



PENLEIGH AND ESSENDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

# Altior et Sapientior

June 2021



## From the Principal

Each decade, education leaders from around the country get together to establish Australia's educational goals and actions for the next ten years. The inaugural Declaration was made in 1989, and the most recent version, the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Declaration was developed following consultation with young people, educators, education and training providers, parents, business and industry from all around Australia.

The Mparntwe Declaration makes explicit the role of schools in preparing young people to 'thrive in a time of rapid social and technological change, and complex environmental, social and economic challenges'. It emphasises that young people need 'flexibility, resilience, creativity, and the ability and drive to keep on learning throughout their lives'. Key changes in the most recent declaration include an increased focus on student diversity and community partnerships, emphasis on student voice and agency, and student wellbeing, and broadening the scope of the Declaration to lifelong learning, and new attributes and skills for the 21st Century.

Each Term, *Altior et Sapientior*, invites readers to share in a sample of the experiences that PEGS students enjoy. When reading this newsletter through the lens of educational leadership, it is difficult not to see the links between what our students experience, and what those involved in establishing the Mparntwe Declaration were aspiring to.

Through the examples of students forming political parties, running community service activities, composing works for ensembles and being consulted on key policy and educational initiatives, we see the emphasis on student voice and agency. Educational research makes clear the links between student voice and wellbeing, and so as well as this work impacting wellbeing in a positive way, we also read stories in this publication about the more explicit work being done to support student wellbeing, through the examples of Project Rocket, consent and respectful relationships. The importance of partnerships and connections are also illustrated through student conversations with Astronauts on the other side of the world, through support for organisations like the Indigenous Literacy Foundation, and through the support of groups like the Friends of PEGS and the Former Students Association and Business Network.

More importantly though, many, if not most, of the opportunities for learning and engagement that are detailed in this publication occur outside of the classroom. There's no denying that within the classroom, students have myriad opportunities for growth and learning, but when they are given the chance to pursue areas of interest and passion that might begin in the classroom, beyond the classroom walls, there is often a sense of intrinsic reward that occurs as a result. Lifelong learners have a drive to keep learning throughout their lives because they see the value in it, and because they have developed qualities like curiosity, persistence and creativity, which enable them to find the joy in taking on new challenges. It is our hope that each of our students is able to find their area of passion through the many opportunities on offer here at PEGS.

Education Council, (2019). Alice Springs (Mparntwe) education declaration. *Carlton South, Victoria: Education Services Australia.*

**Kate Dullard**

# Capacity and confidence

Our twin pillars – our Culture of Thinking and approach to Care and Wellbeing – make explicit the dispositions that we know will help our students to thrive here at school and beyond. Qualities like courage, curiosity and persistence; compassion, confidence and resilience; are all essential in becoming a good thinker who can manage themselves and their wellbeing, now and into the future.

Students are developing these character traits through their experiences, often without realising it. As they learn, and as they adapt to challenges and solve new problems, their capacity increases, and by recognising and reflecting on these successes, their confidence can develop too.

The various opportunities available in the middle years of schooling – in the classroom, at camp, in House, on the stage and in the sporting arena – provide mechanisms for capacity and confidence to grow. Academic competitions like the da Vinci Decathlon allow students to exercise their thinking ‘muscles’ in creative ways, and student-led initiatives (like the lunchtime sports organised this term by our Year Nine students) give them an opportunity to use their voice, and lead, in the service of others.

Because many very capable students continue to underestimate their capacity, the explicit coaching provided by our Form programme, our Coordinators, and guest speakers like Layne Beachley, remain important in helping our students to develop a mindset that allows them to recognise their capacity and power. But capable and powerful they are, and as their capacity grows, so too can their confidence.

**Anthony Simmons**  
Head of McNab House

# Junior astronomer

Year Five student, Stasi Gionis, is enthralled by Space and what lies beyond. He was captivated from the age of two, when he was first gifted a poster of the Solar System and a small telescope.

For his birthday, Stasi recently received a Dobsonian space telescope which enables him to view objects, such as the moon, in greater detail. He regularly shares these findings and knowledge of astronomy in a segment at assembly.

As a member of Mensa, Stasi recently entered one of his photos in their photography competition. His detailed capture of the lunar landscape was so impressive, it appeared on the front cover of their Mensan publication, *TableAus*. Stasi has also authored an article for the Astronomical Society of Victoria's, *Crux* magazine, discussing the Moon, Lunar X and V which appeared in his prize-winning photo.

This year's National Simultaneous Story time title, *Give me some Space*, by Philip Bunting was the perfect platform for Stasi's lunchtime presentation on constellations. He followed this up with student activities which included creating a constellation in a cup and constructing a planisphere. It was evident Stasi's passion for space was shared by the many students who engaged in his presentation and activities. It was also indicative of the campus' support and enthusiasm for Stasi's intergalactic endeavours.

We celebrate Stasi's achievements and look to 'infinity and beyond' for the next instalment in his exploration of Space.

**David Graham**  
Year 5-6 Coordinator, Junior School (boys)



# Our Place in Space

Eager faces and open minds greeted our guest, Ms Sami Raines, on Monday, 15 March. Through a Google Meet, the Year Five students had the opportunity to spend time with Sami to supplement the General Studies topic, Our Place in Space. As a result of her expertise in artificial intelligence, Sami had been hand-picked from around the world as one of only 18 astronauts in training with NASA. I am not sure who was more excited, the boys or the staff in the room!

Over the course of the session, Sami covered a range of information. She shared her journey, including the types of training that she has undertaken from working at IBM to being a NASA astronaut in training and encouraged the boys to examine the different parameters of building a base on the Moon. Her questioning of the boys promoted some wonderful discussion and promoted critical thinking and analysis.

Without a doubt however the highlight for everyone in the room was Sami discussing her experiences. The students loved hearing how she is in regular contact with the current Mars 2020 mission controller, and how she survives the G force machine. The collective mouths in the room dropped closer to the floor when she announced she was about to spend time diving on the Titanic, where her knowledge of both space and artificial intelligence would help map the vessel and provide valuable data on the ageing process. The session proved to be a wonderful experience for everyone.

## Hayden Wardrop

Year Five Teacher, Junior School (boys)



# Learning to embrace examinations

Our Middle School students have recently completed Semester One examinations. For some, it has been a first experience at formal school examinations; for others, a return to 'normal programming' as their journey to VCE studies gathers pace.

The prospect of exams can elicit myriad negative responses from students: "I don't know anything" (not a helpful statement), and "they don't matter anyway" (even less helpful). But they do matter - for the right reasons.

At a recent PEGS Thinking Seminar, seven-time World Surfing Champion Layne Beachley spoke of her experience of the day she caught and surfed a 50ft wave for the first time, and all the emotions that came with it. Significantly, Layne also mentioned the 18 months of training and preparation that set her up for that performance.

Exams are an opportunity to perform. If you take the perspective of a growth mindset, performances are an opportunity to demonstrate skill, understanding and progress, as well as to receive feedback and provide strategies to help the student adjust their performance successfully in the future. Exam questions are designed to assess critical thinking, the application of knowledge in real-world contexts, and to create effective problem-solvers; these skills do not cease to be useful at 3.30pm.

Exams are not designed to 'torment and torture'; rather, when approached with a positive mindset, they are an opportunity to grow. And then when your '50ft wave' comes, you are in a strong position to surf it.

## Rodney Clarke

Deputy Head of Gottlieb House



# Celebrating leadership

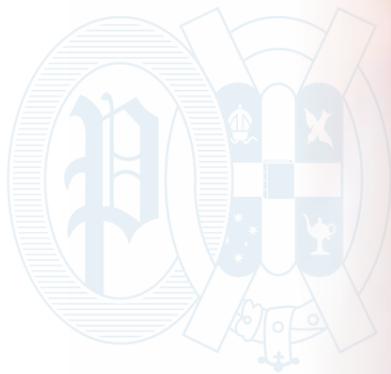
During Term Two it was wonderful to have the opportunity to celebrate the students who achieved Half and Full Colours in 2020.

On 5 May all of the Larkin Centre students were invited to a formal Colours Assembly where Ms Bilewicz, Ms Dullard and myself presented the awards from 2020. During the assembly a number of speakers, using a leadership quotation as a starting point, discussed their own views on leadership. Catherine Filippone (Year Eleven) and Bevan Holder (Year Twelve) explained how leadership is a 'series of actions rather than the role of heroes and that one does not set out to be a leader but becomes one by the quality of his actions and the integrity of his intent'.

Following the Colours Assembly on Wednesday 12 May a Colours Lunch was held where students had the opportunity to sit with members of the school leadership and talk about what they would like to achieve this year. It was lovely to hear from Charlee Kemp (Year Twelve) and Benjamin La (Year Twelve) who put forward their views on leadership.

The attainment of Full Colours is one of the highest awards of the School and it was wonderful to be able to acknowledge the fine work of these students.

**Tim Watson**  
Head of Larkin Centre





# Positive relationships

This term, Sue Pain an expert in Positive Sex Education has been working with staff, parents and students across the school to build understanding about respectful relationships and the issue of consent. These can be uncomfortable topics for adults and young people to discuss but these conversations are vital if our children are to be prepared for the choices they will continue to confront. Sue has already held a staff workshop this term and presented a seminar to the parents and carers of students in Years Seven to Twelve. Her friendly, informed approach allows everyone to feel safe and supported and promotes deeper empathy reflection. Sue has spoken about how adolescents experience issues related to sexuality, gender and pressure to conform to peer expectations. She provided insight into young people's use of pornography and its role in shaping attitudes towards sex that may impede the development of respectful and positive relationships. In the next part of the programme, Sue will be running sessions in the middle schools – clearly placing relevant topics on the agenda so they can be explored, shared and better understood.

Recently, there has been negative press around the behaviour of some boys in some schools. As we move forward with our programme, we make it clear that this is all about support and respect, not about shaming boys. With a positive shared approach, we look forward to achieve positive lasting outcomes for all of our young people.

**Caroline Horton Andrews**  
Head of Gottliebsen House

# Year Nine reflection

During Term Two, the form groups of Year Nine have been reflecting on the topic of RESPECT. Each class has viewed informative presentations on the importance of respecting one another. This provided an opportunity to identify the key ideas that define respectful qualities and behaviour. A visual representation, in the form of a blossoming tree with quotes written on leaves, was created in each room. These activities have increased our awareness of the importance of being mindful in how we behave and treat fellow students, and also teachers, friends and family members.

This will encourage students to form stronger, more empathetic and longer lasting connections and relationships with the people around them. This will help improve the welfare of others, making our community a better place.

**Cameron Woolley**  
Year Nine

# Writing In Year Two

The Year Two Writing programme aims to continue consolidating the literacy skills gained from previous years, and also challenge and extend the girls. Beyond teaching varied text types such as recount writing, information reports, and narratives, the girls engage in weekly Quick Write sessions where their creative juices can really flow. Using a visual or aural stimulus, the girls write freely and expressively during this session.

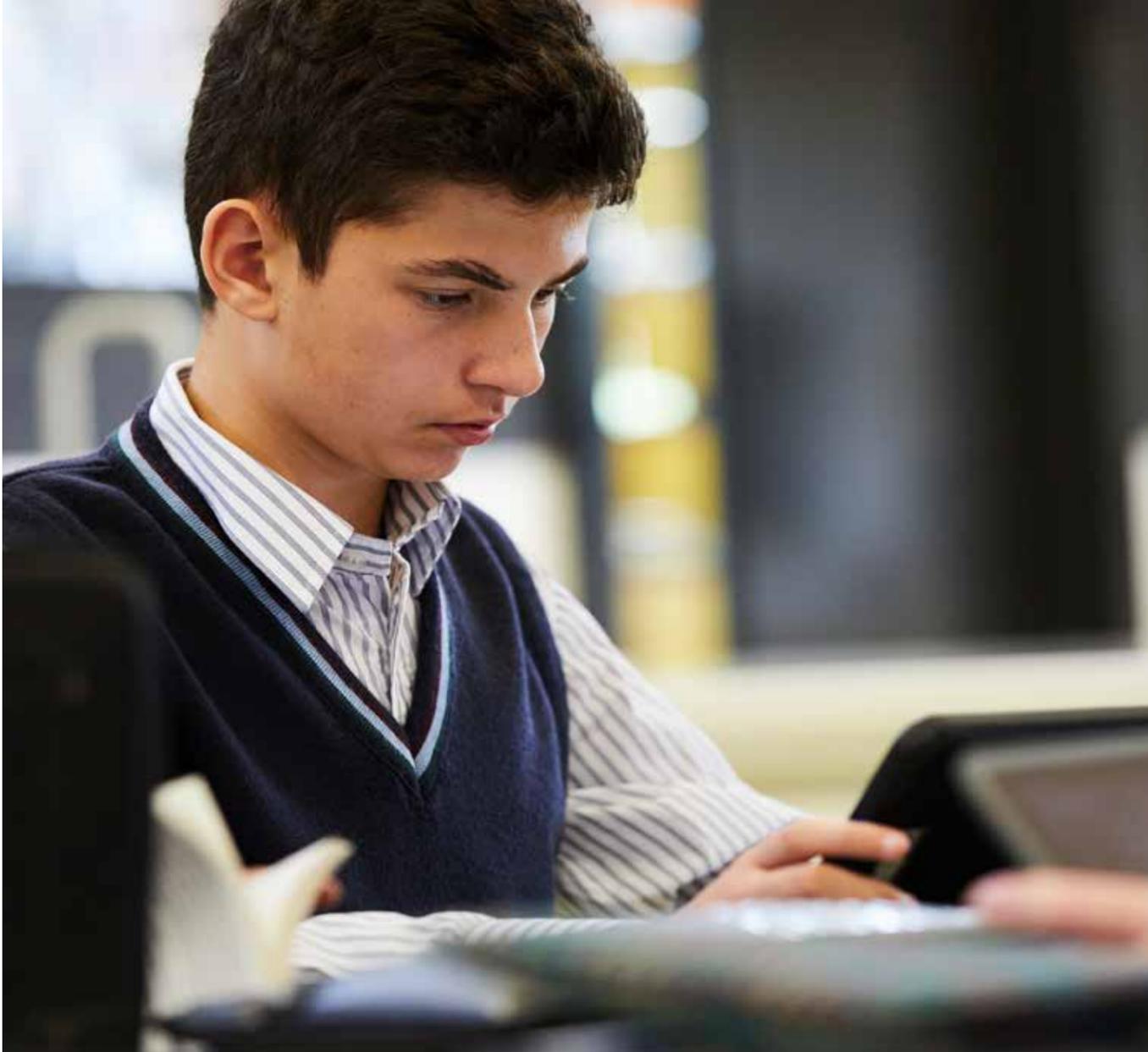
During our remote learning chapter, the opening of a treasure chest with a mysterious golden light was the image used to generate ideas. The eagerness of the girls to share their writing was a testament to their self-awareness of growth and achievement. Sylvie wrote, *'Right in front of my eyes was a glorious, magnificent, wooden treasure chest. Was it abandoned by vicious pirates?'* while Ava shared *'They tugged with all their might, until it was resting on the ship's rim.'*

Harnessing our professional learning from sessions with Terri Campbell, teachers frontloaded the girls' knowledge by collaboratively generating vocabulary to enrich their word choice. The possible inclusion of advanced writing conventions such as rhetoric, figurative language, and similes were also modelled.

Exemplar models of past writing pieces become valuable classroom resources for our students, as they are able to expand their repertoire of literary devices and writing ideas. Reflecting on their writing promotes self-efficacy by allowing the girls to become experts of their own learning journey, and is a celebration of their developing skill as writers.

**Kylie Hammond**  
Year 1-2 Coordinator, Junior School (girls)





## Talking Politics

As part of the Politics: Making a Difference elective, Year Ten students had to form political parties for an election that would be held for the Year Nines. Each party had different policies and different tactics. It was a substantial learning curve for us all and was our first real look at how the world of politics works.

In the beginning, we were quite naive about how campaigns were supposed to work, with parties quickly presenting extreme policies and ideas. Many of us were of the belief that this would be an easy campaign and that there was not much work that needed to go into it. However, as election day came closer, we realised that we had to switch to more reasonable policies and ideas that would relate to the younger audience to ensure our votes.

We learned that politics is very much about appealing to people's emotions and opinions by using different forms of advertising and persuasive techniques to attract our target demographic. These included videos, and promotional and slander posters, in order to deceive the voters.

As a class we learned that there are mixed opinions, as shown by the different policies presented by the parties. It is our job to learn to sort through what we are being told so that we can understand which party is looking out for us. As much as it was an informative experience for us, it was also a great learning curve for the Year Nines.

**Lachlan Montebello and Scott Luu**  
Year Ten

## Count ourselves in

Monday 17 May was the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT). While the day exists to draw our attention to the discriminatory behaviour that members of the LGBTIQ+ community face, the PEGSequals team at Larkin Centre (composed of students in Year Eleven and Twelve) organised events that marked the power of collaboration and pride.

The Larkin Centre was decorated with Progress Pride flags, the library staff set up a wonderful display of LGBTIQ+ literature, and the lunchtime karaoke and bake sale drew in a crowd of singers, supporters and allies. Casual Clothes day donations combined with the bake sale enabled PEGSequals to raise money that will go towards the work of the Victorian Pride Centre. This space houses resident organisations such as Minus18, which support and celebrate the LGBTIQ+ community in Victoria. The day was a salient reminder to count ourselves in when it comes to pushing back against prejudice and embracing unity.

**Stephanie Lazarides**  
Year Twelve Coordinator



# Connecting and understanding through stories

Telling, and listening to stories is a human need. They've been a traditional vehicle for passing on knowledge and are a powerful way of explaining life to people. Being able to connect with the ideas presented in stories, and with each other through rich discussion, gives meaning to our own experiences and helps us come to understand one another.

During Reconciliation Week, the theme of which was *More Than a Word: Reconciliation Takes Action*, students at Junior School Girls focused on sharing stories which amplify First Nation Peoples' voices and foster a higher level of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and their contribution to our national story and identity. The stories provided further opportunity to develop an appreciation of respectful and inclusive language, and the girls were encouraged to share these stories at home.

At Assembly, Christine Hallman made reference to the story *Respect* by Aunty Fay Muir and Sue Lawson which heightened our understanding of the need to respect the stories of our ancestors, and our families who show us the way. It explains how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have been listening to the heartbeat of the land and sea for generations, and the role we must all play as caretakers of our environment, and of each other.

The Year Six Captains were included in a school-wide discussion regarding a Reconciliation Action Plan and they eagerly accepted their role to collect campus-wide data on ways in which this understanding of our First Nation Peoples' could be built upon and encouraged. We look forward to the next meeting to discuss the implementation of these actions.

**Julie Neylon**  
Deputy Head of Junior School (girls)



## Sphero Art

There was great excitement in Year Two art classes recently when art met technology. The boys used iPads and Spheros as tools, just like they would a paintbrush or pencil, to create a variety of vertical and horizontal lines as well as curves and swirls. Various colours of paint flew onto the paper at a rapid pace as the boys manipulated their Sphero via an iPad with a feverish zeal.

The boys worked collaboratively, displaying great curiosity and perseverance, and solved problems as they encountered them. With the help of the Sphero they were able to apply their knowledge of lines and techniques to their artwork. At the end of the session the boys enhanced their composition with overdrawing and printed decorations. Guided by their art teacher, Mrs Vanda Mullen and Sarah Waljzak, a member of our eLearning team, the boys produced some very creative work.

**Graeme Sharman**  
Head of Junior School (boys)



## How do you ride a fifty-foot wave?

This was the question posed to the large group of staff, students, parents and friends who attended the first Thinking Seminar for 2021.

Layne Beachley AO explained that riding a wave taller than the HR Stevens Music Centre comes down to focusing on a few key things; small steps you need to take to achieve your goal. Naturally, my first thought, if I was riding a wave at 70 kph over shallow reefs, would be “Don’t fall off!” However, as the seven-time World Champion surfer explained, this is the wrong mindset. Instead, focus on the few manageable and achievable tasks required to fulfil your goal. If you overcomplicate the steps, you plummet off the wave and frankly, you’re dead.

This same principle of focusing on success, rather than potential failure, can be applied across all aspects of life. If we break down large, daunting tasks into manageable steps then we increase our chance to excel.

Layne also talked about how negative thoughts like “Ugh, it’s so early... Why do I have to get up in the cold?” frame the rest of your day. While we may mask that negativity at school or at work, it still subconsciously influences the way we act and behave. Alternatively, starting your day with thoughts of, “Today is going to be awesome!” or “I can’t wait for...” frames your day positively, right from the get go. A call to arms by a champion – let’s define our thoughts, not let them define us.

**Ella Nunan**  
Year Nine

## Focusing on respectful relationships

Chanel Contos’ courageous petition to mandate consent education in schools started a tidal wave of social commentary around the experiences of young people in Australia. Amassing over 3000 testimonies of harassment and sexual misconduct, the petition was a lightning rod for discussions around the nature of relationships students have while at school.

Respectful relationships definitely involve ensuring students have a good understanding of consent, and more importantly the need to ensure ‘enthusiastic’ consent, but it also involves a whole range of characteristics. Empathy and kindness are critical dispositions that are crucial for young people to understand and respect other people better – these are fundamental if we want the young people in our care to be not only mindful, but caring of those with whom they interact.

It was a privilege to sit in the back of one of the consent workshops which Ms Stephanie Lazarides presented to Year Eleven students in Week 6 of the term. This was the starting point of a broader conversation at the Larkin Centre around how we can ensure that the ways young people interact are respectful and healthy. Mr Anthony Quirk recently chaired a meeting with a group of students to review a survey that asked for Year Eleven and Year Twelve students to reflect on their experiences and the nature of the interactions they have when on campus.

We continue to grow, to learn and to understand better what we must do to ensure all students within our care have wonderfully nourishing and fulfilling relationships.

**Tim Watson**  
Head of Larkin Centre





# Inquiry-Based Learning

*Inquiry-based learning begins with a question, problem or idea. It involves children in planning and carrying out investigations, proposing explanations and solutions, and communicating their understanding of concepts in a variety of ways.*

*Queensland Department of Education, 2019*

At PEGS Kindergartens, the children have been actively engaged in our inquiry-based programmes. To commence each project, the educational team collaborates and creates a research question that engages the children's interests and encourages their growing curiosity. The question also drives the educators' wonder in children's learning.

This term Cottage 49 explored the question 'How do children develop and communicate their understanding of emotional intelligence using a variety of mediums?' Cottage 51 researched 'In what ways does engagement in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) make children's critical thinking and inquiry skills visible?', and Cottage 53 investigated 'In what ways do creative arts support children's critical thinking?' Although these questions seem quite complex, we spend time with the children unpacking meaning, sharing understandings and generating smaller sub-questions for in-depth research.

Whatever the inquiry may be, it is vital that the project is founded on the children's interest and the questions that are driving their curiosity. Throughout the process of inquiry, the children generate new questions, create and test their theories, share and build knowledge together, as well as critically reflecting on their actions and thinking.

The children also develop a sense of agency and autonomy around their learning and become important participants and contributors within their community of learners.

**Lauren Olcorn**  
Director of Kindergartens

# Duke of Edinburgh initiative

For the service component of our Bronze Duke of Edinburgh we decided to run coaching sessions in the new gym for Year Seven students. Two lunchtimes per week we have run a variety of activities promoting exercise and building relationships. It has been amazing to see, since the start of Term Two, the profound growth in confidence and independence that our participants have displayed. So far we have enjoyed games of dodgeball, volleyball and netball whilst getting to know the girls and helping them get to know each other. Through games that require teamwork we have seen immense social development in communication and cooperation, the ultimate highlight being the Year Sevens triumphant volleyball victory over the team of Year Nines! It has been an overwhelmingly positive experience, that we look forward to just as much as the Year Sevens do.

**Cara Manning, Scarlett Sroka and Milla Conn**  
Year Nine

In the past few weeks, some Year Nine students have been organising sports events for the Year Sevens. I have met four Year Nine girls who have been running these activities: Mia, Scarlett, Cara and Milla and I have also met some other Year Seven girls who have participated. Attending has been heaps of fun and I think we laugh more than play. Between laughing at failed attempts at different sports and teaching the Year Nines how to play, there has been a massive impact because these events were organised by students not teachers; some of our peers have organised these fantastic events to get younger students interested and have some fun. When we participate we are supporting students rather than because the teachers want us to go. To be honest, this has made it more enjoyable and an even better reason to get involved.

**Milly Nunan**  
Year Seven

# Project Rokit

This term, we were fortunate to have Project Rokit visit our school. Project Rokit is a youth driven movement against cyber bullying which empowers young people to lead change in their school community, specifically in regards to bullying, hate and prejudice, instead of standing by and watching.

The Year Eight students had an interactive workshop with two passionate presenters over the course of the day. Project Rokit provided us with tips on reducing our digital footprint, understanding online consent, and navigating online hate. The workshop explored themes such as inclusion, diversity, values, ethics and empathy. The presenters also gave us insight into wellbeing support and services available for students to access. We learnt tangible skills to maintain digital wellbeing, including how to look out for each other at school, online and beyond. They also provided us with tips on how to use technology to foster social connections and respectful relationships with each other. Overall, I found the workshop inspiring and it provided me with a clear understanding of how to have a safer online presence and how to navigate potentially harmful experiences.

**Amber Hafiz**  
Year Eight

# da Vinci Decathlon

In May, a diverse selection of students from Years Seven to Eleven gathered in the new gym for the State da Vinci Decathlon competition which was conducted over Zoom. Competition occurs against other schools in teams comprised of eight students, across the disciplines of Mathematics, Engineering, Code Breaking, Art and Poetry, Science, English, Ideation, Creative Producers, Cartography and Legacy (general knowledge). It provides for unique collaboration between McNab and Gottlieb Houses, and across year levels. Competing in Decathlons since Year Seven has equipped me with a wealth of new skills and associations. This year I was challenged to compete in the Year Eleven competition. I particularly enjoyed the engineering paper; I was well out of my comfort zone, and was elated to place second in the state. Our team placed first in Legacy, second in Maths and third in Science; Year Ten placed First in Art and Poetry and Third in English, and both teams finished Third overall. The Year Nines finished Second in Maths and the Year Sevens Second in Art and Poetry.

In line with the 2021 school theme, it was uplifting to witness such a range of students choose a 'Count me in' mindset, and step up to the challenge. While it is melancholic to conclude my da Vinci journey, I am left with invaluable memories and experiences and extend my deepest gratitude to Mrs Kaloudis.

**Laura Brandt**  
Year Ten

# Brave New World

*Brave New Wâorld* was performed by students from Year Seven to VCE, in the Drama Theatre at the Keilor East campus on May 6, 7 and 8. The show was delivered by an incredibly talented group of actors who gave it their all. I watched the production on its second night, and was impressed by the amazing talent demonstrated by everyone involved.

*Brave New World* was set in a dystopian future, where everyone was created with a specific 'class' and purpose in mind. The play followed notable characters who had amusing semi-historical names such as Bernard Marx, Nero Smith, and Benito Hoover. They developed recognisable personalities as the plot progressed, and it was quite satisfying to see them change and grow. The talent that the actors showed in bringing the characters to life was impressive, and I admit that I even gasped in some places I was so deeply immersed in the story and the actors' performances.

The younger performers blew the audience away with their confident depictions, and I cannot wait to see what they do next! Hilarious music and dancing were used to transition the scenes, and the use of cast members as walls and horses was especially creative. I really enjoyed the show and I hope to see more by the Drama Team.

**Charlotte Roberts**  
Year Ten



# Performance notes

Our Monday@6 online concerts have become more successful since they began in Term 1. The concert on 10 May presented solo performances from 16 students from Year One to Year Eleven. It was also an opportunity to share a video of a Year Ten class ensemble performance.

This term we have also had three department concerts. The first was the Guitar Concert which was a fine display of acoustic and electric performances. Suzuki Concert Two was held in Limerock Hall and many young piano and violin players had their first performance opportunity. The Brass Concert was also a success with eleven solos, some with piano accompaniment and some with backing tracks. The Brass Ensemble played the final item displaying the rounded tone colours of combined brass.

## Live performances return

We have been very excited to be able to present live concert performances to our community in Term Two. There have been audiences in the Auditorium and for the first time, a live streaming option.

Concert One featured the Middle School Choir Audacity, conducted by Nela Trifkovic, and Senior Choir Vox Populi, conducted by Claire McDonald. It was an exciting presentation of folk song, art music and songs from Musicals, sometimes incorporating staff members accompanying as chamber musicians. The beautiful strains of choir singing were enormously invigorating after such a long break from live performance.

Concert Two featured Percussion Ensemble conducted by Ron Burns, presenting two pieces. The first used untuned instruments only and was rhythmically complex. The second was the easily recognisable and favourite theme from *Mission: Impossible*. Stage Band, ably led by Peter Bohmer, played six pieces varying in tempo and style with some wonderful solos taken by members of the band. Two student vocal soloists were excellent in their two songs; Molly Dale and Maxwell Pickering.

Concert Three featured Concert Band. As usual Andrew Derrett conducted the band with distinction, but one piece was conducted by Caroline Marsden making her debut. The five pieces, plus encore, represented music from the movies and the greats (Beethoven and The Beatles). The performance was full of energy and joy, and was appreciated by everyone fortunate to be present.

## Synthesizer teamwork

In recent times, the Synthesizer Ensemble has adopted a new approach for creating the repertoire it plays. Rather than relying on music staff to generate arrangements and compositions, all ensemble members have been encouraged to become active in selecting, arranging and creating music for the group. This learning flip has had a most positive effect; all members of the ensemble have stepped up and taken a direct role in choosing musical material for the group to present at performances throughout the year.

Giving students this responsibility has resulted in various exciting musical outcomes. One student has written a composition for the ensemble; a piece which has proven to be both rewarding and challenging to learn. Other ensemble members have worked together to arrange existing songs, and, through this process, have assigned themselves new roles, such as singing lead vocals in an arrangement. Overall, the Synthesizer Ensemble has become a group where students are able to take risks, try new concepts and bring ideas to rehearsals to discuss and explore with their peers.

**Amanda Rowarth**  
Director of Music





## State Lawn Bowls

In the year of Count Me In at PEGS, it was pleasing to be able to offer the sport of lawn bowls to our Year Six students. Twenty-four boys volunteered to represent the school and try a new sport. Many of these students hadn't represented the school at a School Sport Victoria event before so they were full of anticipation as they headed to Altona Bowls Club for the regional competition.

The lawn bowls team is made up of twelve players who are split into three groups of four to play against an opponent, scores across all three groups are added and an ultimate winner decided. After some close games, we were lucky enough to have one of our teams win the day at regional level and qualify for the state championships.

The state competition was held at Sunbury Bowls Club, and saw teams from across the state compete. Despite a lack of bowls experience, our boys played well and you could see a rapid improvement in skill and touch with each round. There were two pools of teams and after four rounds, scores were added up with the winner of each pool playing off in the final. We came third in our pool and finished fifth overall, which was an amazing result for a group of boys who were new to the sport. Congratulations to all boys who participated in the 2021 lawn bowls competitions.

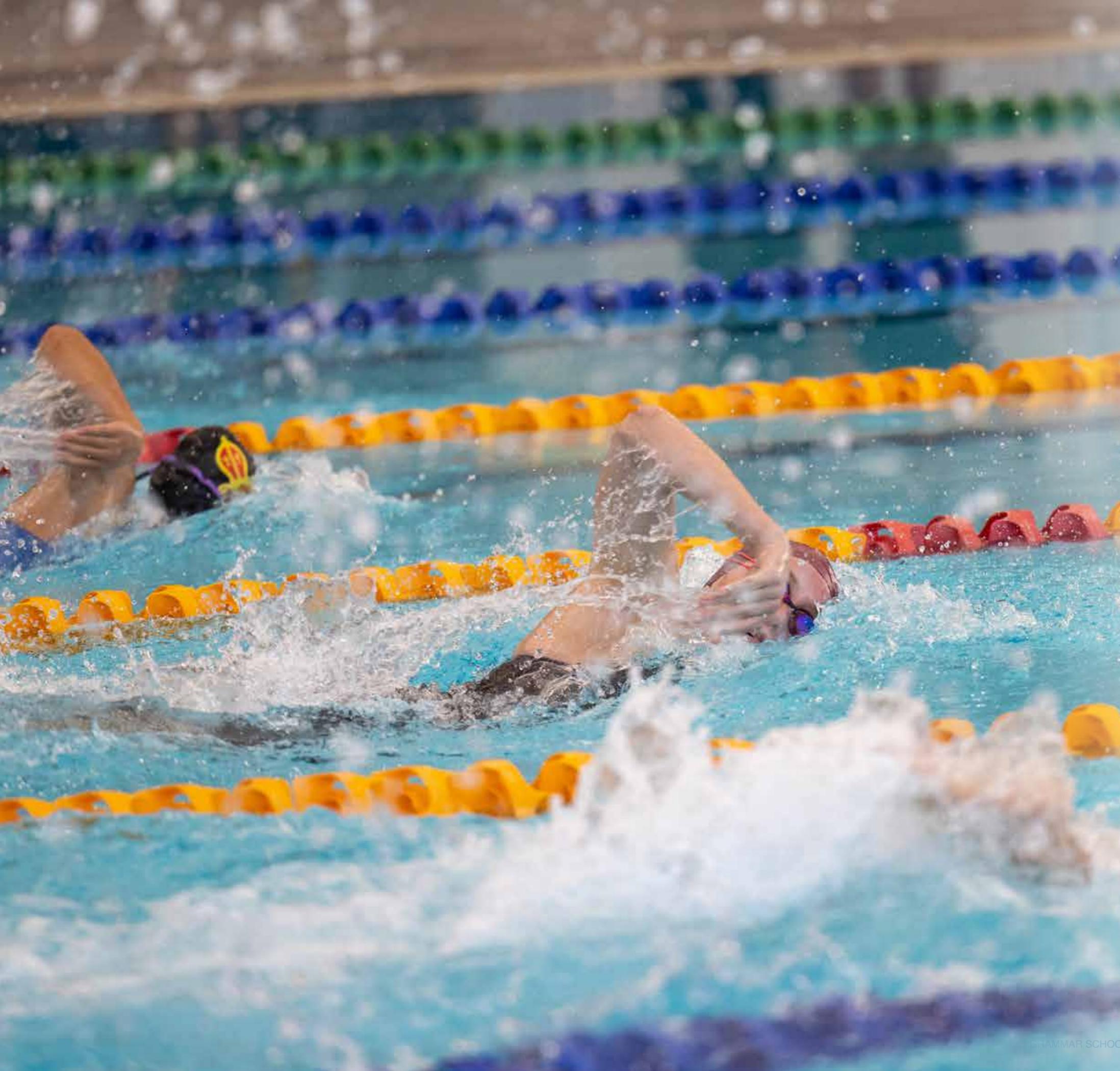
**Troy West**  
Coordinator of Sport, Junior School (boys)

## Fencing silver

On Sunday 16 May the PEGS fencers competed in their first Fencing Victoria tournament of the year, held at the new PEGS gym. There were some exciting matches, some breathtaking wins and some disappointing losses by our sixty-strong fencing team. Our female junior novice team showed their skill and determination by coming runners up in the competition. In a tightly fought final match they performed at the highest level, but were unfortunately bested at the end by a more experienced team. Congratulations to Ruth Tran, Mariam Awad, Chloe Cabritit and Meaghan Cheong for coming second overall and receiving a silver medal.

**Catherine Lane**  
Director of Sport





# Junior Swim success

A return to school in 2021 also saw a return to competitive swimming for our Junior Swim Squads. There were a number of very strong performances throughout the season, culminating in fifteen of our students making it all the way to the State Championships at Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre.

Jack De Fazio participated in the 11 years 50 metre individual freestyle, where he performed exceptionally well to come sixth against the best junior swimmers in the state. As well as Jack's individual performance we had four relay teams qualify for the state finals. The 12/13 Medley Relay team of Dante D'Alesio, Tommy Le, Lachlan Gilbertson and Charlie De Fazio performed brilliantly to win the bronze medal. The 11 years boys 4X50 metre freestyle relay team, consisting of Jack De Fazio, Tommy Le, Oliver Rados and Jake Anderson also performed exceptionally well to place third in the state. The 11 years girls team comprising of Mai Leong, Rose Huynh-Smith, Mackenzie Staff and Violet Falzon swam an amazing race finishing third in the state. The 12/13 years girls relay team, of Madison Moreira, Maddie Hateley, Allison Do and Angelina Nguyen also performed brilliantly to finish fourth in the state. Congratulations to all members of the Junior Swim Squads of 2021.

**Troy West and Brett McQueen**  
Coordinators of Sport, Junior Schools

## Olympics hopes

Three of PEGS own will be vying for Olympic glory. Linden Hall (PEGS Athletics captain of 2009) will once again be running middle distance for Australia, Stacey Hymer (PEGS Girls Soccer Captain of 2017) will compete in Taekwondo and Connor Metcalfe (Class of 2017), midfielder for Melbourne City, will take the field with the Olyroos. We will watch their Tokyo journeys with special pride.

Liam Laidlaw (PEGS Swim captain in 2018), Luka Zubcic (PEGS Swim captain in 2015) and Baden Coxsedg (Class of 2019) all headed to Adelaide for the Olympic Swimming qualifiers in June. While they were not successful on this occasion, we wish them all the best of luck for the future.

**Catherine Lane**  
Director of Sport

# PEGS Former Students Association and Business Network

## PEGS Business Network Event (07.05.21)

The first PEGS Business Network event for 2021 kicked off at the Essendon Hyatt on a beautiful Friday afternoon.

The new PEGSHUB was presented and outlined the role of the FSA and Business Network in bringing together our community of business, jobs and careers, sporting clubs, events and more.

In an informative and fascinating session we heard from two exceptional guest speakers; our Principal Kate Dullard discussed the future of PEGS and its role in shaping our students for the future, while school Board Member Lisa Lawry discussed the future of the workplace and employment.

The changing world we are living in provides opportunity for businesses and individuals while the importance of adapting to this environment is more important than ever.

About 120 guests enjoyed a delicious lunch while networking, hearing from Kate and Lisa followed by an interactive Q&A.

Thank you to both Kate and Lisa for such fantastic presentations and providing their time in supporting the FSA and Business Network.

**Jordan Leask**  
FSA & Business Network President



# PEGSHUB

PEGSHUB is the home of PEGS Business, Parent and Former Student Community. The place to connect with businesses, former students, job and careers, sporting clubs and more. PEGSHUB is a dedicated destination for commerce, careers, news and events in an easy-to-use platform that makes it easy to connect for any purpose.

PEGSHUB has replaced the digital PEGS Business Directory publication and Business Memberships are now available for the PEGS Community.

### Business Membership

- Promote your business, products and services to the PEGS Community via your own account.
- Connect with businesses, former students, jobs and careers, sporting clubs, events and more.

### Why

- Reach the PEGS Community online – your business will be available to 10,000+ PEGS Former Students and business community of current parents.
- Promote your business throughout the year.
- Make products, services available and market your business via edm's, social media and on PEGSHUB.

Visit [www.pegshub.com.au](http://www.pegshub.com.au) to view all the membership options available.

For further information on PEGSHUB, please contact Lisa Leask, PEGS FSA Business Network Coordinator - 03 9016 2180 or [lisa.leask@pegs.vic.edu.au](mailto:lisa.leask@pegs.vic.edu.au).

**Make your business products & services available to the PEGS Community. Join PEGSHUB as a business member and receive the following benefits:**

- Connect with the 10,000+ PEGS community of businesses, parents, former students and sporting clubs
- Sell products for ecommerce, any services for direct enquiry or events you are hosting
- Manage your own account on PEGSHUB and control what is shared to our community

**PEGSHUB**

## Alumni Spotlight Christian Charisiou, Class of 2009

Christian Charisiou opened his first role in a major Melbourne musical, as the Adam Sandler character in *The Wedding Singer* in May 2021. Cameron Woodhead, theatre reviewer for *The Age*, gave both Christian and the show a review that could quite easily be described as gushing!

*What have you been doing since leaving PEGS in 2009?*

It feels like a lifetime ago now! I was lucky enough to be accepted into NIDA in Sydney (where I now live) and graduated with a Bachelors of Performing Arts – Acting in 2013. Since then, I have been pursuing a career as an Actor (which has led me to LA as well) that has expanded into Voice Over, Film, TV, Theatre and has really taken off in the last three years.

*During your time as a student at PEGS, what did you like most?*

I loved the strong community between the students and the teachers. High school is hard but it's a lot easier when you have strong and trusting relationships with your peers and teachers.

Oh, and the drama performances and musicals while I was there were pretty great too, haha.

*Was there anyone who inspired you?*

Mr Murray and Mr Simmons were pretty brilliant teachers for me. They had nothing but trust and encouragement for their students while pushing us to work to our full potential.

*Tell us about the Major Melbourne Musical, *The Wedding Singer*?*

So, I play Robbie Hart, the lead role in *The Wedding Singer*. It's a musical based on the 1998 Adam Sandler film and it follows Robbie's journey of being dumped at the altar then finding new love with Julia (engaged at the time) and the trials and tribulations that come with pursuing true love. It's a laugh a minute, super 80s and big energy from start to finish.

My character Robbie in the show has a huge amount of time on stage and gets to perform some outrageous and beautiful moments in the show, so I get to run the full gauntlet of my abilities in this musical – even learning guitar for the role! It's the biggest and most enjoyable experience I've ever had the opportunity to perform.

*What is your biggest professional accomplishment?*

There are three at the top of my list at the moment in no particular order. *The Wedding Singer* is my biggest professional musical accomplishment to date but I will be rolling into a production of *Cry Baby: The Musical* performing at the Opera House straight after, which is a great tick for the ol' bucket list. The third is an animated series called *Space Nova* (that you can watch on ABC iView) where I got to voice a lead character and fulfil my dream of appearing on Saturday Morning Cartoons, haha.

*What's your favourite memory of PEGS?*

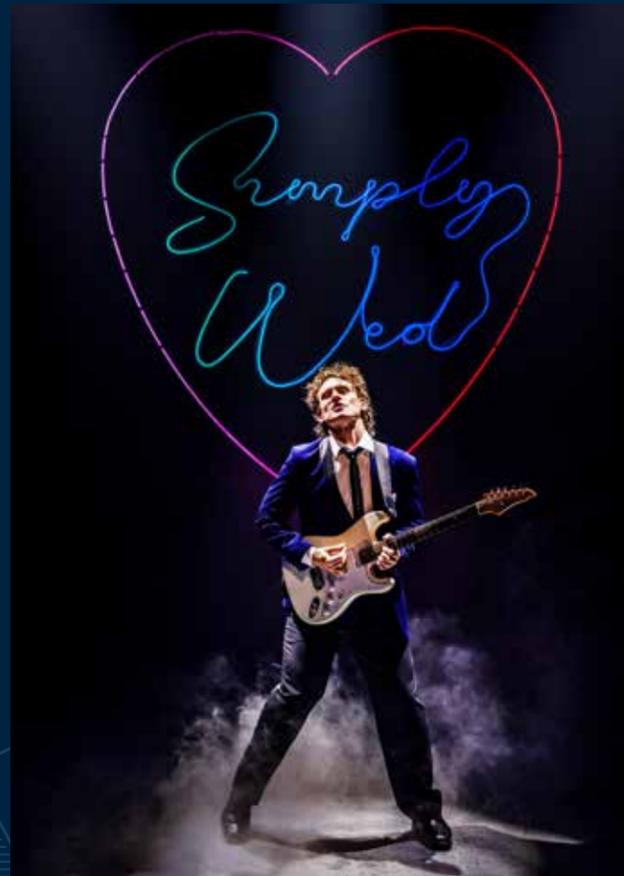
Performing the lead role of Seymour in PEGS first musical, *Little Shop of Horrors*, will always be my favourite memory. Keeping Mr Murray on his toes as to whether I would learn my lines in time for the show and then magically pulling it altogether is a "fond" memory for both of us...SORRY JUSTIN!

*What advice would you give to young PEGS alumni?*

Good question! The biggest thing I've learnt is that you are the number one constant in your life, so take the time to understand who you are, what you truly want in your life and make sure you take care of yourself on the way. Your aspirations and goals will always be there, but you can't achieve them if you don't know yourself and neglect what you need.

*What do you do in your spare time?*

I love a hobby! I've been an avid rock climber for the last several years and now I scuba dive, which leads to many more adventures. I'm a big nerd, so I love video games and movies and to add to my hobby list, I've just learnt ring making so I'm giving that a crack in my spare time.



## 2021 Events

### PEGS Business Network Functions

#### Event 2 – Mental Health, Wellbeing, Culture and Leadership

Date: Friday 10 September 2021

Time: 7am – 9am

Venue: RACV Club, Level 2 Club Pavilion, 501 Bourke St, Melbourne

Guest Presenter: Paul Roos

#### Event 3 – End of Year Celebration – Details TBC

#### Golf Day – Details TBC

For further information or to book please visit [www.pegshub.com.au](http://www.pegshub.com.au) or contact the PEGS Business Network Coordinator, Lisa Leask on 03 9016 2181 / [lisa.leask@pegs.vic.edu.au](mailto:lisa.leask@pegs.vic.edu.au).

#### FSA Reunions

**10 Year Reunion** – Class of 2010 - Bells Hotel, 157 Moray Street, South Melbourne  
12noon – 5pm, Sunday 14 November 2021,

**10 Year Reunion** – Class of 2011 - Penny Young, 22 Young Street, Moonee Ponds  
12noon – 6pm, Saturday 20 November 2021

**20 Year Reunion** – Class of 2000 and 2001 – Penny Young, 22 Young Street, Moonee Ponds  
7.30pm, Saturday 2 October 2021

**30 Year Reunion** – Class of 1990 and 1991 – Garden State Hotel, 101 Flinders Lane, Melbourne,  
12noon – 5pm, Saturday 16 October 2021

#### Reunion: Class of 1960

On Sunday 20 June a group met at the Jack Rabbit winery/restaurant on the Bellarine Peninsula, for lunch. Those attending were John Welsh, Greg Brown, Robert and Sue Ward, Robert and Barbara Gottliebsen and Geoff and Setsuko Stevens. Ed and Joan Richards were not able to make it. The original plan was to lunch at my home in Ocean Grove but home visitors were limited to five. We plan to lunch again in the next few months, but this time at my home.

If other members of the Class of 60, or that era, would like to join us, please contact Geoff Stevens on 0411 800 or [gnstevens2@bigpond.com](mailto:gnstevens2@bigpond.com)

#### PEGSHUB

Visit [www.pegshub.com.au](http://www.pegshub.com.au) to subscribe and join PEGSHUB

#### LinkedIn:

PEGS Business Network's specific purpose is to connect former PEGS students, creating business opportunities for all members while also keeping them in touch with and contributing to the greater PEGS Community. To request membership, please login to LinkedIn and search for 'PEGS Business Network'

#### Facebook

If you have a Facebook account, please search for **PEGS Former Students' Association** and **PEGS Business Network** and 'like' our pages.

#### Announcements

##### Deaths

**Elizabeth Ellen (Beth) Carolan** (PEGS Staff 1988 - 2011), on 13 May 2021, aged 81.

**Margaret Jean McPherson (née Gordon)** (Penleigh 1946 - 1951), on 20 April 2021, aged 85.

**Dr Frederick Talbot Widdop AM** (EGS 1937-1947; 1947 Dux of School, School Captain, Captain Raleigh House, Captain First XI Cricket, Captain First XVIII Football) on 26 April 2021, aged 88.

**Judith Margaret Withers (née Drew)** (Penleigh 1948-1951), on 7 May 2021, aged 84.

# From the Archives

Brigid Cooper Archivist

## 150th Celebrations 2021 - 2022

### 1921 and 1922 - A Snapshot from 100 years ago

There were three foundation schools in existence during 1921 and 1922, one girls' school - Penleigh Presbyterian Girls' School, and two boys' schools - St Thomas' Grammar School and Northern Presbyterian College (later to be re-named as Northern Grammar School).

#### Penleigh Presbyterian Girls' School

These two years were very significant for the girls' school. 1921 brought the celebration of their 50th Jubilee Year - 50 years since Mrs Elizabeth Tulloch founded Dorset House Ladies' College. Naturally the school marked the occasion. Here is an excerpt from The Penleigh Magazine 1922, describing the previous year's "Break-up" activities:

##### Jubilee Concert - Town Hall, Moonee Ponds

*Our School Concert was one of the chief events in our Jubilee Celebrations. As was fitting on so important an occasion, every child in the school took part in at least one of the six items on the programme.*

*The Junior School gave a gay and happy opening with their Nursery Rhyme Pageant. From the Queen of Hearts down to poor Humpty-Dumpty and small people seemed, as well as the audience, to be enjoying this grand game of dressing up. Both junior and senior physical culture displays were very successful, the Grecian posing and dancing of the elder girls proving most attractive.*

There was excitement on the sporting scene as well. The girls re-count their season highlights in The Penleigh Magazine 1921:

*The Tennis this year has been very exciting, as Association match after Association match came and went, leaving us victors. Never before have we been so near to winning the shield, and we were naturally very disappointed when we lost in the final against Rosbercon [Girls' Grammar School, Brighton], whom we heartily congratulate on their victory.*

*Saturday morning, August 27th, broke dull and stormy, and it was with anxious hearts we made our way to the Essendon Public Courts. Who can...recount the detail of the play - with the ball moving so swiftly between the opposing sides - the clever returns, the artful manoeuvres and the strong straight strokes, that gained the admiration of all? The wind, as if determined to be as disagreeable as possible, swept the courts with horrid squally gusts, but nothing daunted, the eight girls struggled valiantly until the final stroke was given, and Rosbercon had won the match, and cheers broke out on all sides for victors and vanquished... Simultaneously, the captains called for cheers, and so, amid laughter and good fellowship, the great event came to an end. But no! We mustn't forget the welcome morning tea served in St John's School-room by the girls of both schools.*

However, the most dramatic event was relocating the whole school from Chaucer Street to the newly purchased Wahgunyah property at Park Street Moonee Ponds. You can sense their excitement in this write-up from The Penleigh Magazine 1922:

##### Editorial 1922

*In the annals of Penleigh, 1922 must be written in red letters, for it not only marked the commencement of a new half-century of her existence, but brought, too, the new home so necessary for a more complete school life.*

*At the end of the first term we bade farewell to the old familiar building in Chaucer-street, where, for so many years, school girls had come and gone, adding each her bit to the making of a school tradition. Into our new classrooms and larger playing fields we want to bring all that was best in the life at the old school, adding to it the new ideals and unselfish service that should be called forth by the more numerous and wider activities enjoyed by school girls of to-day.*



The Penleigh Magazine 1921: Elaine Slobom, Hope Cromwell, Ethel Archer (L-R) were chosen this year to wear the white badge indicating their position of School Prefects. Photographer: Agnes Thomson, Ascot Vale. (PEGS Archives [PH00101])



Students a ready for the Sack Race in the garden at their new site in Park Street 1922. (PEGS Archives [PH04430])



Penleigh students - probably the whole school - gathering around the flag pole for the first unfurling of the School Flag at Chaucer Street, Moonee Ponds, 1922. (PEGS Archives [PH00111])



Junior Students at the first unfurling of the School Flag at Chaucer Street, Moonee Ponds, 1922. (Donor: Amy Turner/Elsa Jopson [PH07988])

## St Thomas' Grammar School

St Thomas' Grammar School, located near Moonee Ponds Junction, at the site of the current Sam Merrifield Library, was a bustling school with around 120 students. Through the Association of Grammar Schools (now known as the AGSV) they competed in athletics, football, tennis, swimming and cricket.

There was a strong connection to their past, particularly as their Headmaster, Mr Gresham Robinson, had previously been Headmaster of Carlton College, as it merged with St Thomas' Grammar School in 1910. This is best demonstrated by the unveiling of a Honourboard, dedicated to the former students of both schools who served in World War I, by Brigadier-General H E (Pompey) Elliott in May 1921. When the school merged with Northern Grammar School in 1934, the Honourboard was moved to the new Essendon Grammar School site at Raleigh Street, Essendon. Former student network were strong, as can be seen in this account from *The Argus*, 3 October 1921:

### ST. THOMAS'S GRAMMARIANS REUNION.

About seventy-five old boys attended the annual re-union of St. Thomas's Grammarians and Carlton Collegians at Sargent's Cafe on Saturday night. Mr. Thomas Ryan, M.L.A., in proposing the toast of the association, said that old boys were upholding the tradition of the school in professional, commercial, and other walks of life. Speeches were made by Mr. Gresham Robinson, M.A. (head master of St. Thomas's Grammar School), and Mr. W. E. McLeod, who proposed the toast of the school.



St Thomas' Grammar School First XI Cricket team, who won the B Grade Premiership for the Associated Grammar Schools in 1922 (PEGS Archives [PEGS03966])



St Thomas' Grammar School junior students circa 1921. Photographer: Stewart Strawbridge, Parkville. (Donor: Liddle Family [PH05724])



Honourboard listing St Thomas' Grammar School and Carlton College students who served in World War I, unveiled in 1921. This is now located in Woollacott Hall at the Essendon Campus. (PEGS Archives [PEGS07395])

## Northern Presbyterian College

1921 and 1922 were both significant and difficult years for Northern Presbyterian College.

Notices in *The Argus* and *The Herald* in late 1920 and early 1921 declared:

*Owing to needs north of the Yarra, the education board of the Presbyterian Church has decided to open a new college for boys next year at Ascotvale. Increasing pressure on the accommodation at Scotch College, East Melbourne, and the early removal of that school to Glenferrie, have made the new departure essential in the view of the Church authorities.*

*The aim of the College will be the development of personality and of a manly Christian character by providing an all-round education for which the best teaching skill will be employed. Boys will be trained for the professions and for business life. The buildings in which the college will be carried on belong to the Ascot Vale Presbyterian Church, and were constructed eight years ago for school purposes.*

Rev Herbert T Postle MA, LLD, Dip Ed, previously acting Principal at Presbyterian Ladies' College, relocated to Ascot Vale for the role of Foundation Principal. The degree of Doctor of Laws (Melbourne) had been conferred on Rev Postle the previous year. He remained at Northern Presbyterian College for only one year.

By the start of 1922, Rev Herbert W Burridge MA, BD, who had moved from New Zealand in February 1921 to be the new Minister at St John's Presbyterian Church, Essendon, took on the role of Principal at Northern Presbyterian College. Unfortunately Rev Burridge became unwell through the year and, after six months of illness, died on 22 December 1922. Fortunately the school was well-steered by the Acting Principal, Mr Rodney Charles Woollacott, who would guide this school, and later Essendon Grammar School, until 1950.

By 1922, the school was occupying the School Rooms at St John's Presbyterian Church. Here is an account from *The Argus*, 15 December 1922:

*The second annual speech night of the Northern Presbyterian College was held in the school hall, Essendon, on Wednesday. There was a large attendance of parents and friends. The prizes were distributed by Mr. Ryan, M.L.A. The Rev. W. Fraser, in a short address, welcomed Mr. Ryan and the visitors, and referred to the fine work done for the college by the secretary of the council (Mr. W. Lloyd Green).*

*After an excellent musical programme, the acting principal (Mr. C. R. Woollacott) submitted his report of the year's work. He referred to the difficulties to be faced in establishing a new school. These difficulties had been overcome, and the council of the college felt assured that still greater success would attend the school in the future. The attendance this year was an increase of 59 per cent. on that of last year, and the indications were that there would be an even greater increase next year. Early in the year a laboratory was equipped, and science was one of the subjects taken for the intermediate examination. The increased grounds had led to a keen interest in the various branches of sport. During the year a special physical culture and boxing class was formed. Last month the first annual sports meeting was held. The competition was keen, and the events were well contested.*

*In conclusion, Mr. Ryan expressed his pleasure at being present... He was glad to see that the district could support another school. Though the school was celebrating its second birthday, it was not to be judged by its size. He urged each boy to do his best to beat the next boy, but if beaten by him to think the more highly of him, and always to play the game.*



Rev Herbert T Postle, Foundation Principal of Northern Presbyterian College, and later Member for the seat of Bass in the Tasmanian Parliament 1933-1934. (Image: Parliament of Tasmania, Members Lounge, used with permission)



Ascot Vale Presbyterian Church Hall, Maribyrnong Road, Moonee Ponds - first home of Northern Presbyterian College

# FoPEGS News

## Mother's Day Stall

The Mother's Day Stalls were a great success this year. The children were very eager to purchase gifts especially as they missed the stall last year due to COVID-19. They loved browsing and independently choosing their special gifts for not only Mum, but aunts, nannas, grandmas and godmothers. It was especially exciting for the Prep and Grade One students who hadn't attended previously.

A mini stall for Year Six boys heading off to camp was held on 4 May, as the boys did not want to miss the opportunity to purchase. It was a lovely morning and much appreciated by the well-mannered boys and their Mums. The 'official' Junior boys' stall was held on Thursday 6 May. We sold out of most items, with pink scarves, gold bracelets and lemon and mandarin soaps proving to be very popular choices for the boys. Gorgeous china tea cup sets were very popular, especially as gifts for nannas and grandmas. The Junior girls' stall was held the following day. Once again, we sold out of most items, with grey scarves and cosmetic bags proving to be popular choices for the girls as well as nail kits. Tea cup sets were again popular gifts with the girls.

Both mornings were wonderful events and we would like to thank the committee members and Mums for all their hard work and help, donating their time to make the mornings such a success.

**Lyn LoMoro**  
FoPEGS Coordinator



# PEGS Community Report 2020



# Our Philosophy

Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School is associated with the Uniting Church and is dedicated to the provision of an academic curriculum and a broad co-curricular programme which encourages in each student the development of intellectual curiosity, respect for the traditions of scholarship, the realisation of his or her artistic and recreational potential and the practice of Christian values.

## Our Objectives

The school is committed to a curriculum that encourages excellence through the nurture of intelligence, creativity, independence and perseverance. It promotes the view that a student's academic achievement is enhanced by her or his enjoyment of school and engagement in school life.

Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School encourages all students to participate in Australian life as proud and responsible citizens. It is committed to create an environment of mutual respect and support amongst the staff and students.

The objectives of the School are:

- To create an environment where students are safe and where teachers and students can work in harmony
- To foster a love of learning
- To develop in all students a critical awareness of their own experiences
- To assist students in their spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social and physical development
- To nurture an appreciation of the intrinsic value of education and knowledge
- To encourage in students the traits of self-confidence, independence and perseverance
- To encourage each student to achieve his or her potential in all activities
- To engender a sense of responsibility and respect for other people
- To ensure a high level of literacy and numeracy
- To develop an aesthetic and creative sense and to foster an appreciation of cultural and artistic endeavours
- To provide a community in which students may choose to embrace Christian values and attitudes
- To provide students with a knowledge and understanding of their history and the Australian experience
- To develop an appreciation of leisure time and the capacity to use it productively
- To provide a range of activities so that all students have the opportunity to discover their talents and their worth
- To prepare students for their transition to tertiary study or work through personal development and vocational guidance
- To encourage in all students an appreciation of their natural environment.

# Board of Management

Mr B Henderson, *Chairman*

Mr D Whiting, *Vice Chairman*

Mr G Aplin  
Dr E Dapiran  
Ms W McMaster  
Dr S Tsang

Rev P Blacker  
Mrs B Deery  
Mr P Phelan

Mr D Cerantonio  
Mr R Gottliebsen  
Dr D Pitkin

Mr C Clausen  
Ms L Lawry  
Mr A Smith

## Chairman's Message

The Community Report allows you to gain insight into what it means to have a PEGS education and to be part of the PEGS community. 2020 was a year without precedent and we were constantly reminded how important this community is as we have worked together to support students and to encourage them to embrace challenge and opportunity, and the outcomes should make all of us proud to be associated with the School.

We knew 2020 would be a year of transition for Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School. Initially, when we were thinking about this change, at the forefront of our mind, was the legacy of Mr Tony Larkin, and the transition to our new Principal, Ms Kate Dullard. While Ms Dullard was new to the role of Principal, her time at the school and her experience as a member of our community, offered us stability.

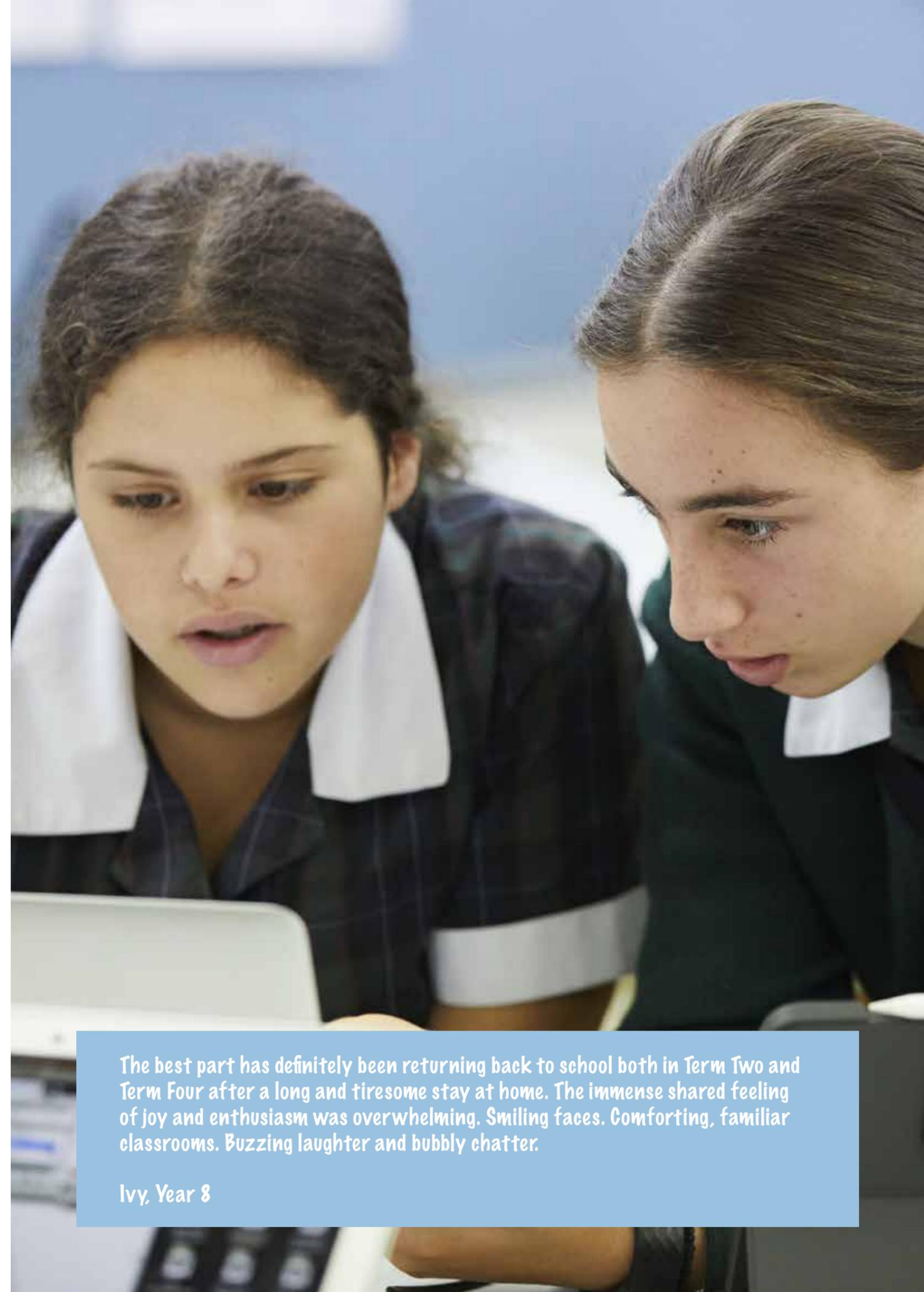
Early in the school year the COVID-19 pandemic that swept the globe instigated a shift in our focus. The focus was now ensuring we were able to adapt to the rapidly changing needs of our community and the community at large, and providing the stability and continuity of learning for our students, which is expected from a PEGS education. I am immensely proud of the work of our staff, students and parents, who demonstrated great resilience, innovation and adaptability in the face of adversity.

In the face of challenge, we also were able to make great progress on some of the major capital expenditure projects that were underway prior to the pandemic. Works on the new gymnasium at Keilor East continued, with very good progress being made despite some delays related to the pandemic. The Music House at Junior School (boys) is now complete and is a striking addition to the Essendon campus. It is a truly beautiful building with thirteen music rooms of varying sizes and a classroom which can double as a performance space. The boys were very excited to be able to use this facility in 2020. While 2020 did not allow us to make use of the Keilor Park sports campus as much as we would have liked, new changerooms, and new, elite-standard hockey fields awaited the return of our students to competitive sport, and are also now in use.

All of these projects have been undertaken with a view to providing our students with an exceptional educational experience, both inside the classroom and beyond. We well understand that our programmes in sport, music, drama, dance, social justice and at camp, in partnership with a rigorous academic programme, create well-rounded individuals, who exemplify our pillars of Care and Wellbeing and the Culture of Thinking.

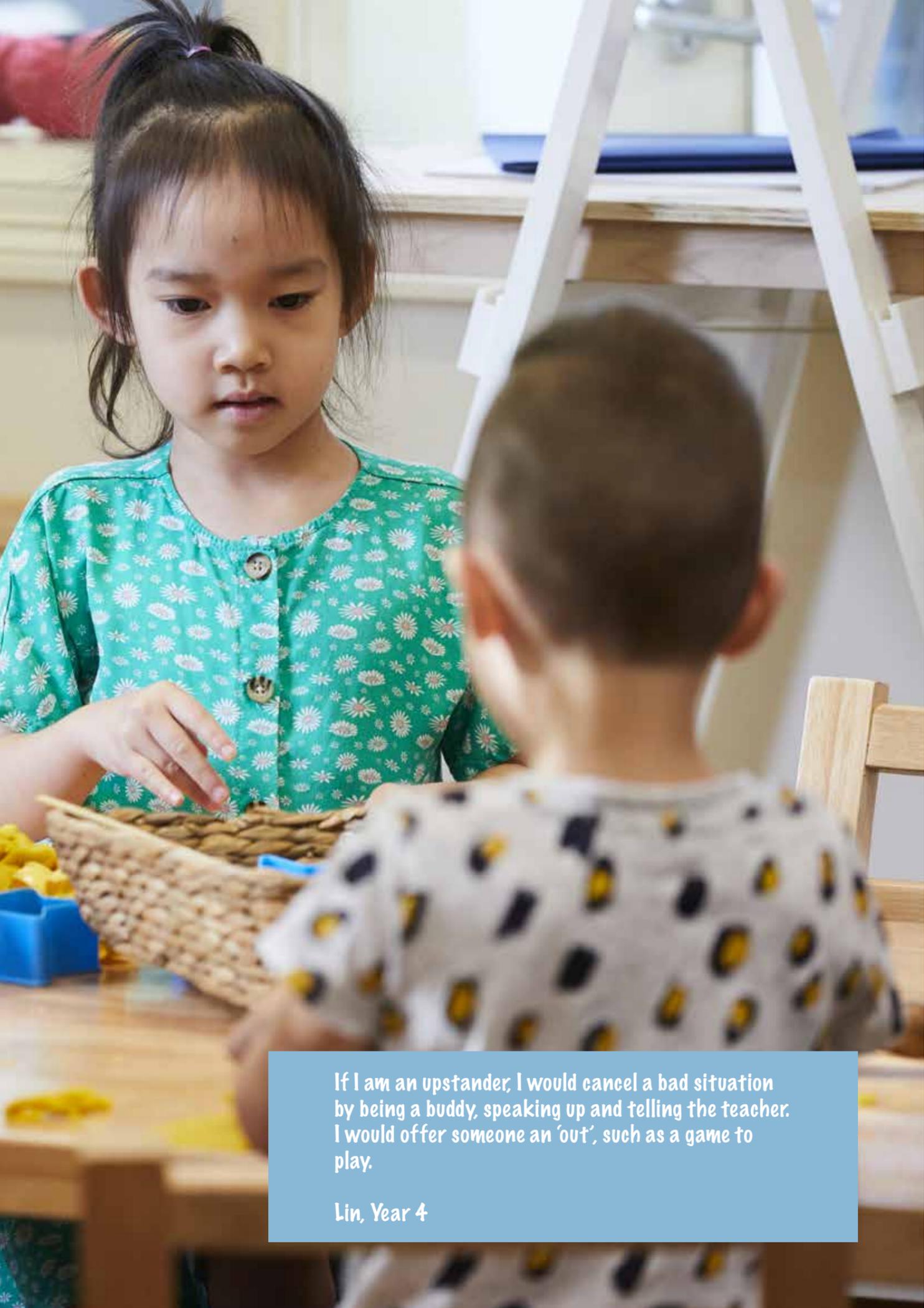
I present to you the 2020 Community Report both in celebration of our community engagement and achievements and the incredible opportunities presented to our students through challenge and change.

**Bruce Henderson**  
Chairman



The best part has definitely been returning back to school both in Term Two and Term Four after a long and tiresome stay at home. The immense shared feeling of joy and enthusiasm was overwhelming. Smiling faces. Comforting, familiar classrooms. Buzzy laughter and bubbly chatter.

Ivy, Year 8



## The PEGS experience: 2020

With an enrolment of more than 2800 students at campuses situated in Essendon, Keilor East and Moonee Ponds, PEGS offers a rigorous academic programme, encouraging a love and respect for the challenges of learning whilst remaining sensitive to individual abilities and circumstances. A framework of cultural, spiritual and sporting activities promotes student engagement and supports our aspirations for the development of mature, socialised and discerning young adults.

PEGS has been associated with the Uniting Church in Australia since 1977 and offers the fundamentals of a Christian education to all students. Religious Education classes are an intrinsic component of the curriculum for all students from Prep to Year Nine. Students at every level attend services of worship at Commencement, Easter and Mid-year, with Year Twelve students also attending a Valedictory Service. As a consequence of community health protocols in 2020, most services took place online and the annual end of year Carol Service was not celebrated.

The twin pillars at the heart of our school's strategic plan- Culture of Thinking and Care and Wellbeing provided a firm structure underpinning staff and student response to the crisis presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. By encouraging a growth mindset which views challenges as learning opportunities and champions the value of thinking, our teaching and learning was able to pivot to online classrooms where teachers engaged students in a full timetable of activities, discussions and collaborative learning, albeit remotely. Teaching staff was supported by the eLearning team to gain confidence with new technology, develop a variety of online classroom strategies and strengthen communication. Many of these strategies have also proven valuable with the return to onsite learning.

Students' wellbeing was supported during the extended period of community lockdown by the strong structure of Year level Coordinators and class teachers. Daily Home Room sessions included a variety of challenges, sharing special skills and opportunities for students to connect. The co-curricular programme was not neglected: online activities included instrumental concerts, rehearsals for music ensembles, actors and dancers, Google Meet debates and a drama production filmed remotely and edited for a YouTube audience.

The ability of our staff to support students' remote learning in an inclusive and productive manner owes much to ICT services which had continued with expansion to address the essential role of digital media for communication with students and parents and opportunities for online learning.

The school's building programme continued with the completion of the extended and refurbished Music House project at the Essendon Campus, new change rooms and hockey pitches at Keilor Park sports complex and major extension of sports facilities at the Keilor East Campus with a doubling of gymnasium capacity and additional classroom, sports and fitness facilities.

Recognizing and responding to the different strengths and learning styles of boys and girls across stages in their development, PEGS considers the arrangement of single-gender classes in the Junior and Middle Schools and co-educational education in Senior years is paramount to maintaining the exceptional educational opportunities that our students enjoy. In 2020 the school was granted an exemption to the Equal Opportunity Act in order to support this structure, including maintenance of separate waiting lists for boys and girls.

If I am an upstander, I would cancel a bad situation by being a buddy, speaking up and telling the teacher. I would offer someone an 'out', such as a game to play.

Lin, Year 4

# The PEGS experience: students in focus

## Curriculum and academic achievement

The school encourages excellence through the nurture of intelligence, creativity, independence and perseverance. It offers its students a range of learning activities suitable to their developmental levels and a breadth of subjects appropriate to their needs and abilities.

## VCE results

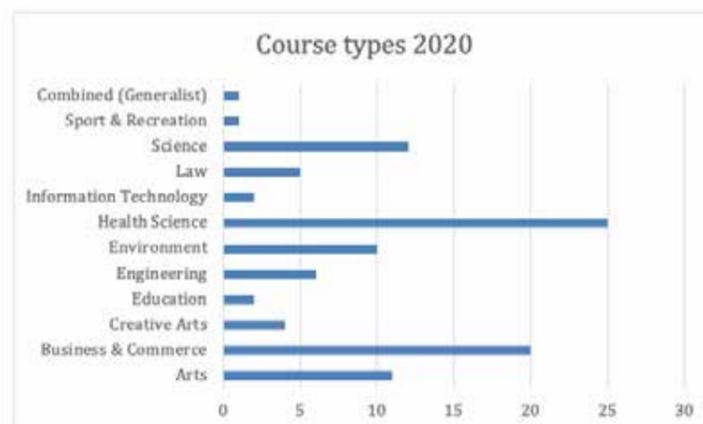
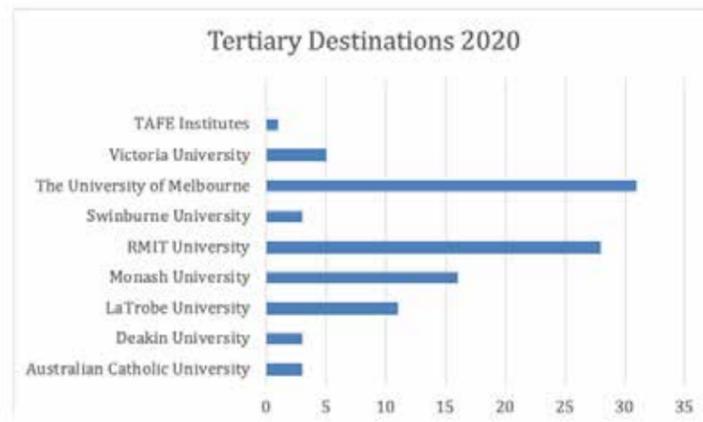
All candidates successfully completed the VCE.

Two students achieved the highest possible ATAR score of 99.95 with a further two students scoring 99.90 and two scoring 99.85. A total of 17 (or 7 per cent of our students) were placed in the top one per cent of students in the state, with ATAR scores of 99 or above. The median ATAR score at PEGS was 88.45, placing 50 per cent of our students in the top 12 per cent of the state.

All VCE subjects are scored out of 50 and, in each subject, less than 8 per cent of candidates statewide obtain a score of 40 or above. At PEGS 23 per cent of all study scores were at or above 40. The median study score was 35 out of the possible score of 50. This result matched that of 2019. Perfect scores of 50 were recorded on twelve occasions and in the following six subjects: Australian and Global Politics, Biology, English, Further Mathematics, Mathematical Methods and Physical Education.

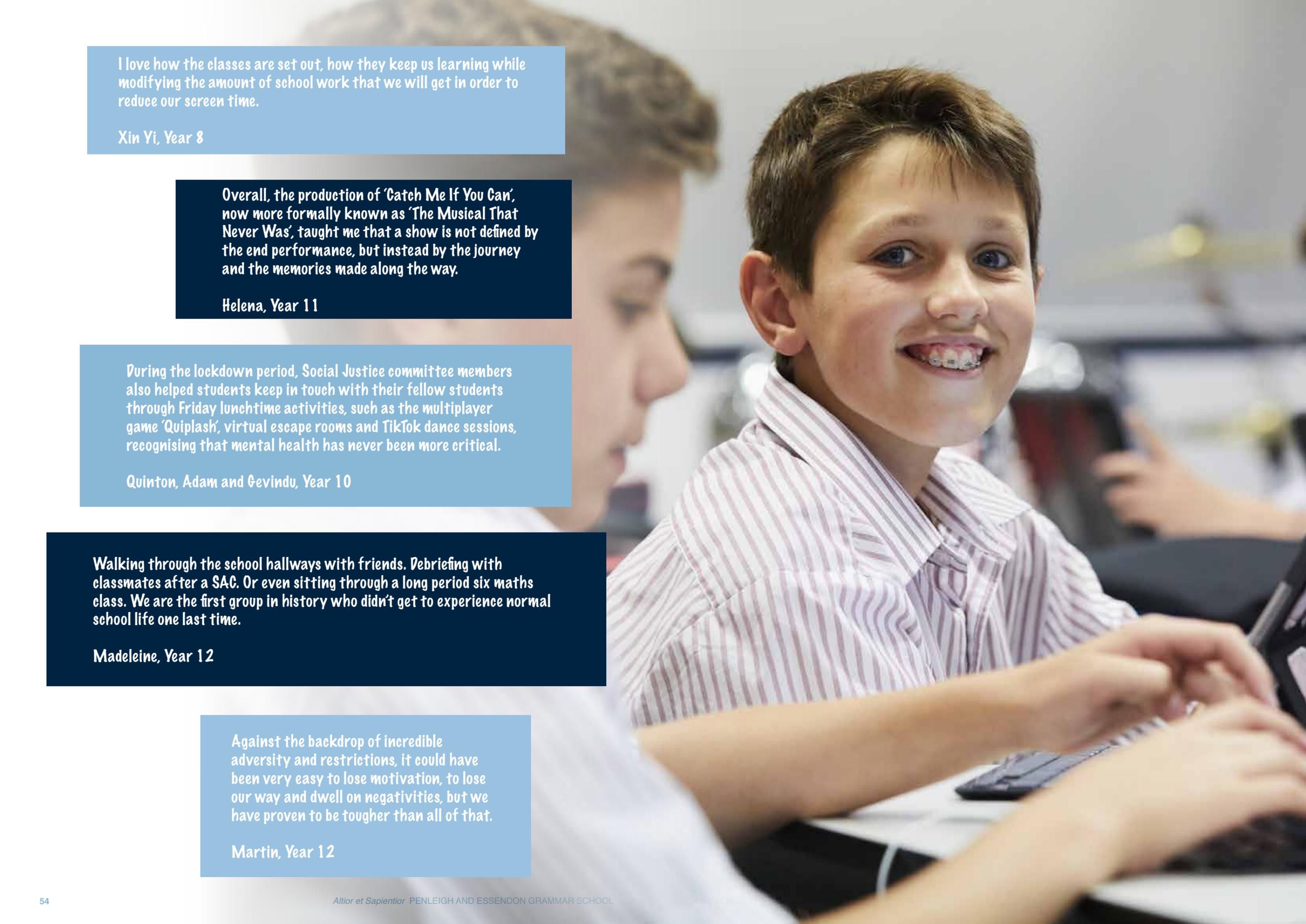
The University of Melbourne remains the most popular tertiary destination, attracting 31 per cent of our students, with RMIT close behind at 28 per cent. Health Science was the most popular tertiary course, followed by Commerce/Business, Science and Arts in that order. 93 per cent received an offer for their first or second tertiary course preference.

Destinations of students completing VCE in 2020 are summarised below:



For the five of us, the School Maths Olympiad was one of the few events still running this year which allowed us to enjoy the thrill of competition and our passion for mathematics.

Nicholas, Year 12



I love how the classes are set out, how they keep us learning while modifying the amount of school work that we will get in order to reduce our screen time.

Xin Yi, Year 8

Overall, the production of 'Catch Me If You Can', now more formally known as 'The Musical That Never Was', taught me that a show is not defined by the end performance, but instead by the journey and the memories made along the way.

Helena, Year 11

During the lockdown period, Social Justice committee members also helped students keep in touch with their fellow students through Friday lunchtime activities, such as the multiplayer game 'Quiplash', virtual escape rooms and TikTok dance sessions, recognising that mental health has never been more critical.

Quinton, Adam and Gevindu, Year 10

Walking through the school hallways with friends. Debriefing with classmates after a SAC. Or even sitting through a long period six maths class. We are the first group in history who didn't get to experience normal school life one last time.

Madeleine, Year 12

Against the backdrop of incredible adversity and restrictions, it could have been very easy to lose motivation, to lose our way and dwell on negativities, but we have proven to be tougher than all of that.

Martin, Year 12

## Literacy and numeracy benchmarks

Due to COVID-19 restrictions the annual National Assessment Programme – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests were not conducted in 2020.

## Standardised tests and competitions

Participation in standardised tests, national competitions and forums was restricted but the following achievements were recorded.

### In Mathematics

Enrichment activities continued online throughout the year at the Middle Schools and the Larkin Centre.

National Mathematics Summer School (online) - 4 participants

Computational and Algorithmic Thinking (online) –1 High Distinction, 3 Distinctions

Australian Mathematics Competition (online by invitation): 1 Prize, 3 High Distinctions, 2 Distinctions

The University of Melbourne Open Day School Maths Olympics (online)- 5 competitors

### In Science

National Youth Science Forum – 2 students selected to attend

Chemistry Olympiad – 2 Distinctions, 1 Credit

### In Languages

Chinese: CLTAV Chinese Speaking and Performance Competition – cancelled

French: Alliance Française Competition - 7 Prizes

German: Goethe Poetry Competition – 2 Prizes, 5 finalists

Indonesian: Indonesian Language Teachers Association Oral Competition – 2 Prizes, 11 finalists

Latin: National Latin Examination – 16 gold medals

Linguistics: Australian Computational and Linguistics Olympiad (OZCLO) – 4 gold medals

## Co-curricular participation

The busy co-curricular calendar enhances student enjoyment of school and engagement in school life. Students have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of co-curricular activities including music, drama, dance and sport. In the secondary school they participate in up to two seasons of sport – a summer sport and a winter sport.

Highlights of 2020 included:

### In the Performing Arts

**Music:** Although the planned series of concerts could not be presented due to health restrictions, online rehearsals for ensembles continued throughout the year. In addition, instrumental concerts were conducted online, with families sharing the experience as a virtual audience.

**Drama:** Portraying the final instalment of a trilogy that had commenced two decades ago, the drama production planned for 2020, *The Final Adventures of Charlie Ace Private Eye* transitioned from a stage production to a short film during the rehearsal period. Circumstances offered students the exciting opportunity to work with a green screen and the final production was shared with a virtual audience via YouTube.

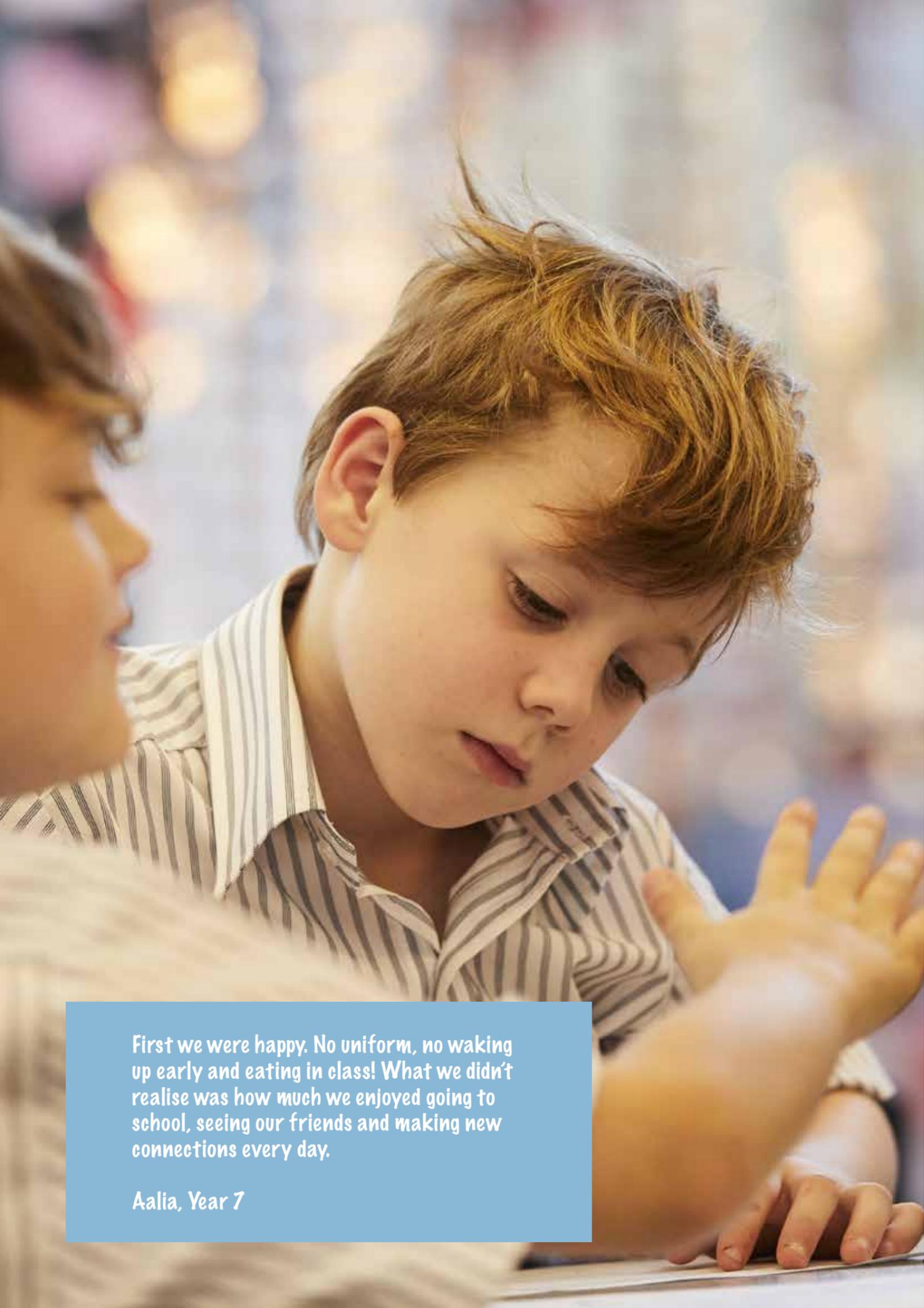
**Dance:** The Dance Company began the year with regular workshops onsite and transitioned to an online studio format in Term 2.

**The Musical:** Production of *Catch Me If You Can* was planned for Term 3, with rehearsals continuing under COVID safe arrangements into Term 2. Unfortunately extended lockdown arrangements ordained that performance could not go ahead.



While being captain of the Junior Strings has not been as I expected, I have enjoyed the opportunity to meet the other students to share music together through our online meetings. Rehearsals have been a good way to stay in touch with our friends and to share our experiences.

Joanna, Year 6



First we were happy. No uniform, no waking up early and eating in class! What we didn't realise was how much we enjoyed going to school, seeing our friends and making new connections every day.

Aalia, Year 7

### In Sport

The AGSV and AGSV/APS summer sport season was completed in Term One and with considerable success for PEGS students. Highlights included premierships for the First Cricket XI in the centenary AGSV year and First Tennis team for girls in the AGSV/APS competition. First Table Tennis for boys and First Badminton for girls both finished the season in third place.

Triathlon: School Series - Second place

The winter sport season did not proceed.

### In Public Speaking

In a season where the DAV schools' competition went online, teams were entered at every level from Year 9 to Year 12

DAV Monash Asian Studies debating competition- 6 participants

UN Youth Voice – national finalist

City of Melbourne - Junior Lord Mayor

British Youth Parliament - 1 representative

Plain English Speaking Awards - 2 representatives

Lions Youth of the Year - division finalist

## Student surveys

The biennial survey of students planned for 2020 will now be conducted in 2021 and will investigate Student Satisfaction and Quality of Teaching in all Sections. The exit survey of graduating students will also return in 2021.

## Attendance and retention

The enrolment from Prep to Year Twelve in Term 4 2020 was 2,803.

Electronic monitoring of student attendance occurs at all levels with attendance checked twice daily at all levels except in Years Eleven and Twelve where attendance is monitored in each teaching period.

Attendance was monitored across the school in each class period for the duration of online instruction in 2020. The average attendance rate was stable at 95 per cent and remained relatively steady across all Sections of the school as summarised in Table 3.

Table 1: Average attendance rate per year level

Primary	Percentage attendance	Secondary	Percentage attendance
Prep	94	Year 7	95
Year 1	94	Year 8	95
Year 2	95	Year 9	95
Year 3	94	Year 10	96
Year 4	95	Year 11	97
Year 5	96	Year 12	98
Year 6	95		

From a total of 236 students enrolled in Year Nine in 2017, 217 remained at PEGS in 2020, a retention rate of 92 per cent.

# The PEGS experience: staff in focus

In 2020 the school employed 296 teachers in 279.7 full time equivalent positions and 169 non-teaching staff in 135.9 full time equivalent positions. All teachers were suitably qualified and registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. All classroom teachers hold a teaching degree or higher qualification and 25 per cent of teachers held a Masters degree or higher qualification. The teacher retention rate was 94.6 per cent and non-teaching staff was 92.3 per cent. The staff attendance rate was 97.1 per cent.

## Professional Learning

Professional learning activities were available to all staff including teaching and non-teaching staff and all staff are required to complete a professional learning plan annually.

Professional learning was somewhat affected by the circumstances of COVID-19 in 2020; however in total, staff completed 11692.27 hours of professional learning in 2020. On average, each full-time equivalent staff member completed 3.7 days of training. In addition, staff practised and developed skills in digital literacy and in delivering remote learning and these hours were not included in the logged hours.

Approximately 0.92% of total remuneration was invested in professional learning.

The professional learning programme continued with a strong focus on developing and embedding a Culture of Thinking, with 3,686 hours of training completed in total. Forty-one teachers participated in Harvard Graduate Programmes in Visible Thinking, Creating Cultures of Thinking and Teaching for Understanding. Primary and Middle School teachers continued to work with Terri Campbell on enhancing their practices in teaching literacy, with staff completing a total of 376 hours in face to face and remote learning.

In-house and online remote professional learning sessions were also held regularly and teachers were encouraged to attend targeted external professional learning activities to address specific learning priorities and all teachers completed training to support students with individual needs.

Section based professional learning addressed learning and development needs and faculty based professional learning improved curriculum knowledge and teaching practices. Staff members were actively encouraged to attend targeted, external faculty association and educational sector conferences and seminars.

In 2020 staff members completed 1854 hours of First Aid training, including CPR, Asthma and Anaphylaxis and Perform CPR refresher training. All staff completed COVID-19 Infection Control Training, with 247 hours completed.

E Learning facilitators provided in-house training to improve teacher digital literacy, with 896.50 formal hours of training completed in addition to in-class support provided throughout the year to build teacher capacity. E Learning facilitators greatly supported teachers in delivering effective remote learning.

Four staff members undertook tertiary studies supported financially with a study assistance payment and logged 1930 hours.

New staff completed 110 hours of induction training, including safety and compliance training units.

## Staff Feedback

Staff members had the opportunity to engage with and provide feedback to the school leadership through individual discussions, staff meetings and various consultative processes including, but not limited to the Occupational Health and Safety Committee, Staff Wellbeing Committee, and Teaching and Learning Committee.

Staff feedback was also sought through annual Professional Learning planning and reviews, new staff satisfaction surveys and staff exit surveys.



It's impossible to perfectly replicate the dynamics of a classroom on a video call. But, with the help of an engaging teacher and an engaged class, we can manage to get somewhat close.

Christian, Year 9



The one lesson I have learned in the time of COVID-19, is that when everything seems bad there is always a positive.

Stanley, Year 4

New staff members reported high levels of satisfaction in their new roles and reported feeling very well supported by their colleagues and managers, in what was a challenging year with some staff commencing during periods of remote learning.

The majority of staff members leaving PEGS reported in exit surveys that their experience had been either positive or very positive on all measures, including work conditions, OHS, staff wellbeing, professional development, leadership, teamwork, feedback and support.

The biennial LEAD staff survey was postponed in 2020 and will be conducted in 2021.

## The PEGS experience: **finance**

PEGS ensures that its finances are managed effectively and efficiently so that educational goals are achieved. The annual income for 2020 was \$73.5 million and included \$44 million from student fees, \$20.2 million from government recurrent funding. Expenditure of \$67.6 million included salary and teaching expenses of \$54.7 million and administrative expenses, general, maintenance, provisions and depreciation of \$12.9 million. The surplus of the School was used to finance its capital and IT infrastructure projects including the Keilor East Gymnasium, the Essendon Campus Music House and the new Keilor Park hockey pitches.

## The PEGS experience: **families in focus**

History and tradition are important at PEGS, with a number of students representing the third and fourth generation of family associations with the school.

A Camp Open Day was held early in March, with more than 350 family and friends enjoying the opportunity to view recent improvements to the site as well as canoeing, archery and barge rides on Lake Eildon.

Activities arranged by the Friends of PEGS offer opportunities for social interaction for school families and their fund-raising contribute substantially to student amenities. A family friendly Movie Night and a Meet 'n Greet for parents of Year Seven students were well attended in Term One but further events were not able to proceed.

To combine the efforts of two groups working to support the PEGS community, in 2020, the decision was made to merge the Former Students' Association and the PEGS Business Network. The new group consists of existing members of both committees and will continue to provide social and business opportunities to members of the PEGS community.

The new PEGS Former Students' Association and Business Network continues to facilitate Class Reunions although the formal round of Class Reunions was delayed and will return in 2021. It also provides business, networking, industry insights and opportunities for former students, current students and their families, PEGS Business Network Jobs Board links job seekers with opportunities within the PEGS Business Network and community and PEGS Business Directory is also shared online with the school community. PEGSHUB, a new online destination was introduced in 2020 to bring together the PEGS community.

PEGSHUB offers:

- a platform for parents and former students involved in business to make their products and services available to the school community
- the place to find and directly contact former students
- a new 'hub' for job and career opportunities
- links to PEGS sporting community of cricket, football, hockey, soccer and tennis clubs.

The annual series of Thinking Seminars continues to offer students and the wider community access to the ideas of outstanding thinkers representing a diverse range of interests. Science communicator Dr Karl Kruszelnicki AM proved to be a timely guest in early March 2020 and the series is continuing in 2021.

The biennial survey of parents planned for 2020 will now be conducted in 2021.

# 2021 Dates for the Diary

## July

- 13 July – Term Three begins
- 25 July – Winter Dance Showcase
- 26 July – Suzuki Concert Three
- 28 July – Junior String and Piano Concert

## August

- 3 August – Synthesizer and Composition Concert
- 5, 6, 7 August – Mary Poppins Jr Musical Production
- 9 August – Percussion Concert
- 12 August – Woodwind Concert
- 19, 20, 21 August – Sketch Show/ Snapshots
- 24 August – Vocal Concert
- 25 August – Thinking Seminar Three
- 26 August – Chamber Concert
- 30 August – Suzuki Concert Four

## September

- 2 September – One School Day
- 8 September – Concerto Concert
- 10 September – Term Three ends

## October

- 4 October – Term Four begins
- 6 October – VCE Visual Arts Viewing
- 9 October – Craft Market
- 11 October – Piano Concert Three
- 14 October – String Concert Three
- 19 October – Valedictory Dinner
- 25 October – Suzuki Concert Five

## November

- 15 November – Suzuki Concert Six: Break-up and Graduation Concert
- 29 November – Junior Christmas Concert

## December

- 1 December – Carol Service
- 7 December – Transition Day
- 8 December – Term Four ends

