

Further layers of meaning include the Gathering Circles linked by tracks, representing students' educational journeys and culminating in central suns, symbolising life and the brighter future of reconciliation. Soft, undulating lines and the mountainous ranges around Naarm (Melbourne) encompass the landscape, reflecting the area's historic role in trade and ceremony. Through this artwork, PEGS celebrates a shared commitment to building a strong future with our First Nations communities.

With *Kaberring Yirramboi Ngawan, Beyond Tomorrow's Sun*, Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School not only enriches its campus with Indigenous artistry but also deepens its commitment to reconciliation and respect for Country. This artwork stands as a daily reminder of the history and resilience of the Wurundjeri people and our shared responsibility to care for the land and each other. Together, we look forward to a future grounded in understanding, respect, and unity.

Jane Henry

Art Teacher, Junior School (girls)
Reconciliation Action Plan Coordinator







New Beginnings...

As Year Three students embark on their journey at Eildon Camp, they are welcomed with a traditional smoking ceremony, a powerful symbol of new beginnings and cleansing. This special ritual not only connects students to the land but also sets the tone for the adventures and learning that lie ahead. The smell of eucalyptus fills the air, and the sense of renewal resonates deeply with both students and staff.

Springtime at Eildon Camp is a magical season, brimming with the promise of new life. Baby wombats and kangaroos can be seen venturing out with their mothers, while birds busily hatch their eggs in nests perched high in the trees. This vibrant display of nature's renewal mirrors the students' own journey, as they learn to explore and connect with their surroundings.

As 2024 winds down, the camp begins preparations for the exciting programs of 2025, each filled with fresh opportunities for growth and discovery. It's a time to reflect on the lessons that 2024 has taught us—about resilience, connection, and the power of nature. The Eildon Camp experience is more than just an outdoor adventure; it is a place where students build meaningful connections to the natural world and to each other, carrying these lessons forward into the new year. With gratitude for the year gone by, we eagerly anticipate the "new beginnings" ahead.

Paul Crouch
Camp Manager



Australian Maths Trust State Awards

The presentation of Australian Maths Trust State Awards was held at Wesley College on Monday 18 November. This awards night is to celebrate the achievements of the high performing students in the 2024 Australian Mathematics Competition. The outstanding results of the award winners have demonstrated that they have the capability to face a future full of real-world problems – complex and challenging problems that will require ingenuity, creativity and determination to solve.

Brendan Plover from Year Ten was presented the Best in School Award. It is awarded to the student with the best overall result in a school, after adjustment for each year level.

Congratulations Brendan!

Silvana Nuspan
Maths Enrichment Coordinator

It all adds up to fun

The success of our students in Mathematics is celebrated regularly. We were so excited at the achievement of our students in this year's Maths Talent Quest; with Anna Jackson, Year Four, who was best in school in the Australian Mathematics Competition and Mathematics Olympiad participant, Angela Liu, Year Six, who achieved a perfect score. The key to this success is to make Mathematics feel accessible, relevant, and enjoyable rather than abstract and intimidating.

Maths Week – It All Adds up to Fun! injected an additional fillip of liveliness to the learning. Orchestrated by Ms Choo, our Mathematics Coordinator, with a logo competition providing added interest and excitement, there were so many wonderful entries that there were multiple winners. Vihara Jinadasa, Year Six, explained that she used an image from a geographical website and substituted the globe for the nautilus to represent the Fibonacci sequence for her logo. She used the equations from the Theory of Relativity and incorporated the theme into the foreground.

Mathematics education thrives when we connect it to real-world applications and make it engaging through hands-on activities. Gamification, where mathematical concepts are embedded in puzzles, games, and interactive challenges, engages all year levels. One of the projects involved the use of Ozobots to create a Pacman-like game. Keisha, Sylvia, Madeleine and Annika, Year Four, used Coding textas to map out the board and cooperated with each other to code the Ozobots. They agreed that working together made the activity memorable.

Christine Hallman

Head of Junior School (girls)



Prime Minister's Spelling Bee

Term 3 brought excitement to our Year Three and Four students as they eagerly participated in the school round of the Australian Prime Minister's Spelling Bee. The competition buzzed with energy as our young spellers showcased their linguistic prowess.

Three of our talented students - Jaxson Ong, Kiran Reddy, and Michael Li - were impressive as they advanced to the state finals. A standout performance came from Kiran Reddy, who achieved a perfect score of 30 in an astonishing time of 1 minute and 49 seconds, spelling 30 words flawlessly.

Kiran's exceptional performance earned him a coveted spot in the National finals. Competing against the nation's best spellers, Kiran rose to the challenge with determination and skill. In a fierce competition, he scored an impressive 24 out of 30 in just two minutes, securing a remarkable 12th place finish nationally.

We extend our congratulations to all students who participated in the Spelling Bee. Their focus and determination during the competition were commendable. A special round of applause goes to our finalists, whose spelling talents shone brightly on the national stage.

The Prime Minister's Spelling Bee has proven to be an excellent platform for our students to showcase their linguistic abilities and compete at a high level. We're incredibly proud of their achievements and the positive way they represented our school.

Looking ahead, we're already excited about the 2025 competition and can't wait to see what new spelling challenges our students will conquer!

Peter Adams

Year Four Teacher, Junior School (boys)





Year Three at Eildon

Identifying and exploring rites of passage has been an ongoing theme at Junior Girls this year. Over the seven years spent together, there are many highlights and just as many 'firsts' but no other elicits as much excitement, anticipation, and nerves as the students' first overnight camp at Eildon.

Year Three camp serves as an introduction to life at camp, equipping the students with the knowledge and familiarity to be able to engage in the adventures that await in the years to come. Lucia, a student in 3B was excited to learn that the dining tables are the original tables from the very first camp, held in 1984. Her mother, Danielle, sat at those very same tables. The students not only learn about the campgrounds and the staff, they learn how to work together as a group, how to support each other and, most importantly, they learn to take time to appreciate and enjoy the here and now. All are lessons that will extend beyond their time at the school.

This year, for the first time, Year Three class groups that visit Eildon have planted their own flowering eucalyptus, with each child decorating their own tree guard with their name. Students will be able to find and visit their class tree when they return in subsequent years. The symbolism behind the growing tree and their journey at PEGS was not lost on the students. Year Three classes left Eildon with memories of an amazing first visit and excited for what is to come.

Carlee Yuill

Years 3/4 Coordinator, Junior School (girls)

‘What do you stand for?’

The school theme in review

During 2024, students have thought carefully about what it means to ‘stand for’ something and how what we decide to ‘stand for’ can reveal and define our character. Individual and collective values have come into sharper focus, students have learned about their moral compass and capacity to exert influence and elicit change through their decisions and have expanded their emotional intelligence.

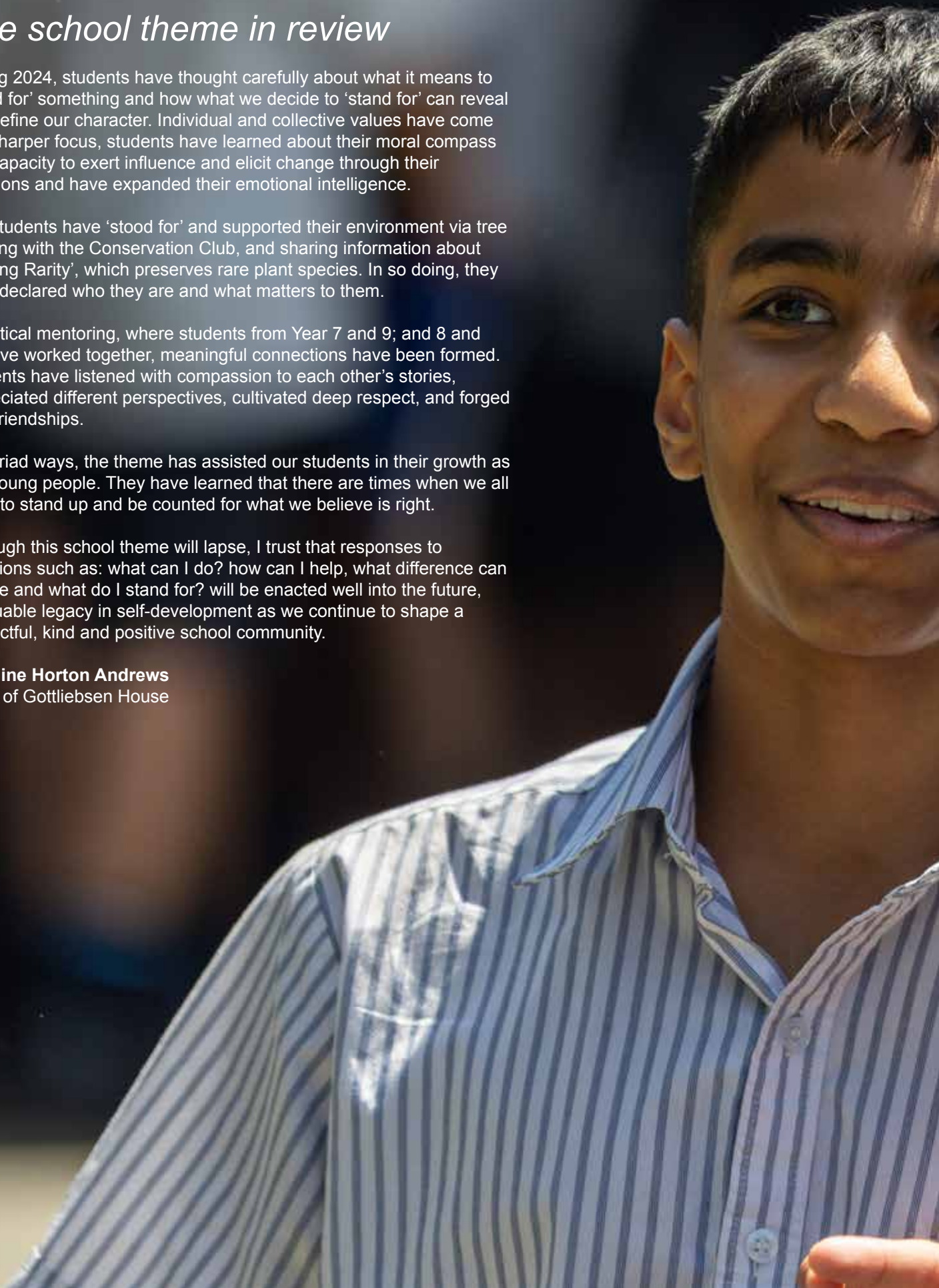
Our students have ‘stood for’ and supported their environment via tree planting with the Conservation Club, and sharing information about ‘Raising Rarity’, which preserves rare plant species. In so doing, they have declared who they are and what matters to them.

In vertical mentoring, where students from Year 7 and 9; and 8 and 10 have worked together, meaningful connections have been formed. Students have listened with compassion to each other’s stories, appreciated different perspectives, cultivated deep respect, and forged new friendships.

In myriad ways, the theme has assisted our students in their growth as fine young people. They have learned that there are times when we all need to stand up and be counted for what we believe is right.

Although this school theme will lapse, I trust that responses to questions such as: what can I do? how can I help, what difference can I make and what do I stand for? will be enacted well into the future, a valuable legacy in self-development as we continue to shape a respectful, kind and positive school community.

Caroline Horton Andrews
Head of Gottliebsen House





Celebrating mathematical excellence at Junior School

2024 has been an extraordinary year for Junior School mathematics across both campuses, as our young mathematicians soared to new heights in prestigious competitions state and nationwide.

At the Mathematical Association of Victoria's Maths Games Days, our students displayed exceptional talent, securing first place in Year Five and top-five positions in Years Three and Six.

The Australian Mathematics Competition saw outstanding performances from 217 of our Years Three to Six mathematicians, who achieved:

- 15 High Distinctions
- 60 Distinctions
- 103 Credits

In the Australasian Problem Solving Mathematical Olympiad, our students demonstrated impressive problem-solving skills over four months, earning a place in the top 10% nationally.

The Mathematics Talent Quest brought further national recognition to our school:

- 27 projects earned High Distinctions at state level
- 6 projects were selected to represent Victoria nationally, with PEGS' entries comprising 50% of all Year Two to Six submissions
- 3 projects claimed National Prizes for best project in Australia:
 - Year 2: Evelyn Temme
 - Year 3: Sarah McGinley
 - Year 4: Scarlett Le
- A further four students achieved excellence by securing 4 out of 6 possible special awards

These accomplishments showcase not only our students' mathematical prowess but also their unwavering dedication, innovative thinking, and collaborative spirit. As we celebrate these achievements, we are reminded that mathematics transcends numbers – it embodies problem-solving, persistence, and the wonder of discovery. It is our joy and privilege to nurture these exceptional young minds as they continue to explore, discover, and flourish in their mathematical journey.

Jacqueline Benson and Phuong Choo
Junior School Mathematics Coordinators





Leading with or without a badge

During Term 4, Year Five students participated in a series of workshops run by the company, UPP [Unleashing Personal Potential] which focussed on fostering leadership qualities. The day was an opportunity for students to consider what it means to be an effective leader, and to explore how they might challenge themselves, and each other, to make good choices and solve problems. Students were prompted to be flexible in their thinking as they worked collaboratively and engaged with their peers in a range of activities which, at times, took them well out of their comfort zone.

In reflecting on their experiences, students discussed how they had discovered things about themselves, and their peer group, and Aviana summed up her experience:

True leaders do not need a badge or a designated position to lead. They listen, connect, encourage, and much more. Things as simple as cheering on a teammate or providing a reassuring word can mean such a lot. There are different types of leaders, but that doesn't mean they are any less special. During the incursion, I learnt that listening to everyone is equally, if not even more, important than sharing your own ideas. When you actively listen to someone, they may gain self-confidence, and can grow and become happier and stronger. Being a true leader is about how you make people feel and think, and how you can help them grow.
Aviana Tsui (Year 5)

Julie Neylon
Deputy Head of Junior School (girls)



What do the children stand for?

Throughout the year, the kindergarten embraced the school theme of *What do you stand for?* with remarkable enthusiasm and insight. Accompanied by much thought and planning, our inquiry projects invited engagement and participation of this idea through the lens of play, dialogue and research.

With storytelling and the deep exploration of characters as the catalyst of Cottage 49's inquiry project, the children placed emphasis and importance on the attributes and being a good friend and/or person. In Cottage 51, coming together to create a 'Cottage 51 flag' highlighted the passion of community as a collective value amongst the children. Building a relationship and connection to land where the children have cared deeply for the plants and animals called attention to custodianship and citizenship as shared respected principles of Cottage 53. Although each cottage's research unearthed differing values for each community of children, there were also strong common underlying threads of friendship, team, kindness and respect.

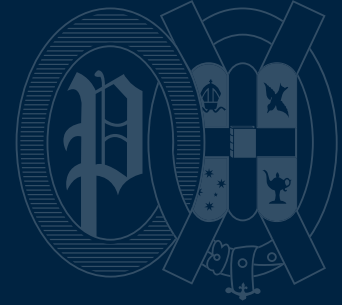
The school theme empowered the children to express and demonstrate their thoughts and values, as well as engage in deep, complex learning. As the children transition from kindergarten to primary school, the embedded learning of standing for positive values will undoubtedly guide them in their future journeys, fostering a sense of purpose and connection that will last a lifetime.

Lauren Olcorn
Director of Kindergarten





Tournament of Minds Honours



On Thursday 31 October the Year Nine Tournament of Minds team (Lakithi Ranawaka Arachchi, Mahi Kumar, Saheli Premathilaka, Kisali Punchiwedikkara, Ashley Liu, Senadi Akmeemana Peduruge, and Abigail Hammond) travelled to Sydney to compete in the International Finals.

Tournament of Minds is an academic competition in which students respond to a prompt by creating a dramatic performance. Our prompt for the Finals was to take the start of a short story and transform it, using dramatic irony and a surprising plot twist.

During three hours of preparation time, we split into groups for prop-making and script writing, and then worked as one group to make the whole performance come together. Each discipline of TOM (The Arts, Language Literature, STEM, and Social Sciences) asks competitors to think creatively, but this was especially present in the Language Literature theme.

Although the morning was tense, we stayed calm and worked together to create something of which we were incredibly proud, and were rewarded by an afternoon watching some amazing productions. It was a surreal experience to be sitting in the massive UNSW auditorium and hear the announcers call out "First Honours to Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School for Secondary Language Literature". All of our hard work certainly paid off!

We would not have been able to do this without unwavering support from PEGS; Ms Dullard and Mrs Bilewicz made the trip possible and Ms Bentley and Ms Wang spent their weekend making our time in Sydney a truly amazing experience.

Lakithi Ranawaka Arachchi
Year Nine





Bike Education

This term, our Year Five students engaged in an enriching Bike Education program, fostering essential skills and knowledge for safe cycling. The excitement was evident as the bikes arrived, with students eagerly observing comprehensive safety demonstrations led by skilled instructors. These sessions introduced them to the critical safety features and functions of their bicycles, emphasising the importance of vigilance and responsible riding. Each student performed detailed safety checks on their bikes and helmets, ensuring all equipment met safety standards before participating in skill-building exercises. Through a range of structured activities, the boys practised precision, control, and safe riding techniques, reinforcing their awareness of road safety.

The Bike Education program has been an invaluable experience for our Year Five cohort, equipping them with the foundational skills and confidence to navigate cycling safely in various environments. We are proud of the enthusiasm and commitment shown by our students, who are now well-prepared to approach cycling with a strong sense of responsibility and safety.

LisaMarie Fiorenza
Year Five Teacher, Junior School (boys)







Learning, together

If you ask McNab House students to tell you about their favourite subjects, you will probably hear answers as varied and wonderful as the students themselves. The number who love the act of creation in Music or Art will be matched by those who love the physicality of PE; as many will tell you about the rewards of problem-solving in Mathematics as will tell you about the quiet joys of reading in English.

If you ask them more broadly about the favourite things they've done at school this year, you will probably hear even more variety. Some will nominate subjects, but many will tell you about sport; some will note the Chess Club; some will mention the Dance Company; some will say Theatre Sports; some will tell you about their House Talent Quest act; some will tell you about the Generations in Jazz Festival; some will say victory in the Tournament of Minds.

All of these activities are about learning. Each one helps our students to become more courageous, creative, curious, ethical, persistent, reflective and strategic, and therefore better thinkers and learners.

And each of these activities helps our students to feel more connected – to feel that they belong. In some cases friendships predate the activities, but in a great many cases they arise precisely because of them: it is often by learning together that friendships are born. This connectedness is an explicit aim, and a result, of our learning program.

We stand for learning, in the class and beyond, together.

Anthony Simmons
Head of McNab House

State Hockey Champions

On 12 August, Junior School (boys) competed in the Regional Hockey Championships at Footscray Hockey Club. Comprised of eight talented Year Five and Six students, the team played in the 'Hockey 7's' format on a modified field. The squad consisted of Tom Brown (State representative), Hamish Thomson, Jake Larmer, Zachary Tam, James Haigh, Emmett Cashman, Angus Brewster and Xavier Brunckhorst.

Our team dominated from the outset: their first match against Yarraville West ending in an 8-0 win. With each game, the boys gained confidence, and they followed up with a 6-0 victory over Arnold Creek to reach the finals. Facing tough opponents, Manifold Heights, they went into half-time with a 2-0 lead and won 5-0, becoming regional champions and earning a spot in the State Championships.

In the lead up to the State Championships, the boys trained to build continuity and confidence. On 12 September, they faced the best hockey teams in Victoria, competing against eight schools. In the last pool game, our team had to win by more than 15 goals to advance. Rising to the challenge, they defeated Shepparton Christian College 21-2. The School Sport Victoria coordinator told our students he had never seen a hockey score that high in his time in the role.

In the final against Hamilton and Alexandra College, our team started strongly with a 2-0 lead at half-time but the second half was tougher. Despite this, the boys were victorious, with a 4-3 win to take out the State Championship.

Callum Glassford

Sports Coordinator, Junior School (boys)





9ers Guest Speaker - Abdi Aden

For the final 9ers session, Mr Scott organised for Somali refugee, Abdi Aden, to speak to the students about his amazing journey from the war-torn city of Mogadishu to the shores of Australia.

Abdi spoke about how as a 15-year-old he had to flee his home when civil war hit and his family was torn apart. What was once a flourishing and beautiful country where he had enjoyed growing up crumbled before his eyes.

His story of resilience took us through both heart-breaking and heart-warming moments as he crossed the border into a Kenyan refugee camp. Alone and unable to find any family, Abdi relied on the kindness of strangers to help him eventually find his way to Romania and then on to Germany before arriving in Melbourne as a 16-year-old.

With no English, no family or friends, no money and no home, Abdi probably had every right to give in to a darker side of life, however, recognising that he had an opportunity to help other people in a similar situation, he went on to complete his secondary education and then tertiary studies in youth work to give back and inspire other young people to never give in or give up, even when the world seems like it is conspiring against them.

Abdi implored our Year Nine students to take the opportunities presented to them and find courage and strength in difficult moments and be thankful for what they have.

Gavin Tippet

Year Nine Coordinator, Gottliebsen House

The Commonwealth at 75

In the atmospheric Cloisters of Westminster Abbey, leaders from across the Commonwealth gathered for the launch of *The Commonwealth at 75*, a commemorative publication celebrating the Commonwealth's rich history, diversity, and future vision. As dusk settled over the historic venue on October 9, guests mingled among the stone arches, surrounded by centuries of history, to celebrate the book that marks the 75th anniversary of the Commonwealth of Nations.

Amid speeches by prominent figures, including Canon Anthony Ball of Westminster Abbey and former Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General Ransford Smith, attendees enjoyed a specially commissioned musical performance by The Commonwealth Resounds. The event, compered by royal correspondent Russell Myers, highlighted the Commonwealth's shared values and future potential, while dignitaries, High Commissioners, and other guests applauded the contribution of schools, communities, and organisations that reflect shared values.

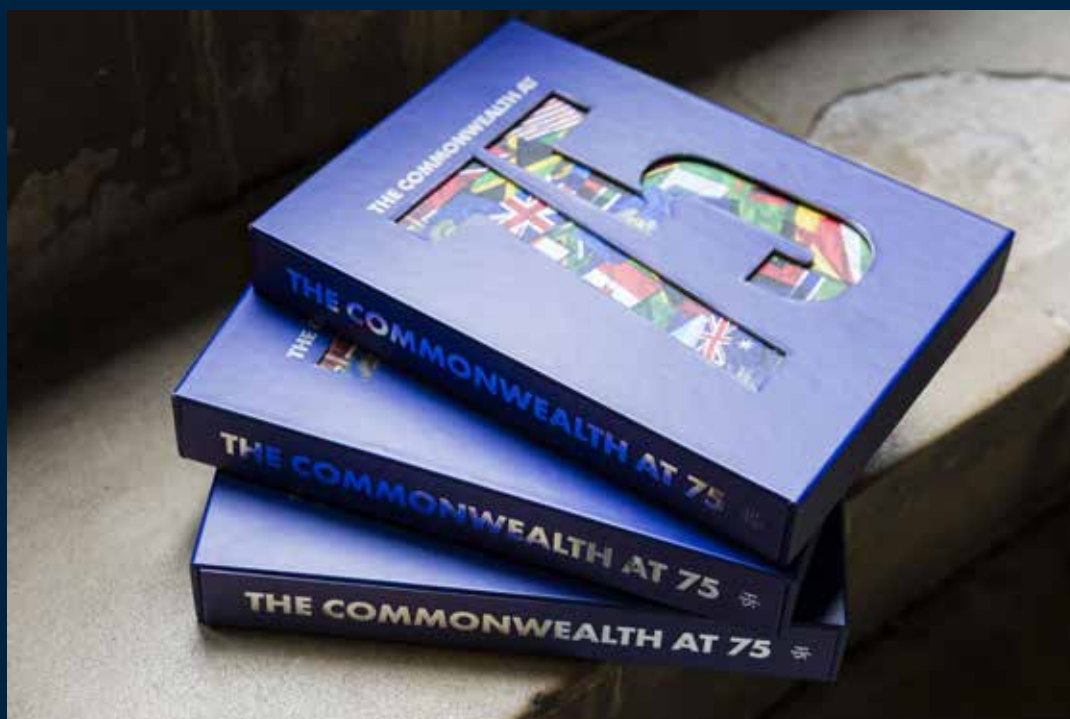
PEGS was honoured to be one of the selected schools featured in *The Commonwealth at 75*. Recognised for its high standard of teaching, its commitment to a broad education, and its significant community focus, PEGS exemplifies the Commonwealth's educational ideals. St James's House, the publisher of *The Commonwealth at 75*, noted PEGS' commitment to educational excellence and its contribution to global communities.

The school's emphasis on developing collective efficacy—where educators and students work together to achieve shared goals—embodies its dedication to providing a world-class, well-rounded education that impacts both individual students and society as a whole. This holistic approach to education aligns with the Commonwealth's vision for the future, which values education as a cornerstone of societal improvement.

The publication, a collaborative venture by St James's House and The History of Parliament Trust, includes stories from various sectors within the Commonwealth that demonstrate forward-thinking and innovation in areas such as education. PEGS was selected as a "benchmark of best practice" for its leadership and its inspiring learning environment, both of which contribute to the Commonwealth's global vision for education.

As PEGS continues to foster thinking and learning, community engagement, and wellbeing, the school was pleased to be part of an event that celebrated the potential of education to uplift communities and drive positive change worldwide.

Kate Dullard





Old and new tricks

This is the 40th edition of *Altior et Sapientior*. During ten years we have recorded the relocation of Middle School (girls) to Keilor East; Junior School (girls) going solo at Moonee Ponds campus; expansion at Essendon campus including an award-winning Music House extension; One School Days, with one celebration in the new Gym at Keilor East; growth and innovation in every Section, and even remote learning.

Our students' contributions to this publication have reflected on many aspects of growth and their enthusiasm for challenge. Repeatedly we read of a student thrust 'out of their comfort zone' into unfamiliar territory where they have thrived.

Decisions to test boundaries calls to mind a classic image from *The Far Side*, (Gary Larsen, 1992): A worried hound balances on a unicycle high above the circus ring – High above the hushed crowd, Rex tried to remain focused. Still he couldn't shake one nagging thought: He was an old dog and this was a new trick. As a fellow 'old dog' I appreciate the hound's reluctance but I rejoice in many new tricks witnessed during my 36 years at PEGS and celebrate our students' willing leaps into the unknown.

I trust you enjoy the challenges our students have shared as much as I do. My sincere thanks to our Principal, Kate Dullard, Vice Principal, Nina Bilewicz and designer, Jennifer Adams. It has been a delight to assist them to bring glimpses of our school to you in *Altior et Sapientior* for the past decade.

Helen Dapiran
Coordinator of Publications

Wild action!

At the beginning of Term 4, Year Seven classes were lucky to attend an incursion from the Wild Action Zoo. We all had the opportunity to learn about some cool animals and some students even got to hold them!

A zookeeper started by telling us about various fauna and their traits. The creatures shown to us were all really interesting. Some of these animals included the spiny leaf insect, the shingleback lizard (whose tail has adapted to look like its head to confuse predators), the rock python, the lace monitor, the mopoke owl, the starfish, the Australian green tree frog, the flying fox, a juvenile freshwater crocodile and even a wallaby joey.

Toby McIntosh and Runitha Amaratunga
Gottliebsen House

A highlight of the experience was exploring the physical characteristics of the animals; the instructor allowed us to touch and feel their skin, fur, scales, and feathers while describing each adaptation and its purpose. This hands-on approach made the learning deeply impactful. Beyond sharing her expertise, she quizzed us on both the newly introduced information and our recent class studies, enhancing our engagement and comprehension.

The live encounters and examples solidified our understanding and helped us apply our learning to future tasks. In addition to its educational value, the program provided an incredibly fun and refreshing break from our usual schedule. It created memorable moments for all the Year Sevens, giving us a new perspective on biodiversity and related topics.

Elena Talevski
McNab House



Pig the Pug for Preps

Our class of fifteen Year Nine students was tasked with creating a *Pig the Pug* performance to present to Prep students at our Essendon and Moonee Ponds campuses. There are many talented people in my class and everyone contributed to making the fun and silly story that would surround this mischievous pug. I volunteered to take the role of Director. We went through the *Pig the Pug* picture books, and over the holidays each of us wrote short scripts based on the events. Then we went through and revised the script, reordering scenes and editing lines so they would make sense to our 5-6 year old audience, and worked on writing out the stagecraft.

The biggest challenge of all, however, was the time factor. After the scripting stage was completed we had less than two weeks to learn lines, rehearse and then perform. This was also coupled with the fact that five people were on camp during the first week of rehearsals! Of course, everyone stepped up to the task and learned their lines quickly, as well as their cues. We all helped to create the stagecraft, props and costumes that made this show come alive, and when performance day came, the Preps loved it! What we gained from this experience was working with like-minded people, and grasping the type of humour and language that young kids would find funny.

Jasmine Trieu

Year Nine Drama student

City Experience

Every year, Year Eight girls have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the city during the annual City Experience excursion. For weeks beforehand, we planned every part of our trip in small groups, from the moment we got off the bus to when we met back at Fed Square. During the planning, we came up with what activities we would be doing and how we would travel between the locations using trams and walking. We also had to figure out how long each activity would take and plot our travel and destinations on a map.

Finally, on Friday 26 October, it was our turn to go to the city. We arrived at Fed Square and, after an unintentional walk in the rain, our group made it to the NGV International. Throughout the day we did activities such as an exhibition at ACMI, lunch at Melbourne Central and bowling to finish off the day. We walked and rode the trams to our many destinations, which was a first-time experience for many of us in my group.

Although there were some struggles during the day, such as improvising when our first destination was closed, the day went very well. We all had a lot of fun figuring out things that were new, such as the trams, and experiencing different activities that the CBD has to offer.

Georgia Armstrong

Year Eight

Vertical mentoring

Earlier this year, the Year Eight cohort took part in a new initiative. Running mainly during homeroom in Term 3, this program allowed us to work alongside Year Ten students, building connections and learning from each other.

I remember the first session when my homeroom teacher handed out a booklet titled 'Vertical Mentoring'. I was excited but also unsure about what to expect. When the Year Tens arrived for our first session, I was slightly nervous, however, quickly, they made me feel at ease, and before long, we were chatting and working together.

Over the next few weeks, we discussed various activities in our booklets and had discussions on topics ranging from study tips to exam preparation. The Year Tens were always supportive, offering practical suggestions and sharing their own experiences.

By the end of the program, I had implemented many of the strategies they had shared. One Year Ten mentor shared how he broke large tasks into smaller, more manageable ones, which inspired me to do the same. It made a huge difference in my study habits, and I noticed a real improvement in my efficiency.

Overall, Vertical Mentoring was a very rewarding experience, and I'm looking forward to more opportunities like this in the future.

Andrew Tan

Year Eight

Indigenous dance incursion

Dance is a means of honouring and acknowledging our country and the people who have lived here for thousands of years. Historically, dance is used to communicate stories and messages about the land, animals and ancestral spirits.

Year Four students enthusiastically participated in an Indigenous Hip Hop Dance Workshop which complemented their unit on Dance Styles and Cultures in Term 4. Sermsah Bin Laad, our guest artist, engaged students in a journey of our country's past while connecting it with the spirit world through the medium of dance. Sermsah's name in the Indigenous community is synonymous with theatre, dance and choreography. Above his many artistic achievements, Sermsah values his heritage and strives to empower cultural and spiritual development through the Arts, inspiring students to be warriors of their own lives.

During the workshop students moved expressively to convey a special narrative and displayed creativity and strength as they combined the movements of Australian animals with hip hop dance. Arielle Gangemi, described how Sermsah taught the students to respect nature by doing movements with their hands across the ground. She enjoyed leading half of the girls dance in a battle against Sermsah who led the others in the boys' dance. The students learned to dance like Bunjil the wedge tailed eagle by flapping their arms and pointing above their heads to resemble him flying over their heads.

It was a wonderful opportunity for our students to explore the culture of our people, using movement to communicate their connection to Country and Spirit.

Terri O'Donnell
Dance/Drama Teacher

Arielle Gangemi
Year Four student





Theatre Sports comes to PEGS

This year, for the first time, we sent two teams to the Impro Melbourne TheatreSports Schools Challenge, competing against schools from across the state in structured improvisation tasks. (Think 'Whose Line Is It Anyway?' and 'Thank God You're Here'.)

Our Intermediate team ('How to Train Your Drama') participated beautifully and held their own against some very stiff competition. Another team took out the top spot, but our crew had an absolute ball, throwing out scenes that involved everything from breakdancing to Masterchef.

Big success came to our Senior team ('The In-PEGs-ibles'), who tied for second place, only one point from the first place winners. This is an exceptional achievement for a team competing for the very first time. All of this is made even more exceptional by the fact that our TheatreSports Club is in its first year, and these results are a testament to the commitment and enthusiasm shown by our young people and Mr Tom Ruttkay, who has championed the project.

Emily Atkins

Middle School Drama Coordinator



Debating wrap-up



The school has a historic and proud tradition of students' engagement in debating and public speaking. This year's debating season culminated in students competing in the finals as well as earning recognition at the prestigious 'Swannie Awards'.

Larkin Centre

Year Twelve students in A Grade continued to demonstrate their exceptional critical thinking skills as the debating season transitioned from prepared to secret topics. This required teams to collaborate effectively, constructing compelling arguments under time pressure in an increasingly competitive environment. While each of the teams narrowly missed securing a spot in the finals, they still demonstrated a remarkable effort and an impressive performance.

This year, the finals beckoned for the Year Eleven students in B Grade. The team consisting of Crystal Du, Simon Roseman, Arushi Davar, Madeline Grant and Aaron Goyal competed in several additional gruelling rounds, traveling across the city each week to face increasingly formidable opponents. Their dedication, resolve, and teamwork carried them all the way to the semifinals – a testament to their effort and their ability to rise to every challenge with determination and skill.

Middle School

Debating for McNab and Gottlieb House students has been a whirlwind of learning opportunities and great successes. Our Year Nine and Ten debaters competed in five rounds of competition at St Bernard's College, testing their quick-thinking and oratory skills on topics such as the cost benefits of the suburban rail loop, the ethics of password sharing for streaming services and the viability of online political elections.

Two Year Nine teams progressed to the statewide finals. Congratulations to Alice Pu, Kathleen Ma, Olivia Lee, and Lucy De Zoete for making the Playoff Final. Special congratulations to Abigail Hammond, Ashley Liu, Lakithi Ranawaka Arachchi, Senadi Akmeemana Peduruge and Saheli Premathilaka who's winning streak took them all the way to the semifinals and a finish in the top eight teams in Victoria.

In addition, Year Seven and Eight teams participated in the Junior Secondary debating program. These students attended training sessions run by debating coaches and experienced the adrenaline rush of public speaking competitively for the first time.

Swannie awards

Our year concluded with the annual 'Swannie Awards', which recognise the speaker in each region and grade who has the highest average speaker score. Our school celebrated a clean sweep for the Essendon region, with awards going to Ella Nunan (Year Twelve), Sejal Agarwal (Year Eleven), Harry Atchison (Year Ten) and Kathleen Ma (Year Nine). Kathleen was also awarded the 'Swannie' for best speaker in the state for D Grade. We congratulate them all on this outstanding accomplishment.

Thomas Langan

Debating Coordinator, Larkin Centre

Hannah Bentley

Debating Coordinator, McNab House



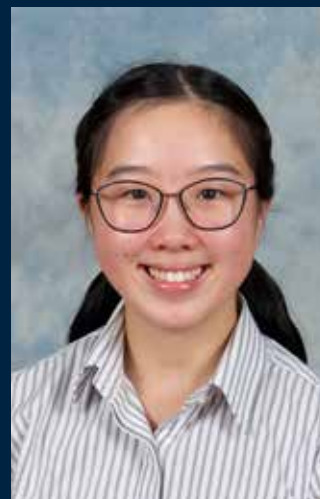
Ella Nunan (Year Twelve)



Sejal Agarwal (Year Eleven)



Harry Atchison (Year Ten)



Kathleen Ma (Year Nine)

Snowsports Champion

At the Victorian Interschools Snowsports Championships held at Mt Buller in August, Jake Anderson (Year Eight) produced some magic on his snowboard.

Jake competed in all three snowboard events in his Division Three age group, achieving some fabulous results:

Snowboard Slopestyle – First (State Champion)

Snowboard Cross - Third

Snowboard Giant Slalom – Seventh.

Jake's State title in Division 3 Snowboard Slopestyle (the event where competitors speed down the mountain, fly off a super steep jump and do crazy tricks in the air), saw him achieve back-to-back State titles for 2023 for 2024.

Last year, the National championships were cancelled due to poor conditions, so it had been a long time coming for Jake when he competed against Australia's best on the national stage at Perisher in September 2024. Jake gave his all at the Nationals and was placed third in the Slopestyle event and fifth in Snowboard Cross. Well done Jake!

Ben Bailey
Director of Sport





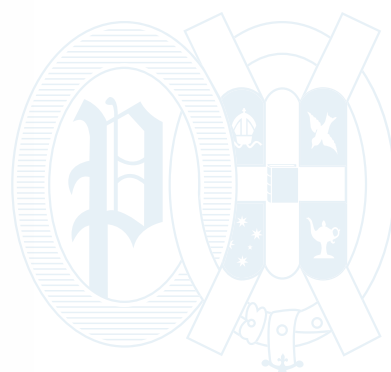
Parkrun

Since its introduction to the sports program in 2019, parkrun has wormed its way into the affections of students and families alike. As far as school sports go, parkrun is unique. Students are encouraged to bring along their family members to run alongside them. This is mostly friendly but has been known to get competitive!

For those unfamiliar with parkrun, it is a community event involving a 5 km course that participants of all ages and abilities can run, jog or walk. It takes place every Saturday morning in locations all around the world and it is entirely managed by volunteers. The PEGS students involved in parkrun meet at the Maribyrnong River, prepared for sunshine or rain.

Through our participation in parkrun at Maribyrnong, the PEGS community has become a part of the local community. The social interactions between students, teachers, parents and general members of the community have helped to foster a sense of connection. The vibe at parkrun is overwhelmingly positive. The value of being outdoors amongst like-minded individuals is not lost on us. Many students and families have chosen to continue turning up to parkrun beyond the compulsory Saturdays, either to run or in a volunteering capacity. We leave feeling lighter, proud of our personal achievements and with a sense of community and social connection.

Rhianna Higgins
McNab House Teacher





Arts Sustainability

Responding to global concerns about increasing amounts of plastic pollution, the PEGS Performing Arts department set targets this year to minimise the use of plastic to create the Musical Production.

The main challenge was sourcing the amount of jewellery required to deliver the grand opening scenes of *Anastasia: the Musical*, where the Russian royal family would waltz around in gross displays of opulence and excess. We needed diamond tiaras, strings of pearls, bracelets, earrings, rings and officer's medals.

A straightforward solution would have been to shop at any local costume or discount store, but that would have meant supporting the manufacture of hundreds of small shining plastic beads that would end up who-knows-where one day.

Instead, we remained committed to our target, and after trials and experimentation with different paints, fabrics and threads, the design team came up with ways to attach light-catching, recyclable, aluminium foil to the costumes, which would give the illusion of expensive jewellery from a distance.

Under the guidance of talented Costume Coordinator Mrs Helen Roccuzzo, who also works as a Learning Assistant at the school, students hand-rolled hundreds of different shaped aluminium beads to adorn the dresses, hats, and jackets featured in the scene. Additional accessories were up-cycled from the school's existing collection or sourced second-hand, ensuring no new plastic items were purchased for the show.

The project delivered positive results, and provided the school's Performing Arts participants with a sustainable approach to material choices - one which they can apply in future creative endeavours.

Jessica Gorlin
Director of Performing Arts





Term Four final concerts

As the year drew to a close, music students delighted audiences in a series of concerts showcasing their resilience and dedication. These performances included chamber ensembles, string orchestras, and brass and percussion players, celebrating each musician's progress.

The String Concert was dedicated to chamber ensembles, demonstrating the interplay required between each member of the group, allowing musicians to connect closely with the audience through a wide variety of styles. The concert ended with two pieces from the Middle School String Orchestra which highlighted the joy of collective music-making.

The solo piano concert provided an enchanting mix of classical and contemporary pieces, showcasing each pianist's achievements and unique style.

Suzuki method students shone in two distinct concerts: an online piano recital and the annual Graduation Concert. The online concert enabled a large number of students to perform for their peers and families in a more relaxed environment. The end of year Graduation Concert marked each student's achievements, celebrating the Suzuki philosophy that emphasises gradual skill-building and a love of music.

Finally, the Junior Brass and Percussion Concert brought a bold, rhythmic finale to the season. These young musicians filled the room with warm brass sounds and energetic percussion, creating a vibrant atmosphere.

These concerts reflected the joy and growth of our young musicians, each performance reminding us of the transformative power of music. Together, these various concerts celebrated skill, community, and the love of music.

Amanda Rowarth
Director of Music





A Season of Musical Celebration and Tradition

The School wrapped up its musical year with two enchanting performances that highlighted both emerging talent and cherished traditions. The Junior Celebration Concert, held on 26 November, gave proud parents and friends a wonderful display of our youngest musicians' progress. As these budding performers took to the stage, their year of dedication and growth was evident in every note, creating a perfect prelude to the Christmas and holiday season.

Even more momentous was this year's Carol Service at the majestic St Paul's Cathedral, marking a remarkable 60-year milestone since its inception. The occasion was elevated by the presence of alumni choristers, who joined current students to fill the cathedral's soaring vault with song. Adding to the evening's significance was a distinguished audience including former Directors of Music and Conductors – Mary Armour, Barbara Chalmer, Jill Francis, Peter Chaplin and Stuart Shearman – alongside past Principal Tony Larkin and past choristers from the 1960s and 1970s.



Student leaders inducted

Leadership is often thankless (so, don't do it for the kudos). Leadership can be lonely (so, don't do it to be popular). Leadership requires you to put yourself out there (so, don't think you can sit back and criticise others). Leadership is hard work (so, don't think it will be easy).

These are some of the messages delivered in leadership guru Dr Brenda Holt's keynote address to our recently-inducted 2025 Student Leaders at the school's inaugural Leadership Day held at the Larkin Centre

Students spent the day mingling and brainstorming ideas for the upcoming Leadership Camp (Dec 3-5) where they will be tasked with leading activities, participating in team-building exercises and receiving training about leadership logistics and school protocols. Most exciting for most, though, is the opportunity to return to Eildon where so many great school memories have been formed.

Lee Crossley

Student Leadership Coordinator, Larkin Centre



Student Executive 2025

School Captains

Community Service and Activism Captain

Music Captains

Performing Arts and Speaking Captain

Sports Captains

Student Learning Captain

Student Wellbeing Captain

Mia Dellas

Aaron Goyal

Mimi Pascal

Greta Tatham-Thompson

Zara Kemal-Yates

Lloyd Birch

Kate Hannan

Simon Roseman

Alan Huynh

Lachlan Toussaint

Student Leaders 2025

Big Blue Bonanza Leader

Community Service Leader

Dance Leader

Debating Leader

Drama Leader

Environment Leader

Feminist Collective Leader

Music Leaders

Arshina Ahsan

Aayan Asif

Alanah Le

Crystal Du

Alessia Mancarella

Madeline Grant

Haerin Park

Mia Cook

Jae Man

Jason Tran

Queenia Xue

Noah Irwin

Cameron Thompson

Sophia Wang

PEGSequal Leader

PEGSTV Leader

Public Speaking Leader

Reconciliation Action Plan Leader

Social Justice Leader

Sports Leader: Badminton Captain

Sports Leader: Basketball Captain

Sports Leader: Cricket Captain

Sports Leader: Swimming Captain

Sports Leader: Swimming Captain

Sports Leader: Table Tennis Captain

Sports Leader: Tennis Captain

Sports Leader: Tennis Captain

Sports Leader: Touch Football Captain

Sports Leader: Triathlon Captain

Sports Leader: Triathlon Captain

Sports Leader: Volleyball Captain

Sports Leader: Volleyball Captain

Student Learning Leader

Isabella Palermo

Luca Kraljevski

Arushi Davar

Steven Siafalis-Tsiatsios

Nathaniel Pitliangas

Ashlee Cox

Cooper Duff-Tytler

Hamish Pearce

Charlotte Ristig

Lloyd Birch

Steven Siafalis-Tsiatsios

Aaron Goyal

Jasmine Mathew

Jasmine Nguyen

Lara Wynn

Oscar Steward

Shaun Wong

Chelsea Pesavento

Jemima Daniell-Edwards

Janice Leung

Aidan Truong

Jasmine Cen

Leo Fan

Calvin Hua

Taylan Kurban

Jisviga Sureshkumar

Jessica Zhu

Ella de Zoete

Amelia Gray

Lara Wynn



School Awards

School Awards recognise leadership, dedication and excellence and honour the contribution made by students to the life of the school.

Principal's Award

The Principal's Award is the highest category of school awards. It honours an ongoing, outstanding and broad contribution to the school by a graduating student who has set the highest standards of commitment to the academic and cocurricular life of the school.

In 2024 fifteen students are recipients of the Principal's Award. We commend and thank these graduating students for their lengthy and exceptional contribution to the school.

Vansh Agarwal	Domenico Gallicchio
Ken Goh	Benjamin Gray
Amy Hawking	Noah John
Marsianna Mastrantuono	Juliette McCarthy
Ella Nunan	Ruby Parkin
Michael Sena	Lillian Sun
James Tran	Ivy Zhang
Louisa Zhu	

School Colours

Full Colours holders are the leaders within the school community and, through their continued commitment, set a fine example for younger students as well as enjoying the personal rewards to be had from a school experience which establishes a balance between studies and wider interests.

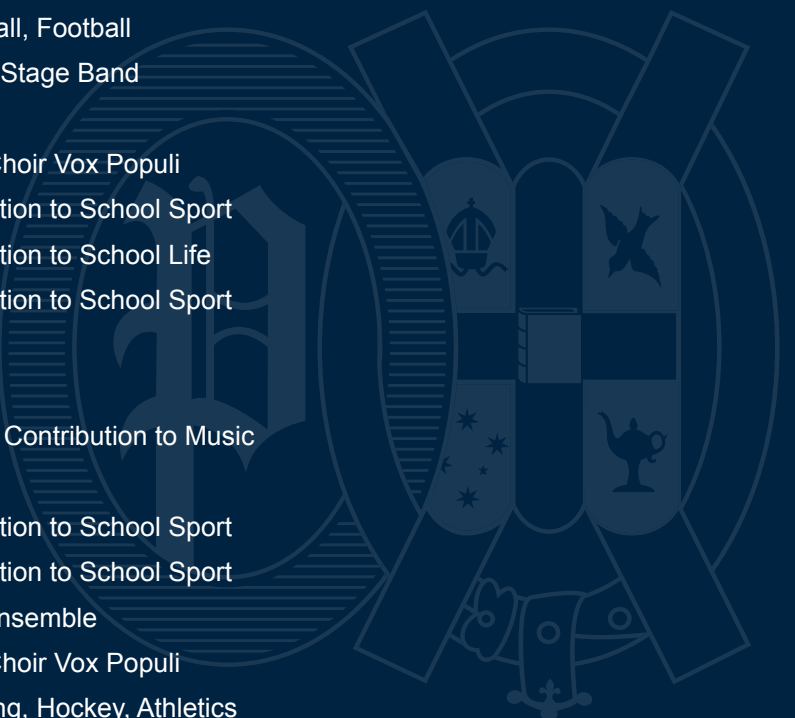
We congratulate the following students who have been awarded Full Colours in 2024 and thank them for their valuable contribution:

Year 12

Samuel Baker	Social Justice
Conner Bassett	Football
Audrey Box	Triathlon, Netball
Abbi Burns	Hockey
Camryn Bux	Contribution to School Sport
Isabella Cvetkovski	Soccer
Jake Daglis	Football
Keira Daquino	Swimming
Mia Daskalovska	Contribution to School Sport
Nicole De Silva	Senior Choir Vox Populi
Quinn Digney	Soccer
Jason Fabiano	Contribution to School Sport
Christian Failla	Contribution to School Life
Olivia Falzon	Soccer
Elena Filiopoulos	Touch Football
William Forsythe	Contribution to School Sport
Domenico Gallicchio	Stage Band
Sienna Gauci	Hockey, Community Leadership



Daniel Golding	Basketball
Benjamin Gray	Basketball Referee
James Hately	Drama
Amy Hawking	Stage Band, Academic
An Huynh	Community Leadership
Katie Iliopoulos	Soccer
Noah John	Contribution to Music
Lucas Jurgec	Soccer
Tanuli Kannangara	Community Leadership
Simran Kaur	Contribution to School Life
Audrey Kerlin	Soccer
Thomas Legudi	Football
Charlie Louros	Tennis
Sarah Macphee	Public Speaking
Cara Manning	Netball
James Martin	Cricket
Marsianna Mastrantuono	Contribution to School Life
Ania Mathew	Tennis
George Matsoukas	Symphony Orchestra
Juliette McCarthy	Contribution to School Life
Chloe Mott	Contribution to School Sport
Paul Moustakas	Swimming
Eliza Murphy	Contribution to School Life
Oliver Neo	Contribution to School Life
Charlotte Nguyen	Symphony Orchestra, Community Leadership
Jacob Nimmo	Contribution to School Sport
Noah Nimorakiotakis	Contribution to School Sport
Ella Nunan	Triathlon, Public Speaking
Maddison Papadatos	Senior Choir Vox Populi
Gus Papal	Basketball, Football
Ruby Parkin	Hockey, Stage Band
Alannah Perryman	Softball
Loc Pham	Senior Choir Vox Populi
Jay Pitcher	Contribution to School Sport
Molly Rawson	Contribution to School Life
Oscar Richards	Contribution to School Sport
Kalan Roach	Football
James Sarris	Triathlon
Michael Sena	Musical, Contribution to Music
Isabella Sloan	Musical
Mingjun Song	Contribution to School Sport
William Sophocli	Contribution to School Sport
Arabella Stevens	Guitar Ensemble
Ella Stevens	Senior Choir Vox Populi
Lachlan Steward	Swimming, Hockey, Athletics



Lillian Sun	Athletics
Lila Teng	Contribution to School Life
Dylan Tran	Music Technology Ensemble, Social Justice
Jadelyn Tran	Swimming
James Tran	Volleyball, Stage Band, Drama
Tiara Tubman	Senior Choir Vox Populi, Symphony Orchestra
Luke Tutus	Football
Eliza Vargiu	Soccer
Emily Vassiliadis	Soccer
Jasmine Walker-Johnson	Basketball
Hunter West	Contribution to School Sport
Joshua Whitfield	Football
Malindu Wickramanayake	Public Speaking
Thisal Wijekoon	Social Justice
Rachel Wooden	Touch Football
Cara Zammit	Contribution to School Life
Ivy Zhang	Public Speaking
Lisa Zhang	Symphony Orchestra, Musical
Louisa Zhu	Senior Choir Vox Populi

Year 11

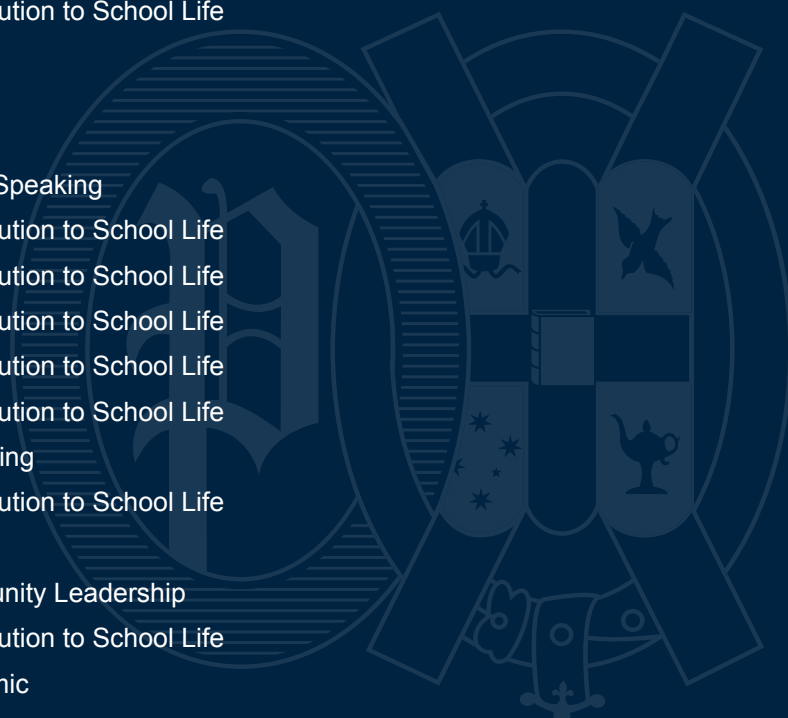
Ethan Arkinstall	Hockey
Lloyd Birch	Swimming
Priyanka Bora	Community Leadership
Jasmine Cen	Community Leadership, Academic
Alexander Cirone	Academic
Liam Clark	Fencing
Mia Cook	Contribution to Music, Drama
Ashlee Cox	Badminton
Jemima Daniell-Edwards	Sport, Community Leadership
Ella De Zoete	Sport
Zain Deen	Athletics
Cooper Duff-Tytler	Basketball, Football
Aaron Goyal	Academic, Community Leadership
Amelia Gray	Basketball
Calvin Hua	Community Leadership
Alan Huynh	Musical, Academic
Elizabeth Joseph	Badminton
Prisha Kandadi	Community Leadership
Zara Kemal-Yates	Hockey
Daniel Kostandinov	Hockey
Taylan Kurban	Academic



Angus Le	Hockey
Prabhavi Liyanage	Community Leadership
Sophia Man	Music
Alessia Mancarella	Drama, Dance
Bella Milicevic	Community Leadership
Bao Nguyen	Badminton
Jasmine Nguyen	Touch Football
Jennifer Nguyen	Community Leadership
Tony Nguyen	Badminton
Eason Pains	Academic
Mimi Pascal	Musical, Dance, Music
Hamish Pearce	Football
Chelsea Pesavento	Contribution to School Life
Kartikein Pillai	Community Leadership
Charlotte Ristig	Sport
Stevie Siafalis-Tsiatsios	Musical, Senior Choir Vox Populi
Madison (Madi) Spring-Brown	Football
Aleyna Tamer	Community Leadership
Greta Tatham-Thompson	Drama
Cameron Thompson	Contribution to Music, Musical
Lachlan Toussaint	Hockey
Jason Tran	Musical
Sophia Wang	Musical
Emi Wong	Academic
Lara Wynn	Sport, Community Leadership
Queena Xue	Contribution to Music, Musical
Lily Yang	Community Leadership
Jessica Zhu	Contribution to School Life

Year 10

Oscar Adams	Public Speaking
Neriah Asirwatham	Contribution to School Life
Harry Atchison	Contribution to School Life
Dilneth Bandara	Contribution to School Life
Daemon Basu	Contribution to School Life
Oliver Burns	Contribution to School Life
Keira Carlon	Swimming
Ellie Cheong	Contribution to School Life
Ayaan Chowdhary	Tennis
Lithaya De Silva	Community Leadership
Harriet Hoskins	Contribution to School Life
Emma Howard	Academic



Lucy Howard	Academic
Jennifer Kieu	Contribution to School Life
Mia Layton	Community Leadership, Contribution to School Sport
Joel Li	Academic, Public Speaking
Gracie Luong	Community Leadership
Jasmine Mathew	Academic
Daniel McNeill	Academic
Milly Nunan	Contribution to School Life
Raj Singh	Contribution to School Life
Lochlan Tieu	Academic
Ella Tran	Contribution to School Life
Raissa Tubman	Contribution to Music
Nathan Zhang	Contribution to Music

Year 9

Zoe Ahmadi	Community Leadership
Gerlach Ava	Contribution to School Life
Lily Clark	Community Leadership
Hannah Gec	Community Leadership
Sienna Gec	Community Leadership
Abigail Hammond	Contribution to School Life
Maddie Hateley	Contribution to School Life
Ashley Liu	Community Leadership
Marcus Mastrantuono	Community Leadership
Zara Nathanielsz	Community Leadership
Lakithi Ranawaka Arachchi	Community Leadership
Bailey Sienna	Community Leadership

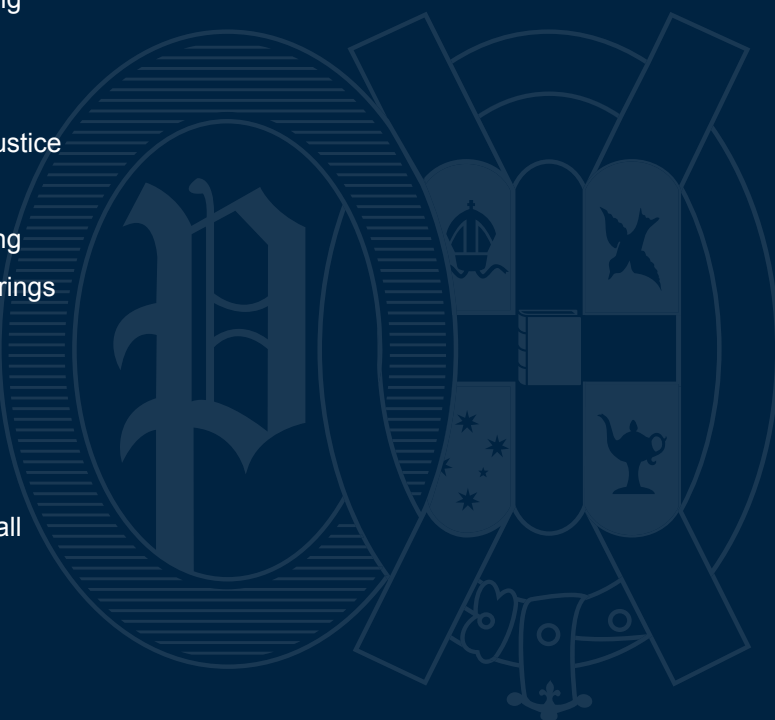
Half Colours

Half Colours are the school's second highest award and, again, are normally awarded to senior students.

We congratulate the following students who have been awarded Half Colours in 2024 and thank them for their significant contribution.

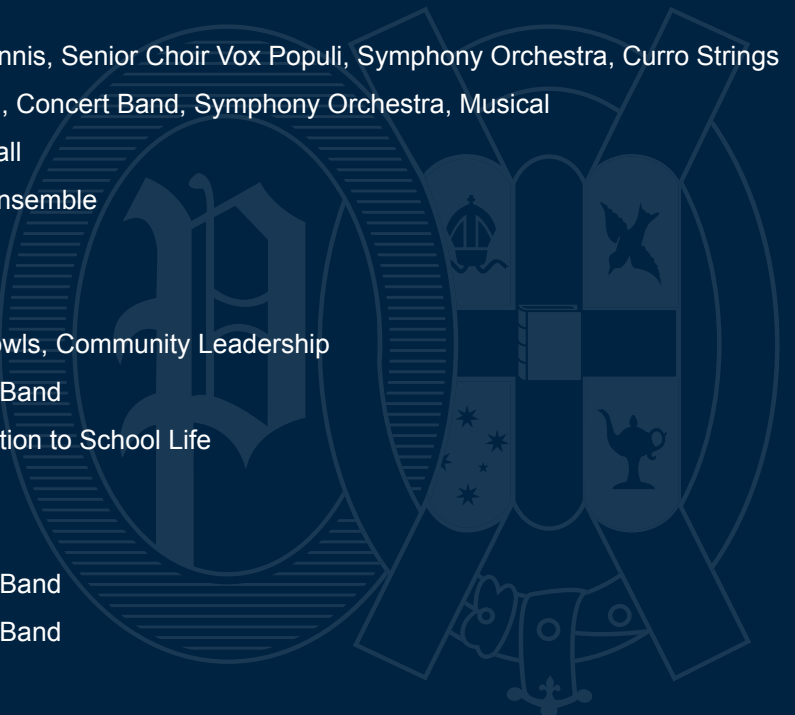
Year 12

Ayushi Amarasekera	Community Leadership
Samuel Baker	Musical
Chloe Bakis	Tennis
Archie Beattie	Football
Hamish Brewer	Public Speaking
Abbi Burns	Tennis
Nicole De Silva	Concert Band, Musical
Olivia Falzon	Swimming
Will Gleeson	Swimming
Anthea Gollant	Football
Amy Hawking	Concert Band
Induni Hendahewa	Public Speaking
Stella Hughes	Social Justice
Christopher Katsoulis	Soccer
Mia Landgren	Tennis
Hubert Li	Tennis
Charlotte Nguyen	Curro Strings
Ella Nunan	Concert Band
Maddison Papadatos	Concert Band, Guitar Ensemble
Loc Pham	Swimming
Olivia Powell	Football
Lucas Ratskos	Football
Aish Sharma	Social Justice
Scarlett Sroka	Tennis
Sophie Testro	Swimming
Tiara Tubman	Curro Strings
Annabelle White	Soccer
Malindu Wickramanayake	Tennis
Xavier Young	Football
Sebastian Zafferano	Football
Eric Zhang	Basketball



Year 11

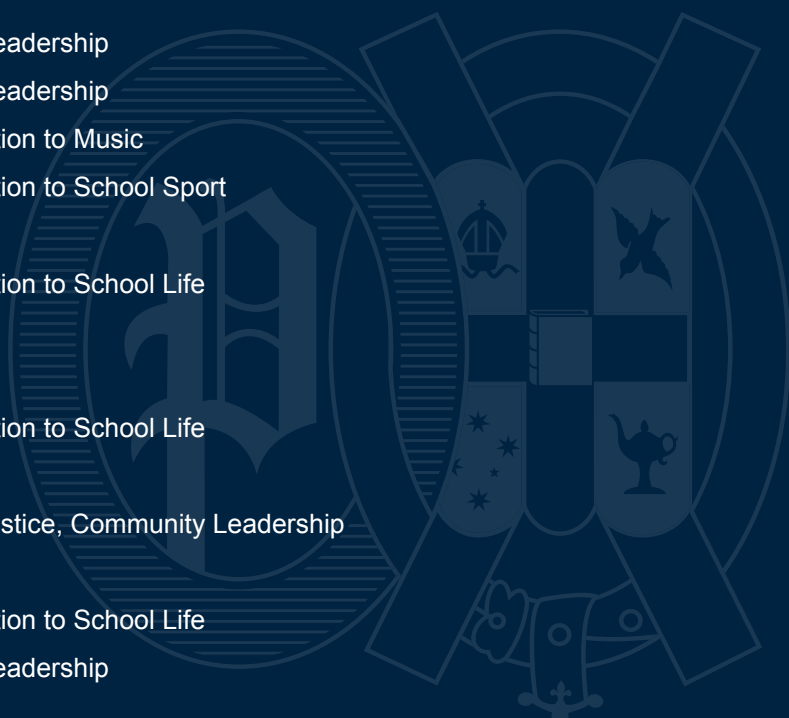
Sejal Agarwal	Public Speaking
Arshina Ahsan	Social Justice
Ruby Anderson	Triathlon
William Armstrong	Stage Band
Aayan Asif	Social Justice
Jack Avsar	Football
Ellena Bassett	Triathlon
Priyanka Bora	Public Speaking
Darcy Callanan	Cricket
Daniel Capeci	Soccer
Alexander Cirone	Triathlon
Jake Cukalac	Soccer
Dante d'Ovidio	Football
Arushi Davar	Public Speaking
Ella De Zoete	Stage Band
Mia Dellas	Sport
Scarlett Drum	Touch Football
Crystal Du	Musical, Senior Choir Vox Populo, Social Justice, Public Speaking
Alicia Gec	Athletics
Xavier Giovannello	Football
Havin Giyik	Community Leadership
Aaron Goyal	Tennis, Public Speaking
Madeline Grant	Public Speaking
Maddison Hall	Sport
Kate Hannan	Tennis
Coco Hoyle	Football
Alan Huynh	Table Tennis, Senior Choir Vox Populi, Symphony Orchestra, Curro Strings
Noah Irwin	Triathlon, Concert Band, Symphony Orchestra, Musical
Jacob Kinali	Basketball
Samuel Lee	Guitar Ensemble
Jonathan Leeds	Football
Tristan Leeds	Sport
Joshua Leszczynski	Lawn Bowls, Community Leadership
Janice Leung	Concert Band
Audrey Li	Contribution to School Life
Alyssa Liberatore	Soccer
Camryn Liddle	Football
Hannah Lim	Concert Band
Matthew Ma	Concert Band
Zachary (Zac) Martin	Football



Noah McMenamin	Football
Bella Milicevic	Fencing
Noah Milis	Soccer
Masato Mizumoto	Soccer
Elin Oveisi	Fencing, Senior Choir Vox Populi
Eason Paini	Table Tennis, Public Speaking
Haerin Park	Social Justice
Chelsea Pesavento	Contribution to School Life
Nathaniel Pitliangas	Social Justice
Simon Roseman	Public Speaking
Olivia Santeufemia	Tennis
Stevie Siafalis-Tsiatsios	Table Tennis
Joseph Sita	Football
Oscar Steward	Triathlon
Hamish Stone	Football
Aleyna Tamer	Senior Choir Vox Populi
Greta Tatham-Thompson	Senior Choir Vox Populi, Public Speaking
Lachlan Thai	Triathlon
Akhila Thomas	Social Justice
Jason Tran	Volleyball, Stage Band
Sophia Wang	Concert Band, Senior Choir Vox Populi
Shaun Wong	Volleyball
Alannah Xerri	Triathlon
Lily Yang	Concert Band
Amy Zhang	Dance

Year 10

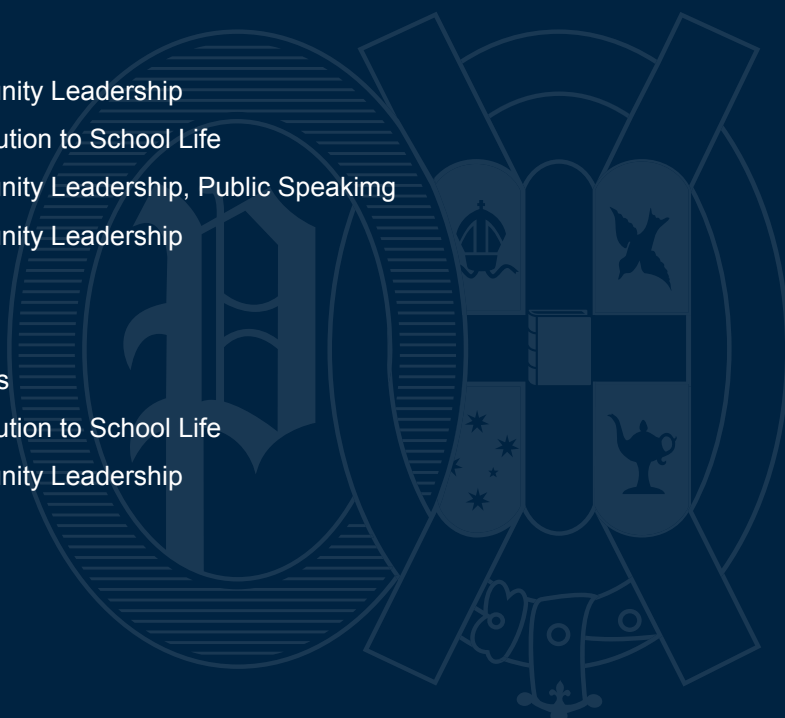
Oscar Adams	House Leadership
Harry Atchison	House Leadership
Hanna Chen	Contribution to Music
Chiara Cuzzilla	Contribution to School Sport
Lithaya de Silva	Chess
Fahiz Deen Mohamed	Contribution to School Life
Megan Duong	Drama
Alexander (Alex) Gray	Football
Mina Hanna	Contribution to School Life
Emma Howard	Drama
Annabel Jenkins	Social Justice, Community Leadership
Eva Jovcevska	Soccer
Jennifer Kieu	Contribution to School Life
Aaryan Komaragiri	House Leadership



Bryan La	Volleyball
Abbey Lehmann	House Leadership
Joel Li	Chess
Andrew Ma	Contribution to School Life
Olivia Maheras	House Leadership
Bailey McMillan-Power	Volleyball
Daniel McNeill	House Leadership
Jacob Mtanios	House Leadership
Paige Ngo	Dance
Angelina Nguyen	Football
Sunita Pandya	Social Justice
Olivia Russo	Contribution to School Life
Ashleigh Story	Football
Raissa Tubman	Musical
Millie van Diemen	Community Leadership
Petria Vargiu	Soccer
Jackson Watkins	Football
Jarvis West	Basketball
Chris Yan	Contribution to School Life
Ethan Yeung	Contribution to Dance
Ethan Zhang	Social Justice
Nathan Zhang	Musical, House Leadership

Year 9

Chloe Dang	Contribution to School Life
Tasha Huang	Music
Katelin Huynh	Musical
Chase Jardine	Community Leadership
Hayley Keenan	Contribution to School Life
Hamish Lambeth	Community Leadership, Public Speaking
Zac Marasco	Community Leadership
Michelle Phang	Music
Mabel Rogers	Drama
Lucas Tran	Athletics
Jasmine Trieu	Contribution to School Life
Jasmine Volpato	Community Leadership



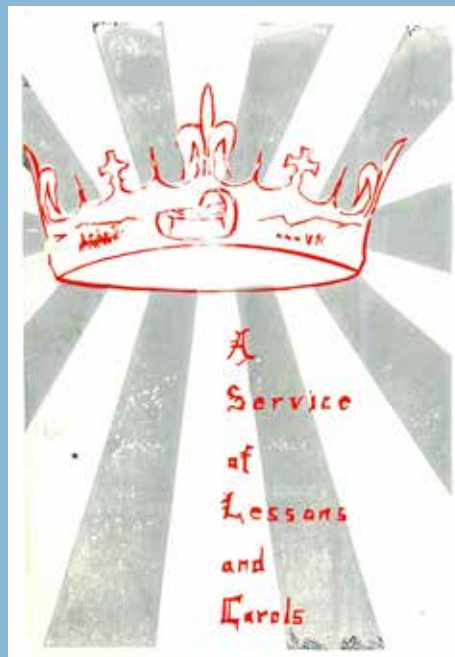
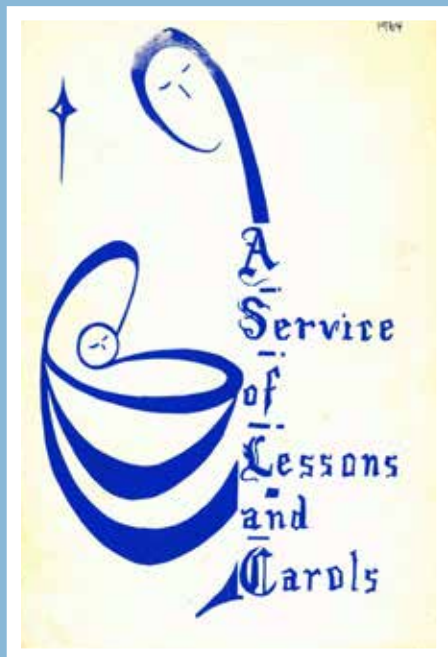
From the Archives

Brigid Cooper Archivist

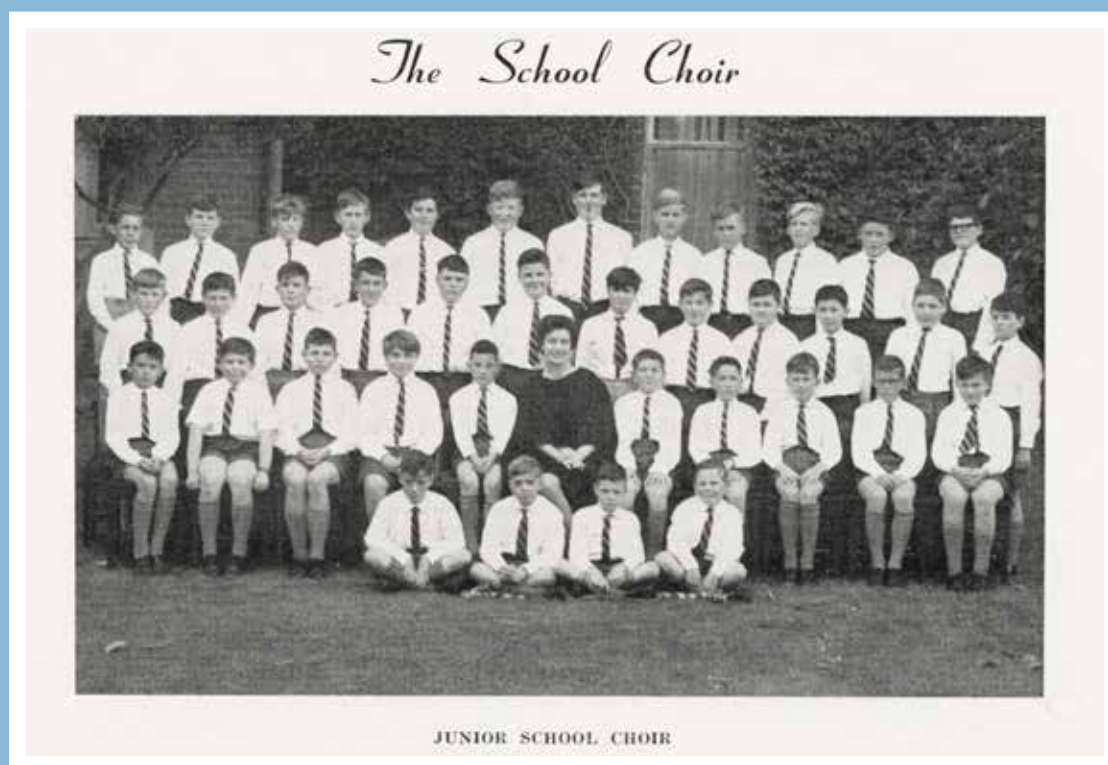
60 Years of the Nine Lessons and Carols Service

This year we are fortunate to be able to celebrate a long-running tradition at our school. The Service of Nine Lessons and Carols is a Church of England (Anglican) tradition, first held in 1880 in Truro Cathedral, then made popular from 1918 with the annual King's College Cambridge event. The Service tells the Christmas Story through bible readings interspersed with carols, hymns and anthems.

Held at our school for the first time in 1964 in St John's Church on the corner of Mt Alexander Road and Buckley Street, the Carol Service moved in 1978 to Collins Street Uniting Church



The front covers of the first two Services of Nine Lessons and Carols held in 1964 and 1965 (PEGS Archives [PEGS05986] [PEGS05990])



1964 Essendon Grammar School Choir with Mrs Mary Armour (PEGS Archives. [PH05250])

Choir Notes from The Triune 1964

The School Choir has had a very successful year, and one which they can look back on with a great sense of achievement.

We started the year with a considerable number of new recruits, most of whom had not done any serious singing before. So it was a matter of starting from scratch, and welding this into a good group of singers, one of which the School could be proud.

Third term saw preparations for the Nine Lessons and Carols in progress. A large amount of singing was entailed in this and a considerable amount of concentrated work had to go into it.

However, November 29th duly arrived, and the Service performed, and from what we have heard from those present, the reaction to our efforts was good. In fact, we are told people are still talking about it. We will be pleased to hear the tape which was made of the Service, so that we can hear our faults as well as our good points.

The powerhouse behind not only the first Carol Service, but the establishment of a music program initially at Essendon Grammar School, then across multiple campuses of Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School, was Mrs Mary Armour, Music Directoress.

In 1962 Mary Armour was teaching at Lowther Hall Church of England Girls' Grammar School when she was asked to work with the boys at Essendon Grammar School for an upcoming music concert. She taught class music in the junior school - initially unpaid! - and formed a choir with the boys who "liked to sing." In 1963 the incoming Principal, Rev H R (Bert) Stevens, was very supportive of the development of a music program. By Term 2 Mary was being paid for her efforts and was rolling out classroom music across the year levels, eventually reaching into the middle school. Instrumental music was added and, with assistance from Mr Geoff Hardman, a School Band was also formed.



Mrs Mary Armour's portrait in the 1979 Triune (PEGS Archives)

In the 1979 Triune Yearbook Mary Armour responds in an interview:

We have a wide range of groups they can participate in and the more proficient they become the wider the range of options available. They are only going to be limited to what they can do at this school by how much work they put in. We have string quartets, string orchestras, a military band, brass bands, woodwind groups to offer any student who is interested.

At her retirement from the school at the end of 1985 her contribution to the PEGS music program was recognised. Here is an excerpt from the 1985 Yearbook.

Music Report

Any music report for 1985 could not be considered an adequate report if no mention was made of Mrs. Armour's resignation. I will therefore open with it. After twenty-four years as the Musical Directress at our School, she has done a marvellous job and has brought the standard of musicianship in this school to an almost undreamed of height; may she enjoy her coming years as a "lady of leisure".
Jacob Taurins – Year 12

PEGS Alumni Association

2025 Reunions

- Class of 2015 Ten Year Reunion – 21 March, 7pm, Penny Young, Young St. Moonee Ponds
- Class of 2005 Twenty Year Reunion – 7 March, 7pm, Penny Young, Young St. Moonee Ponds
- Class of 1995 Thirty Year Reunion – 2 May, 7pm, Penny Young, Young St. Moonee Ponds
- Class of 1990 Thirty-five Year Reunion – 16 May, 7pm, Penny Young, Young St. Moonee Ponds
- Class of 1985 Forty Year Reunion – 17 October, 7pm, Penny Young, Young St. Moonee Ponds
- Class of 1980 Forty-five Year Reunion – 31 October, 7pm, Penny Young, Young St. Moonee Ponds
- Class of 1975 Fifty Year Reunion - TBA

In order to hear about upcoming reunions please make sure we have your recent contact details by emailing us at alumni@pegs.vic.edu.au. You are also encouraged to join your 'PEGS - Class of' Facebook group for event information, booking details and photos of your reunion afterwards. Even if you don't have a milestone event coming up please join us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/PEGSAA> to see what the School and your fellow alumni are up to.

Announcements

DEATHS

Dalinkiewicz, John (Vunjay) [Class of 2004], brother of Greg [Class of 1991], Irina [Class of 19994], Sofia [Class of 1997] and Nicholas [Class of 1999], on 3 Nov 2024, aged 38.

Judith Ross (nee Tardif) (Penleigh 1950 - 1951; President Penleigh Old Collegians' Association, member of the Golden Girls), sister of Wendy Ritchie (Penleigh 1950 - 1954), mother of Alison [Class of 1977] and Karen [Class of 1979], on 13 April 2024, aged 87.

Congratulations

The school community offers heartiest congratulations to PEGS Board member and a former Chairman, Robert Gottliebsen AM, on his recent Walkley Award. Already recipient of the Melbourne Press Club Lifetime Achievement Award for contribution to business journalism in Australia, the Australian Journalist of the Year and a previous Walkley, Robert's latest Walkley Award recognises more than fifty years of leadership in business journalism and financial commentary.

Robert established the first national business column in the Australian Financial Review in 1974 and has most recently featured in The Australian covering business, politics and industrial relations since 2014.

A member of the Essendon Grammar School Class of 1958, a former school parent and current grandparent, Robert's legacy at PEGS was assured with the naming of Gottliebsen House in his honour in 2013. We are grateful that he continues to share his exceptional store of wisdom and business acumen with school leaders and wish him continued health and success.





McNab House reunion

In 1973 two schools took a bold step to create a co-educational centre for senior students. At the start of the school year, Form 5 and Form 6 students from Penleigh Presbyterian Ladies' College and Essendon Grammar School started in new buildings at the latter's Keilor East Campus. And so PEGS was born.

Some 51 years later on Friday 22 November many from that original group of 1973 and 1974 students reconvened where it all began as they celebrated this amazing milestone as well as their 50 and 51 Year reunions. School Archivist Brigid Cooper took this special group on a tour of the School where they marvelled at how much the place had changed in the half century since the humble beginnings of McNab House. Following the tour it was on to East Pantry, just over the road, where all enjoyed a night filled with mirth and memories, including a fantastic archival display, provided once again by our dedicated Archivist. The joy and camaraderie was evident with tales of yesteryear flying thick and fast. Suddenly half a century didn't seem that long ago.

It was wonderful to see so many of those first PEGS pioneers come together again in a celebration of a very special time and an equally special place.



Reunion Program

The School reunion program offers past students of PEGS the chance to catch up with their fellow alumni and remember those wonderful school years. This last term saw reunions from 1984 and 1989 held at Penny Young in Moonee Ponds as former classmates enjoyed an evening of reminiscing and revelry that lasted long in to the night.



A football season to remember

It was a stellar year for several PEGS alumni on the football field, with our own Cam Rayner (PEGS2017), Sarah Wright (PEGS2012), Tahlia Gillard (PEGS 2021) and Amy Gaylor (PEGS2023) experiencing amazing success at the highest level.

Cam Rayner, the 2017 No.1 draft pick, enjoyed a career-best season with the Brisbane Lions, making the All-Australian squad for the first time and experiencing the ultimate success as an integral part of the Lions' premiership team. He kicked a career-high 31 goals, including two in the Preliminary Final win over Geelong in which he was crucial to his team's come-from-behind win.

Sarah Wright achieved the ultimate glory during North Melbourne's first AFLW premiership victory in an undefeated season. A key contributor on the day with 20 touches, Sarah has played an integral role in the Kangaroo's defence since her selection in the 2019 draft and this season was rewarded with a berth in the AFLW All-Australian squad.

Continuing her success of previous seasons since her debut with Melbourne in 2022, Tahlia Gillard was named in the AFL Players' Association "22 under 22". Recognising the top players in the league under the age of 22 this cements Tahlia's standing as one of AFLW's elite young players.

Amy Gaylor also played a huge role in her team's success, with the Essendon AFLW team achieving its first finals berth. Taken by the Bombers as an expansion pre-signing ahead of the 2023 draft from the Calder Cannons, Amy was nominated as the Week Six Telstra AFLW Rising Star and went on to finish third overall in the AFLW rising star award.

Congratulations to all. We look forward to watching them continue their football ascension in the coming years.



Friends of PEGS

Craft market

12 October, saw a perfect spring Saturday at the Essendon Campus with an endless stream of happy and excited faces enjoying a fun-filled family day. For many, it was the sheer delight of thrill rides or succeeding at a game of Splat the Rat. It's the gleeful surprise of bumping into a school friend, finding a treasure at one of the many stalls, or enjoying a tasty morsel from any of the many food trucks, the barbeque or a CWA scone.

Craft Market is a celebratory carnivalesque event and we all love it. The mainstage platformed our student ensembles, kicking off with a rock band and swinging us throughout the day with showcased talent from classical pieces to jazz combos – in sound and movement.

Thank you to all who rolled up their sleeves and worked to make Craft Market a success for our School and our students. Thank you volunteers, parents, teachers and Committee members. Behind-the-scenes and audience-facing, it is generosity of spirit, time and effort that make PEGS Craft Market a gloriously, noisy lively event. Our students revel in and remember the moment.

2024 Reflection

From picnic-blanket family huddles at Movie Night in February; to a welcome embrace for our new-to-PEGs parents at Year 7 Meet 'n Greet in March, Friends of PEGS has celebrated milestone moments across the year – for parents and their children.

In 2024, we revisited crowd-favourites. Brimming with choice at Mothers, Fathers and Special Person Day Stalls, students enthusiastically searched for a surprise gift for that special someone. The FoPEGs Committee team love presenting a surprise. Our mid-year Trivia Night tested minds and cemented warmly vibrant memories of wins and losses. The End-of-Year Luncheon, was an admirable way to colourfully dress the past year's celebrations and welcome the next.

Enriching the life of the school

A vibrantly active and welcoming committee, Friends of PEGS is the school's parent association, which contributes to strengthening and enlivening the school community with a calendar of celebratory events for parents and students.

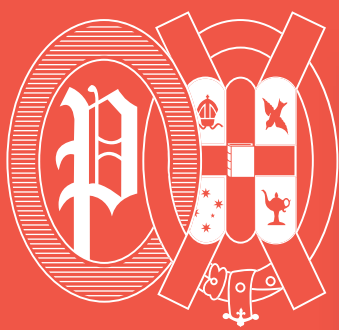
We thankfully acknowledge the dedicated voluntary commitment of FoPEGs Committee members, and welcome you to our spirited team. If you are interested in joining or contributing to our committee in 2025, we would love to hear from you. For more information, please contact Lyn LoMoro: 9016 2183 lyn.lomoro@pegs.vic.edu.au

2025 FoPEGs Events

Monday 3 March	FoPEGs AGM
Wednesday 12 March	Yr 7 Meet and Greet
Friday 14 March	Movie Night
Thursday 8 May	Mother's Day Stall Junior Girls
Friday 9 May	Mother's Day Stall Junior Boys
Saturday 14 June	Trivia Night
Thursday 4 September	Father's Day Stall Junior Girls
Friday 5 September	Father's Day Stall Junior Boys
Saturday 11 October	Annual Craft Market
Friday 28 November	End of Year Luncheon







Strategic Plan

update

December 2024



Learning and thinking

Strategic objectives

- Set high expectations for all to promote intellectual engagement, complex problem solving, growth and self-awareness
- Use evidence-based strategies that drive academic and personal success
- Challenge every student to apply new knowledge through deep learning
- Use rigorous assessment practices and feedback to improve teaching and learning
- Cultivate tenacity, courage and drive

New initiatives/developments in 2024:

At PEGS, our commitment to learning and thinking is fundamental to our purpose, guiding how we serve our community. By combining high expectations with high support, we strive to foster both growth and achievement in our students. Our staff are essential to this effort, actively nurturing our Culture of Thinking and contributing significantly to our collective learning environment.

Research consistently shows the connection between teacher development and student success, and so we prioritise ongoing professional growth opportunities for our educators. Through collaborative learning, staff enhance their skills and build a sense of collective efficacy. This year, we have continued to emphasise evidence-based practices in staff professional development across school-wide, sectional, and smaller group settings.

Across the School, the dedication of our teaching staff to advancing their practice reflects their commitment to fostering student achievement through evidence-informed strategies. This is demonstrated through:

- The expansion of Adaptive Leadership programme

- Emina McLean working with all Junior School staff on literacy
- Terri Campbell working with staff from Prep-Year Ten
- Brownn Ryrie Jones supporting work on an instructional playbook
- Harvard online- teachers involved in work to support the Culture of Thinking
- The expansion of the Communities of Practice programme. Feedback from an initial survey has been positive – in particular, with regards to the way the program has improved teacher self-efficacy.
- Music staff embedding a system of observation and moderation of assessment to promote learning and consistency.
- Deputies from each section continuing to make progress on sectional projects, designed in line with AERO's research. Some of these include the development of an instructional playbook with common language, routines and evidence based high impact teaching strategies, and routines for maintaining focussed classrooms.

Our commitment to reflective practice has seen curriculum audits taking place in different areas of the school. An example of this was the audit of the Junior School (boys) mathematics curriculum,


which led to the introduction of an instructional model in all maths lessons which includes worked examples, number fluency, reflection, peer observation and learning walks whilst recognising cognitive load and differentiated learning.

Within the Middle School, our Thinking and Learning Committee has established three dedicated subcommittees to focus on key areas of development:

- The Feedback and Assessment Sub-committee has developed Best Practice Guidelines
- The Culture and Pedagogy Sub-Committee, with input from Faculty Coordinators has developed Best Practice Guidelines

We also make use of standardised testing data to tailor support for students, ensuring that programmes meet individual learning needs.

- To support transition, MYAT testing took place in September for 2025 Year Seven students.
- The launch of our Essential Assessment platform in the Junior Schools provides valuable formative assessment data.
- Expansion of Literacy and Numeracy Plus programmes in Middle School
- Appointment of Data Analyst coordinators at Prep-Year Two

- 
- A young woman with dark hair, wearing a school uniform consisting of a dark blue sweater over a light blue and white striped shirt, is looking down at a book she is holding. The background is a soft-focus indoor setting with a window showing greenery outside.
- and Year Three-Year Six.
 - Study of individual NAPLAN results and cohort results to further drive classroom instruction.
 - Morrisby careers testing and parent feedback meetings for Year Ten students.

Work was also done to support Pathways for students at senior secondary level.

- VET subjects have been introduced for subject selection in 2024, with commencement in 2025. Information sessions were held at Larkin Centre information nights. Subjects were offered based on recommendations made by Year Ten Coordinators.. Careers interviews with students considering VET subjects were held.
- Introduction of new accelerated options for subject selection in 2024 with courses starting in 2025.
- First University Extension courses to be trialled in 2025. Numbers for these courses will be limited due to the early stage nature of this trial.

To show support for students striving for excellence, the Altior Awards were introduced and presented to Larkin Centre students who have demonstrated the values and ethos of the school.



Care and wellbeing

Strategic objectives

- Foster of a culture of individual and community care
- Identify and develop initiatives to support the wellbeing needs of students and staff
- Demonstrate our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

New initiatives/developments in 2024:

We are dedicated to cultivating a safe, inclusive environment where every individual feels known, valued, and supported. In 2024, we strengthened our focus on care and wellbeing through numerous initiatives aimed at building a supportive culture. Staff are equipped with training and resources to maintain this environment, and our commitment to inclusion and diversity remains a priority, with ongoing work to promote these values. The development of our Reconciliation Action Plan remains a focus. This year, sections have worked on various projects, such as the planting of an Indigenous garden at Larkin Centre, engaging with Simone Thomson, a First Nations artist, to develop an artwork for the school, professional learning for senior staff, and members of the RAP committee and senior staff engaging in Cultural Consultation with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.

The school engaged in community consultation around our suite of Child Safety Policies, which also informed our review of the Child Safety risk register, led by the Board and Senior Management.

The School developed a new protocol for responding to cyber incidents

A committee was formed to provide guidance and support on the issue of school refusal.

Staff undertook training on Rites of Passage, a new programme to support transition, being launched through our Year Seven camp

programme in 2025. Parents were also introduced to the key tenets of this programme at Year Seven 2025 information nights.

A range of student programmes have been developed to support care and wellbeing, demonstrating our commitment to nurturing the whole person. These include:

- Paul Dillon drug and alcohol education
- Year Ten Gottliebsen House students engaged with the issue of homelessness through sessions run by the Big Issue and the Intersection Melbourne, with a view to building empathy
- A new Larkin Centre tutor group wellbeing programme has been developed and delivered, emerging from the Communities of Practice work.

Student voice continues to drive other initiatives. At Larkin Centre, Student leadership committees each planned for and ran a week of activities including dance competitions, debates, charity drives, sports activities and quizzes. At Gottliebsen House, a Swimming Carnival programme has been planned by students, marking the return of this event after a long hiatus. 2024 was the second year of a student-led futsal competition at Year Ten, which is another example of student initiative and cooperation between students and staff to create a new and very positive event.

A peer mentoring scheme took place between Year Eleven and Year Nine students. The scheme involved around 20 Year Eleven students who were matched with Year Nine students.


Vertical mentoring has also taken place between students in Years Seven and Nine and Years Eight and Ten, to build a stronger cohesiveness and sense of community across year levels, foster friendships and further embed respect and positive culture.

Additionally, we provided resources for parents and caregivers to help manage various wellbeing concerns, extending our care focus beyond the School.

- The school engaged psychologist Judith Locke to run sessions on parenting. A corresponding session was run for staff. The sessions were very well-attended, with around 600 parents attending over the two sessions (Junior School and Secondary School).
- The parent care and wellbeing resource pages continue to be updated with material relevant to current issues faced by families.
- Parent sessions were held as part of the Body Safety Superstars programme at Kindergarten, and to align with sex education sessions held at Junior School.

The cocurricular programme has also seen enhancements, with a renewed emphasis on practices that support care and wellbeing across all activities.

In Music, the Multi-Cultural Ensemble has been very successful in promoting diversity and inclusion. The addition of other cultures' music has broadened the repertoire and given opportunities for students from other cultures to express their cultural identity in this context.



The design phase of the gender and sport-neutral uniform has been completed and a sample of new design received. The design has been based on student feedback, to ensure uniform is not a barrier to participation.

Work has been done to improve leadership structures around the school, with Position Description for Form Captains being formalised, selection processes codified, and practices for Captains' Councils being formalised. Similarly, a selection process for the SRC has been developed and refined.

Our Human Resources team has led a review of staff survey data and staff feedback to develop and provide physical wellness programmes and relaxation opportunities offered. These initiatives aim to promote physical and mental wellbeing amongst staff, to encourage a healthy lifestyle and to create a sense of community. We saw a 4% increase in staff participation in the Big Team Challenge with 114 staff participating. They fundraised \$681 for Beyond Blue and planted one tree for every 10 participants. The PEGS Active Centre is also being utilised by staff from various sections.

Psychosocial hazards were assessed and action plans developed to reduce risks. Training has been completed to increase awareness and better manage risk. Voluntary Psychological Health and Safety Training was completed by 36 staff in 2024 and 20 managers (in 2023/2024).



Engagement and connections

Strategic objectives

- Promote an environment of mutual respect
- Collaborate and share our story within and beyond the school community
- Build positive and productive relationships with parents and caregivers and alumni
- Promote a culture of open communication and feedback

New initiatives/developments in 2024:

Building strong relationships that encourage personal growth and contribution continues to be a core focus. We have expanded opportunities for parents and caregivers to connect with our programmes, creating pathways for deeper engagement within the school community. Examples include:

- Celebration of learning/open classrooms at Kindergarten and Junior School levels
- Record attendance by parents at the Year Twelve Colours assembly
- Life at the Larkin Centre breakfasts
- Year Eight Astronomy Night for students and parents
- To support transition, a tour of Middle School facilities and introductory session with Heads of Section, for parents and caregivers of students currently in Year Six at the PEGS Junior Schools, took place as a new initiative in 2024.

Additionally, students have more chances to interact with the broader community, fostering real-world connections and experiences. A large number of students received Full Colours for Community leadership in recognition of their voluntary work in the wider community.

A formal student leadership system was introduced at the Larkin Centre, establishing roles such as School Captains and a Student Executive for 2024. In the first year of this new leadership structure, the School Captains have actively developed relationships with other parts of the school.

The Student Executive developed a calendar of events for 2024 and worked within the student body to develop activities and opportunities to acknowledge the diversity of the community.

The 2025 cohort of student leaders participated in the first Student Leadership Workshop day on November 14. A workshop was delivered by Dr Brenda Holt, before small group discussion and planning sessions. The Student Leadership Camp for 2025 has been extended to two nights and the Student Captains will begin planning the programme during the Student Leadership Workshop day.

The Student Representative Council met regularly throughout Term Two and Three and provided a voice for students from Years Seven to Eleven. A number of initiatives were generated from the Council.

At Larkin Centre, the expansion of the House system saw six House events introduced throughout the year, linked to each Student Executive committee week.

In Music, many informal performances, including at both Junior campuses, have been organised as part of the new Position of Responsibility aimed at increasing performance opportunities for students across the school.

Feedback gathered from students, parents, and staff through surveys across the school informs our commitment to ongoing improvement and responsiveness to community needs. Feedback gathered from Year Six, Ten and Twelve student and parent surveys in 2024 will be used to track our progress.

We continually refine our programmes to keep students engaged and to provide platforms for learning and leadership.





Continuity and sustainability

Strategic objectives

- Embrace environmental, social responsibility and governance (ESG) best practice to ensure our school is sustainable for the future
- Ensure we follow best practice in compliance, and financial and risk management to continue to flourish regardless of external impacts
- Maintain the recruitment and development of outstanding and diverse staff
- Continuously develop resources and create assets, including ICT and facilities

New initiatives/developments in 2024:

Our approach to long-term growth emphasises sustainability and careful stewardship of resources. Every decision regarding financial, physical, and human resources considers its impact, not only on our immediate community but on the wider world.

In 2024, we advanced our commitment to sustainability by incorporating eco-friendly practices in both major projects and daily operations. Examples of this include:

- Blown light globes across each site are replaced with LED fittings. These will help reduce power bills and help PEGS become more environmentally sustainable.
- Solar panels have been installed at the social club building, powering the facility completely and allowing excess to be sold to the grid.
- Extra solar usage is now being used to run the car charging station at Keilor East.
- 16 green waste bins have been installed at the Junior Schools. This green waste is collected and converted to compost.
- All garbage liners have been changed to natural, degradable bin liners
- Natural gas water heaters have been changed over to electric in

the Social Club and renovation projects. These are powered by solar panels.

- Battery operated ground maintenance machinery has been trialled for six months at all sites, to reduce running costs and fumes, and to be more efficient and sustainable. Battery operated blowers, hedge trimmers and push mowers have been purchased.

Improvements to facilities remain a priority and an ongoing task. To this end, in 2024, the following projects have been undertaken or completed.

- The development of the ground floor of the social club, to create inclusive changing spaces, additional staff offices and a new drama storage area.
- The projector in Ian Morton Centre was upgraded to a LED panel, along with a new audio system.
- Refurbishment of the western block at Moonee Ponds campus.
- Reconfiguration of the Middle School Library.

This year, the school also undertook a major review of our Managed Service Provider (ICT) to ensure we have the best support for our school's growing needs, including structured skills across a broad range of technologies. This

process is complete, with the new provider commencing in December 2024.


We continue to make improvements in the area of risk, with work done on records retention. This resulted, for example, in extra EFTPOS machines being obtained for administration offices, to alleviate the need to record credit card details on forms.

In recruitment and retention, several new Positions of Responsibility were launched this year to support staff development. For example, at Middle School, a new role was instated to support new and early career teachers. The School was represented at the Career Expo at Melbourne University to support recruitment efforts.

Our Employee Value Proposition (EVP) roadmap is complete, with EVP language in advertising, recruitment panels, manager 1:1s and reviews.

In compliance, the Annual Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) report was completed, and analysis of industry benchmarking data completed, with recommended strategies to improve gender equality. WGEA training has been undertaken by key staff to build capacity and review and develop improvements.

The School also developed

A photograph of two students in school uniforms sitting on large, grey, rounded rocks outdoors. The student on the left has dark hair and is wearing a dark blue sweater. The student on the right has blonde hair tied back and is wearing a dark blue sweater and glasses. They are both looking down at the rocks. The background is slightly blurred, showing some greenery and a blue and white striped object.

actions and guidelines in response to legislative changes such as the Right to Disconnect Bill, and positive duty under the Sex Discrimination Act.

In the area of Occupational Health and Safety, training videos were developed to provide targeted support for areas raised by staff. Examples of this are supervising pedestrian crossings, the requirements of bus duty, and use of PA systems in emergencies.

To support best practice in governance, the Board undertook a skills audit, and a new Expression of Interest process was launched to ensure sustainability on subcommittees in terms of skills and experience.

Additionally, our financial strategy was updated to ensure continued fiscal strength, especially in light of new payroll tax regulations. This planning ensures that PEGS remains positioned for a sustainable future.

Through these initiatives, we reinforce our dedication to a vibrant and enduring learning community, equipped to support the next generation, and the world beyond our School.

2025 Dates for the diary

Term dates 2025

Term One

Friday 31 January – Friday 4 April

Term Two

Tuesday 22 April – Friday 4 July

Term Three

Tuesday 22 July – Friday 12 September

Term Four

Monday 6 October – Wednesday 10 December

