20 November 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Today is International Children's Day, marking the 76th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Today, communities around the world pause and reflect on the dignity, rights, and wellbeing of every child. At Iona College, this is central to everything we do. Our purpose as educators and staff is to create an environment where our young people are respected, where they can learn and flourish.

A core principle of Catholic Social Teaching is the Dignity of the Human Person. Everyone, including children, is created in the image of God and possesses inherent dignity. At Iona, we work to ensure student voice is at the core of our decision-making.

By listening to our young people, we can fulfil their right to self-expression, understand their ideas for a better world and include their priorities in our actions today. Today, let us pray for all young people, those in the Iona community, and in communities worldwide.

God of Life,
You created every child with sacred dignity and a voice that matters.
Help us protect their rights, listen to their hopes,
and build a world where they are safe, heard, and free to flourish.
May our hearts reflect Your love,
and our actions defend their future.
Amen.

Celebrating Our Year 12s: Exams Complete

Yesterday marked the completion of all Year 12 exams, and we are delighted to congratulate our Year 12 Class of 2025 on reaching this important milestone. We are incredibly proud of their hard work, resilience and commitment throughout the year.

We also want to thank all the staff who have supported our Year 12 students throughout their learning journey, as well as those who worked tirelessly to ensure the examination period ran smoothly.

Iona College Christmas Appeal

We are now in the second week of our Christmas Appeal, and are very grateful for the gift cards that have started coming in. We are collecting gift cards for two important local charities, Mackillop Family Services and Vinnies. A gift card to Mackillop Family Services will go to a young person living in out-of-home care, during the Christmas season. A gift card to Vinnies will be added to a family's Christmas hamper, to make the festive season a little easier for those who need it.

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If you are in a position to donate a gift card, please deliver it to reception by 4th December. If you have a preference for it to go to MacKillop or Vinnies, please write this on the front of an envelope containing the card. We will ensure it goes to the nominated charity. All other cards will be distributed evenly between the two organisations.

We thank you for your support with our final fundraising initiative of the year.

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Year 7 & 8 Passion Project Expos

We were blown away by the talent on display at yesterday's Year 8 Passion Project Expo. Congratulations to all our Year 8 students who put so much time, energy and passion into their projects. We are incredibly proud!

Parents and carers are warmly invited to visit and explore the upcoming Year 7 Passion Project Expo next week:

Year 7 Expo: Wednesday 26 November, 2:00–2:45 pm

Please sign in at Main Reception upon arrival.

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Second-hand Textbook Selling Option

As we approach the end of term, families are reminded that there is an option to sell your young person's textbooks through the Secondhand School Shop. This is a great way to recycle books, support other families, and reduce waste.

We also encourage students to take their textbooks home rather than leaving them at school on the final day after they have completed their locker clear-out.

For more information or to list textbooks for sale, please visit the following link.

Year 7 Applications & Tour and Information Sessions - Reminder

If you have a young person starting Year 7 in 2027, applications are now open. Families are encouraged to complete the online enrolment form before Friday, 8 May 2026.

Applications can be made online via the following link.

ENROL ONLINE NOW

We are also pleased to share the dates for our upcoming Tour and Information Sessions:

- Monday 16 March – 4.15 pm to 5.45 pm
- Tuesday 17 March – 11.00 am to 12.30 pm
- Wednesday 18 March – 9.00 am to 10.30 am
- Wednesday 18 March – 4.15 pm to 5.45 pm
- Thursday 19 March – 9.00 am to 10.30 am

Bookings for these sessions can be made online via the following link.

BOOK A TOUR & INFO SESSION

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Music Department News

As we head into the final weeks of Term 4 the Music Department continues to be very busy!

AMEB Examinations

This Friday, we will be hosting the AMEB vocal exams for the first time, with many of our own students presenting for assessment.

Carols@Iona

Preparations are well underway for this year's Carols@Iona, taking place on Tuesday, 2 December. Our ensembles have been working hard on a beautiful selection of Christmas music. We are also excited to be joined by St Joseph's College and St Catherine of Siena on the night, along with a few surprise performances from our talented staff.

A new addition to this year's event is the option to pre-order picnic packs prepared by our wonderful canteen. More details about these packs will be shared in next week's newsletter. On the night, the canteen will also be selling choc-tops and hot chips, there is no pre-order required for these two items.

Book your ticket on the Try Booking link. Bring the whole family and make a night of it.

Staffing Changes 2026

At the end of this year, we farewell two of our sessional music teachers, Jessica Sherman and Siobhan O'Shaughnessy.

Jessica has worked at Iona College for three years as our vocal teacher. In that time, she has worked with our students to perform at soirees, prepared them for AMEB examinations and also prepared VCE vocalists. Jessica is relocating to New Zealand to be with her family. It has been wonderful to have Jessica on staff, and we are very grateful for all that she has done for our students, families and program. We wish her all the best with her new endeavours.

Siobhan has been with us since the start of 2025 as a specialist cello teacher. We have been very blessed to have her on staff to help "kick start" the cello part of our program. Siobhan's extensive experience and quiet manner have been greatly appreciated as part of our program.

There will be three new staff members joining us in 2026: two singing teachers and one cello teacher. More details will be coming in the new year.

Music Enrolments

A reminder that now is the time to get your music enrolments in. The benefits of learning an instrument have been proven over and over again to enhance a student's learning in other areas of their academic life. Feel free to peruse our Music Brochure for more information for 2026.

We have many orchestral instruments waiting to be used:

- Saxophones
- Clarinets
- Flutes
- Violins
- Cello (only one left)
- Trombones
- Trumpets
- 1 x euphonium
- 1 x tuba

If your young person wanted to explore what some of these instruments sound like, they can take a look at our instrumental website.

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2026 Opportunities

Our performance calendar is nearly complete for 2026, and we will share this with you as soon as all dates are confirmed so you can “lock” those dates in.

Our Ensemble Program continues into 2026, and students are welcome to sign up now. In 2026, we will be running the following ensembles:

- Contemporary Band Program (students are placed according to ability)
- Choir
- String Ensemble
- Concert Band

As always, if parents or students have any questions, please feel free to reach out to music@iona.vic.edu.au

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Goodwin family for their kind donation of a pair of congas for our Music Program. I am certain they will be used in our community for years to come.

Jodie Townsend
Head of Performing Arts

Iona Sleep Wisdom

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Weekly Emotional Regulation Strategy

This week we're looking at moving out of the head and into the body through pressing your feet into the ground. This activity is great for emotional regulation as it brings your brain out of 'thinking mode' and into 'sensing mode.'
When you focus on the physical feeling in your feet, your nervous system gets a signal that you're safe in the present moment. This helps slow down racing thoughts, reduce the intensity of big emotions, and makes it easier to think clearly again. Simply put, it helps your body calm down so your mind can catch up.

GROUNDING THROUGH THE FEET

Pushing your feet firmly into the ground and noticing how it feels helps bring your mind back to the present and away from racing thoughts or overwhelming emotions

1 - **Sit or stand** somewhere safe and quiet

2 - Bring your attention to your **feet**

3- **Press your feet firmly into the floor** - as if you're trying to push the floor away

4 - Notice the **pressure,** the **temperature,** and how your **muscles feel**

5 - Take a few **slow, deep breaths,** imagining your breath moving down into your feet

6 - Optionally, add a phrase like:
"I am grounded"
"I am safe"
"I am here"

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools | IONA COLLEGE

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Iona Pathways Press

The 20th November edition of the Iona Pathways Press can be found here.
In this edition you will find information about:

- Dates to Diarise in Term 4
- Reminder: VTAC 2026 Upcoming Key Dates
- Subscribe to Pathways Press
- Book an Appointment with Pathways
- Change of Preference Information
- The Gordon Info Nights
- VIC Police Opportunity for Year 11 & 12's
- Looking for a summer job?
- Creating a resume

Year 12 Graduation Photos Reminder

A reminder that the Year 12 Graduation photos are now ready to order. Arthur Reed Photos uses an online ordering system where you can view your photos prior to ordering.

If you have already registered for photos earlier this year, you should have received an email or SMS from Arthur Reed Photos with a link to view your photos. If you have not yet registered for 2025, please contact their customer service team directly via email at customerservice@arphotos.com.au

Please note that you will need to register online with your **2025 photo code** to gain access to this year's images. All photo packages will be sent directly to your nominated address, so please ensure that you enter the correct details and nominated shipping address upon checkout.

If you require any assistance ordering your photos, please contact Arthur Reed Photos directly at customerservice@arphotos.com.au

Reminder: Boundary Road Crossing Safety Reminder

We're seeing some students crossing Boundary Road unsafely, particularly near Ashbury Estate and the southern side of the road. Please remind your young person to always use the traffic lights/pedestrian crossing at Boundary Road and Horseshoe Bend Road.
Staff will continue to reinforce this, and we're working with the City of Greater Geelong to have supervised crossings in place for 2026.

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First Aid Update

First Aid Update

Kate Every - College Nurse

School Immunisation Catch Up Information

If your young person missed the scheduled immunisation day at school this year, catch-up sessions are available through Barwon Health immunisation. Information about these sessions is listed below, or you can contact your GP.

If you intend to attend Barwon Health for your child's immunisation and feel they may need more time than the standard 5-minute appointment (for example, due to nerves or additional support needs), please phone **4215 4444** so a longer appointment can be arranged.

Families can book through the Barwon Health Immunisation Service via the following link, or by calling 4215 4444 if you need assistance with the booking process.

Immunisation Centre	Immunisation Hours
Belmont Vaccination Centre 2 Colac Rd, Belmont, 3216 (enter off Reynolds Rd)- Carpark in between Bowling Lanes & Barwon Health.	**APPOINTMENT ONLY FOR ALL SESSIONS** • Wednesday and Friday mornings - 09.00 am - 12.00 pm • Wednesday and Friday afternoons - 1.30 pm - 4.45 pm • Saturday morning - 08.30 am -12.00 pm
Korayn Birralee Family Centre 146-152 Purnell Road, Corio, 3214.	**APPOINTMENT ONLY FOR ALL SESSIONS** Every Wednesday 9.45 am - 11.45 am
Ocean Grove Boorai Centre, 4-50 Shell Road, Ocean Grove, 3226.	**APPOINTMENT ONLY FOR ALL SESSIONS** 2nd and 4th Friday of each month 9.30 am - 11.45 am

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Over-the-Counter Medications

If you would like your young person to have access to over-the-counter medications at school, such as antihistamines or Panadol, please ensure that a Medication Authority Form is completed.

This is especially helpful during hayfever season, when symptoms can arise unexpectedly.

As per MACS guidelines, the College is unable to administer any over-the-counter medication without this form. Once submitted, the form is kept on file and does not need to be completed each year. Over-the-counter medications do not require a doctor's signature.

The Medication Authority Form can be downloaded via the following link, or your young person can collect a paper copy from Main Reception. Completed forms can be uploaded via your young person's medical profile on PAM or returned to Main Reception.

College Uniform Supplier (PSW) is Relocating

Our College uniform supplier, PSW, is relocating from their Malop Street store in Geelong to their new purpose-built retail showroom and warehouse in Grovedale.

This upgrade will provide more space and improved service for families.

Key details:
- **Current store:** 164 Malop Street, Geelong
- **Last trading day at Malop Street:** *Thursday 20 November*
- **Store closed:** Friday 21 November – Friday 28 November
- **New store location:** Uniform Group Grovedale, 111–113 Grove Road, Grovedale (behind Aldi)
- **Grand opening of new store:** *Monday, 1 December*

As part of the move, the retail store will be rebranded as Uniform Group Grovedale. PSW have also commenced extended trading hours at their current location, and these extended hours will continue once the new store opens.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this transition.

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Art and Technology News

We warmly welcome the school community to come and celebrate the exceptional work produced by the senior years 10-12 Art, Design and Technology students. Join us on Thursday the 27th of November from 4:00-5:30pm in the specialist arts wing within the Columba building on level two for the *Inspired 2025 Exhibition*. We hope to see you there.

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Term 4 2025 Dates to Remember

Date	Event
Monday 6 October	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Tuesday 7 October	Term 4 Starts
Tuesday 14 October	Year 7, 2026 Parent Information Night (Online)
Thursday 16 October	Summer Soiree
Tuesday 21 October	Whole School Assembly (Formal Uniform Required)
Tuesday 21 October	Year 12 Arts and Technology Exhibition (5 pm - 5:45 pm)
Tuesday 21 October	Year 12 Graduation Mass (6 pm, Iona Stadium)
Wednesday 22 October	Year 12 Celebration Session
Thursday 23 October	Year 12 Graduation Dinner
Wednesday 22 October - Thursday 23 October	Year 9 Camp (Group 1)
Thursday 23 October - Friday 24 October	Year 9 (Group 2)
Tuesday 28 October	VCE Unit 3 & 4 Exams Begin
Monday 3 November	Student Free Day (School Closed for Mid-Term Break)
Tuesday 4 November	Melbourne Cup Public Holiday
Monday 17 November - Friday 21 November	Year 10, 11 and Unit 2 Exams
Wednesday 19 November	Year 8 Passion Project Expo (1:30 pm - 3 pm)
Monday 24 November	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Wednesday 26 November	Year 7 Passion Project Expo (1:30 pm - 3 pm)
Wednesday 26 November - 3 December	Ignite Program (Years 10 -12)
Thursday 27 November	Inspired Exhibition (4 pm - 5:30 pm)
Tuesday 2 December	Carols@Iona (6 pm - 8 pm)
Wednesday 3 December	End of Year Mass (Formal Uniform Required)
Thursday 4 December	Term 4 Concludes (3:05 pm)
Thursday 29 January	Year 7, Year 12 and All New Students to the College Start
Friday 30 January	Years 8-11 Commence

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.

A reminder that Monday, 24 November, will be a student-free day while staff participate in professional development.

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Kylie and Melissa

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