31 July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

At our most recent staff gathering, we took some time to pause to appreciate that we are well and truly in the midst of the 2025 Year of Jubilee. We were reminded that Jubilee years are a time of newness. They have been celebrated throughout the history of the Church, but their origins go back to the Old Testament, when the Israelites were commanded to celebrate a jubilee every 50 years. Before his passing, Pope Francis designated the theme of Jubilee 2025 as 'Pilgrims of Hope'. This theme encourages Catholics worldwide to journey spiritually towards hope, drawing strength from faith to overcome life's challenges. Emphasising reconciliation and mercy, the Jubilee reminds the faithful of God's unwavering love and the Church's call to spread hope.

It is worth spending some time exploring the Jubilee 2025 Logo.

The logo shows four stylised figures, representing all of humanity, coming from the four corners of the earth. They embrace each other to indicate the solidarity and fraternity which should unite all peoples. The figure at the front is holding onto the cross. There are the rough waves under the figures, symbolising the fact that life's pilgrimage does not always go smoothly in calm waters. That's why we should pay special attention to the lower part of the cross, which has been elongated and turned into the shape of an anchor, which is let down into the waves. The anchor is well known as a symbol of hope. It is worth noting that the image illustrates the pilgrim's journey not as an individual undertaking, but rather as something communal.

In September, during our staff faith formation day, Iona staff will be further exploring the theme of 'Pilgrims of Hope' and how it relates to our context at Iona College.

In late November, a lucky group of students and staff will attend the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Melbourne, as part of the Jubilee Year celebrations. The festival will be held over three days from 30 November to 2 December 2025 and offers young people from across Australia a chance to come together in fellowship, grow in their faith, strengthen their relationship with Jesus and be inspired to live out their Catholic values in everyday life. The festival will include opportunities for engagement with other young people, school and youth groups, bishops, musicians and speakers. More information about this event can be found here.

Information on how and when to apply will be shared with students from Years 9-12 shortly.

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Courage Awards

Last Friday, our college community came together to honour the Term 2 value of 'Courage'—the guiding pillar of Francis House, inspired by the enduring legacy of the late Pope Francis. This assembly was organised and led exclusively by our Year 12 Leaders. It was inspiring to see such initiative and courage on display by these young people.

A highlight of the assembly was the presentation of the Courage Awards. Congratulations to the following recipients:

Year 7: Zara Burnheim and Audrey Finnigan
Year 8: Thomas Lockwood and Laura McConnell
Year 9: Finn Nelson and Eliza Nielson
Year 10: Toosje King and Angus Bartrop.
Year 11: Josh McMahon and Mia Peselj
Year 12: Peter Christo and Christelle Goodall

It was encouraging to see the diverse range of personal qualities recognised in these award recipients. Courage was recognised in students who embraced new challenges and opportunities, who showed generosity of spirit, and who were engaged in academic and extracurricular pursuits. Strength of character, quiet determination, leadership and peer support were also celebrated. These qualities don't just shape success, they build community, and we are proud to celebrate each one.

Combined Catholic School's Production of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'

Courage, among many other attributes, was certainly on display in last week's outstanding Combined Catholic Schools' Production of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. To see students from all four colleges work together and support one another to present a show of such a high standard was truly inspiring.

We are extremely grateful to the creative team whose unwavering dedication, commitment and talent ensured this production was an unforgettable experience for all involved. Thanks go to the following amazing team:

Creative Team: Nicholas Mawson (Director), Jodie Townsend (Musical Director, Vocal Coach & Assistant Producer), Amy Whitfield (Producer), Xavier McGettigan (Choreographer), Cathy Wilson (Rehearsal Accompanist & Vocal Coach), Tessa Dunstan (Costume Co-ordinator), Meg McKenna (Costume Assistant), Lottie Noller (Assistant Producer, Backstage Manager, Communications Officer & Prop/Set Co-ordination), Deb Hartup (Production Supervision & Support, Jayson Fry (Stage Manager) Kate McLaren(Hair & Makeup Co-ordination), Seonna Primus (Program Graphic Designer), and Lauren Flint (Production Supervision & Support)

Audio and Sound: Ben Anderson Sound Design
Backstage Crew and Props Assistants: Serena Caimano, Freya Crook, Helaina Despott, Carter Dingle, Zoe Edwards, Lacie Hopgood, Amelia Murdoch
Set Building: Nev Curavic, Shane Lee, Joe Scaffidi, Gavan Turnley, Kade Walter
Projections: Mike Fletcher
Audition Volunteers: Di Makings, Dean Millard, Pauline Northeast

A big thanks to the Iona ICT team, Instrumental Teachers, Geelong Arts Centre and of course the Parents and carers of the production members!

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We are truly appreciative of the extraordinary amount of work that was put in, often behind the scenes, supporting all these talented young people.

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Year 12 Student Revision Opportunity

Saint Ignatius College Geelong is delighted to welcome students from across the Geelong region for their **'2025 VCE Lecture Series,'** which is to be held in the first week of the Term 3 break on campus at their College (please note that this is held in the same week as Iona's Unit 3/4 trial exams, so there may be some clashes).

All Unit 3/4 students from the Geelong Catholic Schools are welcome to attend this series, with all bookings to be placed via this link.

Senior students are able to gain tips and hints for their Unit 3/4 studies from visiting expert presenters, and we really recommend that Iona Unit 3 and 4 students sign up to hear from some different voices and experts in their fields.

Introducing Our Teaching in Practice Program

At Iona College, we are continually striving to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in every classroom. As part of this commitment, we are pleased to introduce our Teaching in Practice Program. The program is a new professional learning initiative designed to support teacher growth and collaboration.

This program is underpinned by our newly developed Instructional Model and draws on current research from the Science of Learning and Explicit Teaching methodologies. It provides our educators with valuable opportunities to observe and reflect on effective teaching strategies in action, strengthening our shared goal of delivering the highest standard of learning experiences for our students.

A key feature of the program involves the use of video to support teachers to learn from each other's practice and collaborate in meaningful ways.

At different stages of Term 3 and 4 this year, teachers will record short segments of their own lessons to share within their teaching teams. These videos are used exclusively within the College and focus solely on the teacher's practice, not the students. Cameras will be positioned to ensure that the teacher is the primary subject of the recording. No videos will be published or used outside of our internal professional development process. This professional development program is focused on fostering a culture of continual improvement and professional growth among our staff. The use of video provides a practical and powerful tool to support meaningful feedback, shared reflection, and the celebration of best practice.

We thank you for your ongoing support as we continue to invest in high-quality teaching and learning at Iona.

Kate McLaren,
Acting Deputy Principal (Learning), Head of Learning and Innovation

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Re-enrolment for 2026 for current students

As we begin preparations for the 2026 school year, we ask all current families to confirm their re-enrolment intentions for next year by the end of Term 3, Friday, 19 September.
You will receive a communication from us this week requesting you to select from the following:

- **Will Return**
- **Unsure if Returning**
- **Will Not Be Returning**

To assist us in planning, we would appreciate your response as early as possible.

Di Makings
College Registrar

Kokoda Trek 2026 - An Unforgettable Opportunity for Year 10 Students

We are thrilled to share an exciting opportunity for our current Year 10 students, which is an opportunity to take part in the Iona College Kokoda Trek in 2026! This life-changing experience is planned for the last week of Term 2 and the first week of the June/July holidays in 2026.

Walking the Kokoda Track is more than just a physical challenge; it's a journey that develops resilience, leadership, teamwork, and personal reflection. Students will learn about the sacrifices made during World War II, develop a strong sense of gratitude, and return with a greater appreciation for history, community, and their own inner grit.

I invite all interested families to attend an online information session on Tuesday, 19th at 5:30 pm, where full details of the experience will be shared.

Please log in to the session via the following link.

Please note that the approximate cost will be $6,000–$6,500, which includes travel, accommodation, meals, guides, and support throughout the journey.

I look forward to sharing more about this powerful and memorable opportunity.

Craig Durran
Head of Positive Behaviours

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Win $2500 worth of books for your library!

QBD Books is running a competition to celebrate Book Week 2025 by giving away a $2500 voucher to the school that collects the most points until August 23rd, 2025. Just pick up a flyer from the Resource Centre Library desk and drop it off at the QBD Westfield Geelong store, no purchase required. Only 1 flyer per student. 1 flyer = 1 point. The school with the most points collected at the end of the competition wins. Terms and conditions here.

Help us get the chance to add even more books to our growing Library collection!

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Year 9 and 10 Drama Students Beetlejuice Excursion

On Wednesday, 2 July, the Year 9 and 10 Drama students travelled to Melbourne to see Beetlejuice, the Musical! For some, it was their first time seeing a show in Melbourne, for others, it was adding to their already strong passion for theatre. It was a great opportunity for the students to see how acting and production skills come together to create a masterpiece of theatre. This is now a regular event in the Drama calendar, with previous years seeing Beauty and the Beast and A Christmas Carol.

Here are some reflections from the students:

Naomi: Beetlejuice is the best musical I have ever seen! It was a hilarious horror comedy that left the whole audience laughing and in shock from the amazingness of it all. From stage effects that could wake up the dead to songs that you will be singing to the grave, Beetlejuice is 'a show about death' that will bring you to life.

Zoe: The overall casting of the show and characters was perfect, with Eddie Perfect as an amazing choice for Beetlejuice, and Karis Oka as an amazing Lydia. I believe that the whole cast made the show an overall awesome, show-stopping experience, with the audience interactions and comedy really tipping the whole performance over the edge. I also really enjoyed the effects and the songs, written by Eddie himself, which really added to the overall enjoyment and experience of the show.

Xavier: Beetlejuice was an amazing experience. It was purely unbelievable how well the cast was able to tell the story through some powerfully emotive performances with a lot of laughs. The show always kept you on your feet, and you couldn't look away. With amazing visuals and even better music, you won't be let down by this spectacle. It also embraces Melbourne, with many references that any Victorian will love.

April: Beetlejuice was one of the funniest and engaging musicals I've watched. The music was extremely well performed. The cast of Beetlejuice all had amazing voices, and it was so interesting to see. There were so many dramatic effects in the play that made me and the others very entertained. The puppets, like the snake, had the crowd excited and cheering as it was huge. The humour was constant, and overall, it was an excellent musical.

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Week 2 – Emotional Regulation Strategies

WEEK 2: BUTTERFLY HUG

The **Butterfly Hug** is an evidence-based, self-soothing technique used to calm anxiety, reduce distress, and promote emotional regulation, especially in moments of overwhelm.
The gentle tapping mimics the calming effect of rhythmic touch, which can **regulate the nervous system** by promoting parasympathetic activation ("rest and digest"), **lower heart rate** and cortisol and **provide a sense of safe, nurturing touch**. It can even trigger the release of oxytocin, which promotes **emotional regulation** and reduces perceived threat. The alternating left-right tapping activates both hemispheres of the brain, which helps to **reduce emotional intensity.**

To practice the Butterfly Hug, follow these steps:

1. **Settle In: Choose a quiet area and sit with the straight posture**
2. **Breathe: Begin with deep, steady breaths, eyes closed or gaze soft.**
3. **Hand Placement: Cross your arms, placing each hand beneath the opposite collarbone, thumbs towards the chin, forming wings.**
4. **Tap Rhythmically: Gently tap your chest alternately on the left and right, in a rhythmic pattern for eight counts, while breathing deeply.**
5. **Monitor and Continue: After each set of taps, pause to access how calm you feel. If you're feeling more relaxed or the same, continue with additional sets until your relaxation deepens.**

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Meli – Drop-In Service

MeLI

Drop-In Service
Armstrong Creek

Meli's drop-in service provides free support to families and does not require an appointment or referral.

Our drop-in service provides free support to families who:

- would like to build their skills as parents
- may be experiencing family challenges and need support
- would like information about other services available for families
- may need support with referrals to other services.

DETAILS	
LOCATION	Armstrong Creek East Community Hub 46 Central Boulevard Armstrong Creek
WHO	Parents/Carers/Families
CONTACT	Wednesday 9am – 12pm Claire Taylor 0491 093 539 SMS and phone calls welcome
COST	**FREE** (no referral required) Support people welcome

For more information please call Meli on 5226 8900.

meli.community meli.community groups@meli.org.au

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Wellbeing At Iona

Sleep Wellbeing, Weekly Grab

At Iona College, we know good sleep is important for our whole school community -our students, our caregivers and our school staff. One of the things which can get in the way of sleeping is the use of devices.

Firstly, using devices can often create too much interest and excitement to allow us to settle to sleep. Our arousal system isn't calm enough, and if we do have cues of sleepiness, we will find it difficult to notice them. Not only is this problematic for our sleep, but the more tired we are, the poorer our decision-making.

There is also a lot of research that tells us that the incidence of bad decision-making goes up the later that young people stay up. In the online environment, this means that young people are more likely to be unsafe online, and to use unhelpful language the later the hour.
Secondly, there is some evidence to suggest that the light from our devices can play havoc with our circadian rhythms. Light is a signal to our body that it is time to wake up, not get ready for bed. There is some evidence that this is less likely to be an issue for us as adults (the lenses in our eyes are becoming more yellow as we age, and this means the light from devices has less of an impact on our sleep systems).

However, even for adults, the interest and excitement from our devices can make us too alert to sleep. The advice for our young people is:
Having Trouble Sleeping? Set a Bedtime for Your Electronics.
Your devices will emit light, which is a confusing signal for your brain and body when it is time to sleep. They also increase your alertness. Set your devices to Night Shift mode once the sun goes down.

Helpful Apps:
Doze App for our teenagers
Insomnia Coach for adults
Separating out sleepiness from insomnia:
Useful resources for young people
Cumulative sleep debt may create behaviours which look like ADHD, and may exacerbate ADHD symptoms.

Marisa Lavars
College Psychologist

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Upcoming Online Parent Information Session

A reminder that the *Teen Mental Health Matters* webinar, presented by the Black Dog Institute, will take place on **Monday, 11 August at 6:00 pm**. This free online session is designed for parents and carers and will cover how to support teen mental health, when to seek help, and how to have supportive conversations.

Zoom link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88164833305?pwd=235f7wUoctTqU7K3hTpYxXk2pZarnS.1#success
Webinar ID: 881 6483 3305
Passcode: 529897

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Year 7 Immunisation

On Tuesday, 12th August 2025, Barwon Health immunisation service will visit our Year 7 students to administer the following immunisations for free:

- HPV(Human Papillomavirus) vaccine =1 injection
- Boostrix(Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough booster) = 1 injection

Please complete the online consent form via the following link, as soon as possible or via the QR code below:

Kate Every
College Nurse

Family webinar on AI and Online Safety - Reminder

As part of Iona College's ongoing commitment to young people's safety and digital wellbeing, we invite and remind families of the following College digital safety initiatives. In partnership with Catholic Network Australia (CNA) and Cyber Safety Project, we invite parents and carers of secondary students to attend a free webinar titled **"AI & the Digital Generation"** on **Monday, 11 August 2025**, from **7:30 PM to 8:00 PM (AEST),** hosted by CNA.

This session will explore key topics such as generative artificial intelligence (AI), AI companion apps, deepfakes and online misinformation, AI safety at home, and the legal and ethical considerations of AI use. It aims to empower families to better understand the technologies their young person may be engaging with, build confidence in discussing AI and digital truth, and learn practical strategies to encourage safe online behaviour. Registration is available via the following link.

Additionally, as announced to families in Term 2, the College has invested in **Qustodio**, a powerful parental control tool offered at no cost to families through our partnership with LineWize.

Qustodio helps parents manage and protect their young person's online activity outside of school hours by providing features such as screen time monitoring, content filtering, app usage tracking, location tracking, and alerts for concerning activity. Families opting into this service can monitor both the college-provided device and one personal device.

To get started, sign up via the College's Online Safety Hub at https://ionavic.onlinesafetyhub.com.au using the email address registered with PAM. Please note that while the College facilitates access to Qustodio, all support queries should be directed to Qustodio at **myschool@qustodio.com**. These initiatives reflect Iona College's proactive approach to supporting families in fostering safe, informed, and responsible digital habits.

Kylie Power & Michael Hughes
Deputy Principal (Wellbeing) and ICT & Resource Manager

Iona Pathways Press

The 31st July edition of the Iona Pathways Press can be found here.
In this edition, you will find information about:

- Dates to Diarise in Term 3
- VTAC Year 12 Guide 2025
- What is VET in the VCE?
- 2026 VETDSS Application
- Bachelor of Information Technology (Professional Practice) at Federation University
- News from Monash University
    - Important Notice: Changes to Maths Prerequisite for Biomedical Science
    - Pharmacy News from Monash
    - International Experiences for Pharmacy Students
- Studying a Common First Year in Engineering
- Industry Insights at Hyatt Centric Melbourne hosted by The Hotel School Australia
- Cetacean Sisters Workshop
- Health Science Degrees in Victoria in 2025
- Public Health Degrees in Victoria in 2025
- Universities in Western Australi**a**
- Deakin Guarantee ATAR
- Meet Melbourne Bellarine Peninsula
- ADFA Open Day
- Monash Information Session in Geelong
- Swinburne Early Entry Program
- 2026 ATO School Leaver Program
- Deakin 50th Anniversary Excellence Scholarship
- Mannix College Open Day

Path Closure – Armstrong Creek Sports Centre Construction Works

The Senior Project Manager of the Armstrong Creek Sports Centre, currently being constructed to the north of Main Street, near the Armstrong Creek Shopping Centre, has advised that related drainage and sewer works to the south of this site (along the back of the Coles supermarket and carpark area) will commence in mid-August.

This construction site will be fenced off, resulting in the closure of an (informal) path that some Iona students (and other family members) may have been using these past months to get between either their house in Ashbury Estate and the shopping centre or between Iona College and their house in Mount Duneed (or the shopping centre). Whilst signage was recently erected on nearby fencing, please see the below snippet from a flyer that Development Victoria has been distributing locally on this upcoming closure.

To ensure your ongoing safety, we ask that students (and other family members) who may have been using this informal path seek a safe alternative route between their house in Ashbury Estate and the shopping centre or between Iona College and the shopping centre or house in Mt Duneed. Please DO NOT attempt to scale the fencing and cut through the construction site, as the drains and sewer lines are very deep.

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Term 3 2025 Dates to Remember

Date	Event
Monday 21 July	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Tuesday 22 July	Term 3 Starts
Wednesday 23 July - Saturday 26 July	Combined Catholic Schools Production (Geelong Arts Centre)
Friday 25 July	Whole School Assembly (Formal Uniform Required)
Thursday 31 July	Strings Festival (Iona Stadium)
Friday 1 August	Year 11 2026 Subject Selections Due
Thursday 7 August	Winter Soiree (Iona Stadium)
Friday 8 August	Year 10 2026 Subject Selections Due
Tuesday 12 August	Year 7 Immunisation
Friday 15 August	Year 9 2026 Subject Selections Due
Wednesday 20 August	Unit 4 Student Progress Meetings (3:30 pm - 5:30 pm, face-to-face)
Thursday 21 August	Ensemble Showcase (6 pm, Iona Stadium)
Monday 25 August	VCE Recital (6 pm, Iona Stadium)
Tuesday 26 August	Student Progress Meetings (3:30 pm - 6 pm, Online)
Monday 1 September	Online Parenting Session - Empowering Parents in the Vaping Conversation (6:30 pm, Online)
Wednesday 3 September	Year 8 Time and Space Parent and Student Evening (5:45 pm - 8 pm, Iona Stadium)
Thursday 4 September	Student Progress Meetings (3:30 pm - 6:30 pm, Face-To-Face)
Friday 5 September	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Wednesday 10 September	Year 7 Time and Space Parent and Student Evening (5:45 pm - 8 pm, Iona Stadium)
Thursday 11 September	Combined Choral Collaboration (Iona Stadium)
Thursday 18 September	Whole School Mass (Formal Uniform Required)
Friday 19 September	Columba Day Celebration & Lorne 120
Friday 19 September	End of Term 3 (2:05 pm Finish)

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 note the updated date for the student-free Day (Staff Professional Development) is now Friday, 5 September.

Farewell

At the end of this week, we farewell Foundation staff member Mrs. Paula Hardy, who has accepted a teaching position at Clonard College. Paula has been an instrumental part of the Iona story, who has always ensured the best possible outcomes for the students in her care. We thank Paula for her work, particularly in the mathematics space, and wish her well for the next part of her professional journey.

At the start of next week, we welcome a new staff member, Mrs. Marion McCasker, who will be joining us from Bellarine Secondary College, teaching mathematics.

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Melissa and Kate

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