

5 December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

It was wonderful to mark the end of the academic year with mass today. Not only were we in our amazing new stadium, but we were joined by Fr Joel Peart, the new Parish Priest of Nazareth Parish. Our students and staff have long awaited a space large enough to accommodate everyone, and it was wonderful to finally enjoy this new venue together. Concluding our school year with the lighting of two candles on the Christmas wreath, and a joyous mass was a beautiful way to prepare for Christmas and give thanks for the year.



As we leave for the holiday break, we pray for the safe-keeping of all who are part of the Iona community and, inspired by the peace candle on the Advent wreath, we reflect with prayer:

Peaceful God,
Show us your peace in the quiet, often unseen moments of our days;
a gentle breeze, the morning sunrise and the calmness of a stranger.
May all in our human family who live with unrest, feel your hand of peace.
Make us instruments of peace in our homes, in our schools and in our world.
Amen



We extend our heartfelt thanks to our Iona families for their incredible generosity in supporting our Christmas Appeal for MacKillop Family Services and Vinnies. Thanks to your kindness, we collected an impressive total of \$2,115 in gift cards—an extraordinary effort! These gift cards will be handed over to representatives from both organizations this coming Monday. MacKillop staff will distribute them to young people spending Christmas with carers outside their family homes, while Vinnies staff will include them in Christmas hampers for families in need. Your contributions make a real difference, helping ensure that those less fortunate can enjoy something special during the holiday season, whether it's a warm meal or a meaningful gift. Thank you again for your generous support!

Mass at Iona

After trialling a monthly Parish Mass at Iona College in 2024, it has been decided that this will no longer continue. Thank you to those families who have been attending.

The parish has now implemented a new weekly schedule for our Mass times, as follows:

- Saturday 6 PM @ St Christopher's Church, Anglesea
- Sunday 9 AM @ St Therese Church, Torquay
- Sunday 11 AM @ Nazareth Church, Grovedale
- Sunday 5 PM @ St Therese Church, Torquay

Announcing Iona's First College Leaders

We are thrilled to announce a significant milestone in Iona's journey: the introduction of our first-ever College Leaders revealed during our End-of-Year Assembly. These exceptional students exemplify Iona's values and vision and will serve as role models and guides for their peers in their respective portfolios.

Our 2025 College Leaders:



College Leaders of Culture and Identity:

- Stella Rose
- Archer Westhorpe

College Leaders of Learning:

- Annie Reimann
- Harry Ford

College Leaders of Sport:

- Mitch Penrice (absent for today's announcement and the photo above)
- Isabella Dunne

College Leaders of Wellbeing:

- Paris Mahoney
- Luca Fraser

The assembly also marked the announcement of our broader College Leadership structure, including Student Leaders and Student Teams.

Congratulations to our newly appointed College Leaders! We are excited to see them inspire and uplift our community in 2025. A formal acknowledgement of these leadership roles will take place next year.

Celebration of Achievement Night

Last week, we held our annual Celebration of Achievement Night in our newly expanded stadium, and it was an evening to remember. We proudly celebrated and honoured our award winners, recognising their outstanding efforts and achievements.

While we applauded those receiving awards, we also extend our pride and congratulations to every student who gave their best throughout the year. Thank you to everyone who made this special night possible!

In particular, we'd like to acknowledge the following award winners that deserve special mention:



From left to right: Josephine Leonard (**VCE Excellence Award**), Charlotte Carmichael (**VET Excellence Award - sponsored by WestVic**), Ashton Hageman (**VM Excellence Award**) and Charlie Cain (**SbAT Excellence Award**)



VCE Arts, Design & Technology Showcase Exhibition Award: Ava Tadich



Corangamite Leadership and Community Spirit Award: Paris Mahoney



University of Melbourne's Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholar Award: Alice Wolter



Deakin University Young Influencer Award: Annie Reimann

Columba Awards



Year 7: Lillie Taylor & Henry Burgess



Year 8: Harry Curavic & Jaz McInnes



Year 9: Lily McCrohan & Jack Pentony



Year 10: Millicent Crawford & Hamish Frake



Year 11: Harry Ford & Luca Fraser

Congratulations to all. We are very proud of your achievements.

2025 Allocated Bus Route (& Other Bus) Information

Information regarding the 2025 Iona College bus services, including assigned routes/buses for students, required forms, guidelines and expectations, bus fees, and more, is being progressively emailed to families. All families will receive this information by the end of the week. If you have not seen the email in your inbox (by the end of the week), please check your Junk or SPAM folder before contacting the school at conveyance@iona.vic.edu.au.

We have also emailed out the route and bus allocation details to all (bus) students, including any new students commencing with us in 2025.

Headspace Opening in Armstrong Creek

We're pleased to share that Headspace has opened a new branch in Armstrong Creek, providing support for young people aged 12 to 25 in the Armstrong Creek and Surf Coast region.

Headspace Armstrong Creek offers a 'no wrong door' approach—when you register, they'll discuss your options and connect you to the right support, whether at their centre or within the community.

Headspace can help with:

- Mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Work and study support
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Physical health

This new resource is a fantastic addition to our local area, offering essential support for the young.

Maths @ Iona

Well, can you believe it – the end of 2024 is here! What an eventful year in the maths space. Highlights from the students' side included our outstanding effort and results in the two mathematical competitions, the first semester of our "Fast Track" subject at Year 9 (allowing Year 10 students in 2025 to complete a Year 12 Maths), student organisation and resilience across our two exam periods and our first Year 12 exams in Mathematics with our accelerated General Maths group. *One of our students argued with a ninety-degree angle and it turned out it was right!* 😊

From a staff perspective, we had 4 graduate teachers join the mathematics faculty at Iona, each bringing with them not only enthusiasm but some individual strengths that have added to the rich and competent department. *They were, however terrified of negative numbers and would stop at nothing to avoid them!* 😊 We welcomed several experienced maths teachers too, and the collaborative and innovative approach in the maths domain was a delight to be a part of!

Moving into 2025 we will have our first year of three Year 12 Maths subjects with General Mathematics, Mathematical Methods and Specialist Mathematics all running – and we can't wait to see what those students do! We continue with our electives in Year 9 and our Advanced and Support options in Year 9 and 10. *The 2025 calendar, its days are numbered* 😊.

On a personal note, I'd like to thank you for reading my musings! *An opinion without 3.14159265359 is just an onion* 😊! I've enjoyed communicating to our parents and wider community through the newsletter and always get excited when someone mentions a puzzle or a problem I have shared that they have been trying to solve! Many a Parent Student Teacher Conversation has been consumed with speaking about these challenges, which has given me a lot of joy. Mathematics is meant to be a fun challenge and collaborative, so I've been impressed to hear how you and your families have embraced the fun!

This will be my last newsletter article, as I will be moving on to St Joseph's College in 2025. I have loved teaching your children, and getting to know them and you, and will look on with much interest as they move through their schooling years and beyond.

People who can't tell the difference between whole numbers and decimals, are missing the point. 😊

Thank you for getting the point of these articles!

Lou Keating
Learning Area Leader (Maths & Numeracy)

Sport News



2024 has been a fantastic year for sport at Iona! The GISSA and Wednesday activities concluded with a beautiful day, highlighted by a big fish caught at Barwon River. A huge thank you to the staff who coached and supported each group every week throughout the terms, as well as to the Year 7 and 8 students who embraced their chosen sports and activities, with many even trying something new. We look forward to an even bigger group participating in 2025!

In addition to the Wednesday program for Year 7 and 8 students, we had a full year of competitive sports, tournaments, and full game days for all year levels. The competition was always fierce against other schools, but Iona certainly made a name for itself, standing out particularly in Basketball, Netball, AFL, and Cricket. We also enjoyed many friendly matches with other schools, as well as our annual Trinity and Courage Cups. Congratulations to all our students who participated and represented Iona in 2024 – we are incredibly proud of your efforts!

End-of-Year Wellbeing Message from the Iona College Student Support Team

As we approach the end of another incredible year at Iona College, the Student Support Team would like to wish you all a safe, restful, and enjoyable summer break. This time of year, provides a wonderful opportunity to recharge, reconnect, and reflect on the achievements and challenges of the past year. While the summer holidays can be a time of relaxation, we understand that they can also bring unique challenges. If you have any concerns about your child's wellbeing or mental health during the break, please know that support is available. Below are some important community services that can offer guidance and assistance:

Lifeline: 13 11 14 (24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention)

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 (counselling for young people aged 5 to 25)

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636 (support for anxiety, depression, and mental health concerns) or www.youthbeyondblue.com

Headspace: www.headspace.org.au (mental health support for young people aged 12 to 25)

Parentline: 1300 30 1300 (support and guidance for parents and caregivers)

eheadspace: Online and phone counselling via www.headspace.org.au/eheadspace

Mental Health triage 1300 094 187

Suicide call back 1300 659 467

Your wellbeing is our priority, and we encourage you to take time to rest, enjoy family and friends, and engage in activities that bring joy and balance.

We look forward to welcoming you back refreshed and ready for another successful year in 2025.

The Iona College Student Support Team – Mary, Molly, Mel and Marisa

Big Summer Read



We are pleased to support the Big Summer Read which is taking place at Geelong Regional Libraries these summer holidays! The Big Summer Read aims to arrest the 'summer slide' by engaging children and their families in a fun and dynamic campaign through public libraries, supported with resources such as a user-friendly website, posters, reading logs and milestone incentives. Prizes are on offer at local and state levels.

The Big Summer Read runs from 1 December 2024 until 31 January 2025. To register and for terms and conditions please see <https://www.grlc.vic.gov.au/big-summer-read> or <https://readbooks.com.au/bsr>.

Please note: An adult must register first, then add children to the account.

Farewell

At this time of year, we say farewell to the students that are departing our school. We wish each of them every success in the years to come.

We also say farewell to our staff members:

Mrs Carmen Ahearn will be taking up the position of Deputy Principal (Mission) at Saint Ignatius College, Drysdale. Carmen is a Foundation staff member at Iona commencing in 2020 initially as Head of Year 7/Head of Learning and in later years as Head of Culture and Identity.

Mrs Bernadette Stutterd-Lane is a Foundation staff member at Iona who oversaw Learning Diversity at the College. Mrs Stutterd Lane has been on long service leave for the majority of the year and will be retiring at the end of this year.

Mrs Yvonne Billows commenced at Iona in 2021 and has been our Science Laboratory Technician since that time. We wish Yvonne well as she enters retirement.

Mr Ashley Mills will be taking up the position of Deputy Principal (Wellbeing) at St Joseph's College in 2025. Ash commenced at Iona in 2022 as Head of Students and over the last year has been the Head of Wellbeing for Learning.

Ms Louise Keating joined our staff at the start of 2023 and has been in the position of Head of Numeracy and Domain Coordinator, Mathematics. Louise will be taking up a position at St Joseph's College next year.

Mrs Rebecca Barry will take up a new position at Clonard College in 2025. Rebecca has been our Careers Coordinator in 2024.

Ms Kiran Jagpal commenced at Iona this year as a science teacher. Kiran has relocated to Newcastle in New South Wales.

Mr Richard Thompson commenced at Iona this year as a Humanities, English and VCAL teacher. Mr Thompson is leaving us to join Fire Services Victoria.

We also thank our trainees (LSO) staff, Sam Douglas and Bradley Verbeek as they complete their time with us this year.

We thank all of the staff for their commitment to our school and wish them well as they embark on new challenges next year and beyond.

The following staff will be taking maternity leave in 2025- Mrs Suzanne Wynack, Mrs Nicole Pitaro and Mrs Chrissie McPhan.

Christmas Mass



Term 1, 2025 Dates to Remember

Date	Event
Thursday 30 January	Year 7, Year 12 and New Iona Students (Year 8 - 11) First Day of 2025
Friday 31 January	Year 8,9,10 & 11 First Day 2025
Monday 10 March	Labour Day Public Holiday
Friday 21 March	Staff Professional Development (Student Free Day)
Friday 4 April	End of Term 1 2025

This calendar of events will be updated in our first newsletter of 2025.

The term dates for [2025 are available on our website.](#)

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Kylie and Melissa