

14 August 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Tomorrow, August 15th, is the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Jesus' mother. Mary was blessed as she was chosen by God to be the human mother of his son. Because she was so special, and believed to be free of sin, at the end of her life she was assumed, 'taken up', body and soul, into heaven. The Feast of the Assumption focuses on Mary's links to us as well as to God. Her faith enabled her to recognise the work of God in her people's history and in her own life.



Communities around the world celebrate this day; in some places, processions take place where crowds follow a statue of Mary being processed around their local neighbourhoods; in many places, prayers are said to Mary; and, traditionally, Catholics attend Mass to join in the ritual of prayer focused on Mary. The observances of this day all honour Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Catholics around the world today will pray this traditional prayer:

*Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now, and at the hour of our death.
Amen*

Student Application (Years 9 - 11) for the Australian Catholic Youth Festival

ACYF is a three-day festival bringing together thousands of young people from across Australia. The Festival will include opportunities for engagement with other young people, students and youth groups, bishops, musicians, and speakers. Each day, participants can engage in a wide range of activities, including talks, prayer experiences, Mass, workshops, forums, live concerts, games, a justice activity centre and an interactive expo.

Students will attend with school staff and other students from Years 9 - 11. The Festival will be held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre between Sunday, 30th of November, and Tuesday, 2nd of December.

Interested students need to complete the [following form](#) by **Monday 18th of August**.

If you have any questions, please chat with Ms Flynn, kristin.flynn@iona.vic.edu.au or Miss Lappin, georgia.lappin@iona.vic.edu.au. See this link <https://acyf.org.au/> for more information.

Homelessness Week

Last week was Homelessness Week. Homelessness Week aims to raise awareness of the impact of homelessness, the solutions needed to end homelessness, and to educate communities on how they can make a difference.

In our Year 9 RE classes, we joined with the 'Houses at Parliament' project and folded 490 origami houses to raise awareness about the urgent need for more social and public housing in Victoria. We added our tally to the statewide total. The aim was for schools, libraries, local businesses, and local government across Victoria to fold 60,000 origami houses, representing the 60,000 additional social homes needed to meet current need in Victoria, and display them for Homelessness Week (4-10 August 2025).

Housing is necessary for a person's overall wellbeing. Feeling safe, warm, and rested gives people a chance to participate fully in society. Homelessness can lead to poor physical and mental health because of the difficulties accessing and storing nutritious food, constant concerns about shelter and safety, and lack of access to medical treatment due to financial hardship or travel. Homelessness also impacts people's rights to safety and privacy because they might not have a space where they can live and store their belongings without fear of harm. This is also true of accommodations, such as rooming houses, where shared facilities may leave people feeling unsafe.

Finally, homelessness can be a barrier to employment due to discrimination and difficulty managing immediate survival needs alongside participating in the workforce.



During Homelessness Week, Iona sent off the proceeds from our 'Hot Chocolate for Vinnies' campaign to St Vincent De Paul's Winter Campaign. These funds go directly to supporting people facing housing insecurity. Thanks to all the students who organised and supported this campaign.

Life Blood- Blood Drive

Please see the message below from Stella Rose, one of the Culture and Identity College leaders. The final day to register is **August 25th**. Please support Stella in this worthy cause.

<https://account.donateblood.com.au>

Every year, 100,000 new donors are required to meet the ongoing need for blood. Giving blood is giving someone else another chance at life. Beyond saving lives, blood donation also creates a sense of community and solidarity, reminding us that even small acts can have a great impact. In the footsteps of our patron Pope Francis, our Iona team aims to gather our school community and provide an act of compassion to those who need it most.

Count yourself in!

- 1 Download the Donate Blood App and register or sign in.
- 2 Select 'Account' – bottom right-hand side.
- 3 Select 'Teams' – 5th option from the top.
- 4 Search 'Iona College Geelong' Lifeblood Team and exit.

Join our Lifeblood Team, 'Iona College Geelong' and find your reason.
Contact Stella Ploose for more information.

Upcoming Student Progress Meetings



Parents and carers are invited to attend our Term 3 Student Progress Meetings. These sessions provide a valuable opportunity to check in on student progress, celebrate successes, and work together on strategies for continued growth. Students are welcome to attend alongside their parent or carer if they wish.

Meeting Details:

- **VCE Unit 4 Student Progress Meetings - Wednesday 20 August** – 3:30 pm–5:30 pm (*Face-to-Face*) (Booking notifications have now been emailed)
- **Online Student Progress Meetings - Tuesday, 26 August** – 3:30 pm–6:30 pm (*Online*)
- **Face-to-face Student Progress Meetings - Thursday 4 September** – 3:30 pm–6:30 pm (*Face-to-Face*)

Keep an eye on your emails in the coming weeks for a notification letting you know when bookings open.

Iona Stands Together for Anti-Bullying Week

This week at Iona College, our community has been proudly focusing on Anti-Bullying Week, raising awareness and empowering our students to stand up against bullying in all its forms.

As part of this initiative, students have had the opportunity to purchase for a gold coin donation blue hair ribbons or ribbon pins for a gold coin donation for their blazers, with all proceeds going to the Dolly's Dream Foundation – an organisation dedicated to changing the culture of bullying by addressing its impact and promoting kindness, respect, and inclusion.

Friday is our big blue day!

Students are encouraged to wear blue nail polish, blue socks, or blue hair ribbons to show their support. At lunchtime, there will even be a student nail bar, where, for a gold coin donation, students can paint their own nails blue.

Throughout the week, each year level's wellbeing class has taken time to stop and reflect on the impact of bullying, and to learn practical strategies on how to **ACT** – *Ask for help, Call it out, and Take a stand.*

Some important facts for parents:

- 1 in 4 Australian students experience bullying at some stage during their schooling.
- Bullying can have serious and long-lasting effects on mental health, self-esteem, and learning outcomes.
- Open communication between home and school is one of the most effective ways to address and prevent bullying.
- Teaching children empathy, resilience, and assertiveness can significantly reduce the likelihood of them being involved in bullying, whether as a target or a bystander.

We are excited to see our students **sign the Iona Anti-Bullying Pledge** on Thursday – a powerful statement of their commitment to kindness and respect. This pledge will be proudly displayed in the school as a constant reminder of the community we strive to be.

Let's all get on board, wear blue with pride, and continue to build a school culture where everyone feels safe, valued, and supported.

The Wellbeing Team

Columba Day Celebrations



Every year, the Iona community looks forward to a special day on our calendar – the Columba Day Celebration. This year, Columba Day will be held on the last day of Term 3, Friday 19 September 2025. Here is more of a rundown of what you need to know:

What Uniform is required?

Students are invited to dress up in the House colours for the day; this can include House colour fancy dress, should they wish. Anyone participating in the Staff vs. Students Footy game should bring appropriate sports attire to change into.

Activities Galore!

We have a variety of activities planned for the day:

- House Music (a new addition to Columba Day)
- Join classic games like the egg and spoon race, ball in the bin and sack races
- Dunk Tank
- A disco for students to showcase their dance moves
- 3v3 basketball knockout on the halfcourts

- The iconic Staff vs. Students Footy Game (Junior and Senior games)
- Quiet activities like board games/cards and more in the Resource Centre
- Sing Star
- Volley Ball/Pickle Ball

How can I purchase food on the day?

Students can use their Iona student card for any food purchased from the Iona canteen, as normal. Students wishing to purchase from

Iona Canteen

Our wonderful Iona canteen will have the following on offer:

- Donuts (pre-ordered online- we will advise when orders open)
- Iona Spud Shed
- Toasties
- Sugar-free drinks

Food Trucks

The following food trucks will be available on the day:

- Pizza
- Dumplings
- Mexican
- Twisto
- Churros
- Bao/Pho
- Burgers

Students are required to have a debit card on the day to purchase from the food trucks. Alternatively, if a debit card is not an option, you are welcome to purchase an eftpos gift card from supermarkets, which will be accepted by the trucks.

Menus for the Food Trucks will be shared over the coming weeks.



Headspace Partners in Parenting Online Support

In partnership with Monash University, Headspace is offering an evidence-based online parenting program designed to help parents and carers build skills and confidence in supporting their high school-aged young people's mental health and wellbeing. **Partners in Parenting** also covers more common parenting challenges, such as communication, managing strong emotions, boundaries, conflicts and staying involved in your high school-aged young person's life while they navigate their independence.

There are 10 interactive online modules to explore; you can complete them in any order and at your own time and pace. Each one will only take around 15 to 25 minutes to complete. As well as the modules, there are optional reflection questions which can help recommend specific modules for you.

Getting signed up!

You can access Partners in Parenting via [the headspace online account](#). If you don't have an account, it's free, quick and easy to set one up, just make sure to nominate yourself as a carer in the set-up.

Once logged into your headspace account:

1. Scroll down on 'My headspace' (the homepage for your account) until you see 'Your interactive tools'
2. Click 'Go to Partners in Parenting' to read more and agree to the Terms & Conditions
3. You'll then be taken to the Partners in Parenting website, where you can create your profile and get started!

We encourage our parents to access this online support. For more information - [Partners in Parenting | headspace](#)

Kylie Power
Deputy Principal Wellbeing

Black Dog Institute Teen Health Matters Webinar – Resources for Parents.

A huge thank you to all the families (128) that tuned into our Teen Mental Health Matters webinar on Monday evening. Hosted by Dr Sarah Barker (Clinical Psychologist at The Black Dog Institute), parents were taken on a one-hour dive into Adolescence and were given some amazing tools and tricks to assist parents as they navigate this period of massive physical, emotional, social and cognitive change. Due to intellectual property, the webinar cannot be recorded; however, Dr Sarah did encourage all parents to check out their [Parent Hub on the Black Dog Institute website](#).

Parents and carers play a crucial role in supporting young people to navigate this life stage, and some of these tools and apps will assist. We all know sleep plays a huge role in all our lives, especially for teens. The Sleep Ninja app that Dr Sarah talked about looks amazing...

What is Sleep Ninja?

Sleep Ninja® is a free, evidence-based smartphone app shown to be effective in helping young people with sleep problems. Half of all mental illnesses start during early high school by 14 years old. At this critical stage of development, 40% of young people will face significant sleep problems, heightening their risk of anxiety or depression. By addressing good quality sleep, we are setting up the foundations to promote emotional, social and physical wellbeing and academic performance, now and in the future.

Sleep Ninja® was designed and developed at the Black Dog Institute in consultation with young people, their parents/carers, psychologists, counsellors, and sleep experts. It is the first adolescent-focused app which helps young people improve their sleep. It's free to use and [backed by research](#).

Based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I), Sleep Ninja teaches strategies across six 'training sessions' to develop healthy sleep habits and improve sleep quality.

Help teens prepare for a good night's rest with Sleep Ninja®, which is available to download for free on the App Store and Google Play. We will continue to partner with the Black Dog Institute, and we encourage all parents to check out the parent hub for support and guidance.



Kylie Power
Deputy Principal Wellbeing

Craig Durran
Head of Positive Behaviours

Teenage Parties & Alcohol, Victorian Law

Did you know that in Victoria, it's generally an offence to supply alcohol to anyone under 18, even in your own home, unless you're their parent or guardian, or have that parent or guardian's permission?

If you're hosting a party for teenagers, you are legally responsible for the young people in your care. This includes ensuring the party is supervised, managing alcohol-related risks, and having plans in place for emergencies.

Being informed about your responsibilities can help keep everyone safe and avoid costly penalties.

[Read the following fact sheet](#) to learn more about Victoria's laws, your legal obligations, and practical tips for hosting a safe, trouble-free celebration.

Craig Durran

Head of Positive Behaviours

Year 8 Conversation and Connection Reminder

On Wednesday, 3 September, all Year 8 students are invited to attend a special Conversation and Connection evening with their dads, father figures or mentors. This engaging session will be facilitated by Ray Messer, a highly experienced presenter who has worked with parents and adolescents for over 20 years through the Time & Space program. It's a valuable opportunity to pause, connect and reflect together in a meaningful way.

Date: Wednesday, 3 September

Time: 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Location: Iona Stadium

We warmly encourage all Year 8 families to participate.

Please register via the following link: <http://bit.ly/ICG825>.



Time & Space for 'Conversation and Connection'

Iona College Geelong is delighted to offer you an opportunity to experience a lifetime memory with your young person at the inaugural 'Dads and young person' Night.

This innovative single evening program is one of the special transition events that we offer our Year 8 students and it is happening here in our community on the evening of Wednesday 3 September.

It is a big thing when our young people move through their times of transition. Their teenage years accelerate quickly as their ride on the adolescent rollercoaster continues. They are growing up and the opportunity to reflect on the joys and challenges of this time in your lives, is one not to be missed.

This is a great night for the students as they witness their dads or mentors discussing what it means to them to be a dad (or mentor) and see how you handle the 'letting go' process as they start to forge some independence.



We are bringing Ray Messer to our school to facilitate this unique experience for you. Ray is a very experienced and engaging facilitator who has worked in schools and associated parent and adolescent programs across four countries over the past twenty years. Ray is originally from country Victoria, and he gets a real thrill out of the connections that are made through Time & Space and knows that you will too.

Father and Mentors will emerge from the night reassured and impressed by the way our students are able to speak up and share insights about their life. And be assured that the night is fun too... full of activities and conversations that will make us smile.

Come along and enjoy a unique gift - dedicated time with each other in the midst of the special community that we have here at Iona College.

To register please:

Visit the link <http://bit.ly/ICG825>

This helps with our activity planning for the session. This session is exclusive to Year 8.

If you have any other enquiries, please contact Adrienne Shaw on (03) 5229 0004 or Adrienne.Shaw@iona.vic.edu.au

We know that families come in all shapes and sizes and not all fathers can attend an evening such as this. A mentor such as a grandfather, uncle or family friend is welcome to attend.

Year 8 Dads and young person Night

Wednesday 3 September 2025

Iona College Stadium

5:45pm for a 6:00pm Start (finish by 8:00pm)

Light Refreshments from 5:45pm



A program for dads and young people



Upcoming NDIS Webinar on Pathways to School Life

NDIS is delivering a series of webinars to help students with a disability, their parents, carers and education professionals learn about the supports available to help them prepare for work.

Where: Virtual information sessions delivered via Microsoft Teams

Dates & Times:

Tuesday, 12 August 2025 (1:00 pm-2:00 pm AEST)

Thursday, 21 August 2025 (10:00 am-11:00 am AEST)

Wednesday, 27 August 2025 (6:00 pm-7:00 pm AEST)

RSVP: Please register via [the Humanitix registration Link](#)

More information can be found in the [following flyer](#).

Reminder – Kokoda Trek 2026 Information Session

Current Year 10 students have the exciting opportunity to take part in the Iona College Kokoda Trek in 2026 a life-changing journey of resilience, leadership, teamwork, and historical reflection.

Online Information Session: Tuesday 19 August at 5:30 pm

Join via: The [following link](#)

Approximate Cost: \$6,000–\$6,500 (includes travel, accommodation, meals, guides, and full support)

We encourage all interested families to attend this session to learn more about this unforgettable experience planned for the last week of Term 2 and the first week of the June/July holidays in 2026.

Craig Durran

Head of Positive Behaviours

Week 4 -Emotional Regulation Strategies

WEEK 4: DAYDREAMING WITH IMAGINING A BETTER FUTURE

Daydreaming and future thinking often get a bad rap for being "distracting" or "unproductive," but in reality, they offer several mental health benefits when done in a **mindful, intentional way**. In Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), imagining a better future aligns with the **values and committed action processes**. The aim is not to escape the present moment or deny discomfort, rather **envisioning a meaningful future** as a way to **clarify values and motivate action**. Daydreaming can help to **identify what you care about, clarify direction, and choose values-based goals**. It may help strengthen **psychological flexibility** encouraging **perseverance** and **resilience** to persist through the hard times. A point to note, the key here is balance: purposeful or positive daydreaming tends to be helpful; obsessive or avoidance-based daydreaming may not be.



Music News



Victorian Schools Music Festival

For the first time, as a school, we were able to take our choir to the Victorian School Music Festival. The VSMF offered for the first time a regional section for choirs from the Geelong and Ballarat areas. The VSMF is an educational festival that includes school bands, orchestras, jazz ensembles and choirs from all around Victoria. Ensembles get the chance to listen to other school groups, perform and then work with a specialist conductor. I was incredibly proud of the Iona College choir; they were able to produce a performance that was imbued with a strong blended sound, musical sensitivity and displayed courage representing Iona with pride. We were very pleased to receive a “Silver” award. It is so pleasing to see our choir become more confident and skilled each year. New members are always welcome. We rehearse on Monday lunchtimes and/or Thursday after school.

[Here is a little taste of some of the songs the choir](#) performed at the event. Congratulations to everyone who performed!

Winter Soiree

It was very exciting to see so many students sign up to perform at our Winter Soiree on Thursday, 7th August. Eighteen students from Year 7-12 shared their love of music with a very supportive audience. We hope that our music students will continue to impress us with their performances in the future.

A big thank you to all the students who performed, Angus Bartrop for supporting their ‘side of stage’, the IT Department and Mr Wallace and Max for their role in running this event.



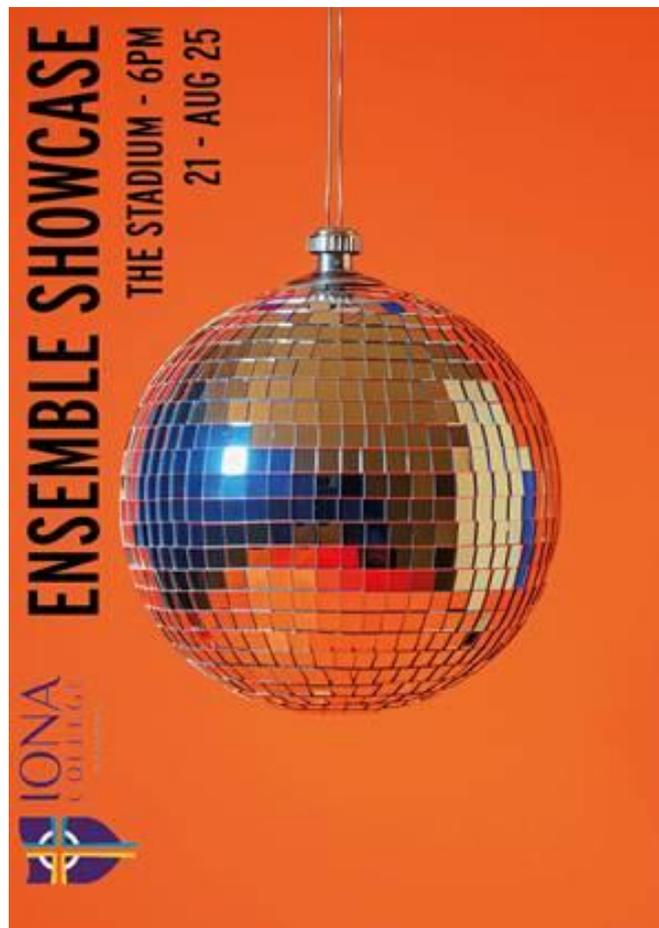


What is coming up?

Ensemble Showcase Thursday 21st August

Thursday, the 21st of August, we have our Ensemble Showcase. This year, the theme is “disco”, so if you are feeling like a trip down memory lane, please come along and support our young musicians. Performers will include all of our contemporary bands, Concert Band, String Ensemble and our Choir. Students will all be involved in a performance of “Blame it on the Boogie” to finish the night on a high note. Please bring the family to support our performers.

Please RSVP [via the following link](#).



Musical Society of Geelong Scholarships

Congratulations to Sam Powers, in Year 12, for making the finals of the “Musical Society of Geelong” scholarships for young musicians. We wish him all the best for the final audition.

Jodie Townsend

Head of Performing Arts

Iona Pathways Press

The 14th August edition of the Iona Pathways Press [can be found here](#).

In this edition, you will find information about:

- Dates to Diarise in Term 3
- Careers/Pathways Meetings
- Year 12 VTAC Guide 2025
- Navigating your post-school with confidence
- Bachelor of Space Science at RMIT
- Principal's Recommendation Scheme at CQU
- News from Swinburne University
 - New Courses on offer in 2026
 - Associate Degree of Applied Technologies
 - Studying Nutrition and Dietetics at Swinburne
- Education and Teaching at Deakin
- Deakin Guarantee ATAR
- Deakin 50th Anniversary Excellence Scholarship
- ADFA Open Day
- Swinburne Early Entry Program
- RMIT Early Offer Program
- RMIT Student for a Day (September School holidays)
- Zoos Victoria Work Experience Opportunity 2026
- Richmond Institute Information Sessions
- Cetacean Sisters: Upcoming Activities
- Nursing and/or Midwifery Degrees in Victoria in 2025
- Nursing – Division 2 (Enrolled) Diploma Courses In 2025
- ACU Guarantee
- ACU Revision webinars
- Snapshot of Flinders University in 2025
- 2026 ATO School Leaver Program
- Game on with GenU

Art Department News

We are so proud of all the amazing student artwork that is currently displayed in the Art area and encourage those at school to come and have a look. Mr Bromley's Year 10 class have blown us away with their Renaissance and Baroque artworks; combining shellac and drawing mediums, currently hanging above the lockers in the Specialist Wing.



Scattered around the halls on easels and in the display cabinets are Ms Carter-Blackhall's Art Making and Exhibiting Unit 1&2 students' works. Here's a small snapshot, but there are so many incredible pieces to enjoy.

Asha Read, *Takoyaki*, 2025, Inks.



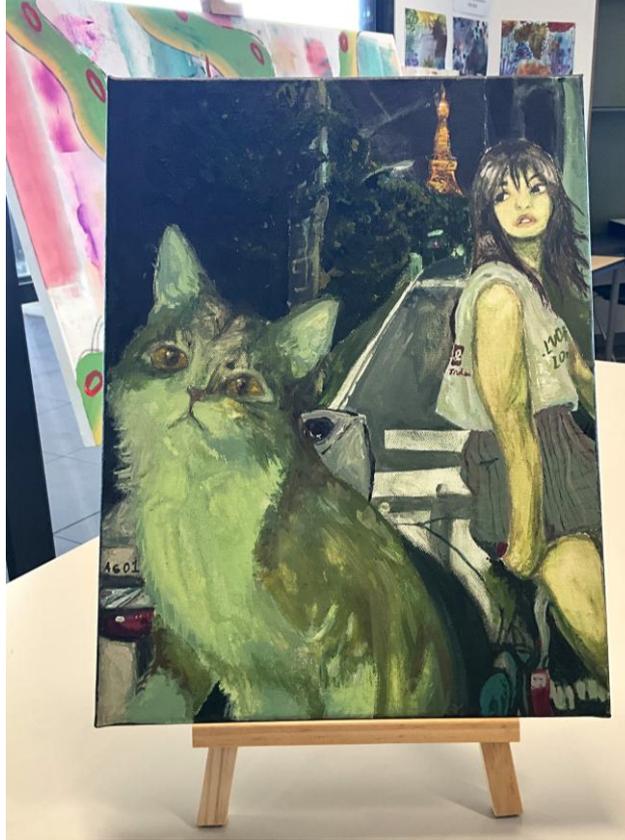
Paddy, *Stress Builds Character/Population Birth Control*, 2025, Charcoal, Posca Pens, Fine liners



Jovi Chamley, *Gig-Garage*, 2025, Pens, Pencils on Paper



Alice Rittinger, *Kitty and the Eiffel Tower*, 2025, Gouache on Canvas



Stella Messina, *Tea Monkey*, 2025, Wire, Aluminium Foil, Sculpey, Acrylic Paint



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
Monday 11 August	Teen Health Matters Online Webinar (6 pm, Online)
Tuesday 12 August	Year 7 Immunisation
Friday 15 August	Year 9 2026 Subject Selections Due
Tuesday 19 August	Year 10 Kokoda Trek Online Information Session (5:30 pm, Online)
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)
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)
Monday 1 September	Iona Contemporary Bands, Year 12 VCE students @ The Piano Bar (6:00 pm - 8:30 pm)
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 Friday, 5 September.

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Melissa and Kate