

8 February 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Congratulations to all of our students for the positive way that they have commenced their studies in 2024. Adjusting to a new school year can be challenging for some students and we would like to commend you for your efforts. Our Year 7 students are settling in well and gradually getting used to their new surroundings. We very much look forward to our parent welcome evenings to be held next week.

The Year 8, 9, and 10 Parent/Carer Community Group Welcome Evening will be held on Wednesday, February 14th, while the Year 7 & 11 Parent/Carer Community Group Welcome Evening will be held on Thursday, February 15th.

Both Welcome Evenings will commence at 5:15 pm in the Stadium with light refreshments, including tea and coffee. The opening presentation will start at 6 pm, followed by breakout sessions in various venues for each respective Year Level. To assist with catering arrangements, if you haven't already RSVP'd, kindly complete the [following online form](#) before this Monday the 12th of February. These evenings are intended for parents/carers only.

Culture and Identity News

Coming together in community is central to the Catholic faith and it was wonderful to do so on Tuesday of this week. Unfortunately, Fr Jim was unexpectedly unable to celebrate our Opening of the Year Mass with us so we adjusted from celebrating Catholic Mass to celebrating the beginning of our new school year with a liturgy. The change to our celebration occurred at very short notice and we are enormously proud of our students who showed patience and calmly accepted the change in plans. In the absence of Fr Jim, we were unable to receive the Eucharist, but we were still able to listen to the readings and pause in communal prayer. We thank our wonderful students for reading during the liturgy and Ms Townsend with the beautiful choir for leading the singing. We also thank our Maintenance Team, Teaching Staff, LSOs and Resource Centre Staff who contributed to this occasion in many ways including setup, preparation and management of students, and enabling the participation of family and friends via the livestream. Our celebration was a lovely way to begin the year and another memorable moment in our Iona journey.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent. During this time, Catholics prepare for Easter in three ways- prayer, fasting and giving. We reflect on our lives and how we can be the best version of ourselves. We give if we are able to so that we can address the needs of vulnerable others. Finally, we fast, which essentially means giving something up so that we can make room for something else. This can also be in the form of re-thinking our way of being, for example, becoming more tolerant or kind.

To prepare for the Lenten fast, traditionally Catholics made pancakes on the day before Ash Wednesday so that ingredients, such as eggs and flour, were used up. This day is known as Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day and is enjoyed by Catholics and non-Catholics across the globe. Next Tuesday is Pancake Day and pancakes will be sold at the Canteen during Break One. These will cost \$2.50 and will be sold over the counter only. Money raised will support our fundraising efforts for the Feeding Program at St Mary's Primary School, Uganda.

The following day is Ash Wednesday when our students and staff will gather for a Chisholm House student-led Assembly/Liturgy which will include prayer, a guest speaker and the distribution of ashes. We will launch our Lenten fundraising activities to support Caritas and St Mary's, Uganda. More details about fundraising will be provided next week.

In accordance with Catholic tradition, the Canteen will not serve meat products next Wednesday. As an important occasion on our calendar, Year 8-11 students are required to wear Formal uniform on Ash Wednesday, with the exception of Year 7 students, who are asked to wear their Sport uniform so that they can participate in GISSA later that afternoon.


A reminder that Nazareth Parish will celebrate Sunday Mass in the Resource Centre at Iona next Sunday 18th at 9 am. All are welcome to attend.

Mrs Carmen Ahearn
Head of Culture and Identity

HAT Curriculum

All Year 7 and 8s will be introduced to our new HAT curriculum during Wellbeing time this semester. HAT stands for 'Here's a Thought'. This program (aimed at our Year 7s and 8s) is unique, creative and inspiring. HAT contains a helpful thought each week that directly addresses one of the ten most common worries of adolescents. Each weekly HAT is accompanied by a thought-provoking illustration from world-renowned artist, Mathew Johnstone and a digestible wellbeing insight formulated by leading wellbeing and positive education experts. Each HAT comes to life with a HAT Chat designed to get the students talking. Our students need a psychologically safe space to explore and discuss wellbeing issues that are relevant to their age and impact their real-life experiences. The teachers will use these sessions to help our students to understand, process and effectively manage their real-life worries. This is a different and unique way to engage our students whilst exploring mental health and wellbeing issues. Here is one of the HAT visuals that our students will unpack this term.

06 Sometimes our thoughts can be way more scary than the reality.



Ms Kylie Power
Deputy Principal - Wellbeing

Planned Extended Leave of Absence Process

We thought now would be a good time to remind our parents/carers about our 'Planned Extended Leave of Absence' process.

Extended Planned Absence From Classes (More than five days and up to 3 weeks)

The College understands that there may be times when your child is away from school for more than five days due to family holidays, and sporting competitions. Families wishing to remove their child from classes for an extended leave of absence must complete the Extended Planned Absence and Leave of Absence Form and return it to registrar@iona.vic.edu.au. Please contact your child's Community Group teacher or our Registrar to obtain a copy of this form.

Leave of Absence (More than 3 weeks)

Families wishing to request a leave of absence (more than three weeks away from school) must apply to the school Principal.

An email outlining the following should be emailed to registrar@iona.vic.edu.au at least one month prior to the Leave of Absence if possible

- the length of time the student will be away
- the reason the student requires leave of absence
- details of any other schools the student may be attending while on leave of absence
- attach a completed Extended Planned Absence and Leave of Absence Form

PLEASE NOTE: Year 11 student requests (or any Year 10 students who are enrolled in a Unit 1 and 2 subject), must also make contact with one of the following staff to advise of any planned absence. Extended absence for students who are accelerating may result in students needing to be withdrawn from VCE units or their program being reviewed as they will not satisfy the minimum attendance requirement.

- the VCE Vocational Major Coordinator (matthew.horsted@iona.vic.edu.au)
- the VCE coordinator (anthea.sholl@iona.vic.edu.au)
- the Heads of Learning and Innovation (kate.mclaren@iona.vic.edu.au and steve.parker@iona.vic.edu.au)

Any VCE student whose absence falls below 85% will need to attend a Student Learning Review (SLR) with a parent/guardian.

Music News

This is just a reminder that the Concert Band and String Ensemble begin Tuesday 13th Feb after school. If your child wants to be involved please ask them to speak to Ms Townsend.

The choir is running – rehearsals are on Monday during lunchtime at 12:50 pm and Thursday after school from 3:10 to 4:10 pm. Students who are interested in choir but cannot make the Thursday after school rehearsal are welcome to just come to the Monday rehearsal.

Music Lesson times – students can find these on the noticeboard outside the Music Room OR they will see a class pass in SIMON on the day of their lesson.

Summer Soiree – the sign up sheet is outside the Music Room. Students need to be proactive and sign themselves up if they are interested in playing (Thursday 14 March 6:00 pm)

Maths @ Iona

It has been fantastic as we move through Week 2 to have all students commence their first maths class and meet their teachers. We have been setting good organisational habits, and classroom expectations and getting stuck into some learning!

Just a reminder to all students that it is **ESSENTIAL** to bring the correct equipment to **EVERY** mathematics class in order to maximise your learning! This includes, at all year levels:

- 1 x grid book
- 1 x lined book
- 1 approved calculator (Scientific Years 7-9, CAS calculator Years 10-11)

Essentials such as a ruler, red and blue pens and grey lead pencils are always required.

The booklist included a plastic folder for students to put both mathematics books in, as this can be very handy for organisation.

In addition to this, all students from Years 9-11 are required to bring to each class:

- A physical copy of their Cambridge textbook

Students who have purchased a secondhand textbook will also need to purchase the accompanying online resource. You can do so via [Campion \(www.campion.com.au\)](http://www.campion.com.au), choosing the Digital Copy only of the following resources:

Year 9: Cambridge Vic Essential Maths 9 2E **Digital**

Year 10: Cambridge Vic Essential Maths 10/10A 2E **Digital**

Year 11: Cambridge VCE Senior Gen Maths 1&2 **Digital**

We understand that for some students their textbooks are still arriving, and thank you to those students and parents for communicating that to their teachers.

Moving forward, students who attend class without the resources they need will be issued a non-flag. We thank you for ensuring you have everything you need to be an active, engaged and challenged learner in the Iona Mathematics classroom!

Any queries or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at louise.keating@iona.vic.edu.au

Ms Lou Keating

Learning Area Leader – Maths/Numeracy

Resource Centre News

It has been wonderful to see so many of your young people in the Resource Centre this week. Whether it has been during break times, before school, for year 11 study sessions, classes, Life Changer or a year level assembly we are glad to have you all in the space.

We are happy to see many of our students borrowing the new books we have on the shelves. Could you please remind your young people who have books on loan from over the holidays to return them to the Resource Centre?

We have a wonderful group of parent volunteers who are covering books for us. If you are interested in helping with this, please contact Sharon via email at Library@iona.vic.edu.au and she will provide you with the information.

We have had to adjust some of our opening times to students which means that we will not be open to students after school. If your young person needs to stay at the College after school and would normally spend that time in the Resource Centre, please contact Mr Jacob in Student Reception to arrange a space in the Columba Centre for them.



RESOURCE CENTRE



IONA
COLLEGE
GEELONG

IS OPEN TO STUDENTS

BEFORE SCHOOL: 8AM-9AM
BREAK ONE : 10.44 AM - 11.07AM
BREAK TWO: 12.41 PM - 1.26 PM

*FOR IT ASSISTANCE AND
LIBRARY SERVICES*

Closure of Surf Coast Hwy (Rail Overpass Works) – Increased Traffic Flows / Possible Delays to Bus Service Timetables

From 9:30 am on Friday 9th February, the Surf Coast Hwy will close to all traffic in both directions at the rail crossing near Baanip Blvd and Heyers Rd, Grovedale for 4 weeks through to 6 am on March 7. Multiple detours will be in place in the areas indicated on the below map and the various authorities are suggesting that drivers allow an extra 20 to 30 minutes for travel as delays are experienced throughout the wider road network as a consequence of the works being undertaken.

This may also result in our school bus services operating through this corridor experiencing similar delays to current timetables due to the detours and unusual (heavier) traffic patterns. McHarry's Buslines have confirmed that there is no change to any existing Stop Points on any routes that are required to be detoured. Additionally, McHarry's also have contingency plans in place for buses that connect with the regional/country (and other) school bus networks – i.e. expected later arrivals/departures.

Students Walking, Riding or Being Driven to School – With a significant increase in traffic expected along both Boundary & Horseshoe Bend Roads over this Surf Coast Hwy closure period, and with school crossings not yet in place (and out of Iona College's control), we request that parents/carers of students walking, riding or being driven to school take note of the following:

- For students who ride or walk to school - please take the time to speak with them to ensure that they are aware that there will be increased traffic in and around Iona College and to be extra vigilant. Please also reinforce to them to only cross the road (walking, not running) if it is safe to do so. Those students residing in Charlemont are requested to cross the road to/from school no closer than Hilltop Drive as they also need to avoid cars and buses coming in and out of the main entrance to the college – this needs to be a permanent measure until proper school crossings are in place.
- Non-Bus Students living in Charlemont – As a further safety measure over the detour period, the college has arranged with McHarry's Buslines to allow any (current) non-bus students living in Charlemont onto our #9 (Ocean Grove) bus at the following Stop Points:

Pick Up Times

- 8:37 am – 49 Precinct Rd, Charlemont
- 8:39 am – Horseshoe Bend Rd, cnr Precinct Rd @ Bus stop

Drop-off Times

- 3:37 pm - Horseshoe Bend Rd cnr Worn Rd @ Bus stop
- 3:21 pm – 44 Precinct Rd, Charlemont

This will be provided free-of-charge and these students will not be required to tap on and off with their student ID card.

- For students being driven to school - we request that parents/carers only drop off their young ones by entering the Main Entrance to the college off Horseshoe Bend Rd and driving straight ahead (i.e. **DO NOT** turn left) to the student set-down / visitor carpark area out in front of Main Reception – this is where the main bus bay area was last year. NB: Spill-over parking is available on the gravel section immediately to the north if this area is full. Please **DO NOT** under any circumstances drop your young ones anywhere along Horseshoe Bend Road between Hilltop Drive and Boundary Road – even after March 7.
- Parents driving students to College are requested to **EXIT LEFT (ONLY) ONTO HORSESHOE BEND RD** – this is required to reduce already large existing queues backing up into the campus from the Main Entrance. Current traffic is making it very difficult for vehicles to turn right onto Horseshoe Bend Rd and priority must be given to our buses (who will be allowed to turn right) to ensure that they remain on schedule.



Pedestrian Crossing Update

There has been significant discussion regarding pedestrian safety and pedestrian crossings lately. We are currently working with various stakeholders to provide designated pedestrian crossings at both Boundary Rd and Horseshoe Bend Rd. Please see below for updates and the current status of these crossings –

Boundary Rd - Following the reopening of Surfcoast Hwy in March, it is expected that the intersection upgrade of Horseshoe Bend Rd and Boundary Rd will commence. This will see this intersection close in all directions for several months drastically reducing traffic. On its reopening, the roundabout will have been replaced with a fully signalised intersection with pedestrian crossings. Hopefully, we will see this reopening early in the second half of 2024. We see this as a solution to pedestrians crossing safely across Boundary Rd.

Horseshoe Bend Rd - This solution is far more complicated with a lot of work still to do. The old section of Horseshoe Bend Rd between Charlemont Rise and the new intersection is currently being designed for a full upgrade to match what was completed last year. We are requesting a pedestrian crossing be included in this design work. This request has Council support however the upgrade being designed includes several developers which all have to be consulted and approvals sought. It is hoped a solution can be found which will allow this upgrade (including the pedestrian crossing) to take place following the reopening of the intersection. Unfortunately, it is a very slow and complicated process to have infrastructure upgraded. We understand the frustration of the community but we will continue to push hard to have these upgrades completed as quickly as possible.

Iona Meet the Team



The graphic features the Iona College Geelong logo in the top left corner. Below it, the text "IONA MEET THE TEAM" is displayed in large, bold, white letters on a blue background. Underneath, "ALEX SIMPSON" is written in blue, followed by "Teacher" in a yellow box. A quote in yellow text reads: "Don't take your education for granted. Be selfish with it by not letting other negatively impact the amazing opportunities you have been given." On the right side, there is a portrait of Alex Simpson, a woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a white patterned shirt, smiling.

Meet Alex Simpson, a passionate educator at Iona. Alex's journey into teaching began while volunteering in South Africa during her Psychology degree, where she discovered her love for teaching.

Joining the Iona Team was a natural choice for Alex. She saw the opportunity to make a meaningful impact in her local community, especially in a growing college community. Alex specializes in teaching Psychology, Maths and Religious Education.

When asked what was the most rewarding aspect of being a teacher Alex commented " Watching the growth and development of a young person take place before your eyes. Whether it be from Year 7 to Year 12 or just over the course of the academic school year; watching students become the learners (and young adults) they are meant to be is really exciting to be a part of."

Outside of the classroom, Alex shares her life with her husband Tim, who is also a teacher, their 1-year-old son Zac, a French Bulldog named Ted, and two cats named Hank and Ryder. A loyal supporter of the Geelong Cats, Alex enjoys listening to The Fray and watching How I Met Your Mother.

In her spare time, Alex loves spending quality time with family and friends, finding the best iced coffee and brunch. Fun fact: she has bravely jumped off the highest bridge bungee in the world!

For our student body, Alex shares this wisdom: "Don't take your education for granted. Be selfish with it by not letting others negatively impact the amazing opportunities you have been given."

Alex, we are delighted to have you as part of the Iona team – we are so looking forward to witnessing your passion and dedication to our students!

Parenting Education

Meli, a non-profit community service organization dedicated to supporting children, young people, and families, has shared information with us regarding several Parenting Education sessions scheduled for Term 1, 2024. You can access further details about these opportunities through their [online flyer](#).

Dates to Remember in 2024

Date	Event
Wednesday 31 January	Year 7 and New Year 8-11 Students Commence
Wednesday 31 January	Year 7 & New Year 8-11 Students Smoking Ceremony - No Formal Uniform Required
Thursday 1 February	Year 8-11 Students Start
Thursday 1 February	Whole School Assembly - No Formal Uniform Required
Tuesday 6 February	Beginning of School Mass - Formal Uniform
Thursday 8 February	School Photo Day - Formal Uniform
Tuesday 13 February	School Photo Catch Up Day
Wednesday 14 February	Ash Wednesday Whole School Assembly - Formal Uniform
Wednesday 14 February	Year 8, 9 & 10 'In-Person' Parent Community Group Welcome Evening - 5:15 pm - 7 pm
Thursday 15 February	Year 7 & 11 'In-Person' Parent Community Group Welcome Evening - 5:15 pm - 7 pm
Wednesday 28 February	Swimming Carnival - Kardinia Aquatic Centre
Monday 4 March	Year 7 -11 'In-Person' Parent Session - Man Box with Drew Hanger, Resource Centre 6 - 7:30 pm
Monday 11 March	Labour Day Public Holiday
Wednesday 20 March	Student Progress Meetings
Friday 22 March	Student Free Day - Professional Development
Tuesday 26 March	Student Progress Meetings
Wednesday 27 March	Athletics Carnival - Landy Field
Thursday 28 March	Last Day of Term - 2:05 pm
Tuesday 16 April	Term 2 Begins



Congratulations

Congratulations to staff member and current Year 8 Coordinator, Andy Walscott who on the weekend will marry his partner, Katie. We wish you both a lifetime of happiness.

Thanks for your support,

Damian, Kylie and Melissa