

13 February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

On Tuesday, 11th February, we came together as a community for Mass to mark the beginning of our school year. We were blessed to have Fr Jim, a member of our College Advisory Council and Parish Priest of St Mary's, with us to celebrate Mass.



A message that resonated throughout the Mass was that when we interact with others, we are interacting with God. The way we treat others reflects how we treat God because we are all made in God's likeness. Fr Jim spoke about treating others, especially those new to the school, with compassion. He also reiterated Pope Francis' call for us to protect the earth, our common home, and treat it with compassion. This message is especially important because the focus for Term 1 is our school's value of compassion. The patron of Chisolm House, Caroline Chisolm, exemplified the value of compassion in her interactions with all.



On February 13th 2008, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made a formal apology from the nation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families who suffered and still live with the injustices of past government policies of forced child removal.

Today marks the 17th anniversary of the National Apology. National Apology Day is a time to acknowledge the strength and resilience of First Nations people. We continue to take this shared journey of truth-telling and reaffirm our commitment to justice, healing and reconciliation.

Creator Spirit of all,
We come to you united as your children.
May you comfort all those whose history on this land is a story of
hurt and pain.
May your wisdom and guidance be with all who work towards a
future of unity, reconciliation and peace within this Great South
Land of the Holy Spirit.
We ask this prayer in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ,
Amen

This prayer has been prepared by Vicki Clark in support of the Proud Race and FIRE Carriers programs.

Commissioning Our First Student Leaders & Celebrating Student Excellence

Last week, we commissioned our first-ever College and Student Leaders during a whole-school assembly. This special occasion not only marked the introduction of our new leadership model but also recognised the outstanding achievements of our students, including VCE Excellence Award recipients and AMEB Award winners—a true testament to their dedication and talent. Congratulations to all our award winners!



Our new Student Leadership model is deeply grounded in our Catholic faith, with our eight College Leaders pledging to follow the example of Jesus, serving the College community with compassion and humility. Each leader was formally presented with their Leadership Badge, their College Leader Blazer, and the honour of holding our new gum leaf wood sculpture. Crafted from wood sourced from our own property, the gum leaf serves as a powerful symbol of College Leadership, representing service, stewardship and a deep respect for Country.

This momentous occasion reflects Iona's commitment to fostering strong, values-driven leadership and celebrating the achievements of our students. We look forward to seeing our student leaders grow and inspire the College community throughout the year.

Positive Behaviours & Expectations at Iona

Supporting Our Students in Wearing the Iona College Uniform with Pride

At Iona, we take great pride in our community and one of the ways we demonstrate this is through wearing our uniform well. Our uniform is a reflection of the high standards we uphold, and we encourage all families to speak with their young person about the importance of wearing it correctly and with pride.

We have gathered to welcome in the new year with an Assembly and Mass, and I thank all the students and families who have taken this opportunity to wear the uniform well. It is disappointing that we are noticing infractions that are within your student's control. We want to start our days with a positive connection rather than asking students to remove incorrect uniform items or issuing infractions. Students are encouraged to do a self-check each morning to make sure their uniform is on point. We ask that all students

adhere to the College's uniform policy, which is available for parents and carers on PAM and for students on SIMON. Your support in ensuring students meet these expectations helps maintain the strong sense of identity and respect that defines our Iona community.

Please see below some areas in terms of our presentation;

- Hair must be tied back if past the shoulders, with natural colours and no shaved patterns.
- Jewellery is limited to two small earrings (studs or thin hoops) per lower lobe—no nose rings, bracelets, rings or necklaces.
 - Examples of sleepers that can be worn:



- Examples of sleepers that cannot be worn (thick hoops larger than a 5c coin):



- Please note that studs larger than 5.00mm are not allowed:



- Make-up should not be obvious, and nail polish, fake nails, and eyelash extensions are not permitted.
- Dresses and skirts must be knee-length and not tightened at the back, forcing the length of the skirt to be shorter than it should be.

For the full policy, please visit PAM under Parent Links or the Iona College website.

Parent/Carer Communication with Teachers

At Iona, we understand the importance of staying in touch with your young person's teachers. While we strive to respond as promptly as possible, please allow up to 48 hours for an email response.

We recognise that some situations require immediate attention, and we appreciate your understanding in these cases. For all other inquiries, we kindly ask for patience within the 48-hour timeframe.

It's important to note that all teachers have a teaching allotment and various responsibilities throughout the school day, which may impact their ability to respond immediately. We appreciate your support and understanding in allowing them the necessary time to provide thoughtful and thorough responses.

Swimming Sports – Expectations and Reminders

Looking ahead, we are excited for our upcoming Swimming Sports event. It will be a memorable time shared for our students and staff. As previously communicated:

- Attendance is compulsory for Years 7–9 students.
- Attendance is optional for Years 10–12, but students in these year levels must compete in at least two events if they wish to attend. Normal classes will be running for the Year 10-12 cohort, so an expectation is that students catch up on missed work.
- **All students must wear swimwear that is fit for purpose rather than fashion-oriented styles.** Should the clothing not be at an appropriate level deemed by a staff member, then the student will be asked to re-dress and may be asked to be collected from the venue.
- Additionally, students are required to wear their sports uniform unless they are dressed in their House colours. A reminder that jeans and jorts are not permitted at this event. We encourage hats to be worn and will give further information closer to the carnival.

We appreciate your ongoing support in reinforcing these expectations with your young person. Together, we can continue to foster a strong sense of pride, respect and community at Iona. Thank you for your partnership in upholding these standards.

Craig Durran
Head of Positive Behaviours

A Positive Start to the Year and Supporting Young Minds

It's been a fantastic start to the school year, with our students settling in well, reconnecting with friends, and embracing the many opportunities available to them at Iona. Whether it's in the classroom, on the sporting field, or engaging in creative pursuits, we are proud of their enthusiasm and resilience.

As we navigate the year ahead, it's important to acknowledge that there is no such thing as perfect parenting—raising a young person can be a tough but rewarding journey. Supporting their mental health and wellbeing is just as important as their academic success. If you're looking for insight into how to better understand your young person's mental health, I highly recommend *Ten Things I Wish You Knew About Your Child's Mental Health* by Dr. Billy Garvey. It's a fantastic read filled with practical advice and reassurance.

If your young person is struggling, or if you'd like additional guidance as a parent, the following resources may be helpful:

- ✦ [Raisingchildren.net.au](https://raisingchildren.net.au) – A trusted source for parenting advice and strategies.
- ✦ [Guidinggrowingminds.com](https://guidinggrowingminds.com) – Expert-led insights on child development and wellbeing.
- ✦ **Podcast Recommendation:** *Pop Culture Parenting* – A great listen for practical tips on raising resilient young people in today's world.

For more serious concerns about your young person's mental health and wellbeing, please don't hesitate to reach out for professional support:

☎ **Lifeline:** 13 11 14 (24/7 crisis support)

☎ **Kids Helpline:** 1800 551 800 (free counselling service for young people aged 5-25)

As always, we are here to support our students and families—please reach out if you need assistance. Let's continue to work together to ensure a positive and fulfilling year ahead!

Kylie Power
Deputy Principal Wellbeing

Year 7 Parent/Carer Welcome Evening



**YEAR 7 PARENT/CARER
WELCOME EVENING**

📅 TUESDAY
18 FEBRUARY

🕒 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

📍 IONA COLLEGE
STADIUM

We are excited to warmly welcome our new Year 7 parents and carers to the Iona community at our upcoming Parent/Carer Welcome Evening.

Details:

Date: Tuesday, 18 February

Time: 6:00 – 7:00 pm

Venue: Iona College Stadium

This evening is a wonderful opportunity to hear from our Foundation Principal, Damian McKew, meet the Year 7 Leaders and Community Group teachers, and connect with other parents and carers from the Year 7 cohort.

We encourage all parents and carers to attend this special event. Tea and coffee will be provided. Please note that this session is intended for parents/carers only, students do not need to attend.

Tour and Information Sessions



**BOOK YOUR TOUR AND
INFORMATION SESSION
TODAY.**

Iona warmly invites families with a Year 6 or 7 student at home to our annual March Tour and Information Sessions.

Our student-led tours provide a great opportunity to explore our College, ask questions and hear directly from students about life at Iona.

Please book your spot online- <https://iona.vic.edu.au/tour-and-information-session/>

Year 7 2026 Enrolment Applications Open



**YEAR 7 2026 ENROLMENT
APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN**

We would like to remind parents that if your child is set to enter Year 7 in the year 2026, it is important to submit an enrolment [online application via the following link](#).

Enrolment applications are currently open and will remain so until Friday, 9 May.

Please note that applications received after this closing date will be added to a waitlist, which may affect your young person's placement. To ensure your young person has the best opportunity for enrolment, please complete the application process before the deadline.

School Photo Make-Up Day

Students who were absent for school photos today, 13 February, will be required to attend our School Photo Make-up Day on Tuesday, 18 February. Formal uniform, including the blazer, is compulsory for all students having their photo taken.

Year 12 Group Photos

All Year 12 students must also wear their formal uniform on Tuesday, 18 March, as Arthur Reed Photography will be capturing a Year 12 Cohort Group Photo along with a photo featuring our 8 College Leaders.

Students may change into their sport uniform after their photo if they wish. Thank you for your cooperation!

Safe and Respectful Bus Travel

As part of our commitment to student wellbeing and safety, we remind all students of the importance of respectful and responsible behaviour while travelling on school and public buses. Once students board the bus, they are not under direct supervision by school staff, making it essential that they uphold the same high standards of behaviour expected during the school day. Recently, concerns have been raised about inappropriate phone use, including sending messages and Airdropping content that is disrespectful and immature. Such behaviour not only disrupts fellow passengers but can also create an uncomfortable and unsafe environment for others.

We ask all students to show respect to their peers, drivers, and members of the public by using their travel time responsibly. This means keeping noise levels appropriate, refraining from using offensive language, staying seated, wearing seatbelts, treating others with kindness, and using technology in a respectful manner. Misuse of devices can have serious consequences, and we encourage parents to discuss responsible digital behaviour with their young person. Let's all work together to ensure that school bus travel remains a safe, respectful and positive experience for everyone.

Students found to breach our expectations face a one-week ban from the bus.

Carl Jones
Accounts Receivable & Transport

Iona Pathways Press

The 13th February edition of the Iona Pathways Press can be found [here](#).
In this edition, you will find information about the following:

- Dates to Diarise in Term 1
- Work Experience Opportunities
- Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2025
- Discover Medicine Webinar – Monash University
- News from ANU

- Tuckwell Scholarship for 2026
- ANU Open Day 2025
- University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT)
- UTAS Maria Island Marine Biology Experience
- Career as a Biomedical Engineer
- Arts Degrees in Victoria in 2025
- Snapshot - Blue Mountains Hotel Management School in 2025



Find & Subscribe to the Pathways Press Newsfeed.

For Students: Visit the College Career website, click on 'for students' choose Newsfeed and subscribe: [Iona College Geelong \(ionacareers.com\)](https://ionacollegegeelong.com.au/for-students/newsfeed)

For Parents: Visit the College Career website, click on 'for parents' choose Newsfeed and subscribe: [Iona College Geelong \(ionacarers.com\)](https://ionacollegegeelong.com.au/for-parents/newsfeed)

To contact the Pathways team, please email pathways@iona.vic.edu.au

Year 10 Immunisations

On Tuesday, 11th March 2025, Barwon Health Immunisation Service will visit our Year 10 students to administer the free Meningococcal ACWY vaccine.

Consent Form

Please complete the online consent form via the following link:

<https://geelong.book.vitavo.com.au/school/IonaCollegeGeelong-rolbFS>



It is essential to complete the consent form regardless of whether you provide **consent (YES) or decline (NO)**. Barwon Health Immunisation requires confirmation that you have received the information and made an informed decision for your young person. If the consent form is completed, no further follow-up will be necessary.

Informational Videos

The following videos explain the importance of this vaccine for Year 10 students:

- [Why this vaccine is given to Year 10 students](#)
- [Understanding the Meningococcal ACWY vaccine](#)
- [Secondary School Immunisation Program - Better Health Channel](#)

Alternative Vaccination Options

If you would prefer for your young person to receive this vaccine outside of the school setting, please contact Barwon Health Immunisation directly:

- **Phone:** 4215 4444
- **Email:** immunisation.user@barwonhealth.org.au
- **Alternatively, you may consult your GP.**

Student Contact Data

The school provides the following basic student and parent/carer contact information to Barwon Health Immunisation Service, including - Student name, Date of birth, Gender, Year level and class group, parent/carer contact details and Language(s) spoken at home.

If you **DO NOT** want your young person's data shared with Barwon Health Immunisation Service, please inform the school in writing by **Monday, 17th Feb** to medical@iona.vic.edu.au.

Art Department News

Our Year 10 Product Design (Non-Resistant) class has started the term getting familiar with the sewing machines and creating a fully lined and functional zippered pouch. Students were able to select their fabric choices and the classroom has been busy building their sewing skills.



Our Year 11 VCE Visual Communication and Design students have immersed themselves with as many mediums and materials as possible, with the aim to explore and experiment with each process to build pages in their folios. Cut paper, lino printing, impasto painting, watercolour and copic markers were all stationed around the room.



Term 1 Dates to Remember

Date	Event
Thursday 30 January	Year 7, Year 12 and New Students (Year 8-11) First Day (Year 7 & New Students Year 8-11 - Formal Uniform, Year 12- Uniform of Choice)
Friday 31 January	Year 8,9,10 & 11 First Day 2025 (Uniform of Choice for all students)
Friday 7 February	Assembly and Commissioning of the College Leader Ceremony (Formal Uniform)
Tuesday 11 February	School Mass (Formal Uniform)
Tuesday 11 February	Year 11 & 12 Parent/Carer Welcome Evening (On-site)
Thursday 13 February	School Photos (Formal Uniform)
Tuesday 18 February	School Photos Catch-Up Day
Tuesday 18 February	Year 7 Parent/Carer 'In-Person' Welcome Evening 6pm
Thursday 27 February	Iona College Swimming Carnival
Wednesday 5 March	Ash Wednesday
Monday 10 March	Labour Day Public Holiday
Tuesday 11 March	Year 10 Immunisation
Tuesday 11 March	Unit 3 Student Progress Meetings (On-site)
Monday 17 March	Open Day Tour & Information Sessions (4:15 pm - 5:45 pm)
Tuesday 18 March	Open Day Tour & Information Sessions (11:00 am - 12:30 pm)
Wednesday 19 March	Open Day Tour & Information Sessions (11:00 am - 12:30 pm)
Wednesday 19 March	Open Day Tour & Information Sessions (4:15 pm - 5:45 pm)
Thursday 20 March	Open Day Tour & Information Sessions (11:00 am - 12:30 pm)
Thursday 20 March	Student Progress Meetings (On-site and Online)
Friday 21 March	Staff Professional Development (Student Free Day)
Wednesday 26 March	Student Progress Meetings (Online)
Thursday 27 March	Iona College Athletics Day
Monday 31 March - Wednesday 2 April	Year 8 Camp (Group 1)
Wednesday 2 April - Friday 4 April	Year 8 Camp (Group 2)
Friday 4 April	End of Term 1 (2:05 pm Finish - Formal Uniform)
Tuesday 22 April	Term 2 Starts

If you would like to download a printable version of the schedule above, [please access it here](#). This link will be updated each week in the newsletter as new events are added to the calendar.

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Kylie and Melissa