

25 June 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we conclude Term 2, we give thanks for a rich and rewarding season of learning, growth, and community life. Across the College, students have embraced a wide range of opportunities that have deepened both their learning and their connections with one another.

Our school camps, retreats, excursions and work experience opportunities have been a particular highlight this term. These experiences have allowed students to step outside the classroom, challenge themselves, and build resilience and teamwork. Whether through outdoor activities, reflection time, or adapting to new environments, these experiences have strengthened new understandings and fostered a deeper sense of belonging within each year level.

A special highlight in Term 2 is the Year 12 Winter Ball, a joyful evening celebrating our senior students. As the hosts of the Geelong Catholic Secondary Schools this year, it has been wonderful to see our Year 12s gather to plan the event in such a spirit of welcome, marking an important milestone in their final year. The evening celebrates not only their growth as individuals but also the strong sense of community that defines our college.

Throughout the term, our commitment to social justice has continued to be central to our Catholic identity. Students have actively participated in initiatives supporting those in need, demonstrating compassion, generosity, and a growing awareness of their responsibility to contribute to a more just world. These experiences remind us that living out the Gospel calls us not only to learn but to act with love and purpose.

As we enter the holiday break, we thank our staff, students, and families for their ongoing support and dedication. May this time provide rest, renewal, and moments of connection with loved ones.

A Holiday Prayer

Loving God,

We thank you for the many blessings of this term,
for learning, friendship, challenge, and growth.

As we enter this time of rest,
help us to slow down and be present to the people and moments that matter most.

Renew our energy, strengthen our spirit,
and guide us to return with open hearts ready to learn, to serve, and to love.

May we continue to walk in your light,
bringing kindness and compassion to all we encounter.

We ask this through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

Year 12 Vocational Major - Wrap Someone in Warmth Appeal and Change for Change afternoon

During Term 2, our Year 12 Vocational Major students heard from guest speakers from the Vinnies Education Unit, along with members of the Torquay and Grovedale Vinnies conferences, as part of their RE program. Students and staff gained valuable insight into the growing prevalence of homelessness in our region and explored the stigma and stereotypes that often surround it.

Inspired by these conversations, the students have developed two projects to help support people experiencing homelessness.

1. Wrap Someone in Warmth Appeal. Students and families are invited to donate coats, socks, scarves, canned food, blankets and beanies. All donations are requested by **31 July**.

2. Change for Change Afternoon

On **Wednesday, 29 July**, VM students will run a fun afternoon of activities for the Year 7 students as a “change” from the usual Wednesday program. **Year 7** students are asked to bring a toiletry item, which will be used to create dignity bags for people in need. The following classes are requested to collect the items listed below.

7 A & B – Toiletry Bags

7 C & D- Tooth Brushes

7 E & F- Toothpaste

7 G & H- Soap

7 I- Hair Brushes

7 J & K- Deodorant

7 L & M – Face washers

All donations of toiletry items are requested by **29th July**. All donated items will be passed on to our local Vinnies conferences by our students during National Homelessness Week on **3rd- 9th August**.

Thank you for supporting this meaningful, student-led initiative.

IONA'S WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE

Wrap Someone In Together Warmth

This will be a competition between community groups - that whoever donates the most will receive a paid lunch of their choosing!!

Deliver your winter clothes at:



**IONA COLLEGE
GEE LONG**

15 Donegal Dr, Charlemont VIC 3217

Donate your winter clothes during:



**June 9th - July
31st, 2026**

09:00 AM - 03:05 PM

**You can share the warmth this
season by donating these cozy
essentials (please bring a bag):**

- | | |
|-----------|------------|
| ✓ Coats | ✓ Cans |
| ✓ Socks | ✓ Blankets |
| ✓ Scarves | ✓ Beanies |



Holiday Help

LOOKING AFTER YOUR TEEN

during the school holidays

The school holidays can be a wonderful opportunity for rest and connection, but they can also be a time when some young people find things more difficult.

Changes to routine, increased time at home, social pressures, and reduced contact with friends or trusted adults can all impact wellbeing.



If you're concerned about your teenager, remember that you don't need to have all the answers. What matters most is letting them know you're available, listening without rushing to solve the problem, and seeking support early if you're worried.

*You don't
have to do
it alone.*

SOME HELPFUL TIPS



STAY CONNECTED.

Find opportunities to spend time together, even if it's something simple like going for a walk, cooking a meal, or watching a movie.



KEEP SOME ROUTINE.

While holidays are a break from school, maintaining regular sleep, meals, physical activity, and some structure can support emotional wellbeing.



NOTICE CHANGES.

Keep an eye out for significant or ongoing changes in mood, sleep, appetite, social withdrawal, irritability, or loss of interest in activities they usually enjoy.



START THE CONVERSATION.

If you're worried, gently ask how they're doing. Listening calmly and without judgement can make it easier for your teen to open up.



SEEK SUPPORT EARLY.

If your concerns persist or your teen seems to be struggling, it's okay to reach out for professional advice.



SUPPORT SERVICES



YOUTH BEYOND BLUE

Information and support for young people experiencing anxiety, depression and other mental health concerns.



Visit their website:
<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/mental-health/youth>



BARWON YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH TRIAGE

24-hour telephone support, advice and referral for young people experiencing mental health concerns.



24/7 support and advice
1300 094 187



PARENTLINE

Free support and advice for parents and carers.



13 22 89



If you believe your child is at immediate risk of harm or is experiencing a mental health emergency, call **000** or attend your nearest hospital emergency department.



Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools – School Improvement Surveys (MACSSIS): 31 August –18 September 2026

Every year, we pause to listen to our students, families and staff to gauge how our learning community is travelling. This feedback is invaluable to our progress as an effective school community and is backed by evidence-based research and best practices.

A significant and formal way in which we engage and gather data is through MACSSIS, the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools – School Improvement Surveys.

MACSSIS is a set of surveys that have been built specifically for Catholic schools in Melbourne by the School Effectiveness team at MACS, in partnership with researchers at Learning First and in wide consultation with principals in Catholic schools in Melbourne.

In 2026, students, families and staff are invited to participate in MACSSIS via our secure and purpose-built online platform. The online platform is where our school leaders will access the summary reports that visualise the results of the student, family and staff surveys.

The MACSSIS survey platform is operated by an independent supplier, ORIMA Research Pty Ltd. The platform meets the high security and privacy standards for handling student and school data.

Students at our school will be provided with supervised sessions, where teachers are on hand to help and answer any questions. Families and staff can complete the survey anytime during the three-week window via an emailed link and password. Feedback has indicated that previous surveys were completed across a range of mobile devices and different web browsers. Schools will be providing more information about MACSSIS throughout Terms 2 and 3, via newsletters and social media.

Our community's opinions are critical to understanding how our school is performing – MACSSIS is a key data source for guiding the ongoing work to improve our school.

All participation is invited, welcomed and 100 per cent voluntary. The surveys are not a test; they are an inclusive way to support the work we are already doing to improve our school. Everyone has the right to refuse to participate, or withdraw from the survey at any point before, during or after completion of the survey. Please notify the school if your child does not wish to participate.

If you would like more information, please contact the school.

Important Update to Student Attendance, Welfare Procedures and Absence Notification

The safety and wellbeing of our students at Iona College Geelong is our highest priority. As part of recent changes to attendance and student welfare requirements, MACS (the College's governing body) has updated its procedures for responding to unexplained student absences.

From the beginning of term 3, if a student is absent from school and the absence has not been explained by a parent or carer, the College will continue to make every effort to contact parents/carers using the contact details provided. However, where these attempts are unsuccessful, the College will now also contact the student's nominated emergency contacts to determine the student's whereabouts and wellbeing.

If the College is unable to establish contact with a parent/carers or emergency contact, and the student's whereabouts remain unknown, the matter will be referred to the Police, who may conduct a welfare check.

These changes have been implemented to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to confirm the safety of students whose whereabouts cannot be verified during school hours.

We ask all families to assist us by:

- Promptly notifying the College of any student absences.
- Ensuring parent/carers and emergency contact details are current and accurate.
- Responding to attendance-related communications from the College as soon as possible.

We appreciate your cooperation in supporting these important measures, which are designed to safeguard the wellbeing of all students in our care.

Supporting Our Students Online Over the Holidays

With more time spent online during the school holidays, eSafety has put together some helpful tips and advice to support parents in navigating the online world with their children. From setting boundaries to building positive online habits, these resources can help families stay safe and connected online.

Read more: [Online safety basics – eSafety](#)

Year 10 Food Studies – Clean out the Fridge

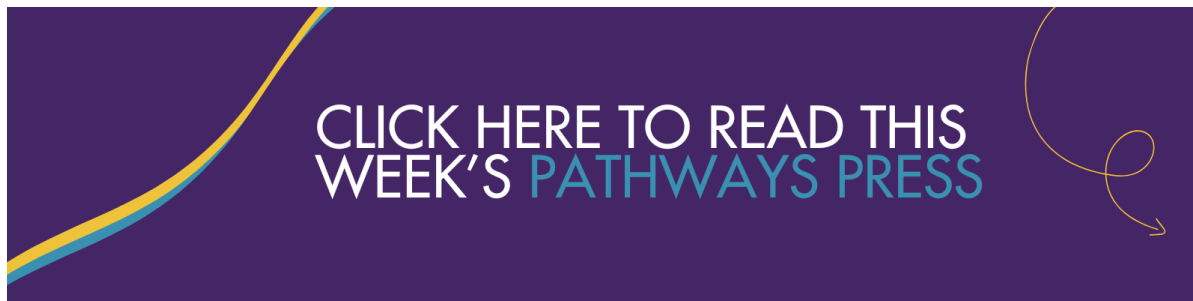


This term, our Year 10 Food Studies students took part in a sustainability practical activity, working in groups of two. Given we were nearing the end of term, the Year 10s took on a Mystery Box “Clean-Out-the-Fridge” Cooking Challenge. Each group was given a protein, a carbohydrate and a vegetable to create a dish, with ingredients including kangaroo mince, gyoza wrappers and coriander. They were required to use all three ingredients and could then select additional spices, herbs, vegetables and other supporting ingredients.

The groups excelled, making it difficult to select a winner. After much deliberation, Archie and Piok Macha's Crumbed Fish Tacos with Pickled Vegetable Slaw took out the win for their excellent presentation and the creativity demonstrated through the range of techniques used in their dish. Other dishes included Chicken and Coriander Gyoza, Chicken Hand Pies, Mexican Chicken Tacos, Kangaroo Gyoza, Fish and Potato Pie, and several delicious stir-fries. Well done to all our students.

Rachel Cumming
Food Studies Teacher

[Iona Pathways Press](#)



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

Term 3 Dates to Remember

Date	Event
Saturday 20 June - Thursday 2 July	Indonesian Study Trip
Monday 22 June - Tuesday 30 June	Central Australia Immersion
Friday 26 June	Term 2 Concludes (2:05 pm)
Thursday 2 July	Community Connections Day
Friday 4 July - Friday 10 July	Admin Office Closed for Holidays
Monday 13 July	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Tuesday 14 July	Term 3 Starts
Thursday 30 July	July Soiree (6 pm - 7 pm)
Tuesday 11 August	Time and Space Evening, Year 7 Students and Mother Figures (Iona College Stadium, 6 pm - 8 pm)
Wednesday 12 August	Consent Labs Parent/ Carer Night (Online, 6 pm - 7 pm)
Monday 24 August	Student Progress Meeting (Onsite, 3:30 pm - 6:30 pm)
Tuesday 25 August	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Friday 28 August	School Play Evening Performance (Plat Form Art, 6 pm - 8 pm)
Tuesday 1 September	Student Progress Meetings (Online, 3:30 pm - 6:30 pm)
Saturday 12 September - Wednesday 23 September	Timor-Leste Immersion
Thursday 17 September	Whole School Mass (Formal Uniform)
Friday 18 September	Columba Day
Friday 18 September	Term 3 Concludes (2:05 pm)
Monday 21 September - Thursday 24 September	Year 12 Trial Exams
Friday 25 September	Grand Final Public Holiday
Friday 25 September - Friday 2 October	Admin Office Closed for Holidays
Monday 5 October	Term 4 Commences

[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.

Thank you and Farewell

At the end of this term, we farewell three College staff members:

- George McMeel has been with us since the start of 2025, predominantly teaching in the Mathematics domain.
- Pauline Jones has been with us for over a year and a half as a Learning Support Officer.
- Chloe Ingles has been with us since April last year as a Learning Support Officer.

We wish George, Pauline and Chloe all the best for their future journeys and thank them for their service to our community.

Mrs Anna Roberts and Ms Shelby Hackett will also be leaving us at the end of this term to begin maternity leave. We wish both Anna and Shelby all the very best as they prepare to welcome their new arrivals.

Admin Office Closing Dates

We hope our Iona community enjoys a wonderful break over the holidays. We look forward to welcoming our students back for a positive and productive Term 3.

Please note that the Administration Office will close at 4.00 pm on Thursday, 2 July and re-open at 8.00 am on Monday, 13 July. Teaching staff will be undertaking a professional learning day on the 13th. The first day for all students is Tuesday, 14 July.

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Kylie and Melissa