

5 February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

In this second week of school, it is wonderful to have all of our students back and to see our whole school community in action!

Our Year 7 and Year 12 students were the first to return to school. It was important for them to have an earlier introduction to the school year as they prepare to begin and end their secondary school journeys, and we were delighted with the way these students conducted themselves.

Our Year 7s were welcomed into the Iona College community with an official Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony, organised by our First Nations Liaison officer, Lisa Couzens, and led by Wadawurrung Country leaders Auntie Naomi, Kristy and Dave from the Wathaurong Booln Booln Cultural Centre. The students gathered around the fire pit in the Iona College Yarning Circle and took it in turns to place a gum leaf in the fire as they walked through the smoke. For thousands of years, First Nations people have used smoke to heal, protect and cleanse. For Catholics, fire shows that God is present. Both Catholic and First Nations communities are energised by fire, and it was wonderful to see our new Year 7s take part in this beautiful ritual that honours our Iona College culture and traditions. Our Year 12 students will participate in their final Iona College smoking ceremony to mark the end of their journey when they conclude their studies later this year.

As we move from transition programs and into Term 1, our focus for the term is 'Compassion,' the virtue of Chisholm House. Caroline Chisholm, the patron of Chisholm House, was a 19th-century humanitarian and social reformer in Australia, famous for helping immigrants, especially single women, by finding them housing and work, establishing employment agencies, creating shelters and advocating for family migration and better conditions for settlers. She is admired for her work, her compassion and for her ability to look at others without judgement, saying, "I promise to know neither country nor creed, but to serve all justly and impartially."

Let us pray we can see others through the eyes of love and equality as Caroline Chisholm did.

Dear God,

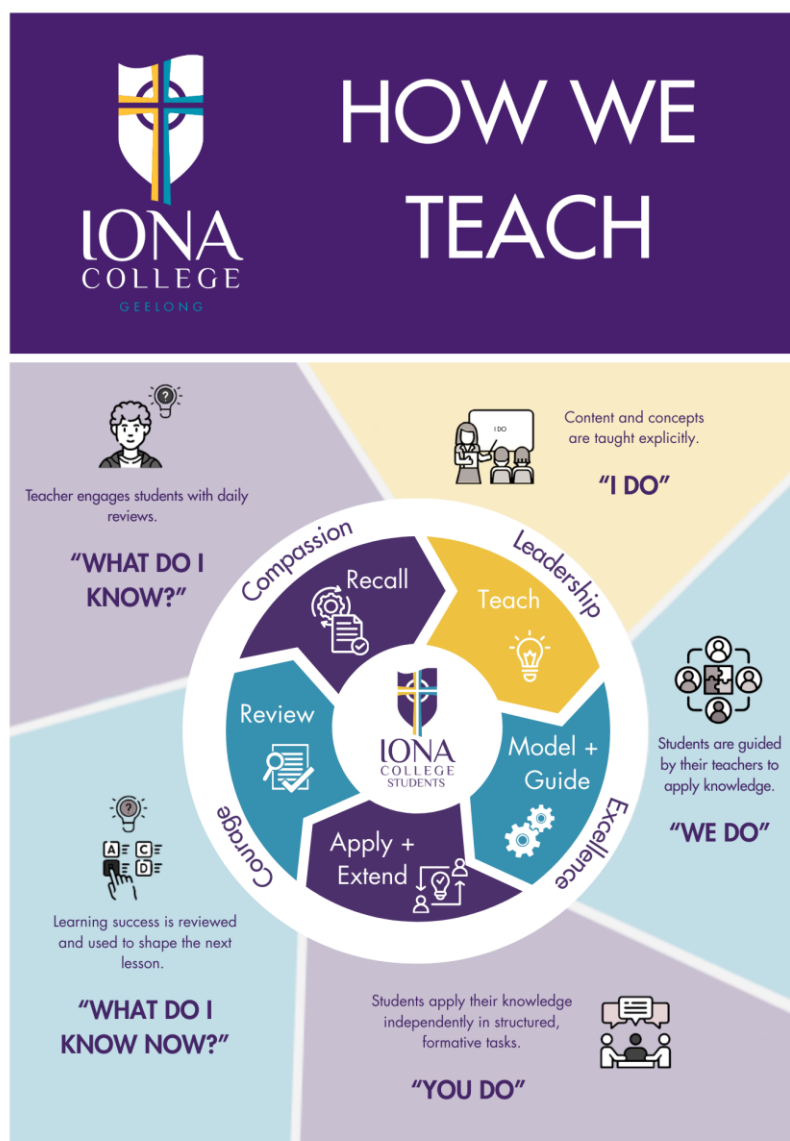
We thank you, most loving and merciful God, for the admirable life of Caroline Chisholm, who heard your call in youth and responded as a woman of patient, energetic faith. Help us to follow her example of Christian commitment, compassion and untiring, resourceful service.

Amen.

Learning at Iona

At Iona College, we believe that great teaching is intentional, evidence-based, and centred on helping every student grow in confidence and capability as a learner. Across the College, our teachers work within a shared framework, the Iona Instructional Model, which guides how learning is designed, delivered, and reviewed in every classroom.

This model provides clarity and consistency for students, while allowing teachers the professional flexibility to respond to the needs of their classes. It ensures that learning at Iona is purposeful, structured, and focused on long-term success.



A Common Approach to Learning

The Iona Instructional Model is built around five key phases that shape each lesson:

- **Recall** Learning begins by revisiting prior knowledge. Students are regularly asked to retrieve what they have learned previously through short quizzes, questioning, or discussion. This strengthens memory and helps new learning “stick”.
- **Teach**, teachers then introduce new concepts clearly and explicitly. Lessons are carefully structured so students understand not only what they are learning, but why it matters and how it connects to prior knowledge.
- **Model and Guide**, where teachers demonstrate skills and thinking processes step-by-step. Whether analysing a text, solving a problem, or planning an assessment task, students see expert examples and receive guided practice before working independently.
- In the **Apply and Extend** section of our Instructional Model, students are given opportunities to practise and deepen their learning through meaningful tasks. These activities are designed to challenge students, encourage independence, and build confidence.
- Finally, before moving on to a new concept or skill, the **Review** section of our model involves reflection and feedback. Teachers check understanding, clarify misconceptions, and help students identify next steps for improvement.

What This Means for Students

In Iona classrooms, students can expect:

- Clear learning goals and expectations
- Structured and supportive lessons
- Regular opportunities to practise and receive feedback
- A focus on building strong learning habits
- A consistent approach across subjects and year levels

This shared language and structure help students become more self-aware learners who understand how to improve and take ownership of their progress.

Evidence-Based Practice

Our Instructional Model is informed by contemporary research into how students learn best, including principles from the Science of Learning and the MACS Vision for Instruction. This includes a strong emphasis on explicit instruction, retrieval practice, feedback, and deliberate practice strategies proven to support deep and lasting understanding.

Throughout the remainder of this term, the Iona College Newsletter will continue to share snapshots of what each phase of the Instructional Model looks like in practice across a range of classrooms and learning areas. These insights will highlight the thoughtful strategies our teachers use every day to support student learning and growth. We will also provide practical tips and

guidance for parents and carers on how to reinforce these approaches at home, helping to strengthen the partnership between school and family in supporting each young person's learning journey.

Kate McLaren
Director of Culture and Strategy (Learning)

Elevate Education Parent Webinars



Elevate Education's Term 1

Parent Webinar Series

Elevate Education delivers high-impact workshops to our students that help to develop their study skills, motivation, and exam preparation. Over the next term, you're invited to join their parent webinar series, where you can help support your child at home by reinforcing the skills they're learning at school.

How to Get (And Keep!) Your Child Motivated

11th February @ 6:30pm (AEDT)

How You Can Help Your Child Manage Their Time

25th February @ 6:30pm (AEDT)

How You Can Make Technology an Ally (& Not the Enemy!)

11th March @ 6:30pm (AEDT)

How You Can Help Improve Your Child's Memory

25th March @ 6:30pm (AEDT)

Register today at: <https://go.elevateeducation.com/auschoolwebinars>

[Book online via the following link.](#)

Inclusive Education News

What is NCCD?

As a parent, guardian or carer, what do I need to know?

The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) is a yearly count of students by all Australian schools across the country. The aim of the NCCD is to provide the Australian Government with information about the number of students with disability in Australian schools and the type of adjustments they need in order to access and participate in education on the same basis as other students. From 2018, the NCCD will be used by the Australian Government to inform funding for schools, known as the 'student with disability loading'.

If you are a parent, guardian or carer of a child with disability who requires ongoing adjustments at school, a teacher or another school staff member will consult with you to understand your child's needs. This collaborative approach ensures the most appropriate adjustments are chosen to support your child's learning and participation at school. In some cases, an individual education plan (IEP) or personal learning plan (PLP) may be developed to document specific educational goals and to review your child's progress over time.

Your child will be included in the NCCD if they require ongoing adjustments at school due to a disability as defined by the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. (the DDA). This is a very broad definition of disability, which includes physical and intellectual disabilities, learning disorders such as dyslexia and dysgraphia, and mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression.

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 (the Standards) set out the obligations of schools towards students with disability. Information for parents, guardians and carers on the DDA and the Standards about how schools can work with students and their families is available at [Disability Standards for Education: A practical guide for individuals, families and communities.](#)

If your child has a disability, your child's school will provide information about them for the NCCD, including:

- your child's year of schooling
- the category of disability that best describes your child's difficulties (one of four categories is chosen by the school team to reflect your child's greatest area of need: physical, cognitive, sensory or social/emotional)
- the level of adjustment your child receives at school (one of four levels is chosen by the school team to reflect the type of support your child requires: quality differentiated teaching practice, supplementary adjustment, substantial adjustment, or extensive adjustment).

The information collected by schools for the NCCD will ultimately be provided to the Australian Government Department of Education. In some cases, this will involve the school passing the

information directly to the Department. In other cases, the school will provide it to its state or territory government agency (or other relevant body) in the first instance, and that agency will then provide the information to the Department.

While it is not possible for schools or families to 'opt out' of the NCCD, the privacy and confidentiality of all students and their families are treated with utmost importance. Data is collected within each school, and personal details, such as student names and other identifying information, are not provided to local or federal education authorities.

Iona College Inclusive Education Team

School Photos 2026

A reminder that annual school photos will be taken by Arthur Reed on Tuesday, 10 February 2026.

Student access codes and order details will be provided to you when the images are ready to view and purchase online.

Year 12 Cohort Photo and Sibling Photos will be taken on Friday, 27 February 2026. If you would like your children to be photographed together, please follow these simple steps.

1. Grab your phone and go to <https://arphotos.typeform.com/to/dKNPbIDB>
2. Enter the name and community group of the eldest sibling
3. Enter the names and community group/s of all other siblings to be included in the photo

Mark the date in your calendar or save it on your phone so you can get organised before the event. Having the date set in advance means you can make sure they have a clean uniform and, as is often needed, a post-holiday haircut before their annual school photo.

Uniform

As a parent/carer, you'll have the task of ensuring your child's formal uniform is ironed, clean and ready to go on photo day. Please make sure that you are familiar with the [most current school uniform policy](#).

Items that are not part of the College uniform policy, including additional earrings, bracelets and necklaces, will be asked to be removed and will be returned to students at the end of the day. Fake nails, nail polish and false eyelashes are not permitted under the uniform policy. Makeup should be minimal. We acknowledge that this may add an extra step to morning routines; however, a consistent, collective effort is important in maintaining our uniform standards.

Year 7 Applications & Tour and Information Sessions – Reminder

Sibling Application

This is a reminder that families with a sibling currently attending Iona College are required to submit an enrolment application if they wish to be considered for placement for Year 7 2027.

To ensure your application is included in the enrolment process, please submit it by **Friday, 8 May 2026**. If you have already lodged an application, thank you; no further action is required. Should you have any questions or need assistance, please contact our College Registrar at 52290004.



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



Student Leave of Absence

Leave of Absence (more than 5 days and up to 3 weeks)

The College understands that, for a variety of reasons, there may be times when your young person is away from school for more than five days. Families wishing to remove their young person from classes for an extended leave of absence must complete the Extended Leave of Absence Form and return it to attendance@iona.vic.edu.au. The Leave of Absence Form can be located on PAM under Knowledge Bank/Student Attendance Policies and Forms.

Extended Leave of Absence (more than 3 weeks)

Families wishing to request a leave of absence (more than three weeks away from school) must apply to the school Principal.

An email outlining the following should be emailed to attendance@iona.vic.edu.au at least one month before the Leave of Absence, if possible:

- the length of time the student will be away
- the reason the student requires a leave of absence
- details of any other schools the student may be attending while on leave of absence
- attach a completed Extended Leave of Absence Form (located on PAM under Knowledge Bank/Student Attendance Policies and Forms)

PLEASE NOTE: VCE student requests (including Year 10 students enrolled in a Unit 1 and 2 subject) must also contact one of the following staff to advise of any planned absence. Extended absences for students who are accelerating may result in students needing to be withdrawn from VCE units or their program being reviewed, as they will not satisfy the minimum attendance requirement.

- the VM Leader (timn.nunn@iona.vic.edu.au)
- the VCE Leader (anthea.sholl@iona.vic.edu.au)
- the Pathways Team (pathways@iona.vic.edu.au)

Iona Equestrian Team

Iona College is proud to support a small group of students who put countless hours into training their ponies and horses to compete in a range of equestrian disciplines. Current Iona students who are currently or planning on competing in interschool competitions this year are asked to email their interest to Mrs Huxtable, Jacqueline.huxtable@iona.vic.edu.au. Also, stay tuned to the daily messages this week to find further information and register your interest.

Please note that students must be able to attend events themselves with their family; the school does not provide transport or supervision. You must also have access to your own pony/horse and registration with a pony club or Equestrian Victoria for insurance purposes.

Pending Release of 2026 (Term 1) Fee Statements & Payment Information

Iona College plans to issue its 2026 (Term 1) Fee Statement by email to families in mid-February. This will include the Annual School/Tuition Fee, any applicable Annual Bus Fee, any applicable Semester 1 Outdoor Education Fees and any applicable Sibling Discounts.

The statement email will be followed by a secondary email covering the various payment options available to families, including this year's (fortnightly & monthly) Direct Debit schedule and will have a Direct Debit Request form attached to it. **NB:** As Direct Debits do NOT automatically rollover from year-to-year, families who had a Direct Debit in place in 2025 and whose bank account details remain unchanged MUST follow the instructions in the second email and reply accordingly by email.

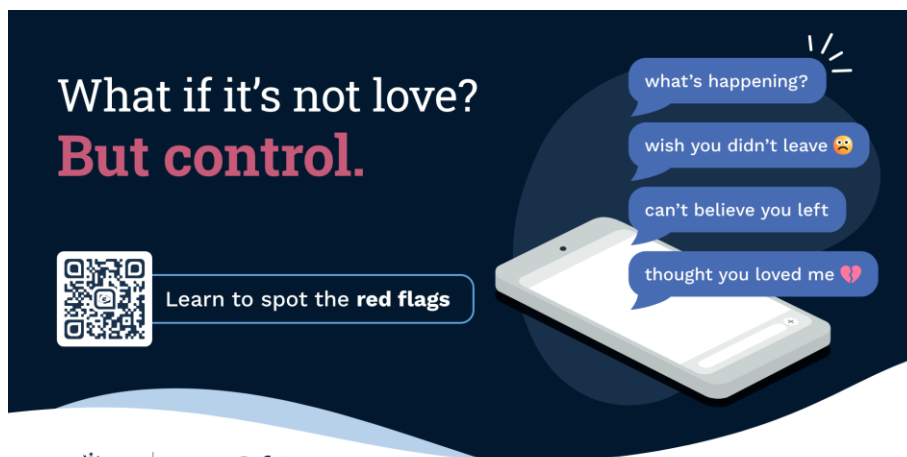
Carl Jones
Accounts Receivable

Safer Internet Day

We're proud to support Safer Internet Day on Tuesday, 10 February 2026.

As the internet continues to play a significant role in the lives of young people, we will be beginning conversations with students about online safety and the importance of respectful, responsible behaviour in digital spaces.



The eSafety Commissioner also offers a range of webinars for parents and carers, providing practical advice and tools to support young people to navigate the online world safely. Further information is available via the [eSafety Commissioner website](#).



What if it's not love?
But control.

Learn to spot the **red flags**

what's happening?
wish you didn't leave 😞
can't believe you left
thought you loved me 💔

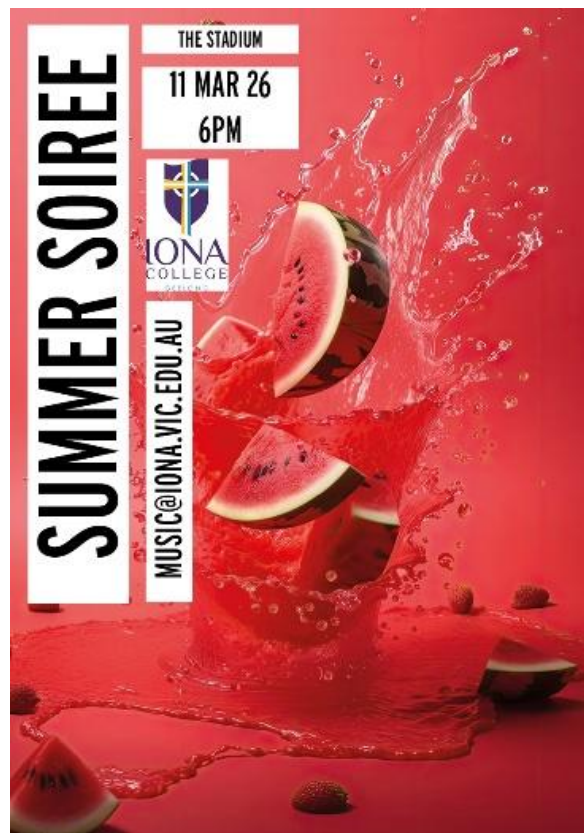
  [eSafety.gov.au](https://www.esafety.gov.au)

Music Department News

Summer Soiree

A reminder that our first concert of the year is our Summer Soiree on 11th March. A sign-up sheet will be placed outside the Music Rooms on Monday, 2nd Feb. Students should **ONLY** sign themselves up if they know they will have a piece of music ready to perform.

Parents can book tickets to the soiree (free) [via the following link](#).



Please feel free to contact the Music Department directly with any questions or enquiries you have by emailing -music@iona.vic.edu.au

Jodie Townsend
Head of Performing Arts



Supporting Children in Stepfamilies

The Family Relationship Centre and CatholicCare Victoria are offering free workshops to support stepfamilies.

“Stepfamilies – through your children’s eyes” is a three-hour workshop that explores the experience of living in a stepfamily from a child’s perspective. The session supports parents and carers to better understand their children’s needs and how best to support them. The workshop is suitable for individuals or couples at any stage of their stepfamily journey.

Location: Family Relationship Centre Geelong

Dates:

- Monday 17 March, 10.00 am – 1.00 pm
- Wednesday 26 March, 5.00 pm – 8.00 pm

For more information, visit the [CatholicCare Victoria website](#) or contact the Family Relationship Centre directly.

Raising Grateful Hearts Forum



PRESENTED BY POSITIVE PARENTING EXPERT ROD SOPER

Discover practical rituals and simple language to help children notice the good, practise thankfulness and turn appreciation into meaningful acts of kindness.

Learn everyday strategies to embed gratitude into mealtimes, school runs, bedtime and family routines.

Explore age-appropriate (birth to 12 years) activities, conversation starters and quick games backed by research, child development principles and real-life practice.

Build empathy, resilience and joy as a family through positive connection and shared appreciation.

Take home a mini gratitude toolkit you can start using immediately to encourage kindness and connection at home and in your community.



THURSDAY 27 FEBRUARY

7.00pm–9.00pm

VENUE

Norlane ARC
1/9 Cox Rd, Norlane

BOOKINGS

Scan the QR code
or visit



geelong.link/GratefulHearts

This is a FREE event but
bookings are essential.

Register online [via the following link.](https://geelong.link/GratefulHearts)

30 MARCH 26

ONLINE WORKSHOP

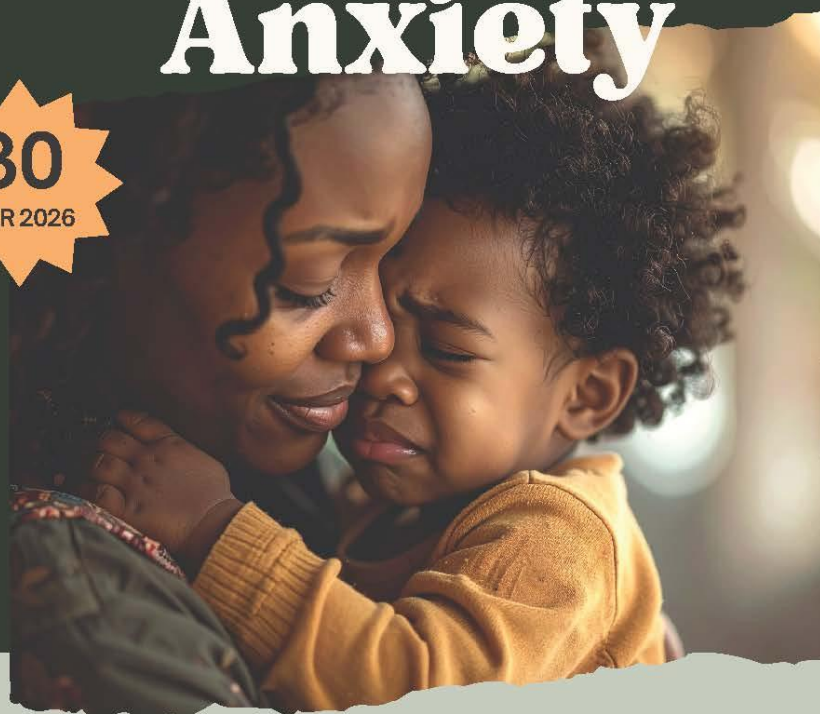
7PM-8.30PM



Parenting For Children With Anxiety

30

MAR 2026



A Psychologist Led Workshop For Parents

HEAR FROM EXPERTS

DR MAHSA MEHDIZADEH
PROVISIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

LIVE FACILITATION

JAYDE WHITTEN
PROVISIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

SCAN ME!



REGISTRATION & TICKETS ONLINE

MORE INFORMATION
INFO@CENTREDWELLBEING.COM.AU

242 Horseshoe Bend Road
Charlemont VIC 3217

p: 03 5229 0004

e: reception@iona.vic.edu.au

iona.vic.edu.au

ONLINE WORKSHOP



Parenting For Children With Anxiety

BOOK NOW

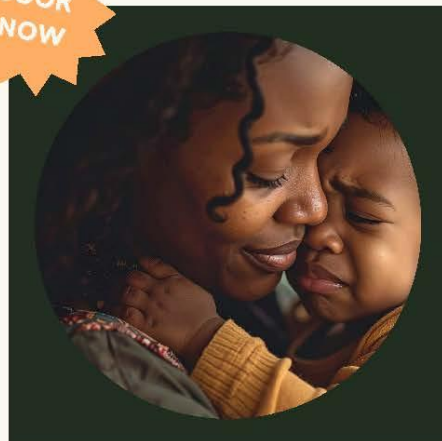
Parenting can make a powerful difference in how children respond to worry and stress.

Learn How To

- ✓ **Support** an anxious child with confidence
- ✓ **Reduce** escalation of worries over time
- ✓ **Respond** in ways that build safety and independence
- ✓ **Spot** common “helpful” habits that can accidentally keep anxiety going

Your Ticket Includes

- ✓ Private access to the **live online workshop**
- ✓ 1x **Parenting Questionnaire** + results
- ✓ 1x **downloadable workbook** (reflection + practical strategies)



Sample Schedule

- 7PM Meet facilitators
Parenting styles
Reflection + discussion
- 7.30PM Stress Types
Brain Systems of Anxiety
Influences on anxiety
What maintains anxiety
- 8PM Reflection + discussion
Top tips for Parents
- 8.30PM Wrap up

ONLINE WORKSHOP
30 March 2026
7pm - 8.30pm

BOOK NOW VIA EVENTBRITE

SCAN ME!



- ☎ 0480 801 658
- ✉ info@centredwellbeing.com.au
- 🌐 www.centredwellbeing.com.au

Iona Pathways Press

The 5 February edition of the Iona Pathways Press [can be found here](#).
In this edition, you will find information about:

- Dates to Diarise in Term 1
- What can the Pathway Hub can assist you with?
- MySCI Science Holiday Program
- Bachelor of Circus Arts
- The Hansen Scholarship for 2027 - University of Melbourne
- Tuckwell Scholarship for 2027 - ANU
- Snapshot of Bond University in 2026
- EOI for Structured Workplace Learning for Victoria Police (Year 11 & 12)
- Aviation Courses in Victoria in 2026

 **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

Term 1 2026 Dates to Remember

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.

Date	Event
Thursday 18 December - Tuesday 20 January	Iona College Admin Office Closed for Christmas Break
Wednesday 21 January	Iona College Admin Office Opens
Thursday 29 January	Term 1 Commences for Year 7, Year 12 and All New Students to the College (Formal Uniform for Year 7s and all New Students to Iona)
Friday 30 January	Years 8-11 Commence
Tuesday 10 February	School Photo Day (Formal Uniform)
Tuesday 10 February	Yr 11 & 12 VCE Parent Information Evening (6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Iona College Stadium)
Wednesday 11 February	Whole School Mass (Formal Uniform)
Tuesday 17 February	Year 7 Parent/Carer Welcome Evening (6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Iona College Stadium)
Thursday 19 February	Whole School Assembly - 2025 VCE & VOC Major High Achievers Awards and 2026 Leaders Induction (Formal Uniform)
Wednesday 25 February	Year 7 Maths Parent/Carer Information Night (6:00 pm - 7:00 pm)
Friday 27 February	Year 12 Group Photo (Formal Uniform for Year 12s)
Friday 27 February	School Photo Catch-Up Day and Sibling Photography Formal uniform required for all students being photographed.
Monday 2 March	Swimming Carnival
Monday 9 March	Labour Day Public Holiday
Tuesday 10 March	Units 3 and 4 Student Progress Meeting (On-site)
Wednesday 11 March	Teen Mental Health Matters Webinar with Dr Sarah Barker (Online)
Monday 16 March	Open Day - Tour and Information Session (4:15 - 5:45)
Tuesday 17 March	Open Day - Tour and Information Session (11:00 - 12:30)
Wednesday 18 March	Open Day - Tour and Information Session (9:00 - 10:30)
Wednesday 18 March	Open Day - Tour and Information Session (4:15 - 5:45)
Thursday 19 March	Open Day - Tour and Information Session (9:00 - 10:30)
Thursday 19 March	Student Progress Meetings (Onsite)
Friday 20 March	Staff Professional Development Student Free Day
Tuesday 24 March	Student Progress Meeting (Online)
Thursday 2 April	Term 1 Concludes (2:05 pm)
Monday 20 April	Staff Professional Development Student Free Day
Monday 20 April	Practice GAT
Tuesday 21 April	Term 2 Commences

Construction - Increased Congestion

A reminder that due to construction on site, there is reduced parking as well as space for drop off and pick up. Traffic will be very congested, so you will need to allow for additional time. As an alternative, we kindly ask parents and carers to consider dropping off and picking up their young person in neighbouring streets where possible.

Term 1 Formal Uniform Days



Nazareth Catholic Parish Name Change

Please note that **Nazareth Catholic Parish will be renamed Damascus Parish**, effective 22 February 2026, as outlined in a decree published by Archbishop Peter Comensoli.

The new name reflects the biblical significance of Saint Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus. Each church community will retain its existing name: Nazareth Church (Grovedale), St Therese Church (Torquay) and St Christopher's Church (Anglesea), with *Damascus Parish* serving as the overarching parish name.

Newsletter Format Update

A reminder that, based on feedback received in last year's survey, we are trialling a new newsletter format this term. A full newsletter will now be shared every second week on Thursday afternoon. In the alternate weeks, families will receive a shorter update highlighting key dates and important information. The first Key Dates and Important Information update will be sent out next week.

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Kylie and Melissa