

21 May 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Recently, our school community has been richly blessed with opportunities to deepen our understanding of faith in action, as we continue to nurture both the spiritual and social consciousness of our young people.

This week (17 – 24 May) is *Laudato Si'* Week, which allows us to reflect on Pope Francis' call to care for our common home. We can follow the example of this wonderful patron of our school and stand up with courage for a healthy and thriving ecology, recognising that we and all living things are deeply connected. *Laudato Si'* Week 2026 is an invitation to move from *Hope to Action*. This reminds us that Hope is not passive; it is lived and shared through daily choices, community life, prayer and concrete acts of care. Hope brings about restored relationships, protection of creation and stronger communities.

Our students have explored what it means to live out the principles of *Laudato Si'* in practical ways, whether through small acts such as reducing waste and conserving resources, or through broader reflections on justice and the impact of human choices on vulnerable communities around the world. This week is an important reminder that caring for the environment is not simply a scientific or political issue, but a deeply spiritual one, inviting each of us to respond with hope and commitment.

A particularly moving highlight for our Year 10 Religious Education cohort was the recent visit from Paulie Stewart and the Alma Nuns from Timor Leste. Their presence offered students a living witness to faith, service and global solidarity.

Through their storytelling and shared experiences, our visitors gave students insight into the realities of life in Timor-Leste, the challenges faced by communities, as well as the deep resilience and joy that flows from strong faith and cultural identity. The Alma Nuns, in particular, spoke of their vocation and mission, demonstrating the power of a life dedicated to service and love. They also performed a song for us, demonstrating the joy with which they go about their work, caring for and serving others.

As we move forward, our attention turns to National Reconciliation Week (27 May – 3 June), an important time for reflecting on the interconnectedness of life in our Australian context. This week calls us to deepen our understanding of the histories, cultures, and contributions of our First Nations peoples, and of each of our roles in building relationships of truth, respect, and justice. As a Catholic school, this aligns strongly with our mission to uphold the dignity of every person and to actively work towards reconciliation and healing.

Throughout the week, students will participate in activities and discussions designed to foster awareness and meaningful engagement. We encourage families to also engage in conversations at home, recognising that reconciliation is a shared journey that extends beyond the classroom. A reminder that our Reconciliation Week Assembly will be held next Tuesday, 26th May, and full formal school uniform is required.

These recent and upcoming events, Laudato Si' Week, our encounter with visitors from Timor Leste, and National Reconciliation Week, highlight the richness of our Catholic identity. They remind us that faith is not lived in isolation, but is expressed through relationships: with God, with one another, and with the world around us.

To stay connected with all that is happening in Catholic education and to nurture faith in our community, we have subscribed to Australian Catholics Magazine and organised free access for all our parents and families! Enjoy the articles and information!

To access, go to: <https://www.australiancatholics.com.au/>

Choose the Education Hub and the login tab at the top of the screen, and log in using:

Email: parents@iona.vic.edu.au

Password: acparents

A prayer for interconnectedness in *Laudato Si* Week

Loving God, Creator of the universe and all that dwells within it,
We give thanks for the profound web of life that sustains our common home.
You have linked us by unseen bonds to one another, to the earth, and to every living creature.

During this sacred week, awaken our hearts to the reality of our shared existence.
Forgive us for the times we have forgotten our place as stewards of creation.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that is.

Help us to see that the wellbeing of our ecosystems and the dignity of our most vulnerable brothers and sisters are inseparable.
Inspire us to sow beauty, justice, and peace.

Amen

National Sorry Day



Next week, on 26 May, we acknowledge National Sorry Day, a significant day for First Nations communities across Australia. Every year on 26th May, National Sorry Day, we remember the mistreatment and impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were forcibly removed from their families and communities, which we now know as The Stolen Generations.

Today is a day to acknowledge the strength of Stolen Generations Survivors and their families, and we need to reflect on how we can play a part in the healing process of our nation. Doing so reminds us that historical injustice is still an ongoing source of intergenerational trauma for Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities.

We cannot begin to fix the problems of the present without accepting the truth of our history.

National Reconciliation Week, 27th May - 3rd of June.

The theme, *All In*, makes clear that reconciliation is not a spectator sport and that all of us must step away from the sidelines and take action to make change. *All in*, also reminds us that reconciliation and advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' rights is not a passive activity. It is not solely the responsibility of First Nations people, who have carried the weight of championing, explaining and acting for far too long.

Reconciliation Australia turns 25 this year, and it presents a renewed invitation to lift our actions and commitment to significant change.

The work that remains requires all of us to do our part. *All in* is not about guilt or shame, but about the reciprocal responsibility of being Australian.

Reconciliation will not happen by itself; we must all be for reconciliation!



Paulie Stewart and Alma Sisters Visit



On Tuesday, the 12th of May, the Year 10s were given the opportunity to hear from two Alma sisters from Timor Leste, along with Paulie Stewart. Through this incursion, we learnt about the role of the Alma nuns in Timor, and their dedication to supporting more than 5,000 children living with disabilities. We also learnt about the hardship Timor-Leste has been through as a country, and how they came out of it as the amazing people they are today.

The Alma sisters not only told us about the work they do but also inspired us to live life being more caring and empathetic towards others. Their stories captivated us, wanting to learn more about their roles as nuns and the work they do teaching disabled children.

Paulie shared with us his experiences of working alongside the nuns after losing his brother, Tony, who was one of the Balibo 5. These were the five journalists who were executed in Timor-Leste during the occupation. Paulie never expected that two nuns would be included in his life until they shared with him their kindness after his brother's death. Nowadays, Paulie has visited Timor Leste over 20 times, bringing hats, clothes and gifts for the children. He also stayed to assist the nuns in teaching the children basic English and essential skills.

Paulie could not talk highly enough of the nuns and how grateful all of the children were. The nuns' infectious personalities were evident in the way they never overlooked a child because of their disability, and they embodied the gift of loving all as they would want to be loved.



This experience was so special for us, as our school has such a close connection to Timor-Leste. We've come away from this with a deeper understanding of community and the role we play in supporting Timor-Leste.

Anna Henderson and Jaz McInnes
Year 10 Students

Medical Update

Year 10 Immunisations

Barwon Health Immunisation Service will be visiting Iona College on **Thursday, 11 June** to administer the **Meningococcal ACWY vaccine** to Year 10 students (single injection).

Please complete the online consent form as soon as possible via the link below:
<https://geelong.book.vitavo.com.au/school/IonaCollegeGeelong-rolbFS>

Student information will be provided to Barwon Health Immunisation Service for the purposes of administering the vaccine. If you do not wish for your young person's details to be provided, please email medical@iona.vic.edu.au by **Monday, 25 May**.

Medication Authority Form

If you would like your young person to receive over-the-counter medication at school, including during camps, please ensure a [Medication Authority Form](#) is completed.

Over recent weeks, a number of students have attended First Aid requesting medication such as Panadol without a completed form attached to their profile. In accordance with MACS policy, we are unable to administer over-the-counter medication without a completed [Medication Authority Form](#).

Camps & Medications

To support student safety while on camp, all families are required to complete a [Medication Authority Form](#) for students attending camps.

If your young person takes more than one prescription medication, please provide a pharmacist-prepared Webster pack (the Chemist Outlet in Charlemont can arrange this for approximately \$5). If only one prescription medication is required, it must be supplied in its original packaging and placed inside a clearly labelled snap-lock bag.

If you require assistance or clarification, please contact the College Nurse via medical@iona.vic.edu.au.

Please hand all medications to the College Reception by the dates below. Medications will not be accepted on departure day.

- **Year 7 Camp:** Wednesday 27 May
- **Year 8 Camp:** Friday 29 May
- **Indonesian Camp:** Tuesday 9 June
- **Central Australia Camp:** Tuesday 9 June
- **Outdoor Education Camps:** Please complete a [Medication Authority Form](#)

Thank you for your support and assistance.

Kate Every

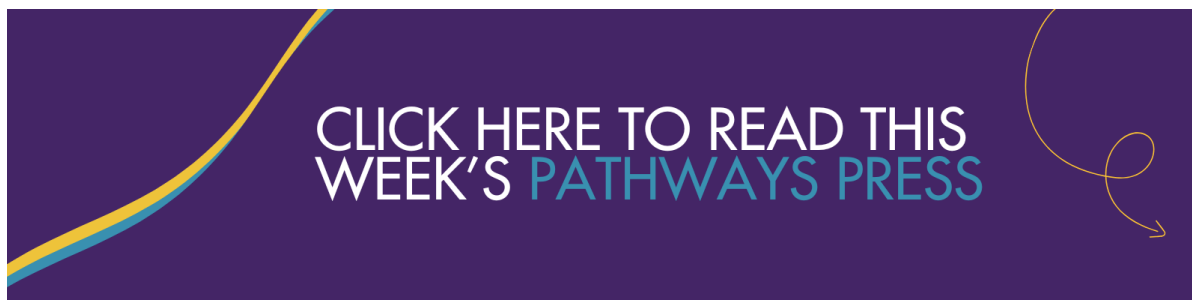
College Nurse

Upcoming Formal Uniform Day



Please note the upcoming formal uniform day next week, Tuesday, 26 May, for the Reconciliation Week whole-school assembly.

Iona Pathways Press



This week's edition of the Careers and Pathways team's Pathways press is [available via the following link](#).



2026 Iona Careers and Pathways Expo – Tonight

Date: Thursday 21 May (Tonight)

Time: 5.00 – 8.00 pm

Location: Iona College – Stadium

A reminder that the Iona College Careers & Pathways Expo will be held tonight, Thursday, 21 May, from 5.00 – 8.00 pm in the Stadium.

Families, particularly those in Years 10–12, are encouraged to attend and explore a range of post-school pathways with 40+ exhibitors, including universities, TAFEs, training providers and industry representatives.

VCE/VM/VET information sessions will run at 5.15 pm, 6.15 pm and 7.15 pm.

A BBQ supporting Timor-Leste will also be available on the night.

Healthy Masculinity Parent/Carer Evening - Reminder

Date: Tuesday 9 June

Time: 6.30 – 7.30 pm

Venue: SJC Performing Arts Centre, Newtown

A reminder to register for a free parent/carers evening with Daniel Principe, focusing on healthy masculinity and the influences shaping boys today.

This event is open to both St Joseph's College and the Iona communities.

[Please register for the event via the following link.](#)

Winter Soiree

Date: Thursday, 4 June

Time: 6.00 pm

Location: Iona College – Stadium



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

Digital Safety and Device Use at Iona

At Iona College, we are committed to ensuring that technology supports learning and that students stay safe online. This update covers two important initiatives: our use of Focus Mode on school devices during the school day, and the introduction of Qustodio, a digital safety tool available to families for use at home.

Focus Mode: Keeping Device Use on Track During School Hours

As part of our commitment to being a certified eSmart school, we actively encourage staff to use Focus Mode on student devices during class time. Focus Mode restricts access to apps and websites that are not relevant to the current learning task, helping students stay on track and making sure device use aligns with the lesson's goals.

Families can expect this to be a normal part of classroom practice across all year levels. Please have a conversation with your young person about the importance of using their device responsibly and in line with our ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

Students who are found to be in breach of our ICT Policy during school hours may face consequences in line with the College's behaviour management processes. We appreciate your support in reinforcing these expectations at home.

Qustodio: A Reminder for Families

A reminder that Iona College provides families with access to Qustodio, a trusted parental control app that gives you visibility and control over your young person's online activity outside of school hours. If you have not yet signed up, we encourage you to take advantage of this free service.

With Qustodio, families can:

- Monitor and set screen time limits
- Filter inappropriate content and websites
- Track app usage and receive activity reports
- Set app and game controls
- Use location tracking and receive alerts for concerning activity
- Support open conversations about online safety with helpful insights

How to Get Started

For families that wish to benefit from the College's partnership with Qustodio and add more than 2 devices, Qustodio offer a low-cost monthly subscription.

To sign up:

- Visit the College Online Safety Hub at ionavic.onlinesafetyhub.com.au to register. Please use the email address linked to your PAM account.
- Install Qustodio on your young person's devices.
- Manage settings and view reports from your own device or computer.
- Stay informed with weekly reports and real-time alerts.

Please note: Qustodio is provided through the College's partnership with LineWize. Families who opt in should contact Qustodio directly for account support at myschool@qustodio.com, as Iona College does not manage individual accounts or provide technical assistance. The College has no visibility into personal devices with Qustodio installed, and can only see College-provided devices during school hours (9:00 am-3:05 pm on school days).

Thank you for your ongoing partnership in keeping our students safe, both in and out of the classroom.

Elizabeth Grayland, Kylie Power and Melissa Gould
Pedagogy and Curriculum Instructional Leader (e-Learning), Deputy Principal (Wellbeing), Deputy Principal (Learning)

Parent Carer eSafety Online Session

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION SESSION



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

JOIN THE CYBER SAFETY PROJECT FOR EXPERT ADVICE

Navigating the Digital Playground

CYBERBULLYING

SCREEN TIME

PRIVACY SETTINGS

AI & MISINFORMATION

SOCIAL MEDIA

GAMING



WHY ATTEND?

You Are Your Child's First Line of Defence Online.

In today's connected world, parents play a powerful role in shaping safe and healthy digital habits. This practical session is designed especially for busy parents who want to:

- ✓ **Feel confident** navigating their child's online world
- ✓ **Create a safer, more balanced** digital environment at home
- ✓ **Support digital wellbeing** and encourage responsible tech use
- ✓ **Know what to do** (and where to turn) when things go wrong online

WHEN & WHERE

LIVE ONLINE

Date: Monday 25th May 2026 7-8pm

SCAN TO REGISTER
or visit
[Registration Link](#)



PRESENTED BY

CYBER SAFETY PROJECT

Cyber Safety Project, Australia's premier
online safety education provider.

cybersafetyproject.com



Parent Webinar: Beyond the Screen: Understanding and Guiding Your Child's Gaming Life

Families are invited to attend a free online webinar presented by Andrew Kinch from Game Aware, designed to support parents, carers and educators in better understanding young people's gaming habits and online experiences.

Date: Tuesday, 2 June 2026

Time: 7.00 pm (AEST)

Location: Online

Cost: Free

The session will explore healthy gaming habits, strategies for setting boundaries, recognising when additional support may be needed, and ways to move from conflict to conversation at home.

Spots are limited, and [registration is required via the following link.](#)

Year 11 VM WRS Workplace Visit

Our Year 11 VM WRS class recently visited Bunnings to explore the ins and outs of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in the workplace. Students were treated to an informative store tour, where they learned about safety procedures, hazard management, and real-world workplace expectations. The visit also included a hands-on craft activity, giving students the chance to apply their learning practically and engagingly. It was a valuable experience that connected classroom learning to real-life work environments.



Art Department News

Year 8 Textiles students explored a tote bag design process by experimenting with transfer dyes and paints to develop a unique surface design. They investigated and generated ideas before selecting and applying a final design onto precut calico. Students then constructed a tote bag, practising technical skills and time management with the focus on increasing independence in their learning. To complete the project, they evaluated their work by reflecting on their design choices, sewing process, and final product, considering what worked well and areas for improvement. Their finished work was documented and presented in their folio.





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Barwon Heads Road Upgrade / Precinct Rd Closure Information

Authorities have reached out to us to 'spread the word' on upcoming changes occurring in the Charlemont area as part of the Barwon Heads Rd upgrade. The closure of **Precinct Road** from **7 pm, Thursday, 28 May to October 2026**, will likely be the most important change for members of our school community. Precinct Road will be closed between Barwon Heads Road and Maidstone Way to upgrade the Barwon Heads Rd / Precinct Rd intersection.

To better understand the impacts of these roadworks and resultant closures and detours, please click on the following linked documents:

[A works notification outlining all upcoming Barwon Heads Rd upgrade roadworks between Reserve Rd and Lake Rd over the next couple of months.](#)

[A \(general\) detour map for the Precinct Road closure;](#) and

[A detour map for the public bus network during the partial closure of Precinct Rd.](#)

Minor adjustments have already been made to a small number of our school bus routes due to detours; importantly, no stops have been affected.

Catholic School Parents Victoria – Supporting Families in Catholic Education

Catholic School Parents Victoria (CSPV) has been re-established to strengthen the voice of parents and carers in Catholic education across Victoria, recognising parents as the first educators and key partners in their child's learning, wellbeing and faith journey.

CSPV is guided by a Council of parent representatives from across the state, ensuring that the diverse perspectives of families in Catholic schools are reflected in its work and advocacy.

We invite you to explore the CSPV website at www.cspv.catholic.edu.au, where you will find a wealth of information and resources to support your parenting journey within Catholic education, including guidance on wellbeing, faith, learning and key issues impacting families. You can also subscribe via the website to join the CSPV community, receive the quarterly newsletter and be invited to upcoming events.

You can also connect with CSPV on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to access valuable insights, updates and practical resources.

Together, we can continue to strengthen the partnership between families, schools and the wider Catholic community.

Term 2 Dates to Remember

Date	Event
Monday 13 April - Sunday 19 April	Admin Office Closed for Holidays
Monday 20 April	Practice GAT (Year 12s and Year 11s VCE 3/4 Students)
Monday 20 April	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Tuesday 21 April	Term 2 Starts
Wednesday 22 April	Iona College Cross Country
Thursday 23 April - Friday 24 April	Year 12 Retreat
Friday 24 April	Year 7 Embrace Day
Tuesday 28 April	Iona Athletics Carnival
Thursday 30 April	Flying Brick Cider House Music Performance
Monday 18 May	Blurred Minds Parent/Carer Evening (Francis Centre, 6 pm - 7pm)
Tuesday 19 May	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Thursday 21 May	Iona College Career Expo (Iona Stadium)
Tuesday 26 May	Reconciliation Week Assembly (Formal Uniform)
Monday 1 June - Wednesday 3 June	Year 7 Camp Group 1
Wednesday 3 June	Units 1 and 3 – All OATS and SACS
Thursday 4 June	Autumn Soiree
Monday 8 June	King's Birthday Public Holiday
Tuesday 9 June	Daniel Principe Parent Carer Evening (6.30 – 7.30 pm St Josephs College Performing Arts Centre, Newtown)
Thursday 11 June	Year 10 Immunisation
Monday 15 June - Wednesday 17 June	Year 7 Camp Group 2
Tuesday 16 June	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development) except for GAT Students
Tuesday 16 June	GAT (Year 12s and Year 11s VCE 3/4 Students)
Wednesday 17 June - Friday 19 June	Year 8 Camp Group 1
Saturday 20 June - Wednesday 1 July	Indonesian Study Trip
Monday 22 June - Tuesday 30 June	Central Australia Immersion
Wednesday 24 June	Year 8 Camp Group 2
Thursday 25 June	Year 12 Clogs Winter Ball
Friday 26 June	Term 2 Concludes (2:05 pm)
Monday 6 July - Friday 10 July	Admin Office Closed for Holidays
Monday 13 July	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Tuesday 14 July	Term 3 Starts

[A printable version of the Dates to Remember](#) is available online. Please note this is regularly updated as new events are added and changes are made.

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Kylie and Melissa