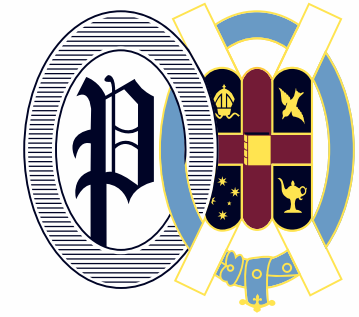


PENLEIGH AND ESSENDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL



Altior et Sapientior

December 2025



From the Principal

At the recent Junior School Art Shows, we were delighted by the strong attendance and support from across our community. One moment, in particular, has stayed with me. One of our youngest students excitedly greeted her father as he arrived, reached for his hand, and led him into the exhibition space to see her work, announcing with complete conviction: "You are going to be so proud of me."

It was a small declaration, yet it revealed something profound about what it means to learn, to grow, and to belong. To feel that someone sees your effort and takes pride in it is among the most powerful experiences a learner can have. Confidence and aspiration take root when encouragement is present - when pride is shared.

At its heart, schooling is a shared enterprise, not just between students and teachers, but among all who form part of this community. The presence of others, the willingness to show up, and the act of paying attention are gestures that carry quiet power.

A "little thing" like attending an art show, a concert, a sports final, or a debate is noticed by more than the person on stage or on the field. It affirms to every young person watching that what we do here matters. It reinforces that effort, creativity, and commitment are worth celebrating. Even our teenagers, who may not always drag their parents by the hand quite so enthusiastically, walk taller when they know that someone has come to see what they have created, achieved, or become.

These acts of support also strengthen the fabric of our school. They bring our REACH values to life: Respect for each other's work and time; Excellence in recognising the pursuit of mastery; Accountability through showing up and following through; Curiosity in engaging with what others have learned or made; and Heart in the generous attention we give to one another.

As we conclude the year, I thank all of our wonderful students, staff members, parents, and alumni who have contributed to the shared life of the School. It is through these many "little things"- a hand held, an audience applauding, or a conversation after a performance - that a culture of belonging and purpose continues to grow.

Kate Dullard



The Importance of The Little Things

As we reflect on an incredible year of growth and learning at PEGS Kindergarten, we acknowledge that our inquiry focus of *The Little Things* has been a significant factor in building strong foundations for lifelong learning, curiosity and participation within all the children.

Our inquiry projects have provided opportunities for the children to engage with their creativity and curiosity, and to develop their emotional intelligence, social skills and rights of citizenship.

One common thread of research through the children's projects was their commitment and dedication to taking care of the world around them. Whether this be in relation to small creatures, endangered birds or the land itself, it was these seemingly small actions, thoughts and moments that created meaningful connections, reinforced essential life skills and nurtured the development of being a good person.

As the children begin their transition into 2026, *The Little Things* remain just as important. Their ability to engage kindly, think of others, and foster positive relationships will support their transition into new communities as well as find their place within a new cohort of peers, teachers and families.

When thinking about *The Little Things* and its impact on us as early childhood educators, we can honestly say that these are the things that inspire us most in our work with children.

It is the EXTRA in the ORDINARY that transforms everyday moments into profound opportunities for growth, connection and deeper understanding, reminding us that the most valuable learning often comes from *The Little Things*.

Lauren Olcorn
Director of Kindergarten

Learning on Two Wheels

During Term Four, Year Five students have participated in a Bike Education Programme. This practical programme is directly linked to the Australian Curriculum, focusing on developing students' confidence, safety awareness and responsibility when riding a bike.

Throughout the programme, students have learnt how to check that a bike is safe and ready to ride, identify and fix problems, and correctly fit a helmet for maximum protection. Lessons were focussed on riding with control and developing safe habits both individually and in group settings.

Students practised essential road safety skills, such as signalling intentions, checking for hazards and safely reacting to other road users. They also learnt strategies for safely passing obstacles and maintaining awareness of their surroundings while riding.

A key focus of the Bike Education programme is promoting responsible and cooperative behaviour. Students learnt that accidents can happen to anyone, and that by being alert, respectful, and prepared they can help keep themselves and others safe.

With the summer holidays approaching, many students are excited to spend time outdoors, exploring their neighbourhoods and enjoying the freedom of riding safely with friends and family. The skills gained through Bike Education will help ensure that every ride is a safe and enjoyable experience.

By the end of the programme, Year Five students are equipped with the skills and knowledge to ride safely, confidently, and courteously in a variety of situations within their local community and beyond.

Brett McQueen and Callum Glassford
Junior School Physical Education Coordinators



A Journey of Growth and Adventure - Eildon Camp 2025

This year's Eildon Camp once again offered students a rich mix of adventure, challenge, and connection to a journey that continues from Year Three through to Year Ten.

Year Three students began their camp journey with wide eyes and open hearts, taking their first steps into outdoor life and learning what it means to be part of the Eildon experience.

Year Four deepened their understanding of place and culture, engaging with an Aboriginal Elder to learn about Taungurung Country and the importance of connection to land.

For Year Five students, adventure came with plenty of mud and laughter as they conquered Heartbreak Hill, cooked damper on a stick over the fire, and learned that teamwork sometimes means helping each other out of a muddy bog hole!

Year Six embraced the water by canoeing on the dam, sharing stories around the fire, and cruising Lake Eildon on the school barge.

Our Year Seven cohort took part in a true rite of passage, for many their very first camp at Eildon. They slept under canvas and discovered the rhythm of life outdoors in their new school.

Year Eight students met every challenge with enthusiasm - rafting the Big River, tackling the High Ropes Course, and collaborating on camp initiatives that built leadership and trust.

The Year Nine programme pushed boundaries further, with rock climbing in the Cathedral Ranges and solo navigation challenges back on the school property, fostering resilience and independence.

And finally, our Year Ten's returned to Eildon for their last time, reflecting on their entire camp journey and celebrating how far they've come.

From muddy boots to campfire stories, from first timers to final reflections, Eildon Camp reminds us once again why outdoor education is such an important part of our school. It is more than just a camp, it is education in the outdoors, and a journey of growth that forms friendships and connections that last a lifetime.

Paul Crouch
Camp Manager



The First Steps

Excitement and curiosity filled the air as the Year Three students embarked on their very first Outdoor Education experience at PEGS' Eildon Camp. For many, it was their first time away from home and, like the first wobbly push on a bike without training wheels, these steps were filled with a wonderful mix of excitement, curiosity, and just a touch of nerves.

The two-day Camp Discovery experience was designed to gently introduce students to camp life, helping them learn how to organise their belongings, settle into shared routines, work together, and approach new situations with curiosity. Through fun, hands-on activities, they began to build confidence and appreciate the natural world as they will continue their camp experiences in future years.

From the moment they arrived, students were immersed in the camp routines. The first activities, *Let's Get Ready* and *Cabin Hunt*, introduced them to their accommodation spaces, and a variety of camp practices such as unpacking, organising, and preparing for adventure. This is an empowering introduction to independence, showing them that being organised can make the adventure even more enjoyable. Laughter echoed through the trees as groups worked together to complete each task, and to prepare their cabin for the night.

During *Student Ranges*, the focus shifted to the natural environment. Guided by staff, students explored the outdoor spaces around camp, learning to observe and appreciate the plants, sounds, and wildlife that make the Eildon landscape unique. Creativity took centre stage during *Camp Hats*, an activity that encouraged expressiveness and individuality. Students proudly designed and decorated their own hats, each one a colourful reflection of their personality and not only a keepsake to remember their first camp experience but to use each year they return.

The final activity, *The First Step*, reflected the spirit of the entire camp. Students made their mark and symbolised the beginning of their PEGS Outdoor Education experience, which they will continue to explore and visit in years to come.

The first steps of their Outdoor Education journey have now been taken; steady, adventurous, and wonderfully theirs. This is just the beginning, and we couldn't be more excited to watch the students return next year.

Sarah Skehan
Outdoor Education Teacher, Eildon Camp

The Final Days of Year Twelve

The final two days of Year Twelve will remain a highlight in our PEGS journey.

Celebration Day started off with Mr Cashman reading a comical mock bulletin, reminding us of the fun we have had and the things we will remember about one another. Activities on the oval followed; giant bubble soccer, sumo wrestling and the dunk tank, to name a few. The fancy dress theme was 'G', so Grinches, Grandmas and Gangsters abounded. Burritos and burgers were our lunch (as well as enormous ice creams topped with everything), and the annual tutor group tug-o-war competition topped off the day.

The next day a Colours assembly was followed by morning tea. It was a good time to laugh with our friends and parents, reminisce about the good times and discuss our aspirations, which PEGS has always supported us with. We then headed to our final Church Service, farewelled Reverend Munro, and thanked her for her amazing time at PEGS. On leaving, we received the most heart-warming 'Best Wishes' cards from the Year Six students that were wholly appreciated.

The Valedictory Dinner was the final event in our PEGS journey. The keynote speaker, Brendan Schwab, discussed gender equality in sport, reflecting some of the key values we leave PEGS with. Ella, the 2025 Valedictorian, ended by sparking nostalgia in the Class of 2025, but stressing that we must look ahead to future adventures, rather than look back. I am sure we are all keen to start our new lives, but we will take a bit of PEGS with us.

Lloyd
Class of 2025, Larkin Centre





Celebrating Our Young Poets

Children have a natural affinity for poetry that's beautiful to observe. Before children even understand all the words, they respond to the music of language. Nursery rhymes, chants, and silly songs stick because the patterns are satisfying. There's something almost physical about the pleasure of rhyme and rhythm and they love nonsense, made-up words, and breaking rules. Poetry says "yes, you can do that with language."

Poetry doesn't always explain feelings, it embodies them. Children, who often experience big emotions they can't fully articulate, recognise themselves in this. Writing poetry is a way of processing what happens to them: grief, joy, confusion, wonder. The act of shaping words helps them understand what they're going through. There is something satisfying about the sound of words, their rhythm, how they fit together. Poetry lets you play with language as material, like a sculptor with clay.

So, it is not surprising that several of our students entered their poetry into the ISV Student Poetry Competition, now in its 6th year and open to all schools in Victoria. The topic was Gratitude - to appreciate, reflect and express thanks. In the Years Five and Six section, Cathy, Year Five, was a finalist with her poem entitled Gratitude for Country. Georgie, Lana, Scarlett and Inara, Year Five, all received Honourable Mentions for their poems. In the Prep to Two section, Khadija, Year One, was a Finalist for her poem So Thankful, and Sanvi, Year Two received an Honourable Mention.

At Assembly, Lucinda, Anaya and Rosie, Year Three read their collaborative anthem on PEGS, a riff on the school values that were discussed in class. Trishika and Zoe, Year Six, read their poems with deeply personal references and Savannah, Year Six, delivered hers as a performance piece, with clear, precise diction and jackhammer urgency.

What strikes me most about these achievements is not just the individual recognition, but what it reveals about our school community. When children feel safe enough to express their deepest thoughts, when they see poetry as a legitimate tool for making sense of their world, and when they're willing to share that work publicly, something important is happening.

These young poets remind us that creative expression isn't just about winning competitions - it's about finding your voice, trusting it, and knowing that others will listen. We're proud of every student who picked up a pen and tried to capture something true.

Christine Hallman
Head of Section, Junior School (girls)

Can We Afford to Stop Being Curious?

Ever since humans started the process of learning and inquiry and developed interest, wonder and curiosity in their surroundings, people have continued to ask questions. Curiosity remains a vital disposition in 2025, arguably more than ever, as technology such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) develops apace, as though to outrun our very frontiers of knowledge and understanding.

The traditional 'go to' questions, (the clutch of 'w' words; what, who, when, where, why, and the 'ring in' how), have helped us gain understanding. Answers to these questions can unlock facts and pave the way toward knowledge from which can follow control, and then mastery. Is there a role for this age-old type of human 'curiosity' as our school community of learners grapples with AI?

PEGS' teachers and students are exploring Chat GPT, which almost instantly furnishes an answer to any question we choose to pose. If we feel curious, we simply type in our question, and the answer materialises. Does this mean that the period of being curious, when we have identified the point of wonder but do not yet know the answer, is shrinking to the point of extinction, with virtually no effort required on our part?

AI may be fast but is it reliable? Have we abrogated our erstwhile human trait of hungry curiosity? And if so, what does that mean?

Earlier this year, Thinking Seminar guest, Adam Spencer, explained that he uses ChatGPT to get 'an answer' but then further interrogates that information, which can be quite generic, to verify it against other sources. Whilst he sees AI as helpful, he exercises a healthy scepticism. In short, his curiosity is not sated by the rapid response provided by the technology; it is in fact awakened with new inquiries being launched.

I'd suggest that we, as teachers and students should copy Adam's approach to explore and experiment but remain resolutely curious – maintaining a robust thirst for confirmation of the very process that we're using to satisfy our initial curiosity. It's very meta but it keeps us in touch and in control, exercising our intrinsically human role of continuing to be curious in our quest for answers and truth.

Caroline Horton Andrews
Head of Section, Gottlieb House



Student Leadership

This term, the students of McNab House selected their House leaders for 2026. The selection process involved each candidate establishing a record of their contribution, articulating their vision, and then explaining their strategy for enacting that vision. A 'Q&A' session allowed all students to develop an informed view of each prospective leader's aims and strengths. Armed with this knowledge, students then voted to select their 2026 House leaders.

The 2026 House leaders are our most senior middle school leaders, and from their number will be selected our representative on the Student Executive. One of their most important responsibilities is to model our values of Respect, Excellence, Accountability, Curiosity and Heart. They will also run meetings, lead assemblies and coordinate support for charitable organisations, as they lead their House and all of the students at McNab House.

As leaders, these sixteen Year Ten students will be joined by two Form Captains, per form, per year level, per semester. This means that, taken together, 96 McNab House students will have a formal opportunity to develop their leadership skills in 2026. But the fact that these positions are available every semester, in every year from Year Seven to Ten, means students have many opportunities to lead.

We look to these students to show leadership in their roles, but we look to all of our students to show leadership in their daily activities, acting with Respect, pursuing Excellence, taking Accountability for their actions, approaching their studies with Curiosity, and showing Heart and compassion in their endeavours and dealings with others.

Anthony Simmons

Head of Section, McNab House



Understanding Our Creative Voice



This year's art journey has been a challenging yet exciting and incredibly rewarding experience for our Year Twelve cohort. Throughout the year, we have pushed ourselves creatively, developing our individual skills while simultaneously growing stronger together as a group. From the early brainstorming sessions to the final refining stages, we walked with each other and bonded through shared struggles, late-night breakthroughs, sudden revelations, and the joy of seeing each other's ideas come to life.

One of the highlights of the year was the way our cohort came together to discuss concepts, techniques, and inspiration, whether through the more formal critique presentations or random creative conversations throughout the year. Each of us approached our work from different perspectives, and seeing these ideas slowly emerge from an abstract thought to finished artworks made the studio a vibrant and collaborative space.

Our end of year exhibition, the VCE Visual Arts Viewing, was the culmination of this journey. It provided us the opportunity to showcase our artworks to the school and broader community after months of dedication, experimentation, and plenty of late nights. It was really exciting to see so many people attend the Opening Night and share in the joy of what we have achieved; from the architectural models illuminated in the display cabinets, to the blockbuster films in the Lecture Theatre and the large canvases on the gallery walls. It was a thrill to see.

It was also wonderful to see the community engage with the People's Choice Award. This is an opportunity for all who attended the exhibition on Opening Night and subsequent days to vote for their favourite artwork across Art, Visual Communication Design and Media. So many votes were cast. Big congratulations to Ashley for VCD, Luca for Media, and Ella for Art. This recognition reflected not only their personal commitment, but the creativity and hard work seen across the cohort, showing that each award was incredibly well deserved.

And of course, a heartfelt thank you to our teachers, Mr Brown, Mr Byrne and Ms Huseyin for their guidance, support, and encouragement throughout the year. Their enthusiasm and belief in our creative potential has greatly helped to shape this journey and pushed us to achieve our very best.

This year has been a testament to imagination, perseverance, and resilience. We leave with a deeper understanding of our own creative voices and a shared pride in what we accomplished together.

Sophia
Class of 2025, Larkin Centre



Stepping Up to Year Ten

As another year at PEGS comes to a close, the Year Nine students are preparing to step up into Year Ten. For many, the first three years of middle school have flown by, and moving on up to the Larkin Centre is not far away. As we look ahead to what next year may bring, we are reminded to make the most of our time here at PEGS.

Year Ten introduces a range of new and exciting opportunities, both academically and in leadership. Recently, the 2026 House Captains were announced at assembly. They will have the opportunity to represent their Houses throughout the year, presenting a chance to develop their leadership and speaking skills, and to leave a mark on the middle school. There is also the opportunity to study a VCE subject in Year Ten. The process involves an interview with one of the coordinator team to discuss what path we might be interested in with our chosen subject. This opportunity will help to build good habits and gain experience that will support us in the VCE years.

While we know that there is still much work to do, we can take confidence from what we have learned this year, knowing our teachers have prepared us well for the challenges that await when we walk through the gates at the beginning of 2026.

Elliot
Year Nine, Gottliebse House



The Honour of Captaincy

To be the School Captains for 2026 is a great honour. Being able to represent the school is something we are both very excited about, and we already look forward to the year to come. We cannot wait to get started!

Of course, our opportunity to lead wouldn't be the same without the work of the previous school captains, Mia and Simon. Their work is something we aspire to, and they've given us a great foundation to build on. They have significantly contributed to the school community and we are very grateful for their work. We wish them the best of luck for their future endeavours.

As your School Captains for 2026, we are very eager to represent PEGS at every level and work closely with students of all ages throughout the school. Entering the new year, we hope to make our final mark as Year Twelve students and create a legacy that will be remembered in years to come.

Harry and Jennifer
2026 School Captains





A Brief History of the Chinese and Multicultural Orchestra

The PEGS Chinese Ensemble was the first group of its kind to be formed at a secondary school level in Australia. Established in 1991 under the direction of Dr Yang Mu and Mr Wang Xiao-Ping, it has been an important part of the school's musical life for more than three decades.

In the past fifteen years, the ensemble was guided by Mr Pangeng Shen, an erhu player, and Mr Zhen-Ting Wang, a multi-instrumentalist best known for his expertise in the sheng, a polyphonic, mouth-blown reed instrument. Since 2018, the ensemble has been led by its current conductor, Mr Dong Ma, also an erhu specialist.

Through both ensemble rehearsals and private lessons, students are able to learn a wide range of traditional Chinese instruments, including the erhu (Chinese violin), zhongruan and daruan (a tenor and bass version of a guitar-like instrument), pipa (lute), guzheng (a zither-style instrument), yangqin (a dulcimer-style instrument) and dizi (Chinese flute). Their repertoire spans Chinese classical, folk and traditional works, as well as soundtrack music from the Chinese-speaking film world. The ensemble regularly performs at school concerts, information nights, cultural events and celebrations curated by the PEGS Language Department.

In 2023, the ensemble began an exciting new chapter. Responding to the increasingly intercultural nature of contemporary Australian arts, it expanded its scope to welcome musicians from diverse non-Western traditions. Two new teachers joined Mr Ma: Dr Max Rudd, a specialist in Brazilian guitar and Latin music ensembles, and Dr Nela Trifković, an expert in Balkan music, Bosnian Sevdalinka and Sephardic Romance songs.

Since then, the group has presented works celebrating musical dialogue between Chinese and Mediterranean traditions, including Greek–Mandarin folk medleys and original instrumental pieces. Year Ten student Raphael, played a key role in this development, being the first new member and introducing bouzouki, an instrument of his cultural heritage, to the ensemble. In 2024, this intercultural work was profiled in Neos Kosmos, a Greek-Australian press publication, highlighting its significance for PEGS' diverse community and intercultural creative education more broadly.

Looking ahead, the ensemble aims to explore additional cultural traditions while embracing a more interdisciplinary approach, integrating music with multilingual poetry, movement, visual projection and more. Mr Ma describes the group as “a window into other creative traditions, and through this, other ways of knowing and learning,” welcoming students of all backgrounds, instruments and levels of experience. Rehearsals take place on Thursday afternoons, and new participants are warmly encouraged to join this evolving community of creativity and friendship.

Dr Nela Trifkovic and Dong Ma
Music Teachers

Biology in Barwon Heads

In October, students studying VCE Units 1 and 2 Biology went to the Barwon Heads Bluff to investigate a rocky shore ecosystem. Students met with field experts and discussed the abiotic and biotic factors present in the area, as well as the different types of adaptations that enable animals to survive in the harsh environment of the intertidal zone. Students then used a transect line and quadrant sampling to examine the abundance and distribution of different species in the limestone platform. They also had the opportunity to observe different microhabitats in the basalt boulder field and examine how these were advantageous for the organisms living within.

After returning from the excursion, students put their field practice into a written report where they had to answer questions and show their results in kite diagrams. These diagrams showed both the density and frequency of different organisms across the limestone platform.

The excursion allowed students to gain a deeper understanding of how various organisms have different relationships within a single ecosystem, while also providing an opportunity to see what field research is like. It was both an educational and inspiring day for all who attended.

Natalia and Reet
Year Ten students, McNab House



Visiting the Holocaust Museum

In October, the Year Ten cohort visited the Melbourne Holocaust Museum as part of our World War II learning for History.

The day began with an overview of what occurred in Germany and surrounding countries during World War II and the impact on Jewish people, along with presenting us with unfathomable figures of Jewish people that had been affected during the Holocaust.

We were then led to see a plethora of replica artefacts. Some of these artefacts included concentration camp bracelets engraved with numbers, fake IDs, and letters to Jewish workers who had been fired for being Jewish. These artefacts helped us to understand the gravity of the repercussions of being Jewish during this time.

Following this, an intern from Austria guided us through the museum section. This section displayed Jewish life in many forms, from prior to the war, during the war and then more specifically, the concentration camps. The artefacts from the concentration camps exemplified the true pain and suffering the Jewish people endured.

The most impactful part of the excursion was a survivor of the holocaust talking about her experience as a Jewish baby. She discussed how her parents gave her away to a German family until the war was over, conveying the hardships that came with having to keep such a large secret at such a young age for her and her seven foster siblings. This gave us a true appreciation of the measures taken to survive during the Holocaust.

The Holocaust Museum was certainly one of the most powerful and memorable excursions.

Chase
Year Ten, Gottlieb House

Pre-Reading: The Secret to Confident and Capable Readers

This term, our Year Four students are diving into *Holes* by Louis Sachar, while Year Three students are exploring *The One and Only Ivan* by Katherine Applegate. Both novels offer rich themes and thought-provoking ideas that stretch readers to think critically and empathetically.

For many students, especially those with individual learning needs, pre-reading or listening to these stories beforehand has been a game changer. Having prior exposure to the storyline reduces anxiety and helps students enter lessons feeling confident and ready to engage.

Just as rehearsing helps a performer deliver their best, engaging with a text before studying it equips students with background knowledge to analyse and discuss meaningfully. Technology has further levelled the playing field. Listening to an audiobook, watching a film, or reading aloud together makes stories more accessible for developing readers who learn best through hearing or seeing language in action.

As Mia shared, *“I remembered the part about the family curse from the movie, it said the same thing as the book!”* Seeing and hearing the story first helped her connect ideas once reading began. Similarly, Maeve reflected, *“Watching the movie helped me see what the boys and camp looked like, but the book described them more.”*

Supporting students to access a class text before studying it isn't “cheating”. It's smart preparation. Pre-reading builds confidence, supports inclusion, and turns reading into a shared success.

Pre-reading isn't a spoiler - it's a superpower.

Lisa Kernich
Individual Needs Coordinator , Junior School (girls)

Finding the Green Sheep

During Semester Two, the Year Nine Drama - Flipping the Narrative class performed *Where is the Green Sheep?* for the Prep students who had voted it their favourite story. The performance was a huge success for us and the Preps had a blast.

At the start of this semester, Ms Atkins gave us an assignment to prepare and create an adaptation of the book *Where is the Green Sheep?*. We were given full creative control of how we wanted the play to look, sound and feel. As a class we used playmaking techniques to create our production. The process started by researching possible ideas for characters and sets, then moved towards brainstorming and collaborating on our findings, improvising scenes, determining character interactions, writing and editing scripts, applying our knowledge in stagecraft (lights, sets and costumes) and finally rehearsing our performance.

Creating and performing the production for the Prep students was both educational and fun.

Sophie
Year Nine student, McNab House



A Strong Voice: Celebrating a Successful Year of Debating

Debating is more than just a competition of words — it's a skill-building journey that teaches students how to think critically, speak confidently, and listen respectfully. Through structured argument and teamwork, debaters learn to research complex topics, form logical arguments, and communicate their ideas clearly and persuasively.

This year has been an outstanding one for our school's debating program. Students from all year levels have demonstrated dedication, teamwork, and courage as they stepped up to the podium to tackle challenging topics ranging from technology and ethics to global issues and social change. As well as participating in the Debater's Association of Victoria Schools Competition, students were able to compete in a range of public speaking competitions, including the Evatt Trophy, Model United Nations, PESA Competition, Ainger Peck and Rostrum Voice of Youth.

Highlights from the season include the following teams who made the Debater's Association of Victoria Finals Series, as well as students who won individual awards for their speaking skills. A special mention must be made to C Grade McNab Team 1 who won ten consecutive debates to beat 353 teams in the state, taking out the prestigious Grand Final title.

Team Awards:

- A Grade (Year Twelve) Octo Finalists: Crystal, Arushi, Aaron, Eason, Madeline, Sejal, Simon, Max
- C Grade (Year Ten) Grand Final winners: Abigail, Ashley and Lakithi
- C Grade (Year Ten) Quarter Finalists: Reet, Olivia, Alice, Kisali, and Matea
- D Grade (Year Nine) Playoff Finalists: Elisa, Methuki, Aadya, Lucy and Angela

Individual Awards:

- A Grade (Year Twelve) Swannie Award for the highest-scoring speaker in the Essendon Region: Eason
- D Grade (Year Nine) Swannie Award for the highest-scoring speaker in the Essendon Region: Aadya
- Year Eight Finalist Rostrum Voice of Youth Competition: Medhansh

As the season wraps up, we look forward to another year of lively arguments, thoughtful discussions, and confident voices leading the way.

Hannah Bentley
Public Speaking Coordinator, McNab House

A Convention of Conservationists



Seven Conservation Club students participated in the Victorian Secondary and Tertiary Fighting Extinction Convention at Melbourne Zoo. On arrival, we were given half an hour to explore the zoo, then we decorated our table to display our school's conservation clubs' main campaigns, namely the Eastern Lowland Gorillas, the Miyawaki Forest and the PEGS Conservation Camp.

After an introduction from zoo staff, which included two "real-life" bandicoots, each school had the opportunity to walk around and see everyone's different campaigns and displays. We split into two groups, which allowed some of us to host at our table, and the others to explore. Our table captivated many schools due to the cool posters created by students from McNab and Gotty House. A fun video created by Larkin Centre Conservation Club students, interactive slideshow trivia and amazing hosts behind the table also informed and entertained students and staff passing by.

We had the chance to swap over in our groups and then we teamed back up for more time to walk around the zoo.

Other than the swooping seagulls that wanted to eat our chips during lunchtime, the day was a super fun and informative experience to be a part of. We'd like to thank Ms Sanza and Mr Scott for supporting our school's conservation campaigns and for supporting us during the convention.

On behalf of Conservation Club,
Hannah, Jonathan, Hamish, and Sienna
McNab and Gottliebse House students



Fireworks Exhibition

On November 14th, VCE Art and Design students from PEGS attended the opening of the Fireworks Exhibition at the historic Crown Street Stables. Hosted annually by the Incinerator Gallery, this exhibition showcases the work of high-achieving VCE Art and Design students from across the Moonee Valley region. To be selected is a huge honour, with students competing against entries from the entire region.

Remarkably, this year we had an astounding 12 PEGS students selected among the 27 exhibitors! A big congratulations to Katina, Jasmine, Ashley, Elly, Eli, Isabella, Leo, Ella, Elin, Ally, Janice, and Emi.

Not only is this a tremendous achievement for PEGS, setting a record for the school, it is also a testament to the hard work and dedication of every single one of our Art and Design students. All those late nights and stressful moments spent frantically meeting deadlines paid off, as we pushed our creative boundaries and produced captivating work we can truly be proud of.

Walking around the gallery was a bittersweet end to a year-long creative journey. This year has been incredibly fun, surrounded by a cohort of like-minded students whose shared passion for creating not only brought us together, but also pushed us to grow. The support everyone showed for each other through the highs and lows of the year built a community that felt like family, and these experiences will stay with us for years to come.

On behalf of the exhibiting students, thank you to Mr Brown and Mr Byrne, who were more than just teachers. They not only guided and supported us through this two-year journey, but also consistently inspired us to be our best and create work beyond what we believed was possible. None of this would have been achievable without their commitment.

Finally, a massive congratulations to Elin Oveisi for her stunning artwork 'Tabriz, Iran, 2010', which took home the top art prize of the evening, The Fireworks Art Award. After witnessing her spend countless hours working tirelessly in the studio, we can say this recognition was more than well deserved.

Leo
Class of 2025, Larkin Centre





Chess Champions

Chess has long been woven into the fabric of PEGS culture. While some view it as a simple board game, for our students it is something far deeper; a clash of minds, a dance of strategy, and a true battle of wits. Chess enables our players to develop discipline, perseverance, and an ability to remain calm under pressure - values that embody both a skilled competitor and a PEGS student. Across 2025, our community competed in multiple tournaments, steadily building towards the ultimate test of excellence - the State Finals. Along the way, students formed new friendships, created shared memories, and strengthened ties with teammates and competitors alike, deepening the social and collaborative spirit at the heart of PEGS Chess.

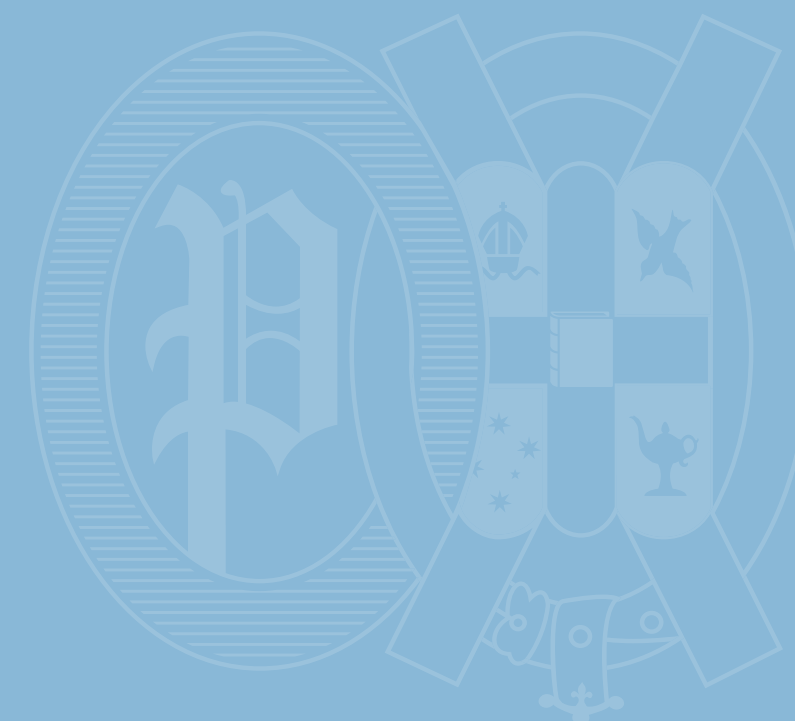
At the Secondary Open Finals, Wilbur (Year Seven) achieved an extraordinary eight wins out of nine games, an exceptional result in a competition where no participant managed a perfect score. The tournament was tight right to the final round, with the last deciding match finishing around 3:30pm. When the outcome was finally confirmed, the victory felt both exhilarating and deeply deserved.

The success continued at the Girls State Finals, where our PEGS girls chess squad celebrated a hard-earned victory that truly came down to the finest of margins. Claire (Year Nine) delivered an exceptional performance, winning all seven of her matches to secure a flawless result and earning her Player of the Tournament trophy. Her personal success, combined with the collective effort of every teammate, propelled PEGS to the top. When the result was announced, the pride in the room was unmistakable; pride not just in the trophy, but in the dedication and unity behind the win.

Reaching the State Finals alone was an achievement, reflecting months of qualifying events that demanded resilience and consistency. Time and again, students returned ready to refine their skills, support one another, and proudly represent PEGS. Throughout this journey, their commitment never wavered, and their sense of belonging to PEGS Chess and to our school community only grew stronger. The connections built between year levels, between new players and veterans, between individuals united by the game, will last well beyond the final move on the board.

2025 has been a remarkable year for chess at PEGS, defined by progress, passion, and perseverance. As we look ahead, we do so with optimism and excitement, imagining what new triumphs 2026 may bring.

Anna Kaloudis
Chess Coordinator, McNab House



A Celebration of Curiosity and Scientific Thinking

The Year Five Science Fair was a vibrant celebration of inquiry, creativity and scientific understanding. Families and staff were warmly welcomed into the Year Five classrooms to explore an impressive range of student-led investigations, each demonstrating the boys' growing confidence as young scientists.

Throughout the morning, visitors moved from display to display, engaging with groups as they explained the purpose of their experiments, the science underpinning their investigations and the conclusions they had drawn from their results. The students spoke with clarity and pride, showcasing not only their knowledge but also the collaborative skills they had refined throughout the term. Their ability to confidently communicate findings, interpret data and respond to questions was a highlight for many attending.

Each project was supported by a Google Site the students created to accompany their display boards. These digital presentations included hypotheses, procedures, tables, graphs and photographic evidence, providing families with a comprehensive look at the scientific process behind every experiment. The high standard of work produced across the cohort was evident, reflecting both the students' dedication and their enthusiasm for hands-on learning.

The atmosphere during the Expo was one of genuine excitement. Classrooms buzzed with conversation, curiosity and celebration as students shared their discoveries with their families and peers. The event not only showcased the students' scientific achievements, but also highlighted their hard work, creativity and passion for exploring the world through experimentation.

Lisa-Marie Fiorenza
Classroom Teacher, Junior School (boys)



Fire Rescue Victoria Visit

The Junior School (boys) Prep students were treated to a special incursion about fire safety. Four local firefighters visited our school to teach the students how to stay safe around fires and what to do in an emergency. Everyone gathered eagerly to listen and learn from the firefighters, who dressed in their protective gear and brought along some of their special equipment.

The firefighters talked about the importance of having working smoke alarms at home and making sure families have a fire escape plan. They also reminded the students never to play with matches or lighters and to always tell an adult if they see something dangerous. The children learned the important rule of "Crawl down low, Go Go Go" and they practised crawling low under smoke to stay safe.

The Preps were thrilled to explore some of the firefighter's tools and even saw the fire truck up close. They asked lots of curious questions and listened carefully to the answers.

The incursion was both fun and educational, helping the Preps understand how to prevent fires and what to do if one happens. The students left feeling proud of their new knowledge and grateful to the firefighters for keeping our community safe. It was a memorable time filled with learning, laughter, and a strong message about safety. Thank you fire fighters.

Ebony Paulka
Prep Coordinator, Junior School (boys)



Junior House Athletics Day

Our Year Three – Six students took to the Keilor Athletics track for the PEGS Junior House Athletics Day, and what a day it was! While the weather was far from perfect, with strong winds keeping everyone on their toes, our students rose to the challenge with incredible energy, effort, and House spirit.

The girls' session ran in the morning, with students giving their all across a range of track and novelty events. Congratulations to Limerock House, who claimed the overall win for the morning!

Our Champion Trophy winners were:

Year Three: Ciela

Year Four: Ava

Year Five: Cathy

Year Six: Kallista

After lunch, the boys hit the field, continuing the excitement and showcasing some outstanding performances. Rose House finished on top, completing an incredible clean sweep of all three House events this year!

Congratulations to our Champion Trophy winners:

Year Three: Nelson

Year Four: Joe

Year Five: Thevindu

Year Six: Henry

A huge special mention goes to Antonio, who broke the Year Six 800m record and now holds all four Primary 800m records, as well as setting the inaugural 400m record. An extraordinary effort!

A big thank you to all staff for their support and to our wonderful parents who came along to cheer from the sidelines. Despite the wind, the spirit and teamwork on display made it another fantastic PEGS community day!

Callum Glassford

PE Coordinator, Junior School (boys)



A Talent for Maths

This year, Junior School students were strongly represented in the annual Mathematics Talent Quest (MTQ), coordinated by the Mathematics Association of Victoria. Participants demonstrated impressive commitment and curiosity as they developed research questions, conducted mathematical investigations, and presented their findings with clarity. The variety of topics explored highlighted students' creativity and diverse interests.

Many students achieved Credit, Distinction, or High Distinction results for their MTQ projects, reflecting the high standard of mathematical thinking across the cohort. Twenty-three students attended the MTQ Awards Ceremony at The University of Melbourne to receive their High Distinction certificates, with several also earning National and Special Awards. National Award recipients included Year Two student Rafael for his project *AFL Grand Final Prediction* (Participation); Year Three student Raaghav for *What Is the Safest Aircraft?* (Commended); Year Five student Inara for *Meat or Plants?* (Prize Winner); and Year Six students Bodhi, Anuk, and Yuthmin for their collaborative project *Carbon-Neutral School Drop-Off* (Prize Winner). Special Awards were presented to Nandini, who received the University of Melbourne Award for *How Weather Affects the Sports Kids Play*; Jimmy, who earned the Kumon Australia Award for *Hidden Maths Behind WORDLE*; and Vivaan, who received the AMSI Award for *Maths on the Fast Track*.

Further achievements included strong participation in the Australian Maths Competition, where 242 of our most able young mathematicians from Years Three to Six tackled challenging problem-solving questions with excellent results. Students also represented the school at Maths Games Days, with 32 students from the upper grades enjoying collaborative problem-solving and achieving commendable results. Finally, Maths Week was celebrated across both Junior School campuses, featuring *Times Table Rockstar* house competitions, problem-solving relays, maths trails, coding workshops, and maths-themed dance activities.

Congratulations to all students for their commitment to mathematical inquiry and excellence. Their achievements reflect the depth of talent within our school community.

Jillian Fenton and Jacqueline Benson
Junior School Mathematics Coordinators



Moonee Valley Young People's Committee

Being a part of the Moonee Valley Young People's Committee has been a highly rewarding and enriching experience. Joining the committee gave me a platform to represent young voices in the wider community and contribute to real change. From our very first meeting, I felt empowered to share my opinions and collaborate with other passionate young people who wanted to make Moonee Valley a better, more inclusive place for everyone.

Throughout my time on the committee, I learned a great deal about leadership, teamwork, and community engagement. We worked on projects that addressed important issues such as mental health, sustainability, youth safety, and access to opportunities. Seeing our ideas turn into real actions and programs was incredibly fulfilling.

Beyond the projects, what stood out to me most was the sense of belonging. The committee brought together a diverse group of individuals with different experiences and perspectives, and together we built strong friendships and mutual respect. The support from Moonee Valley City Council staff also helped me grow in confidence and understand how local government works. My experience on the Moonee Valley Young People's Committee has inspired me to stay involved in community leadership and continue advocating for young people's voices in decision-making. It's been a journey of growth, connection, and empowerment that I'll always value.

The Wylak: Young and Thriving resources developed by Divya and the Moonee Valley Young People's Committee can be accessed at <https://mvcc.vic.gov.au/youth/youth-support-and-resources/#young-and-thriving>.

Divya
Year Nine, McNab House



Learning Through Collaboration



Throughout this year Year Eight students continued to build academic skills while consolidating their collaboration skills. One approach that strongly supported this was the use of study buddies during private study sessions.

The study buddies programme encouraged students to work collaboratively in a structured and purposeful way. Students worked alongside a peer to discuss tasks, share ideas, and clarify their understanding. This collaborative approach helped them learn how to listen respectfully, communicate clearly, and work together towards shared learning goals.

Collaboration with a study buddy enabled students to break down challenging tasks, check their understanding of instructions, and organise their work more effectively. Explaining ideas to a peer and engaging in thoughtful discussion helped deepen understanding and strengthened learning outcomes. Students also developed confidence in asking questions and contributing to learning conversations.

In addition, the study buddy approach promoted positive learning behaviours. Students were more likely to remain focused, stay engaged, and use their time productively when collaborating with a peer. It also supported the development of key skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and mutual responsibility.

From a wellbeing perspective, collaborative learning helped reduce feelings of stress and isolation. By learning together, students felt supported and more confident in their learning. Overall, the study buddy approach reinforced the value of collaboration and supported students' academic progress and personal growth throughout the year.

Jennifer Adams
Acting Year Level Coordinator, Gottlieb House



Elements of Expression

This year's biennial Junior School (girls) Art Show was a vibrant celebration of creativity, diversity, and artistic growth. Families, staff, and students filled the gallery space with excitement as they explored a colourful showcase of artworks created by our Prep to Year Six students. The exhibition was a wonderful success, highlighting both the talent of our young artists and the rich learning embedded across the Visual Arts program.

Throughout the year, students explored the elements of Art - line, shape, form, colour, texture, space, and value - while also learning about influential artists, their techniques, and what inspired them. This theme allowed students to build strong foundational skills while discovering their own artistic voice and identity.

The exhibition featured a vibrant range of media and traditions. Visitors moved from colourful clay cake sculptures to soft chalk pastels, from bold Pop Art pieces to gentle watercolour landscapes inspired by Asian ink-brush painting. This balance of technical learning and imaginative expression showcased the diversity of approaches embraced by our students.

Cultural inspiration was another highlight of the show. Students responded to Van Gogh's swirling skies, Yayoi Kusama's joyful dots, Henri Rousseau's whimsical jungles, Georgia O'Keeffe's floral forms, Chinese brushwork, Pop Art icons, and Australian influences such as Margaret Preston, First Nations stories and symbols, and Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly series. These global and local inspirations brought richness and depth to the exhibition.

Most importantly, the Art Show highlighted the vital role Visual Arts plays in a child's development. Each artwork revealed growing confidence, self-expression, problem-solving, and an emerging understanding of the world. Whether shaping a first clay pot or developing sophisticated shading and composition, students grew not only as artists but as thinkers and individuals.

Thank you to our school community for supporting this special event. We are incredibly proud of the creativity, courage, and hard work that shaped our 2025 Art Show.

Jean Lyons and Genevieve Jones
Art Teachers, Junior School (girls)



Encore! PEGS Students Taking the Stage

Throughout Term Four, as students prepare for examinations, early commencement and the impending summer break, the PEGS music department's event programme has continued to thrive across all three campuses. An incredible array of talent has been displayed in all areas, featuring student musicians of all ages exercising their craft and creating magic on the stage.

Returning from the September holidays, Junior and Senior students put on a stunning outdoor showcase at the re-invented FoPEGS Fair, with a diverse range of groups that included the Year Three and Four Choir, Suzuki Violin Ensemble, a Year Six Rock Band, the JSG Dancers, Junior, Middle School and Senior Concert Bands, as well as Audacity, Chindamo Jazz Ensemble, Stage Band the Music Technology Ensemble.

The String and Piano department held their final concerts for 2025 in mid-October, while the Suzuki team also held a series of online presentations prior to their final Graduation Concert, which saw our young violinists and pianists receive their well earned certificates.

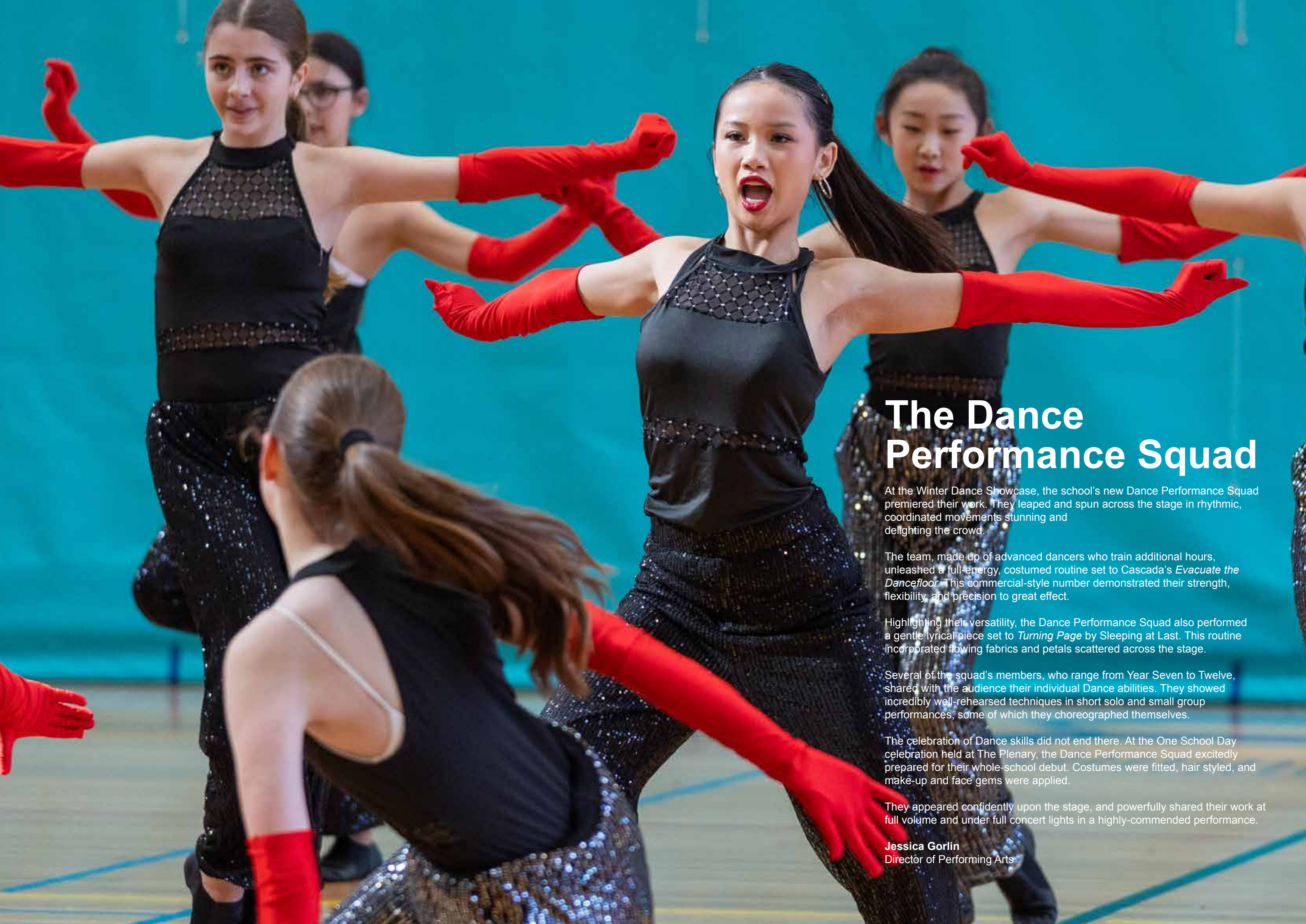
In early November, the Junior Brass and Percussion instrumental students presented a programme consisting of a variety of styles and genres to a very full, appreciative audience at Limerock Hall. Following this, the Year Two String classes from Essendon and Moonee Ponds delivered a heartwarming concert to families and staff in the Auditorium at Keilor East.

To close out our 2025 season, we moved over to the Ian Morton Centre for the Junior Celebration Concert, before presenting the renowned PEGS Carol Service at St Paul's Cathedral in the final week of term. It was a stunning evening, bringing the community together in celebration and song.

Congratulations to all Junior and Senior vocalists, instrumentalists, and staff, who have made 2025 such a special year in the Music Department. We would also like to thank the PEGS community for your continued support and look forward to sharing an exciting programme with you again in 2026.

Andrew Leach
Acting Director of Music





The Dance Performance Squad

At the Winter Dance Showcase, the school's new Dance Performance Squad premiered their work. They leaped and spun across the stage in rhythmic, coordinated movements stunning and delighting the crowd.

The team, made up of advanced dancers who train additional hours, unleashed a full-energy, costumed routine set to Cascada's *Evacuate the Dancefloor*. This commercial-style number demonstrated their strength, flexibility, and precision to great effect.

Highlighting their versatility, the Dance Performance Squad also performed a gentle lyrical piece set to *Turning Page* by Sleeping at Last. This routine incorporated flowing fabrics and petals scattered across the stage.

Several of the squad's members, who range from Year Seven to Twelve, shared with the audience their individual Dance abilities. They showed incredibly well-rehearsed techniques in short solo and small group performances, some of which they choreographed themselves.

The celebration of Dance skills did not end there. At the One School Day celebration held at The Plenary, the Dance Performance Squad excitedly prepared for their whole-school debut. Costumes were fitted, hair styled, and make-up and face gems were applied.

They appeared confidently upon the stage, and powerfully shared their work at full volume and under full concert lights in a highly-commended performance.

Jessica Gorlin
Director of Performing Arts

Western Region Basketball Champions!

The Year Six basketball team capped off a remarkable year by winning the Western Region Finals and competing at the State Championships.

The boys faced off against the top seven schools from across the Western Region and showed incredible teamwork, composure, and skill to win the competition.

Our campaign began strongly with a solid 38–21 win over Gisborne Primary School, giving all 11 players valuable court time. The second game against St Anthony’s, Melton was a physical battle, the scores were tight early, but our team lifted their intensity to claim a 46–39 victory.

With both teams undefeated, our final pool match against Overnewton was a thriller. After an even first half and several lead changes, PEGS held firm to win 38–30, advancing to the Western Region Final.

In the final, we faced Ocean Grove Primary School, a tall and talented opponent. It was a high-quality contest with momentum swinging both ways, but our boys’ teamwork and defensive grit saw them prevail 41–32. An outstanding achievement!

At the state championships at MSAC in November the team won all of their games except one - that team ultimately went on to win the state final.

Congratulations to Henry, Adrian, Nate , Leo, Bryce, Lawson, Connor, Jake, Jimmy, Noah and Edward for their effort, attitude, and sportsmanship.

Callum Glassford
PE Coordinator, Junior School (boys)



Expanding Opportunities

The secondary sport program recently further expanded the opportunities available for students to engage in alternate forms of physical activity.

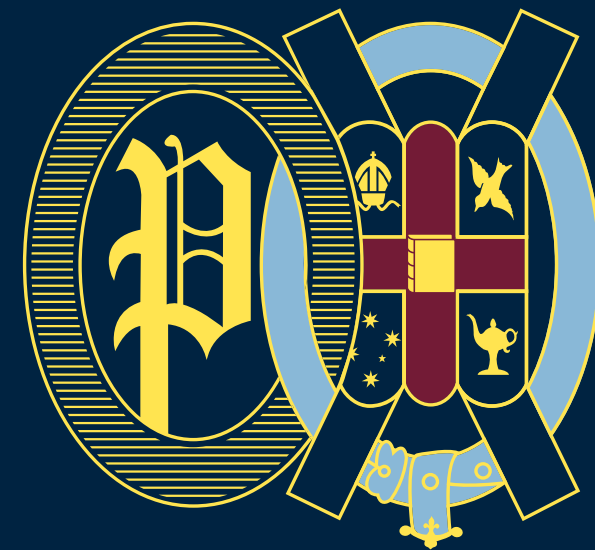
The beginning of the 2025-26 Summer Sport season saw the introduction of mixed netball and spin classes to its already extensive program. Spin sessions are conducted in the recently refurbished Social Club in a purpose-built space housing 20 spin bikes. The energetic classes where music is pumped and gears are shifted, are conducted twice a week by our qualified resident spin instructor and VCE Media teacher, Ms Huseyin.

Mixed netball provides an opportunity for students to engage in a fun and social format of the game. Students involved generate their own teams, train once per week and then compete against each other in an internal competition.

Both activities have been well received by the students involved and add additional depth to the program. Additionally, their introduction sees the school advance further forward with progressive steps towards equality.

Ben Bailey
Director of Sport





School Awards

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

Principal's Awards

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 2025 thirteen students are recipients of the Principal's Award. We commend and thank these graduating students for their lengthy and exceptional contribution to the school.

Lloyd Birch	Alexander Cirone	Jemima Daniell-Edwards
Ella De Zoete	Mia Dellas	Kate Hannan
Alessandra Heywood	Alan Huynh	Taylan Kurban
Alessia Mancarella	Bella Milicevic	Elin Oveisi
Eason Pains	Chelsea Pesavento	Simon Roseman
Stevie Siafalis-Tsiatsios	Greta Tatham-Thompson	Cameron Thompson
Lachlan Toussaint	Jessica 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 2025 and thank them for their valuable contribution:

Year 12

Isabel Allen	Netball
Ruby Anderson	Triathlon
William Armstrong	Contribution to School Life, Academic
Aayan Asif	Social Justice
Lucas Baulch	Contribution to School Sport
Lizzie Bennett	Academic
Lloyd Birch	Contribution to School Sport
Zach Brockfield	Contribution to School Sport
Darcy Callanan	Cricket
Daniel Capece	Soccer
Jake Cukalac	Soccer
Hamish Cutler	Contribution to School Sport
Dante D'Ovidio	Football
Jemima Daniell-Edwards	Netball, Volleyball
Luke Davis	Community Leadership
Ella De Zoete	Hockey, Stage Band, Triathlon
Zain Deen	Contribution to School Sport
Mia Dellas	Football
Scarlett Drum	Contribution to School Sport
Crystal Du	Public Speaking, Academic

Dylan Eftimovski
Holly Falzon
Gerard (Ged) Gibney
Xavier Giovanniello
Aaron Goyal
Vethum Gunathilaka
Maddison Hall
Kate Hannan
Calvin Hua
Asha Huang
Alan Huynh
Noah Irwin
Elizabeth Joseph
Zara Kemal-Yates
Daniel Kostandinov
Chris Kouroupidis
Natasha Labagnara
Edward Lanting
Alanah Anh Le
Max Le
Ryan Le
Jonathan Leeds
Tristan Leeds
Joshua Leszczynski
Janice Leung
Alyssa Liberatore
Camryn Liddle
Zachary (Zac) Martin
Bella Milicevic
Masato Mizumoto
Aidan Nathanielsz
Dan Ngo
Ethan O'Dea
Elin Oveisi
Eason Pains
Isabella Palermo
Mimi Pascal
Mungo Paxton
Hamish Pearce
Chelsea Pesavento
Nathaniel Pitliangas
Charlotte Ristig
Caspar Roberts
Simon Roseman
Oskar Sandner

Soccer
Soccer
Contribution to School Sport
Football
Tennis, Public Speaking
Academic
Contribution to School Sport
Contribution to School Life
Contribution to School Life
Contribution to Music
Senior Choir Vox Populi, Symphony Orchestra, Table Tennis
Concert Band, Symphony Orchestra
Contribution to School Sport
Contribution to School Sport
Academic
Academic
Netball
Soccer
Contribution to School Sport
Academic
Volleyball
Football
Football
Lawn Bowls, Community Leadership
Concert Band
Soccer
Contribution to School Sport
Football
Fencing, Dance
Soccer, Academic
Contribution to School Sport
Academic
Academic
Senior Choir Vox Populi, Fencing
Public Speaking, Table Tennis
Social Justice
Senior Choir Vox Populi
Stage Band
Cricket
Concert Band, Stage Band
Social Justice
Swimming, Academic
Contribution to School Sport
Public Speaking
Academic

Olivia Santeufemia	Academic
Stevie Siafalis-Tsiatsios	Table Tennis, Social Justice
Joseph Sita	Football
Madison (Madi) Spring-Brown	Contribution to School Sport
Oscar Steward	Triathlon
Hamish Stone	Football
Aleyna Tamer	Senior Choir Vox Populi
Greta Tatham-Thompson	Public Speaking
Cameron Thompson	Badminton, Concert Band, Symphony Orchestra
Jason Tran	Volleyball, Stage Band
Sophia Wang	Senior Choir Vox Populi, Academic
Shaun Wong	Volleyball
Lara Wynn	Netball, Triathlon, Academic
Zhiyuan (Queen) Xue	Stage Band
Lily Yang	Concert Band
Fleur Yin	Badminton, Hockey

Year 11

Neriah Asirwatham	Contribution to School Sport
Daemon Basu	Academic
Oliver Burns	Contribution to School Sport
Hanna Chen	Contribution to Music, Academic
Ellie Cheong	Contribution to Dance
Alexander Cooper	Academic
Chiara Cuzzilla	Contribution to School Sport
Megan Duong	Contribution to School Life
Alexander (Alex) Gray	Contribution to School Sport
Harriet Hoskins	Girls Soccer Firsts
Steven Iliopoulos	Contribution to School Life
Annabel Jenkins	Contribution to School Life
Eva Jovcevska	Girls Soccer Firsts
Chanel Kalandos	Contribution to Dance
Rhea Karafotias	Drama, Dance
Bryan La	Boys Volleyball Firsts
Mia Layton	Girls Basketball Firsts
Joel Li	Contribution to School Life
Andrew Ma	Contribution to School Life
Emily McCleave	Academic
Bailey McMillan-Power	Boys Volleyball Firsts
Daniel McNeill	Contribution to School Life
Angelina Nguyen	Girls Football Firsts
Sunita Pandya	Contribution to School Life
Brendan Plover	Academic

Olivia Russo	Contribution to School Life
Raj Singh	Academic
Ashleigh Story	Girls Football Firsts
Raissa Tubman	Chinese Orchestra, Senior Choir Vox Populi, Symphony Orchestra
Petria Vargiu	Girls Soccer Firsts
Jackson Watkins	Boys Football Firsts
Jarvis West	Boys Basketball Firsts
Martin Wooden	Community Leadership
Chris Yan	Contribution to School Life
Ethan Yeung	Contribution to Dance
Ethan Zhang	Public Speaking
Nathan Zhang	Symphony Orchestra, Academic

Year 10

Senadi Akmeemana Peduruge	Community Leadership
Chloe Avram	Community Leadership
Chloe Calyvopoulos	Community Leadership
Megan Cao	Community Leadership
Chloe Dang	Contribution to School Life
Lucy de Zoete	Contribution to School Life
Allison Do	Community Leadership
Hannah Gec	Contribution to School Life
Ava Gerlach	Contribution to Music
Abigail Hammond	Academic, Public Speaking
Maddie Hateley	Contribution to Music
Catherine Heywood	Community Leadership
Tasha Huang	Contribution to School Life
Olivia Lee	Community Leadership
Carla Leszczynski	Community Leadership
Ashley Liu	Academic, Public Speaking
Callista Papachristoforos	Community Leadership, Academic
Ashley Pham	Community Leadership
Saheli Premathilaka	Community Leadership
Kisali Punchiwedikkara	Contribution to School Life, Academic
Maddison Purcell	Community Leadership
Lakithi Ranawaka Arachchi	Public Speaking
Jasmine Trieu	Contribution to School Life
Felix Best	Community Leadership
Peter Davis	Community Leadership
Lucas Janetzki	Contribution to School Life
Chase Jardine	Community Leadership
Raphael Katsapis	Academic, Contribution to School Life
Kevin Kieu	Academic

Hamish Lambeth	Community Leadership, Contribution to School Life
Zac Marasco	Community Leadership
William Matobato	Academic
Lucas Tran	Boys Athletics
Leo Trinh	Academic
Jesse Xu	Community Leadership

Year 9

Georgie Bennett	Community Leadership
Allegra Bui	Community Leadership
Methuki Gangodawilage	Community Leadership
Cara Gauci	Community Leadership
Yasmin Goutzamanis	Community Leadership
Lara Kasalo	Community Leadership
Elisa Kurban	Community Leadership
Asha Liddle	Community Leadership
Keira Matthews	Community Leadership
Ruby Mercieca	Community Leadership
Elise Nguyen	Community Leadership
Rabani Sachdeva	Community Leadership
Aadya Sharma	Community Leadership
Evelyn Thomas	Community Leadership
Lana Tran	Community Leadership
Divya Tyagi	Community Leadership
Alyssa Vojtisek	Community Leadership
Mishka Walia	Community Leadership
Sophie Waters	Community Leadership
Andy Chen	Contribution to School Life
Advik Gourisetty	Community Leadership
Eli Redmond	Community Leadership
Andrew Tan	Contribution to Music



Half Colours

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

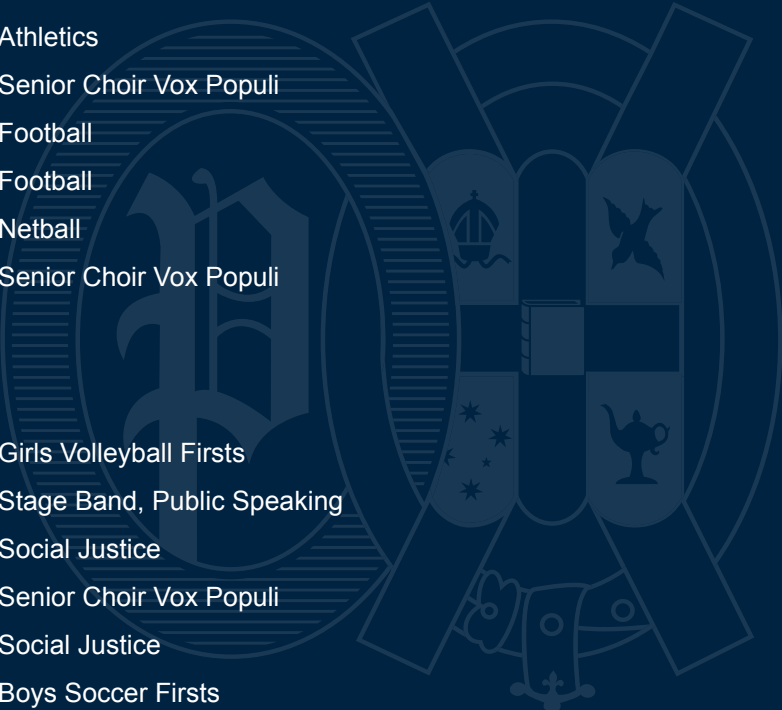
We congratulate the following students who have been awarded Half Colours in 2025 and thank them for their significant contribution.

Year 12

Josephine Accardo	Touch Football
Jack Avsar	Contribution to School Sport
Zhi Hao (Marco) Chin	Table Tennis
Remy Clark	Contribution to School Sport
Mia Cook	Senior Choir Vox Populi
Crystal Du	Drama
Pranav Kapadia	Symphony Orchestra
Jamie Kuan	Badminton
Natasha Labagnara	Touch Football
Prabhavi Liyanage	Senior Choir Vox Populi
Samuel Lyons	Football
Matthew Ma	Senior Choir Vox Populi
Sophia Man	Music Technology Ensemble, Senior Choir Vox Populi
Chiara Mazza	Volleyball
Olivia McGregor	Football
Noah McMenamin	Athletics
Tony Nguyen	Volleyball
Chelsea Pesavento	Volleyball
Vincent Pham	Badminton
Duy (Kevin) Pho	Badminton
Jai Singh	Athletics
Cameron Thompson	Senior Choir Vox Populi
Peter Vassilakopoulos	Football
Thomas Whitchurch	Football
Ava Williams	Netball
Zhiyuan (Queena) Xue	Senior Choir Vox Populi

Year 11

Roqaya Al-Musawy	Girls Volleyball Firsts
Dilneth Bandara	Stage Band, Public Speaking
Daemon Basu	Social Justice
Lithaya de Silva	Senior Choir Vox Populi
Fahiz Deen Mohamed	Social Justice
Matthew Di Lorenzo	Boys Soccer Firsts



Erika Digney
Matilda Falzon
Riley Fletcher
Piper Gay
Zane Gentner
Malachi Hatzakortzian
Charles Hoskins
Jaya Iacono
Ayva Jelenic
Aaryan Komaragiri
Sylvia Lac
Mia Layton
Abbey Lehmann
Ryker Liddle
Thomas Lincoln
Gracie Luong
Elly Mason
Jasmine Mathew
Joanna Matsoukas
Om Neelam
Hoang (Thao Vy) Nguyen
Tania Nguyen
Shayden Perera
Rani Shandil
Raj Singh
Campbell Stone
Raissa Tubman
Nicholas Tzimos
Millie van Diemen

Year 10

Sienna Bailey
Lily Clark
Anastasia Donovan
Sienna Gec
Ava Gerlach
Abigail Hammond
Madeline (Maddie) Hateley
Catherine Heywood
Katelin Huynh
Hayley Keenan

Girls Hockey Firsts
Girls Tennis Firsts
Boys Football Firsts
Cross Country
Boys Football Firsts
Contribution to School Life
Boys Soccer Firsts
Girls Volleyball Firsts
Girls Tennis Firsts
Social Justice
Girls Volleyball Firsts
Girls Volleyball Firsts, Athletics
Girls Volleyball Firsts, Athletics
Contribution to School Life
Boys Football Firsts
Social Justice
Public Speaking
Girls Tennis Firsts
Symphony Orchestra, Social Justice
Boys Badminton Firsts
Girls Volleyball Firsts
Girls Badminton Firsts
Boys Tennis Firsts
Social Justice
Public Speaking, Social Justice, Table Tennis Firsts
Boys Football Firsts
Curro Strings
Boys Soccer Firsts
Contribution to School Sport

Contribution to School Sport
Winter Dance
House Leadership
Girls Athletics
Drama, Winter Dance, Contribution to Sport, House Leadrship
Dance, House Leadserhip
House Leadership
House Leadership
Contribution to School Life
Summer Dance, Senior Choir Vox Populi, Drama

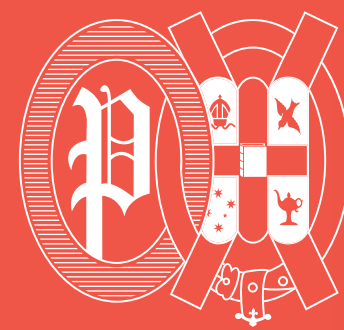
Olivia Lee
Kathleen Ma
Jemma Palay
Alexis Pantazopoulos
Alice Pu
Theodora Togias
Tameia Veitch
Oliver Achen
Stuart Baker
Felix Best
Hugh Brady
Charlie Cook
Peter Davis
Lachlan Gilbertson
Kevin Kieu
Princeton Lam
Thomas Lucca
Jacob Mancarella
William Matobato
Danny Ngo
Edward Orr
Declan Pickett
Aaron Sun
Leo Trinh
Andy Zeng

Year 9

Caitlin Ly

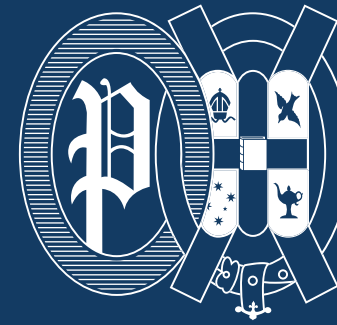
Public Speaking
Public Speaking
House Leadership
Girls Soccer Firsts
Public Speaking
Concert Band
House Leadership
Contribution to School Life
Stage Band
Contribution to School Life
House Leadership
Guitar Ensemble
House Leadership
Contribution to School Sport
Contribution to School Life
Community Leadership, Contribution to School Life
Stage Band, House Leadership
House Leadership, Community Leadership
Contribution to School Life
Contribution to School Life
Contribution to School Life
Contribution to School Life
Contribution to School Life, House Leadrship
Contribution to School Life
Contribution to School Life

Community Leadership



Strategic Plan Update

December 2025



Our School Values - REACH

In 2025, Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School undertook one of the most significant whole-school projects of recent years: the development and launch of our new school values - Respect, Excellence, Accountability, Curiosity and Heart (REACH).

This work drew on extensive consultation with our full community. Parents, students, staff and the School Board all contributed to the shaping of these values through surveys, workshops, forums and leadership discussions. Their insights helped us clarify the principles that both reflect who we are and articulate who we aspire to be.

REACH now serves as a shared compass, guiding the culture of every section of the School. These values inform the way we teach and learn, the expectations we hold for behaviour, the conversations we have with families, and the strengths we seek to develop in our students. REACH provides a consistent vocabulary and a unifying vision that connects Kindergarten, Junior, Middle and Senior School experiences.

The launch of our new values marks an important milestone. It affirms the strengths of our community, gives clarity and direction to our future, and ensures that every young person at PEGS understands the type of character we hope to help them build.



Learning and Thinking:

A centre of excellence where each person develops and grows

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

Across the School, 2025 has been marked by strengthened consistency in instructional practice, deeper use of evidence-informed strategies, and a clear alignment of curriculum and pedagogy through work on our new instructional principles.

A new leadership structure, including Heads of Learning Area (Years 7 - 12) and a Director of Curriculum working across both Junior Schools, has provided a strong foundation for curriculum coherence, explicit teaching and improved instructional leadership. These roles are central to the development of a low-variance and knowledge rich curriculum and shared approaches to teaching and learning.

In the Junior Schools, teachers continued to embed responsive teaching, including daily review, checking for understanding and retrieval practice. Paired oral fluency lessons have become visible across year levels, and Celebration of Learning Days remained a highlight, with strong parent attendance. In the Girls' Junior School, alignment of Ochre English and Mathematics, UFLI phonics instruction and Essential Assessment data tools strengthened evidence-based practice.

Middle and Senior School staff deepened their understanding of explicit teaching through the La Trobe University Science of Learning course, Momentum Schools project, peer coaching, observations and instructional coaching with Bronwyn Ryrie Jones. School visits, structured faculty time and the development of Curriculum Design Principles and Assessment Principles have strengthened clarity and consistency. The Professional Learning program in the LC culminated with the Celebration of Learning on November 14th, where staff presented their findings from the work completed in their PLCs. Other teachers participated in the Quality Teaching Rounds ensuring that two thirds of the LC staff have now participated in a QTR.

Across the Middle Schools, Gottliebse and McNab Houses embedded predictable entry routines - calm transitions, device-free starts, clear expectations and orderly endings - reducing cognitive load and maximising learning time. Teachers reviewed room layouts to support visibility and moved actively through classrooms to maintain focus and attention.

NAPLAN results reflected this sustained work. PEGS students achieved progress rates above students with similar starting scores

and backgrounds in the following key domains: Years 3 - 5: writing and numeracy; Years 7 - 9: reading, writing and numeracy. These results highlight the combined impact of consistent instruction, early intervention, data-informed teaching and strong transitions.

Support for learning was strengthened through MYAT testing for 2026 cohorts, enhanced transition meetings involving families and Individual Needs staff, and more refined approaches to L+ and N+ selection. Staff across both Middle Schools also completed NCCD modules to deepen understanding of equity and access. Learning beyond the classroom continued to expand. PEGS launched an invigorated Tour Programme, including the Conservation Club field experience (2025), the Chinese Language Tour (April 2026), Cape York Immersion Tour (June - July 2026), German and French Language Tours (September 2026) and planning for STEM, sport and arts tours in 2027. These experiences broaden student horizons, embed cultural and environmental learning, and provide authentic contexts for curiosity, courage and connection.



Care and Wellbeing:

A safe and inclusive culture where each person is known, valued and supported

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

The School continued to prioritise predictable, inclusive environments that support connection, belonging and growth.

The launch of REACH provided students and staff with a clear, shared language for expectations, behaviour, relationships and personal development. Assemblies, form programmes and leadership structures across the School used these values to guide daily interactions.

Connections between the Middle Schools were strengthened through mixed assemblies, McGotty Day, shared events and cross-campus form gatherings. Middle Schools strengthened consistent behaviour procedures through a 6-stage response model.

The *Altior Awards* were implemented this year and students were acknowledged on a regular basis in assemblies. The winners of the *Altior Awards* were published in *Altior et Sapientior* and presented at the end of year colours assembly which further increased their importance and visibility.

To support student transition, a mentoring system was developed

for Year 9 Boys and Girls with Year 11 students, fostering awareness of the VCE. The Larkin Centre Student Learning Committee also worked with students during the subject selection period

Student wellbeing initiatives included the REACH Foundation workshops for Year 9, Form Assemblies focused on emotional literacy, Consent Education, Respectful Relationships and PERMA, and the presentation of new eSafety laws to all year levels. Staff in both Middle Schools completed Youth Mental Health First Aid training, and staff across the Junior Schools continued to embed consistent behaviour frameworks and recognition systems. Staff wellbeing initiatives included the Big Team Challenge, staff massage and Fitness Centre access.

The Kindergarten underwent national assessment this year and was rated “Exceeding National Standards” - the highest possible NQS rating - affirming the exceptional quality of care and education provided in our early years programme.



Engagement and Connections:

A focus on relationships that encourages growth and contribution

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

Community engagement continued to be a hallmark of 2025, with increased opportunities for families to participate in School life. PEGS hosted the inaugural AGSV Music Festival, an ambitious three-day event at Keilor East. Students from across the AGSV performed, attended masterclasses, received adjudication, and learned from distinguished guest artists including Eliza Shephard and Syzygy. This landmark festival showcased student talent, fostered collaboration across schools and positioned PEGS as a leader in music education.

Our relationship with the community was further strengthened through large-scale events. In collaboration with the Friends of PEGS, the School hosted the PEGS Fair at the Keilor East campus - a significant logistical undertaking and a resounding success that attracted families from across the School and beyond.

The Music Department provided additional high-quality performance opportunities in 2025: Jazz Night, featuring Stage Band, Jazz Combos and Swing Syndicate (Vox

Ensemble), presenting Generations in Jazz repertoire to families; PEGS in Concert, held at the Melbourne Recital Centre, giving Junior and Senior students a professional, world-class performance experience.

Across the Middle Schools, parent engagement was strengthened through Year 7–10 Forums, Careers Evenings, and the Subject Expo. PEGSpeak articles provided families with insights into emotional development, effort, learning behaviours and academic expectations. Year level meetings at Gottliebse and McNab Houses deepened communication between staff and families and strengthened the home-school partnership.

III Continuity and Sustainability:

Our commitment to long-term growth through resources, policies and procedures

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
- Develop resources and create assets, including ICT and facilities

The School made substantial progress in 2025 toward ensuring long-term sustainability, strategic growth and high-quality infrastructure.

Development of a new indoor sports complex adjacent to our Keilor Park Sports Campus took place, which will see three new basketball courts, indoor cricket nets and a volleyball showcourt available for use from the beginning of the 2026 school year.

Large-scale planning is underway for the Essendon Campus, with early works launched in 2025 to prepare for a major building project that will begin in 2026. Older classrooms and amenities on the western side of the campus will be demolished and replaced with modern learning spaces that will connect to Gresham Robinson House.

At Moonee Ponds, an extensive refurbishment programme was completed. This included: a new shade sail over the running track; renovations to Before Care classrooms and Chinese rooms; complete refurbishment of the Year 5/6 bathrooms, canteen bathrooms and staff bathrooms; a new First Aid room; renovated Grade 3/4 classrooms and offices; fully

renovated Aftercare bathrooms, with new decking and glass doors; new decking and roofing at Tulloch House; new air conditioning in Prep/ Year 1 classrooms. These works significantly enhance safety, comfort and learning conditions across the campus.

The School also purchased two properties adjacent to the Moonee Ponds campus, increasing future capacity for facilities expansion, improved circulation and long-term planning.

The School transitioned to a new Managed Service Provider to streamline our ICT support and provide additional support with data management and cyber security.

In 2025, the School continued to build strong digital capability through the work of the e-Learning Champions, a cross-section of staff from all campuses and year levels. This group is leading the development of a new Digital Strategic Plan to guide technology use, innovation and digital literacy across the School. They also drafted the School's first AI Principles document, establishing a clear framework for the ethical, purposeful and safe use of artificial intelligence in teaching, learning

and administration. Their work ensures PEGS remains future-focused, technologically confident and aligned with national and global best practice in digital education.

Preparation commenced for the updated Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (Psychological Health) 2025 Compliance Code. These changes place a stronger emphasis on how employers – including Independent schools – must identify, manage, and reduce psychosocial risks in the workplace. Through staff consultation and surveys, the school gathered information about psychosocial hazards and their management in the workplace, and provided training and awareness for leaders and staff on their role in maintaining psychological health.

In 2025, PEGS was granted an exemption under the Equal Opportunity Act, confirming the School's ability to maintain balanced numbers of boys and girls in line with our diamond model. Without this exemption, demographic realities would create a gender imbalance affecting the educational, social and cultural experience of students. The exemption supports gender equity, preserves the integrity of our educational model,

and reflects our commitment to inclusivity, safety and respect.

Policy work continued, including updates to the Enrolment Policy and transition processes, enhancing transparency and ensuring that families are well supported through entry into the School.

Sustainability efforts expanded through green waste systems, additional solar panels, LED conversions and reduced material consumption in the Junior Musical, which achieved approximately 65% re-use of costumes and sets.

Our new reversible sports uniform was launched, designed to reduce the number of items students need to purchase while improving functionality and sustainability. Their reversible design also supports greater flexibility during inter-school sport and training. Work also progressed on the streamlined Firsts uniform, with samples produced featuring a reversible clash side incorporating the artwork created for the school by Melbourne-based Aboriginal artist, Simone Thomson. Together, these developments reflect the School's commitment to sustainability, inclusivity and a more efficient, student-centred uniform model.

Digital systems continued to evolve, with Clipboard now used for fixturing, team selection and sport administration. The Keilor Park indoor facility neared completion, with scheduling and planning for community use underway.

A new senior leadership structure was implemented, with the role of Director of Operations and Engagement providing additional support in key areas such as communications, operations, and cocurricular. Staff leadership continued to grow through expanded coaching, role development, and refined responsibilities for Heads of Section and their Deputies and Coordinators.



From the Archives

Brigid Cooper Archivist

Twenty Five Years of Cottage 49

This year we celebrate 25 years since PEGS Kindergarten at St John's was relocated to Cottage 49, to join the already existing Cottage 51 and Cottage 53 Kindergarten classes in Raleigh Street, Essendon.

Our New Kindergarten Cottage 49

Children, families and teaching staff in the kindergartens celebrated the completion and opening of Cottage 49 at the start of this year. The children enter at Cottage 49 through a beautiful foyer where they hang their bags and other belongings.

They have quickly settled into their new environment and have been delighted by the sandpit, digging patch, home corner, block area, the bathroom with hand dryers (!) and the steps from the back verandah where they sit and watch the world go by.

- Pam Hocking, Director of Kindergarten - *Principal's Newsletter*, Term 1 2000

Kindergarten, or as it was known for many years, the Early Learning Centres, has always been an important step in students' learning at our School. Sometimes the Kindergarten students were able to be accommodated on site, but often a separate space was used.

Penleigh Presbyterian Girls' School

A new Branch Junior School will be opened in the Kindergarten Rooms of St. John's Presbyterian Church, Buckley Street, Essendon, under the charge of Miss Elma Limerock

- *The Argus newspaper*, 24 Jan 1920, p.23

The official opening of our new Kindergarten and Primary Branch School at the Strathmore Presbyterian Church Hall was performed by Cr. C W L Gibson, President of the Shire of Broadmeadows. The Branch School will be run in conjunction with the main school, and will be under the control of Miss Sheila Vicars Foote.

- Essendon Grammar School annual magazine, *The Triune* 1939, p.4

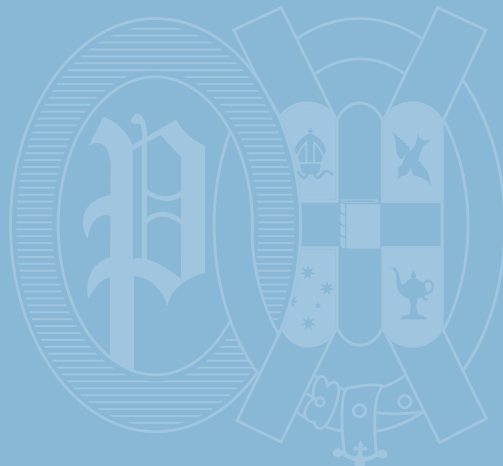
Rev H R (Bert) Stevens, the Principal who brought the two schools together to form PEGS, had a strong focus on the importance of teaching excellence, particularly in the early years. He reshaped the Kindergarten into the Early Learning Centre under the competent eye of his wife, Mrs Sadie Stevens, utilising the houses in Raleigh Street.

Early Learning Centres

The three centres offer a day programme for children aged three and a half or older. There is great demand for places and parents are advised to place their child's name down at birth.

The children in the planned day programme benefit from the challenging learning environment created by staff, the social contacts with other children, the opportunities to develop curiosity and creativity, and the fostering of attitudes and aptitudes which promote achievement.

- Speech Night 1978



Number 49 Raleigh Street, Essendon, in September 1999 – before its transformation into Cottage 49. (PEGS Archives [PH09037])



The 1978 Kinder class at St John's with Miss Heather Oglesby (Teacher), and Mavis Munn (Assistant). (PEGS Archives [PH00354])

Craft Market Memories

Amongst the excitement of this year's Friends of PEGS Fair held at the Keilor East Campus, the PEGS Archives takes a moment to look back at many decades of the Craft Market.

Although the mix of activities at the Craft Market changed over the years, the focus remained on community building alongside raising funds to assist the School. In 1989 the organisation of the Craft Market was taken over by the newly formed Friends of PEGS.



Mrs Benney and Miss Healey were kept busy selling fairy floss in 1989 (PEGS Archives [PH08673])



A regular feature at the Craft Market was the PEGS Corner Store. Here is Mr Cox helping to sell the three tonnes of fruit and vegetables unloaded on the day (PEGS Archives [PH08672])

PEGS Alumni Association

2025 Reunions

Reunion Program

The School reunion program offers PEGS former students the chance to catch up with their fellow alumni and reminisce about those wonderful school years.

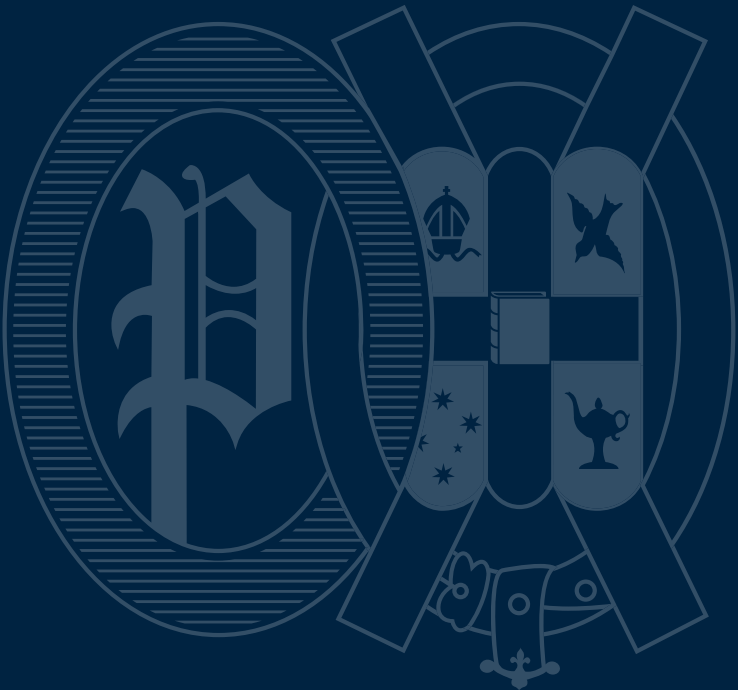
Upcoming Reunions

- Class of 2005 Twenty Year Reunion – 10 October, 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 – 14 November, 7pm, Penny Young, Young St. Moonee Ponds

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.

Death

Jacquelyn Margaret Edney [Penleigh 1942 - 1954; First Matriculation Group 1954; Old Collegians' Association 1955 - 1970], on 24 February 2025, aged 87.



The Hallmarks of Success

Few Australian athletes have shown the blend of endurance, composure, and class that Linden Hall has displayed throughout her career. From her early days training with Athletics Essendon to standing among the world's best middle-distance runners, Hall's story is one of persistence, professionalism, and quiet determination that continues to inspire the next generation.

At the 2024 Paris Olympics, Linden was recognised not only for her athletic ability but also for her leadership and integrity, serving as co-captain of the Australian athletics team. It was a role that reflected her steady influence and deep respect within the sport. On the track she once again rose to the occasion, finishing ninth in the 1500 m final, her second consecutive Olympic top-ten result following a sixth-place finish in Tokyo 2021. In a field stacked with global champions, her consistency and composure under pressure reinforced her reputation as one of the world's most reliable championship performers.

While the 1500 m has always been Linden's signature event, the 2025 season saw her broaden her range and elevate her performances across multiple distances. In June she produced one of the highlights of her career, claiming her first Diamond League victory in Stockholm. Running a superbly controlled race, Linden unleashed a powerful finish to win the 3000 m in a personal best 8:30.01 — her first major international win and one of the fastest times ever recorded by an Australian woman. Earlier in the season she had clocked 14:43.61 for 5000

m, the second-fastest time in Australian history behind Jess Hull. These results underscored her growing strength and endurance, allowing her to compete across a wider range of events while maintaining elite 1500 m speed.

Her form carried through to the 2025 World Athletics Championships in Tokyo, where she contested both the 1500 m and 5000 m. In the 1500 m semi-final she finished seventh, missing the final by just one position yet recording the fastest time of all non-qualifiers, a frustratingly narrow margin for an athlete in career-best form. In the 5000 m final she placed 11th with a time of 15:04.03, once again showing her resilience and ability to compete against the world's best over longer distances.

Beyond the track, Linden's story is equally compelling. A Monash University graduate with a Master of Dietetics, she has balanced the demands of elite sport with academic achievement and a professional interest in sports nutrition. Her holistic approach to performance, combining physical preparation with recovery, wellbeing, and longevity, has helped sustain her at the top of her sport for over a decade.

As she looks ahead to the next Olympic cycle, Linden remains driven by a return to the global podium and the continued pursuit of excellence. She is not just running races, she is shaping the future of Australian athletics, one stride, one season, one championship at a time



The Signing That Signalled a New Beginning

Proud Gunditjmara man Rueben Berg (PEGS1997) recently emerged as one of the most influential voices in Victoria's push toward a better relationship with First Peoples, playing a pivotal role in securing Australia's first statewide Treaty. As Co-Chair of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, Rueben has been central to the negotiation, drafting and successful passage of the Statewide Treaty Bill, landmark legislation that formally recognises the authority of First Peoples and establishes enduring structures for truth-telling, accountability and shared decision-making. The Bill's recent signing into law marks a historic turning point, and Rueben's steady leadership has been widely credited for guiding communities, government partners and stakeholders through this nation-shaping process.

Before stepping into his prominent Treaty role, Rueben built a broad and impactful career across community development, cultural heritage, environmental stewardship and Indigenous design. His early training in architecture sparked a passion for the built environment and later led him to co-found Indigenous Architecture and Design Victoria (IADV), an organisation dedicated to embedding Aboriginal perspectives, storytelling and cultural responsibility into Australia's architectural practices. Through this work, he championed culturally informed design standards that continue to influence major public and private projects across Victoria today.

Rueben would go on to establish RJHB Consulting, a consultancy specialising in Indigenous engagement, governance and project leadership. In this role,

he collaborated with councils, state agencies and community organisations on policies and initiatives that strengthened cultural competency and broadened opportunities for Aboriginal participation in decision-making. His expertise in governance led to several significant public appointments, including his service as a Commissioner for the Victorian Environmental Water Holder, where he advocated for Indigenous knowledge systems and the cultural value of waterways, and later becoming the first Indigenous Chair of Westernport Water, guiding the organisation in sustainable planning, community engagement and reconciliation initiatives. He has also held a long-standing role on the Heritage Council of Victoria, advising on the protection and management of culturally significant sites.

Beyond policy and governance, Rueben has contributed to the cultural and sporting stage, particularly through his involvement in the international Ultimate Frisbee community. As Chair of the World Flying Disc Federation's Rules Subcommittee, he has helped shape the global development of the sport and promoted its ethos of fairness and self-officiation, values that reflect his approach to leadership and community work.

With the commencement of Victoria's Treaty later this year, Rueben Berg stands at the forefront of one of the most significant milestones in Australia's history. His journey, shaped by years of governance, cultural leadership and community building, positions him as a key figure in ensuring the Treaty delivers lasting, meaningful outcomes for future generations.

Friends of PEGS

2025 FoPEGS Reflection

In March the Junior School (boys) campus was the home again for Movie Night as families gathered on the grass, under the stars to enjoy *Despicable Me 4*. March also was the month for our PEGS Year Seven Meet 'n Greet where our new Year Seven parents enjoyed an evening together.

Mother's, Father's and special Person's Day Stalls were also a great experience in May and September for the Junior school students who enthusiastically purchased a surprise gift.

Cowboys and Cowgirls were plentiful at our mid-year Trivia Night as our minds were tested in country style and a great day was had by all at our annual Fair in October.

FoPEGS Fair

The overcast skies above the Keilor East Campus, on Sunday 12 October, the new home for this FoPEGS event, did not deter the hundreds of families from attending another wonderful day now known as the FoPEGS Fair. Whether it is a tasty morsel from any of the numerous food trucks, the delightful thrill of the rides, succeeding at one of the many games, finding a treasure at one of the various stalls, a sausage at the BBQ or a CWA scone, the fair has something for everyone.

The main stage showcased the incredible talent of PEGS students in a variety of ensembles and in the vibrant colours of dance.

Thank you to all volunteers who rolled up their sleeves and worked to make the Fair successful for our School, our students and our community. Behind-the-scenes and audience-facing, it is generosity of spirit, time and effort that makes PEGS Fair a gloriously, noisy (!) and lively event.

Enriching the life of the school

The 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 gratefully acknowledge the dedicated voluntary commitment of FoPEGS Committee members, and we would like to welcome you to our spirited team. If you are interested in joining or contributing to our committee in 2026, please do not hesitate to contact us. For more information, please contact Lyn Rogers: 9016 2183 lyn.rogers@pegs.vic.edu.au

FoPEGS approved donations to PEGS in 2025

2025	Keilor East Bench Seats	\$15,100.00
	Event Chairs	\$ 2,011.95
	HR Stevens Foyer Furniture	\$13,000.00
	One School Day Prize	\$ 500.00
	Sport Shelters	\$25,520.00

2026 Friends of PEGS Calendar

Month	Dates	FOPEGS Meeting/Event
February	Monday 2 February	7.30pm FOPEGS Committee Meeting
March	Monday 2 March Monday 2 March Wednesday 11 March Friday 13 March Wednesday 18 March	7.00pm FOPEGS AGM 7.30pm FOPEGS Committee Meeting 7.30pm Class Rep Meeting Movie Night 7.00pm Yr 7 Meet and Greet
May	Monday 4 May Thursday 7 May Friday 8 May	7.30pm FOPEGS Committee Meeting 8.30am Mother's Day Stall Junior Girls 8.30am Mother's Day Stall Junior Boys
June	Monday 1 June Saturday 13 June	7.30pm FOPEGS Committee Meeting Trivia Night
July	Monday 20 July	7.30pm FOPEGS Committee Meeting
August	Monday 3 August	7.30pm FOPEGS Committee Meeting
September	Thursday 3 September Friday 4 September Monday 7 September	8.30am Father's Day Stall Junior Girls 8.30am Father's Day Stall Junior Boys 7.30pm FOPEGS Committee Meeting
October	Monday 5 October Sunday 11 October	7.30pm FOPEGS Committee Meeting Annual Fair
November	Tuesday 10 November Saturday 21 November	7.30pm FOPEGS Committee Meeting End of Year Event
December	Tuesday 8 December	7.30pm FOPEGS Committee Meeting



2026 Dates for the Diary

2026 Term Dates

Term One Friday 30 January to Thursday 2 April

Term Two Tuesday 21 April to Friday 26 June

Term Three Tuesday 14 July to Friday 11 September

Term Four Monday 5 October to Wednesday 9 December

