

20 February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

World Day of Social Justice is celebrated each year on the 20th of February, and the theme for 2025 is 'Empowering Inclusion: Bridging Gaps for Social Justice'. For Catholics, social justice is based on Catholic Social Teachings about human dignity, the call to family/community/participation, rights and responsibilities, and options for the poor and vulnerable, to name a few examples. More broadly speaking, Catholic social justice also proclaims and practises the teachings of Jesus.

God, fill our hearts with the fire of your love and with a firm commitment to bringing about greater justice for all beings.

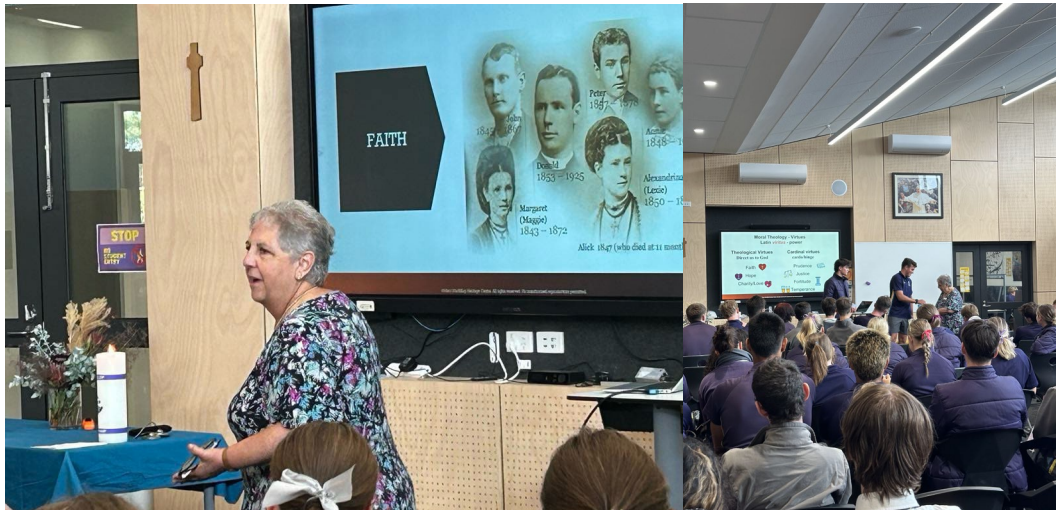
By sharing the many gifts you give us,
may we do our part to ensure equality for all our sisters and brothers throughout the world. With a growing awareness of our common home and of the one web of life in which we live, may we see fresh possibilities for responding each day with compassion and courage. May we renew our efforts to pray, advocate and work for an end to all forms of exploitation, injustice and suffering. We ask this, especially on this World Day of Social Justice. Amen

We were delighted to host many of our new Year 7 parents and carers at our Year 7 Welcome Evening on Tuesday. A big thank you to everyone who braved the gusty weather to join us—it was fantastic to see so many new and familiar faces coming together as part of the Iona community.

We hope you enjoyed the evening as much as we did. We look forward to sharing this journey with you!



Year 12 Guest Speaker – Sister Rita



Last Friday, the Year 12 cohort had the privilege of hearing from Sister Rita from the Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre, who shared her insights on faith, history and values as relevant to the Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of Hope.

Below is an excerpt from Asher Wescott, a Student Leader in the Culture and Identity space, about his reflections on the morning:

A highlight of the session was the introduction of Luce—this year's Jubilee mascot—whose name, meaning “light” in Italian, symbolises hope and guidance for the journey ahead. Rita also took us students on a deep dive into the life and legacy of Saint Mary MacKillop, offering a powerful reminder of her dedication to education, service and faith.

In an interactive segment, students participated in a Christian Wordle, blending modern engagement with spiritual reflection. The talk also emphasised the theological values and cardinal virtues that shape not only faith but also the foundation of a well-rounded education.

One of the most profound moments of the presentation was the sharing of historical relics from Mary MacKillop's era, including a piece of her wooden coffin. Seeing and learning about these tangible connections to Australia's first saint added a unique and moving perspective to the discussion.

We walked away from the session feeling inspired, with many reflecting on the importance of faith, perseverance and hope in their own lives.

A huge thank you to our guest speaker, Sister Rita, for sharing such valuable insights and helping us prepare for this Jubilee Year!

Year 8 LifeChanger workshops Term 1



We are excited that our Year 8 students will be participating in the LifeChanger wellbeing workshops over the next six weeks. These sessions, held every Wednesday, are designed to be engaging and dynamic, incorporating fun and movement to foster a positive learning environment.

The LifeChanger program aims to empower young people by focusing on five key pillars: Health, Skills, Self, Purpose and Tribe. Each week, our students will delve into a different theme, exploring topics such as physical and mental health, mindfulness, goal setting, problem-solving, gratitude, self-awareness and resilience.



These workshops are more than just lessons; they are interactive experiences that encourage students to actively participate and apply what they learn to their daily lives. By engaging in these sessions, students will develop essential life skills and build a strong sense of community and self-awareness. We encourage parents to discuss these topics with their young person each week, reinforcing the concepts and supporting their personal growth. Together, we can help our Year 8 students navigate this journey towards becoming resilient and empowered individuals.

Kylie Power
Deputy Principal Wellbeing

Wellbeing At Iona

Sleep Wellbeing, Weekly Grab



At Iona, we know that good sleep is the foundation for learning, health and wellbeing.

Our young people can find sleep particularly challenging for a number of reasons. One place to start to find out more information tailored for them is <https://www.dozeapp.ca/>. The DOZE app is a free app developed by Dr. Colleen Carney, a Professor at Toronto Metropolitan University.

Marisa Lavars
College Psychologist

Proud to deliver

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S INTERNATIONAL AWARD



Iona is proud to be a registered school that can help students participate in [The Duke of Edinburgh International Award](#).

The Award is self-directed by each young person – they choose the activities they would like to pursue and set goals for each section. Anything that students do as part of their academic timetable program cannot be used for the award. Many students are already doing things outside of school that could be counted as part of an award.

As a registered school, please note:

- The school will help and guide but cannot organise activities.
- Adventurous Journeys must be organised independently from the school through recognised and approved organisations. Outdoor Ed journeys cannot be used.
- For all activities, students will need to provide a Working With Children Card photo of the supervisor before an activity will be approved.
- All activities need to be approved by the school before commencement.
- Students need to be proactive and drive this award personally.

Students will be allocated a staff mentor, but their role is not to chase or follow up on logs and/or activities. If your young person is interested in taking on an award, please ask them to contact me via email to book a meeting. Please see more information below about the award.

More Information from The Duke of Edinburgh

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a unique and exciting opportunity for young people (aged 14-25) to get out of their comfort zone and develop their initiative, self-esteem, and sense of adventure. It is the world's leading youth achievement Award, empowering young people with the skills and opportunities to realise their full potential and go beyond academic success.

The Duke of Ed Award can be achieved at three different levels: Bronze, Silver, and Gold. There are four sections – Physical Recreation (a sport or exercise), Voluntary Service (unpaid voluntary work), Skills (non-physical ability) & Adventurous Journeys. As the levels increase, the time commitment required to complete each level also increases.

At the Bronze level, the time commitments for the Physical Recreation, Voluntary Service and Skills Award sections are one hour a week for 3 months. One section must be a major and requires a 6- month

commitment. All activities do not have to be new for the Participant. However, they do have to be undertaken substantially in their own time, outside of class time.

This means that parents play a vital role in supporting and encouraging young people as they work towards their goals. Some parental guidance may also be required.

The cost for each participant starting their Duke of Ed Award in 2025 is \$210 for Bronze, \$210 for Silver and \$210 for Gold, which includes administrative costs and registration, Online Record Book access, insurance cover and an award-level badge and certificate upon completion.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is internationally recognised and can help students in many aspects of their lives. The Award has helped Participants find jobs (both part-time and careers) and apply for both national and international scholarship programs and University applications. Latrobe University's Aspire Program has community service criteria, which are fulfilled by any level of The Duke of Ed Award, increasing your student's chance of receiving a university placement.

Jodie Townsend
Head of Performing Arts/Duke of Edinburgh Co-ordinator

School Photos

We wanted to take a moment to thank you for ensuring your children looked fantastic on School Photo Day! Their neat and well-presented uniforms truly reflected the pride and spirit of our school community. It was wonderful to see our students looking their best, and we appreciate your effort in helping to make the day such a success. We can't wait to see the final photos and share these special memories with you!

If your child was absent on both of our school photo days, there is still an opportunity for them to have their photo taken at the Arthur Reed Head Office. This can be arranged during the Term 1 school holidays. Please contact Arthur Reed to schedule your appointment.

Arthur Reed Photos
Contact Number: 5243 4390
Address: 148-154 Marshalltown Road, Grovedale

If you have not received your photo slip, please check the bottom of your school bag to ensure it hasn't been overlooked before contacting us. If you're unable to find your form, please reach out to reception to obtain your student code.

If your young person borrowed items from Iona for the School Photos, please ensure these items are returned to Main Reception as soon as possible. We thank you for your support.

Swimming Carnival – Expectations and Reminders

We are excited for our upcoming Swimming Carnival next week Thursday the 27th of February. 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.

Students will travel by bus to and from Kardinia Aquatic Centre from Iona College after attending Community Group at Iona and handing in their phones. Parents and carers are welcome to attend the day and cheer on their young person. Please ensure you sign in upon arrival.

We look forward to a great day of competition and school spirit!

Iona Pathways Press

The 20th 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
- Avalon Airshow Excursion Opportunity
- Work Experience Opportunities
- Medical Work Experience Overseas for High School Students
- Discover Monash Events
- Bond University: Future Forum - Melbourne
- Cetacean Sisters - Inspiring Future Female Scientists through Cetacean Science
- Accounting & Actuarial Science Degrees in Victoria in 2025
- Snapshot of Bond University 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 \(ionacareers.com\)](#)

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

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

Art Department News

The Year 9 Visual and Digital Art i-Create students have been exploring different artists and materials this term. This lesson saw students be inspired by Australian Artist Ben Quilty, who works in a thick gestural painting style. Using impasto mediums, the class focused on making their own painted artworks using eyes as subject matter.





Tour and Information Sessions



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

A reminder about our upcoming 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/>

Book 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.

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