

13 March 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

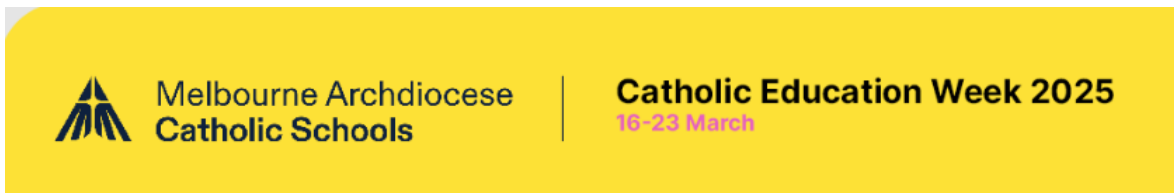
Tomorrow, we mark a historical milestone in our Iona College community, the official opening of 'The Columba Specialist Centre' and 'The Francis Centre of Courage'. We will be joined by Ms Libby Coker, MP. Member for Corangamite, as well as Dr Edward Simons, Executive Director, Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools, who will celebrate this special occasion with staff and students. It is a time to pause and reflect on two of our patrons, whose names honour these buildings. We are inspired by the vision of St Columba, a missionary, who established a centre of Christianity on the island of Iona, a centre of learning by the sea. Reflecting on St Columba, our community aspires to be a place of learning where compassion, courage, leadership and excellence are nurtured. Pope Francis calls on us to be courageous, to be a voice for the voiceless, and to care for all, especially the most vulnerable. He reminds us of the urgent need to protect God's creation, our earth, our common home. We continue to pray for Pope Francis' recovery as he works through his health challenges.

Jubilee Ambassadors

Every twenty-five years, the Catholic Church celebrates a sacred Jubilee to encourage special prayers and sacred pilgrimages. From Christmas Eve in 2024 to the Epiphany on January 6, 2026, Pope Francis invites us to be "Pilgrims of Hope." The holy doors of the four major basilicas are normally cemented shut, but during Jubilee Years they are opened.

We congratulate Miss Georgia Lappin and Evie McNamara, who have been selected as the Jubilee Ambassadors for Iona College. The Ambassadors will be commissioned at the Mass of St Patrick for Schools on Friday 21 March. We look forward to learning from Georgia and Evie as they engage the Iona College community and inspire active participation in Jubilee Year events.

Catholic Education Week 2025



This year's theme draws from the motto of the Holy Year, the Year of Jubilee, and the Australian Catholic Youth Festival's theme – 'Pilgrims of Hope'. Catholic Education Week is an opportunity for all Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne to celebrate their Catholic identity.

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you (Is 60: 1).

The Mass of St Patrick for Schools will take place on Friday 21 March 2025, as well as other activities for both primary and secondary students. The Creative Arts Exhibition will be held from Sunday 16 March to Saturday 22 March 2025. For enquiries, please contact events@macs.vic.edu.au.

St Mary's Feeding Program, Uganda- Easter Raffle



All students have now received a book of raffle tickets to sell, in support of St Mary's Feeding Program, Uganda. We ask you to please consider supporting this worthy cause. It has been very encouraging to see Easter Egg donations already coming in. Please continue to bring in your Easter Egg donations, or other treats, for our raffle.

You can also make a direct donation to the feeding program [via the following link](#) or the **QR code** in the poster below.

As a school community, we recognise the important work that Caritas does through Project Compassion. We will continue to promote this organization, alongside the St Mary's Feeding Program, for the duration of Term One. See the QR code below to donate to Caritas.



Lent

As we move into this second week of Lent, we reflect on a message from Pope Francis, suggesting a more contemporary approach to the Lenten practice of fasting.



Do you want to fast this Lent? (In the words of Pope Francis)

Fast from hurting words and say kind words
Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude
Fast from anger and be filled with patience
Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope
Fast from worries and have trust in God
Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity
Fast from pressures and be prayerful
Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy
Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others
Fast from grudges and be reconciled
Fast from words and be silent so you can listen

International Women's Day

We thoroughly enjoyed our celebration of International Women's Day last week. It was a privilege to be part of Clonard College's International Women's Day Breakfast, where we had the opportunity to hear from Loretta Hart from the local radio station Pulse. Loretta spoke passionately about stepping forward with women and advocating for female representation in the media. A true local gem.

We were also proud to have six of our College Leaders represent Iona at the event. It was a wonderful opportunity to join together in celebrating the achievements of women and continue the important conversations about gender equality.



Tour and Information Sessions – Next Week



UPCOMING TOUR AND INFORMATION SESSION

Next week, we welcome prospective families to Iona for our annual Tour and Information Sessions. This is a fantastic opportunity for future students to explore our school, meet staff and students, and gain insight into life at Iona.

If you have a child in **Year 5 or 6**, there is still time to secure your place. Bookings can be made online: [Iona College Tour and Information Session](#). We look forward to welcoming our community!

Sports News

Congratulations to all our teams for their incredible efforts in recent grand finals:

Gaelic Girls Grand Final – Our girls fought hard but narrowly lost by just 1 point. **MVP:** Sophie Nolan

Gaelic Boys Grand Final – The boys put in a strong performance but were defeated by 10 points. **MVP:** Tai Stewart

Inter Boys Cricket Grand Final – Unfortunately, the boys lost their match, but they displayed great skill and determination. **MVP:** Hudson O’Leary

Looking ahead, our **Senior Boys Cricket Grand Final** is next Monday against St Ignatius. Best of luck to our team!

GISSA Swimming Results – Please refer to the [Geelong Independent School Sports Association Results Hub](#) for individual age results. Congratulations to all our swimmers!

Swimming Carnival

Congratulations to all students for their enthusiasm and participation in our Swimming Carnival! The final House points are as follows:

Francis – 812 Points
MacKillop – 666 Points
Chisholm – 636 Points
Glowrey – 563 Points

Well done to **Francis House** for taking the top spot, and to all competitors for their effort and house spirit throughout the day!



Year Level Champions

A huge congratulations to our **Year Level Champions** for their outstanding performances on the day! Your effort and dedication in the pool were fantastic to see. Well done to all students for your participation and house spirit!

Student	Year Level	Points
Ashton Rickard	Year 7	22 Points
Millie Leijer	Year 7	40 Points
Banjo Condon	Year 8	40 Points
Maeve Timms	Year 8	40 Points
Elliot Sullivan	Year 9	38 Points
Pip Johnstone	Year 9	40 Points
Charlie Parker	Year 10	40 Points
Aurora Aldersley	Year 10	36 Points
Bondi Condon	Year 10	36 Points
Finley Cumming	Year 11	25 Points
Layla McInnes	Year 11	34 Points
Josh O'Brien	Year 12	30 Points
Ava Tadich	Year 12	30 Points

Student Progress Meetings



By now, you should have received an email with a link to book your **Student Progress Meetings**. Please take note of the following dates and formats:

Whole School Student Progress Meetings

- Thursday, 20 March
- On-site Hybrid - Face-to-Face & Online
- 3:30 pm – 6:30 pm
- Wednesday, 26 March
- Online Only
- 3:30 pm – 6:30 pm

We look forward to connecting with our families.

Melissa Gould

Deputy Principal Learning



Sleep Wellbeing, Weekly Grab

At Iona, we know that good sleep is important for our whole school community – our students, our caregivers and our school staff. So far, we have told you a little bit about sleep and suggested some helpful apps. Last week we also gave you some information about sleep apnoea. Today, we are going to talk about how our young people have unique sleep needs.

Just like adults, young people can experience insomnia. They also have special sleep needs because their natural body clocks are undergoing a temporary change. This means they often want to wake up later, feel most awake in the afternoon or evening, and feel sleepy later than before. This change usually continues until they reach young adulthood. They might also feel sleepy during the day and enjoy sleeping in on weekends.

Our young people tend to like to make their own decisions and set their own goals around sleep, and we of course can support them. Working in collaboration with our young people is more effective than 'going into battle' about sleep. If our young people can learn about sleep, they can set achievable goals for themselves and make decisions that help themselves. They can learn skills that they can take with them throughout their life. A helpful place to get started is the free, university designed, sleep app, especially for young people DOZE app <https://www.dozeapp.ca/>

Helpful Apps:

Doze App for our teenagers <https://www.dozeapp.ca/>.

Insomnia Coach for us adults <https://mobile.va.gov/app/insomnia-coach>

Links:

Separating sleepiness from insomnia: <https://drcolleencarney.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Am-I-sleepy.pdf>

Marisa Lavars
College Psychologist

Vaping Online Parent/Carer Workshop

BatForce is offering an **online workshop** for parents and carers on the topic of **vaping**. This session will provide valuable insights into the impact of vaping on young people and ways to support their wellbeing.

Date: Tuesday, 25 March

Time: 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Presenter: Leigh Bartlett, a passionate advocate for young people's wellbeing

Booking link: trybooking.com/CVPPE

We encourage parents and carers to take advantage of this informative session.



Vaping is on the rise across the Barwon South West (BSW) region, especially among young people who have never smoked. In a 2023 community consultation by Barwon Health Healthy Communities (BHHC) schools & families from the region made it clear they cannot address this issue on their own.

When it comes to risk taking behaviours we know that it takes a multi-pronged approach to support Young People. Supply, demand & education.

The BSW Vaping Project is a consortia of 6 local government areas who are committed to working with community to build knowledge and skills about the impact & effects of vaping in Young People aged 12-25.

YOUR INVITATION

You are invited to participate in this interactive workshop run by facilitator Leigh Bartlett & be part of the project.

The workshop aims to deliver tips & strategies for having conversations with your Young Person on vaping & other risk taking behaviours. Along with the opportunity for you to have your say on the topic of vaping – what you say matters.

LEIGH BARTLETT

Leigh has been working with Young People for 35years+. She has delivered 100s of workshops across communities on a broad range of parent carer topics.

If you have any queries re this workshop please email admin@batforce.org.au.

Book your spot in the workshop:
trybooking.com/CVPPE



batforce
Barwon Health Healthy Communities

ONLINE PARENT/CARER WORKSHOP



6.30-8.00pm



Tuesday 25 March

For more information about the Barwon South West Vaping project:
<https://batforce.org.au/projects/>

**BARWON
SOUTH
WEST**
PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT

**Barwon
Health**



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Iona Pathways Press

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

- Dates to Diarise in Term 1
- Victoria Police ~ SWL and Work Experience Info Night
- Work Experience Opportunities
- Victorian Careers & Employment Expo 2025
- News from Deakin University
 - Deakin Campus Tours – April School Holidays
 - Explore Deakin's Pathways into HR Careers
- Discover ACU Campus Events
- Maths: Make your Career Count
- News from Monash University
 - Science Precinct Tour in April Holidays
 - Where can a Science Degree Take You?
 - Useful YouTube clips to watch
- Carlton College of Sport - Open Day in April
- Careers in STEM Presentation for Girls
- Animation & Gaming Degrees in Victoria in 2025
- Snapshot of La Trobe 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 \(ionacarers.com\)](#)

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

Free Home Internet for School Students and their Families and Carers



If there is a school-age student at your home and you don't have an NBN connection, you could qualify for free home internet until 30 June 2028. Children who can access online learning at home as part of their education are more likely to engage in classroom activities.

With home internet access your whole household can benefit – supporting your school age students to build their digital skills, learn how to safely use the internet and participate in an increasingly digital world. Check if you qualify for free home internet until June 2028: By contacting the National Referral Centre on 1800 954 610 (Mon-Fri, 10 am-6 pm AEDT) or by visiting [AngliCareVic](https://www.anglicarevic.org.au).

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.

Please be reminded that Friday 21 March is a Student Free Professional Development Day.

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Kylie and Melissa