

PENLEIGH AND ESSENDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Altior et Sapientior

September 2021



From the Principal

*You will come to a place where the streets are not marked.
Some windows are lighted. But mostly they're darked.
A place you could sprain both your elbow and chin!
Do you dare to stay out? Do you dare to go in?
How much can you lose? How much can you win?*

'Oh the places you'll go!', Dr Seuss.

Late in Term Three, our Year Twelve students received a care package from the school. One of the items included was a copy of the Dr Seuss book, 'Oh the places you'll go!'. Throughout this text, the reader is reminded of their potential, and all the meaningful things they will achieve, despite the inevitable challenges that will arise and the uncertainty that these periods will bring.

Reading the articles in this Term's *Altior et Sapientior*, it is quite remarkable to see our students being able to write reflectively about their experiences during this difficult period. They remain focused on their strengths and the opportunities and support around them, and have developed new levels of self-awareness as they, at times, work more independently.

I have heard many comments from parents over these past two years that indicate they know more about their children as learners as a result of having the opportunity to observe them more directly during the pandemic. It is also clear from the many discussions staff and students are having, that students are learning more about themselves, and the habits they need to cultivate in order to be confident, independent and successful learners once they leave the school setting.

Developing self-awareness in this way requires honest reflection. It requires us to consider where we are, where we want to be, and what we need to do in order to get there. As students are supported to build their understanding in this way, their sense of self-efficacy increases. As a community of learners, when we share the belief that through our effort, we can overcome challenges, we become more effective in producing positive outcomes. At a time when so much is outside of our control, remaining focused on what is within our control is both healthy and productive.

While we continue to encounter 'streets [that] are not marked', it is important that we remain focused on our strengths, both as individuals and as a community.

Kate Dullard

Never underestimate a Prep student!

In 2019 it would have been hard to imagine a time in which educators would inform their Preparatory students that they were no longer going to be learning in the classroom, and would be learning without all their manipulatives, rich texts and resources at their fingertips. But as we gratefully acknowledge, every time we return to Remote Learning, our students and families give us a master class in resilience, flexibility and adaptability.

We could not be prouder of the way the students not only seamlessly transition to Remote Learning, but the incredible way they maintain their dedication to the learning even for long stretches at time. We know that many families face significant struggles, as parents manage their own workload whilst trying to provide the support that our younger learners require when technology is the gateway to the learning; however, we are continually greeted with enormous smiles, words of encouragement and exciting news as we arrive on their screen each morning.

We love the pre-lesson chats that allow us to hear about those who finally conquered their training wheels, had a visit from the Tooth Fairy or baked something delicious. Even better when we hear about how families extended the learning by doing an experiment at home or beat the lockdown blues by enjoying a bike ride at recess. It is heart-warming to see workspaces becoming more colourful as families display and celebrate the products of the lessons.

We can't thank our students and parents enough. Classrooms without children are joyless spaces but PEGS families are delivering the joy to us each and every day, and we are grateful.

Amelia Turner
Prep Coordinator, Junior School (girls)

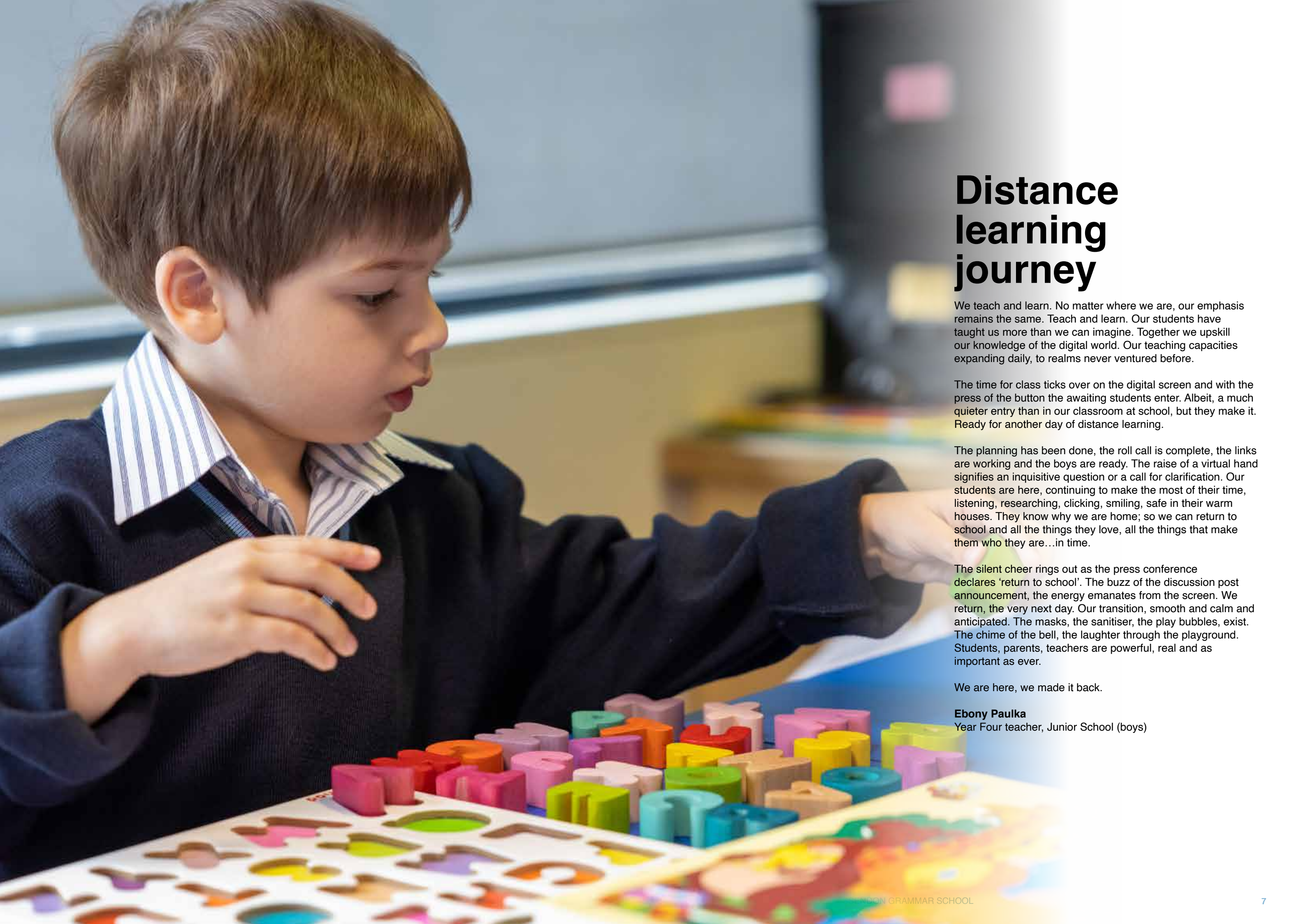
Remaining connected

The word 'connection' has taken many meanings recently, and has become a well-used part of our contemporary lexicon. In our school context, we discuss and share when we have poor Internet connection, when we are missing real life connections, when students are making connections to texts when reading, and we are constantly reimagining what it is like to remain connected as our PEGS community.

We begin connecting with our students each day on Google Meets, and these gatherings help create, establish and solidify our feelings of belonging. When the omnipresent 'ding' of joining Meets is followed shortly after with sounds of happy voices and the odd happy song, or class playlist, and then the vision of 25 smiling girls, we know we are all in for a great day. If it is a Friday, then we know also to expect a burst of rainbow colours, or a fancy hat, or crazy hairstyles – for that extra element of connectedness and fun.

Our weekly assemblies, our morning boggle quizzes, our class games and polls are all ways in which we are remaining connected, albeit a little differently from the past. We thank you all for contributing to this.

Kylie Hammond
Year One and Two Coordinator, Junior School (girls)



Distance learning journey

We teach and learn. No matter where we are, our emphasis remains the same. Teach and learn. Our students have taught us more than we can imagine. Together we upskill our knowledge of the digital world. Our teaching capacities expanding daily, to realms never ventured before.

The time for class ticks over on the digital screen and with the press of the button the awaiting students enter. Albeit, a much quieter entry than in our classroom at school, but they make it. Ready for another day of distance learning.

The planning has been done, the roll call is complete, the links are working and the boys are ready. The raise of a virtual hand signifies an inquisitive question or a call for clarification. Our students are here, continuing to make the most of their time, listening, researching, clicking, smiling, safe in their warm houses. They know why we are home; so we can return to school and all the things they love, all the things that make them who they are...in time.

The silent cheer rings out as the press conference declares 'return to school'. The buzz of the discussion post announcement, the energy emanates from the screen. We return, the very next day. Our transition, smooth and calm and anticipated. The masks, the sanitiser, the play bubbles, exist. The chime of the bell, the laughter through the playground. Students, parents, teachers are powerful, real and as important as ever.

We are here, we made it back.

Ebony Paulka
Year Four teacher, Junior School (boys)

Connected and resilient learners

In the current circumstances, with changes occurring rapidly and repeatedly, we might not be surprised if our students were to respond by narrowing their focus to their own immediate needs. (We have seen this from time to time in the wider community during the last year or so).

The pandemic has certainly been more challenging for some than others, but we have been lucky to see from our students a determination to remain connected. Online classes – and particularly the break-out groups which are made possible by Google Meet sessions – have allowed students to continue to learn from and with each other, even as we are required to be physically apart.

House meetings and shared Form activities (including the seminars presented by Sue Pain and Paul Dillon), and enrichment activities like debating and Tournament of Minds, have also allowed them to stay connected to each other and their school. Some have even expanded their sphere of influence beyond the school by supporting charity organisations like Koala Kids. This willingness to see themselves as part of a bigger whole says much for the breadth of their perspective, their compassion, and their commitment to each other and the communities to which they belong.

Learning from home is not the same as learning at school, but our students have adapted well to its new realities. They may have stumbled occasionally, but overall their responses have been courageous, persistent and resourceful, and their resilience in the face of adversity has been admirable.

Anthony Simmons
Head of McNab House



Camp themes

As Outdoor Education teachers, the team at Eildon Camp have long known the benefits of our programs. At each year level underlying themes and activities are incorporated into the programs, such as leadership, communication, goal-setting and resilience. Our curriculum is a carefully sequenced set of themes and activities aimed at the holistic development of our students.

Despite some interruptions, Eildon Camp has remained focused on providing our students with fulfilling and transferrable outdoor experiences. We have been adaptable and flexible, and this approach has been a feature during the camp activities that we have presented to all students.

The students have not taken any opportunity for granted. We have witnessed our students develop goal setting and independence-based strategies to apply to initiative activities, archery, fire lighting and white-water paddling. The culmination of this learning occurs in the final morning activity of 'Survivor Games'. Teams compete in a series of linked tasks that draw on specific learning from the previous activities.

We feel lucky to be able to offer our students these opportunities and know that these experiences not only add to the PEGS experience but prepare our young men and women for other challenges life presents.

Stephen Collins
Acting Manager, Eildon Camp





Knowing our boys

I was recently reminded that the best teaching and learning happen when students are engaged, energised and self-motivated and that this outcome can be influenced by the relationship between the pupil and the educator. Knowing one's material is important but the human connection between teacher and student is where the turbo charger kicks in.

A school with positive relationships provides a safe emotional environment where boys can learn about themselves and about how to interact and relate with others. These 'lessons' are central to the wellbeing and learning success of our students. Right now, when the world feels out of kilter and upside down, our young people need their adult mentors more than ever. They need us to allow them to learn how to regulate their emotions, connect with others, develop social and emotional resilience, and grow. They need us to set clear boundaries but to also allow them to bounce off these boundaries, not snap them at the first ounce of pressure.

We know that on average our students need nine hours of sleep but get six. We recognise that time apart from peers and activities they love is tough. We understand that boys are not always comfortable to speak about their feelings and may even lack the language to do so. All of us need to work together to build these relationships that allow us to give our young people what they need in spades as they progress through the Middle School.

Caroline Horton Andrews
Head of Gottliebse House

School Maths Olympics

On Sunday the 22 August, a team of five maths-loving Year Elevens participated in the University of Melbourne School Maths Olympics (SMO). Our team, the Pegsponentials, consisted of Quinton Nguyen, Seliyan Thivearaj, Ruchi Bath-Samarakoon, Asel Kumarasinghe, and myself as captain. Mr Vlantis was our coordinating teacher.

The competition involved answering 25 questions as a team within one hour. Since we were all home-bound, the SMO took place online. Although we were physically separated, our enthusiasm for maths and our teamwork were as strong as ever.

Once the problems were released, our team kicked into action. I really enjoyed the experience of working in a team; since we all had different strengths, we were able to tackle problems that any one of us alone would have found very difficult. One problem - about travellers going on international trips, ironically – was particularly memorable because we discussed our alternate lines of attack. Hearing different perspectives introduced me to approaches to problem-solving that I hadn't tried before.

Amidst a plethora of lockdown-related cancellations, it was refreshing to compete in an event again. It was lovely to see and work with my peers whom I haven't seen in a while. The problems we worked on were engaging and quite different from the maths work we do in school.

At the end of the day, the Pegsponentials placed sixth out of 36 teams. We answered 20 out of 25 questions correctly and accumulated 470 points in total. This was an excellent result for PEGS and overall, this experience is one that I will remember fondly.

Sandra Sujith
Year Eleven



Sandra Sujith



Quinton Nguyen



Ruchi Bath-Samarakoon



Seliyan Thivearaj



Asel Kumarasinghe

Lockdown success

Here we are in “lockdown 6” or a NSW style “staycation” and when asked what I'm doing differently from previous online learning experiences I'm not quite sure what to say. It feels almost impossible for students to stay motivated day after day looking at a screen; however, the prospect of going back to school, seeing friends and making it into sports teams are helping drive my success.

By using my refresh periods and setting goals, such as trying to better myself each day, getting regular exercise, playing my favourite music and keeping in contact with the people I love, I am finding my experience to be a positive one. As for online learning, the teachers have been exceptional in supporting us by keeping lessons and their spirits the same as when we were all together face to face. I know I am very grateful for the community of Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School as we bond and connect, and work together.

Charlotte Sutcliffe
Year Ten

What has helped me this time with online learning

This year has been another difficult time for students, especially due to the most recent lockdown. Even though online learning is not optimal, we are making it through by remaining connected and supporting each other.

As this is our sixth lockdown, we have now adjusted to many of the challenges that learning from home can bring. These include distractions, poor sleep and staying focused. I have overcome these challenges by creating a routine and sticking to it as much as I can. This helps me stay motivated and provides a break from being on screens. My routine involves getting eight hours of sleep each night, having time to exercise, having free time with friends and family and completing homework.

From previous lockdowns, I have learnt that having a break is important for our wellbeing and that it is important that we work together to support each other through it! Another part of online learning I enjoy is the refresh periods that were recently implemented again to prioritise students' health and wellbeing. As the name suggests, these periods allow us to refresh by going outside for a walk, spending time with our pets, getting off our screens and organising ourselves.

I would recommend to anyone struggling with motivation during this lockdown, that they set themselves a different objective to work on each day. By doing so, I have been able to stay on top of my work by achieving goals each day, which brings a sense of satisfaction and happiness to each day. Just remember, stay positive and strong. We will get through this together.

Sebastian Italiano
Year Ten



Real life education

In Term Two, we started learning about the changes that we will go through in the coming years as a result of puberty. Our presenter Sue Pain ran three sessions to discuss a range of the changes and considerations for growing up.

When we heard that we were going to take part in these conversations, we were worried that there might be topics that would be difficult to understand, and wary that there would be some things that are simply uncomfortable to talk about with our peers or teachers.

The sessions covered the physical changes that we can expect during adolescence and how our emotions are influenced by them. It was reassuring to see peers raise their hands in agreement when asked questions about mood changes in recent months. We looked at the influences on our body image, including peers and social media, and were given strategies to deal with the expectation of physical appearance.

The Bystander versus Upstander discussion was particularly relevant for us at PEGS. It gave us the confidence to call out behaviour that is not appropriate using assertion rather than aggression. Our learning emphasised safe behaviour online and we explored *do's* and *don'ts* to ensure we are safe when interacting through technology. Whilst parts of the sessions were confronting, we know they are important conversations to have. We feel we've learnt a lot about the challenges of growing up and can approach the coming years positively.

Harry Atchison (7Y), Philippe Bassan (7X), Daniel McNeill (7Z)
Year Seven

Getting acquainted

This term, the Year Seven Coordinators at McNab and Gottlieb Houses introduced a new program to help the boys and girls get acquainted. There was a flurry that morning, as lots of girls appeared to have butterflies in their stomachs. "What am I supposed to talk about?" was one of the things I heard beforehand.

I wasn't bothered by meeting anyone in particular, but I still sat in the corner. Four girls walked through the door, two of whom I didn't know. They sat near me and we began to talk. Around six boys then walked through the door, looking just as timid. So much for worrying!

Our Form teacher, Mr Bardsley, then explained an activity about introducing ourselves and getting to know each other. Easier said than done, as most conversations were very... awkward. And strained. But as the activity went on, it became easier to approach new people and introduce ourselves to them.

By the end of the activity, I could name four people I'd never met before that morning. These sessions encouraged us to socialise and gain more confidence when talking to someone we didn't know. I hope that we all met a potential friend and can grow closer over our time at school.

Allegra Passarella
Year Seven



Party responsibly

As parties move from pop tops, the importance of educating students about safety around drug and alcohol consumption becomes paramount. In August this year, guest speaker Paul Dillon spoke to the Year Ten cohort in an online seminar, discussing the realities of drinking, vaping and other drugs.

As he delivered his message, Paul used his witty jokes and quirky personality to ensure that his message was one that would resonate with students of our age, and be taken with us on weekends and nights out. A 'fist-full of food' and 'water time' (one glass of water) were the pivotal rules, he told us. Another vital discussion considered the use of the recovery position to keep others safe while they rest and wait for help.

Paul's transparent and realistic outlook allowed students to trust him and gravitate toward his message. This experience was enlightening for all students, educating us on the balance between a good time and a safe time. Paul's messages will continue to stay with me the next time I'm at a party.

Portia Farah
Year Ten

Our exam experience

On Thursday 17 June the first exam period of 2021 started. It was the first time any student in Year Seven or Eight at PEGS had experienced exams. The fact that the Year Eights missed out on the exams last year was not great. It created a more stressful atmosphere as we were not familiar with how the exams would work. With that being said, the teachers informed us on everything we needed to know about the exams and helped us as much as they could.

The exams proved a great opportunity to understand the process, especially for future VCE studies. For the Year Eights, the entire process of revising and studying allowed us to understand our subjects more deeply. Due to this being our first exam experience, many of us did not revise enough and this lack of understanding created a more stressful experience.

The exams were set out with two sessions a day; one in the morning and one in the afternoon. If you did not have an exam then you would attend a study period. The exams were one and a half hours long, with a half an hour study session before they started. The exam period allowed Year Eights to understand the process and what needs to be done in order to achieve our best. These understandings will be carried through the rest of our school years.

Cameron Sloan and Ted Thompson
Year Eight

9ERS Olympics

After returning from the fifth bout of online learning, the Year Nine boys were very much looking forward to the first week of the 9ERS programme; however, due to some COVID restrictions still remaining in place, the activities had to be modified. In the spirit of the time, it was decided that a 'Mini Olympics' would be held across the normal 9ERS time slot.

With events ranging from athletics and basketball to Scrabble and Sudoku, all the boys were eager to get involved. The games were played with good spirit and were a good tool to get the boys socialising again after two weeks at home. Not only was 9ERS enjoyable but it gave the cohort opportunities to try new activities and to be challenged both physically and strategically with the limited resources. Even though we couldn't do the activities as originally planned, we made the most of what turned out to be a successful and enjoyable 9ERS activity.

Luke Tutus and Deon Tzaros
Year Nine

A photograph of two young girls, likely students, smiling and looking upwards. The girl on the left has curly brown hair and is wearing a yellow shirt. The girl on the right has blonde hair and is wearing a dark jacket over a green shirt. They are both looking towards the upper right of the frame with joyful expressions.

Respectful relationships

Teachers have been unpacking the resources of The Good Society's, Respectful Relationships program and trialling activities in classrooms. These resources are used in conjunction with carefully planned units of work that help develop through lines of thought and discussion, and teachers make the connection explicit to the girls.

In Prep to Year Two, self-awareness is developed using the Feel See Think Act Do strategy, recognising emotions and actions in building new friendships and negotiating shared spaces. It is generally in the more unstructured times outside the classroom that students have freer rein to try out skills of communication, negotiation and to employ self-regulation. Debriefing and deconstruction of events are crucial to understanding cause and effect, and appreciating how the choices they make, and the way they behave, impact others.

The focus in the middle primary years is development of positive relationships, and in recognising that all difference deserves respect. The girls negotiate belonging to groups, and with this, the exploration of inclusion and exclusion becomes crucial.

The development of personal identity is strong in upper primary as the girls are encouraged to question stereotypes and value their individuality. They are prompted to recognise ethical choices in the way they manage themselves, their friendships and to understand peer pressure.

These ideas sit well with our Bystander Code of Conduct and Mutual Respect policies, and the practices and thinking resonate with the statement in the Care and Wellbeing Pillar that *"We help each other adapt to challenges, make good choices, solve problems and accept responsibility."*

Christine Hallman
Head of Junior School (girls)

Preps celebrate

With another lockdown over, the Prep boys were eager to turn off their computers and return to their Essendon campus. To celebrate their 100 days of school and the Olympic Games in Tokyo, the boys participated in a Mini Olympic Games tournament at school.

World class events included the egg and spoon relay, team-work tunnel ball and a challenging obstacle course around the playground. The highlight was the sprint around the running track, where the boys shot off like rockets while their classmates cheered them on. The boys developed many important gross motor skills, including balancing and catching. They also practised essential social skills, such as turn taking and team work. The boys were commended on their teamwork, resilience and the positive attitudes that were demonstrated at the Mini Olympics.

Although the Prep boys' 100th day of school happened to fall during Distance Learning, the celebrations did not disappoint. Exciting activities across the day included a 'Mystery Voice' matching game and videos sent in by some furry celebrity guests. Other activities included making crowns, doing 100 jumps and a dance party to finish off the celebrations.

Congratulations to the Prep boys, who are now 100 days smarter. A huge 'thank you' to the boys' families and teachers who have supported their growth, learning and play this year.

Natasha Crawford

Prep Coordinator, Junior School (boys)



Rhys Norman

Maths Talent Quest

The annual Maths Talent Quest is a state and national competition aimed at promoting interest and excellence in mathematics with the focus on the process of mathematical investigation and relating mathematics to everyday life.

Students can choose to undertake a project independently or in a small group. In the initial stages of the project the boys meet with the Junior School Mathematics Coordinator, Mr Peter Maher, to brainstorm ideas. The boys then set about collecting data for their investigation before presenting a project that shows real world connections to mathematics using appropriate mathematical terminology. All entries are then submitted to a state judging panel.

This year the following projects received a high distinction at the state level:

Year Four - Neil Aruliah, Thomas Topalovic and Dilan Wickramasinghe– Is the Tallest the Fastest?

Year Four - Dilan Wickramasinghe - Predicting the Number of Lollies in a Lolly Jar

Year Five - Thomas Sevdalis, Maximus Tzikas and Christian Lapetina - The Kids Are In Charge

Year Five - Dylan Ridley and Oskar Parker - Who is Flying Under the Radar in our Local Under 12 A Grade Basketball League?

Year Five - Adam Morosinotto and Jack Wilson - Lower Your Heating Bill Through Gaming

Year Five – Rhys Norman - Watch The Birdie - Galahs on The Nature Strip Again

As well as receiving a high distinction, Rhys Norman's project was chosen to represent Victoria at the national Maths Talent Quest competition.

I would like to congratulate all boys for their strategic thinking, perseverance and thorough investigations.

Graeme Sharman

Head of Junior School (boys)



Going with the flow

A recent wellbeing survey completed by our students provided some really useful information. For our students their families, friends and teachers are an important social connection at this time and their contribution to general wellbeing is crucial. To celebrate this, on Friday 27 August we had a Friendship Day where teachers discussed the importance of staying connected. We also know the power of kindness to improve our own wellbeing and on Wednesday 1 September students were encouraged to participate in Random Acts of Kindness Day.

Students also suggested in the survey that they are finding it hard to sit in one spot for the whole day. As a response to this, the period between classes has been extended to ten minutes to allow students to be more physical. Mr Quirk sent to all students some tips about how they could use their time to be more active.

Adam Grant, writing in the *New York Times* recently used the term 'languishing' to describe how people are feeling. For Grant 'it feels as if you're muddling through your days, looking at your life through a foggy windshield'; Grant suggests one of the key ways to overcome languishing is through 'flow' which is a state of absorption where 'your sense of time, place and self melts away'. To achieve this, it is crucial to have uninterrupted time so that it is possible to focus on one task; it could be cooking, knitting, kicking a football or solving a puzzle. As we continue to face uncertainty, I think there is real merit in us each trying to achieve a state of flow.

Tim Watson
Head of Larkin Centre

Empowering Agency

When we consider children's agency within our educational programs, we are also considering The Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1989). In relation to agency, children have the right to; play, participate, learn, make choices, be consulted, for their voices to be listened to and to access good quality education.

Agency "is about how able they (the children) are to fully involve themselves in their lives, to try new things, to respond to others, to listen and be listened to, and to achieve the things they are working towards." (Whittington, 2014, p. 22)

Although there are many ways in which we support children's agency at PEGS Kindergartens, one practice that we focused on this term was empowering children to guide their own learning. Through their current inquiry projects: Cottage 49- what is thinking?, Cottage 51- science through zoology and Cottage 53- developing a growth mindset, the educators implemented intentional teaching strategies such as 'What do you already know?', 'What would you like to know?' and 'What is your theory?' to encourage the children to reflect on their own learning and develop ownership of their research. These strategies also provided opportunities for the children to participate, be consulted, be listened to, make choices and engage in play.

Throughout this term our work confirmed that when children are active protagonists in their learning, they become more invested in participating and develop a strong sense of agency where they make informed choices, try new things, listen to others and experience success.

Agency in the Early Years, Victoria Whittington; Early Childhood Australia, 2014.

Lauren Olcorn
Director of Kindergartens



Plain English Speaking

Among only 24 semi-finalists in the VCAA's Plain English Speaking Award 2021, which was held at The University of Melbourne in late June, PEGS was ably represented by two students, Gitaanjali Nair (Year Eleven), speaking on 'The Perils of privilege' and Krystel Parras (Year Twelve) whose topic was 'This is a funny thing'.

We are delighted to report that Gitaanjali proceeded to the State Final, live streamed on 10 August. We congratulate both students on their significant achievement.

Krystel wrote the following reflection on her experience:

The hardest thing to grasp about public speaking competitions is not how difficult they are or how good you have to be - it's how nice everyone is. Knowing that we were all atop a metaphorical pile of over one hundred and fifty unsuccessful PESA participants, you'd expect to find the most cut-throat characters at a state semi-final, but that isn't what happened. I was prepared to say my speech, I was prepared to make all of the appropriate hand gestures and pauses, I was even prepared to lose. But I was not prepared for how happy I would be afterwards. Public speakers aren't just good at yelling or manipulating words – we are storytellers above everything else. My favourite part of the competition was talking to the other students and hearing about their lives. It seems that the higher the stakes are, the more down to earth your competition is. Hearing everyone else speak filled me with a sense of achievement knowing that I belonged amongst them, and it filled me with a sense of admiration knowing that teenagers are capable of such emotional and intellectual depth.



Gitaanjali Nair (Year Eleven)



Krystel Parras (Year Twelve)



Food for thought

National Science Week, which runs every year in August, aims to raise awareness of science, technology, engineering and maths and inspire younger people to be fascinated by the world we live in. In recognition of this annual event, students at Junior School (girls) participated in a range of activities such as conducting simple experiments and exploring interesting creatures in their backyard.

Year Five and Six girls took part in a ScienceXArt competition hosted by the Australian Academy of Science's National Committee for Nutrition. The theme, 'Food for Thought', encouraged the girls to consider carefully their food choices and explore the impact their diet has on the way they live their lives. The task involved researching the nutritional value of fruit and vegetables and exploring why dietary requirements vary from person to person. To demonstrate their understanding, they designed a plate of food with a rainbow of different colours and balance of all food groups, and in 100 words or less, described the nutritional science and story behind the plate.

The girls shared their plates with their peers, received feedback, and then had the option of entering the official competition. The entries will be judged on creativity, nutritional insight, and demonstration of the impact through image and description. We wish our entrants all the best and look forward to hearing the outcome later in the year. Regardless of the results, all the girls broadened their understanding of the nutritional values of food and gained a new understanding of the old adage, 'You are what you eat'.

Julie Neylon

Deputy Head of Junior School (girls)

Maths Active

Junior School (girls) continued its tradition of being a 'Maths Active' school with over sixty students participating in the 2021 Maths Talent Quest. After disappointment at the cancellation of the 2020 Maths Talent Quest, this popular activity once again saw participants from Year Two to Year Six undertaking term-long projects focused on exploring an element of maths of personal interest. Students enjoyed being able to present their research in a variety of digital mediums, with movies and websites proving to be popular. Out of the 20 submissions selected to move forward for MTQ judging, 10 received Distinctions and 10 High Distinctions. One of the projects entitled, "Let's make it Equal", entered by Angelica and Nikki Gionis, Year Three, has made it to National judging and we are all waiting with bated breath to hear the outcome.

The Australian Mathematics Competition had 120 participants selected from Year Three to Year Six competing against students from all states and territories. Students completed thirty problems from various strands of Mathematics, with a focus on drawing connections to everyday life. Students prepared for their participation through engagement in weekly problem-solving sessions, focused on developing a strategic approach when solving a vast range of mathematical problems.

Year Six fostered their understanding and application of mathematical concepts and problem-solving skills through their participation in contests hosted by the Australasian Problem-Solving Mathematical Olympiads (APSMO). Students in Year Six competed in one of two competitions (Maths Olympiad or Maths Games). Five contests, held over the course of the school year involved schools from Australia and New Zealand solving a series of problems focused on developing students' creativity, ingenuity and enthusiasm for Mathematics in general.

The experience gained through participation in these events is immeasurable. We eagerly await our students' results, but, most importantly, continue to foster a love of Mathematics at all year levels.

Carlee Yuill

Mathematics Coordinator, Junior School (girls)

Junior Lord Mayor of Melbourne

Following her selection in 2020, Alicia Gec (currently in Year Eight) has been performing her role as Junior Lord Mayor of Melbourne. During her term Alicia was invited to speak at public forums focusing on mental health, and recently she had afternoon tea with (Senior) Lord Mayor, Cr Sally Capp. They discussed home school learning, climate change, youth participation in decision making, current initiatives to bring Melbournians back into the city and many more topics.

Alicia's leadership is built on her willingness to serve, a trait that she shows around McNab House, particularly in her classes, and in Dorset House activities.



Limerock House support for Koala Kids

The Koala Kids Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation that helps children and young adults during their cancer treatment. This organisation provides engaging activities and therapeutic resources for the child undergoing treatment as well as support for the whole family. It provides activities including puzzles, colouring books, stickers and much more. This may seem like a small gesture but it helps preoccupy the children during their treatment and can make their day.

During the July holidays we volunteered at Koala Kids in Hawthorn. Normally most volunteers go to the Royal Children's Hospital to interact with the children in person. However, under COVID restrictions we had to come up with another way to help. We collaboratively worked behind the scenes to create care packages for the children going through treatment and their siblings. The packages consisted of activities such as colouring books and puzzles wrapped in vibrant orange tissue paper and unique handwritten notes from us. Although it was disappointing that we couldn't visit them in person, we knew everything we touched would put a smile on their faces and that is the most important thing. We were grateful for this opportunity to use our time to make a difference and help people.

The Koala Kids Foundation's motto is "We believe happy helps" and this experience allowed us to truly witness the difference that this organisation makes.

Ella Windsor, Aishani Mysore, Keilana Nguyen
Limerock House, Year Ten

Mary Poppins JR

'Anything can happen if you let it ...' were the uplifting lyrics to the celebratory closing number of our production of Disney and Cameron Mackintosh's *Mary Poppins JR*. The words were particularly apt as we witnessed a group of young performers achieve what threatened to become the impossible - appearing on stage in a musical during a pandemic.

They managed it by giving their unwavering trust to the teachers who were organising the show, and to each other. With energy, the students progressed in learning scenes, songs and choreography, even when interruptions to their onsite rehearsal schedule occurred. They approached the whole production process with a gracious acceptance of the fact that it could be cancelled at any time, and as a result seemed to cherish all the more each opportunity they had to work together.

Living the themes of the closing song, the cast and crew of *Mary Poppins JR*, definitely learned to 'fly together', as George Banks and his son Michael did in the show. Mary Poppins advised that if they 'reach for the heavens', they would 'get the stars thrown in', and it is exactly what happened when everybody involved in the 2021 Junior Musical were rewarded with a single spectacular, pinnacle, performance; in stunning costumes, under lights and with an appreciative audience in attendance.

Jessica Gorlin
Director of Performing Arts



Soundwaves inspire

During my first tour of the school in December 2017, with then Principal Tony Larkin, the dilapidated state of the Essendon Music House was a source of dismay for me and apology from Tony! The imminent decision to improve this resource was certainly timely and I was excited to be involved from the concept design stage to finally using the finished facility from Term Four 2020.

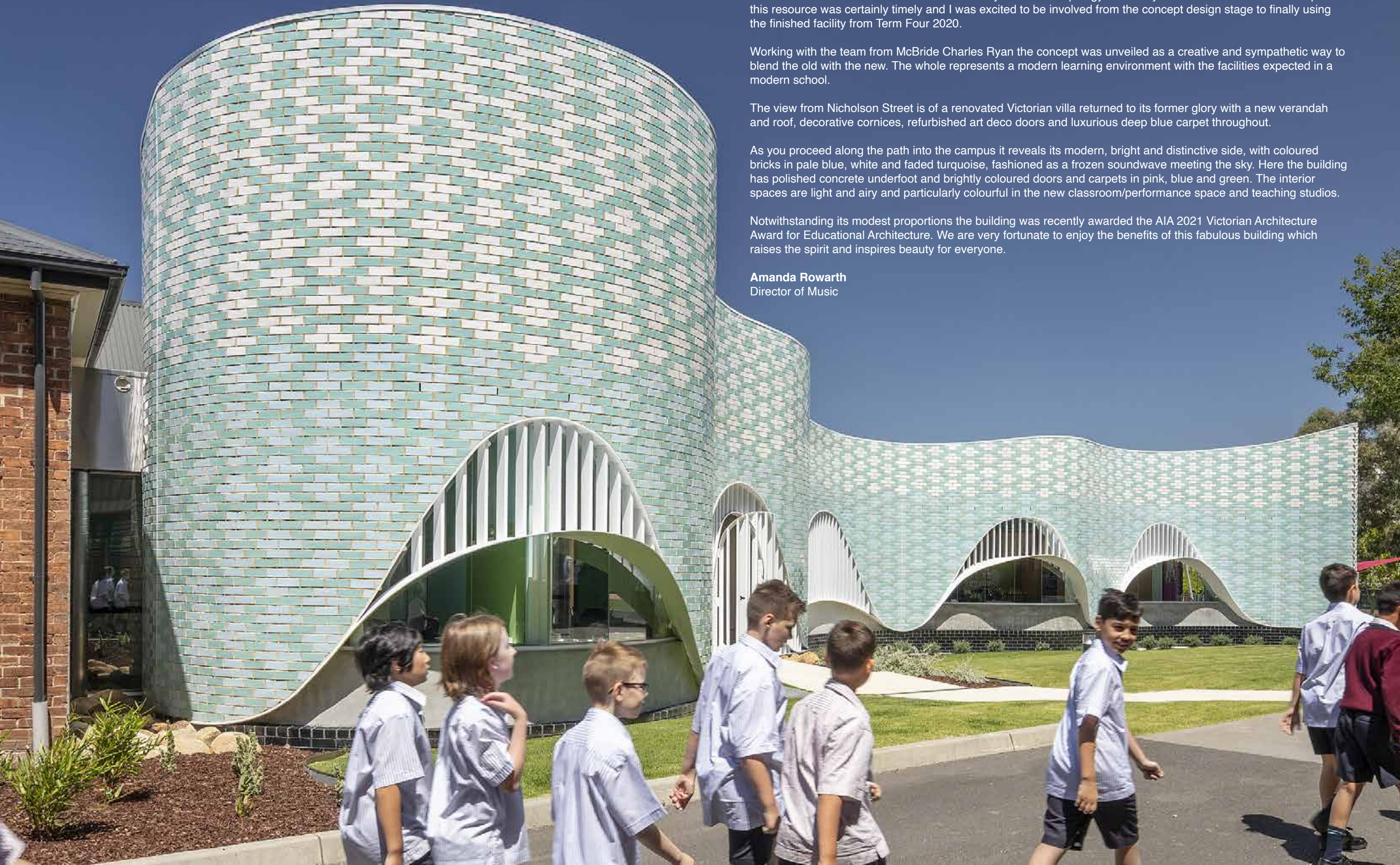
Working with the team from McBride Charles Ryan the concept was unveiled as a creative and sympathetic way to blend the old with the new. The whole represents a modern learning environment with the facilities expected in a modern school.

The view from Nicholson Street is of a renovated Victorian villa returned to its former glory with a new verandah and roof, decorative cornices, refurbished art deco doors and luxurious deep blue carpet throughout.

As you proceed along the path into the campus it reveals its modern, bright and distinctive side, with coloured bricks in pale blue, white and faded turquoise, fashioned as a frozen soundwave meeting the sky. Here the building has polished concrete underfoot and brightly coloured doors and carpets in pink, blue and green. The interior spaces are light and airy and particularly colourful in the new classroom/performance space and teaching studios.

Notwithstanding its modest proportions the building was recently awarded the AIA 2021 Victorian Architecture Award for Educational Architecture. We are very fortunate to enjoy the benefits of this fabulous building which raises the spirit and inspires beauty for everyone.

Amanda Rowarth
Director of Music



Your child and music

There is much research and evidence investigating the benefits of music education for children. In particular the powerful effects of learning to play an instrument, especially when starting in primary school.

The most common positive measures studied concern the impact on children's cognitive and social development, mental health and wellbeing. Unfortunately, mainstream entertainment reinforces the myth that excellence in music is based solely on the talent of the individual, and that others not blessed with the talent gene can merely be the audience. Everyone loves music, but mostly as passive consumers rather than active participants.

Music is surrounded by strong folk-psychological beliefs about the nature of abilities and their acquisition, with the dominant folklore belief being that musical skill is an expression of an innate talent, possessed only by a specially endowed few (Howe et al., 1998). It is not surprising, therefore, that when students encounter difficulty with their learning, they tend to attribute this to their lack of natural ability rather than effort (see Dweck, 2000).

(Evans & McPherson, 2014, p. 12).

Certainly, people display different levels of aptitude for music as with any other human pursuit, but this can be traced to their home and education environment and the opportunities and encouragement and support they have accessed.

Most accomplished musicians know that their success is based on hard work and having a growth mindset. This is all possible without any reference to talent and innate ability. At our school we offer this opportunity to all students and support them with best practice in teaching and learning.

Griffin, M. (2018). *Are You Talented?* <https://professional-development.com.au/believe-in-talent/>

Evans, P., & McPherson, G. E. (2014). Identity and practice: The motivational benefits of a long term musical identity. *Psychology of Music 2014*, Vol XX(X) pp.1-16.

Amanda Rowarth
Director of Music

Soccer Premiership Double

Records were broken in 2021 with the Girls First XI Soccer winning our first AGSV/APS Soccer premiership. In similar fashion the boys also were declared AGSV Premiers despite an interrupted season.

The girls swept all before them. Throughout the season they impressed with some exquisite skills and beautiful teamwork. A couple of very tight encounters highlighted the character and fight in the team, not relying only on raw ability. Finally, when the season was complete a shared title for PEGS with Carey was announced and the history books were inked.

Similarly, the boys fought tooth and nail to stay on top as the uncertainty of the campaign unfolded. The team had won every game up until the matchup at Marcellin, a game everyone knew would be the title decider. The match proved an incredible school sport encounter, ending in a draw. This meant that the teams could not be separated at the season's close. Another shared premiership.

A relevant theme this year was, 'What stands in the way, becomes the way'. It was a season for PEGS soccer in which the girls and boys did the school and our community proud!

First XI Girls Squad

Claudia Mihocic (Captain)
Jesse Armstrong, Zoe Borrelli, Isabella Cvetkovski, Chelsea De Silva, Olivia Falzon, Anthea Gollant, Kiara Istanto, Emily Jurgec, Tea Kastanos, Mikayla Louloudis, Vasiliki Papafotiou, Indra Thomas, Zoe Tsenalidis, Annabelle White, Charlotte Whitfield

First XI Boys Squad

Tyler Cooper, Nick Giarrizzo (Co-Captains)
Marcus Aiello, Jai Balestra, Alexander Bekris, Max Bisetto, Kostas Chrisant, George Dioudis, Kaan Elibol, Matteo Masiero, George Mihailidis, Henry Pickering, Anthony Saad, Lucas Smaragdiou, Reuben Stathis, Stefan Stojcevski, Alexander Tasevski, Lucas Trenkovski, Connor Valenti, Ross Vassiliadis

Colin Cooper

(Team Manager, Boys First Soccer)

Andrew Depetro

(Coach, Girls First Soccer)



Cricket Leadership Forum

In June 2020 and May 2021 I took part in the Cricket Victoria Girls Leadership Forum. The first event had a webinar and online leadership component. This included different guest speakers giving their experiences. My favourite guest speaker was Molly Strano. One of the key points she raised was that you don't need a badge or title to lead. After the webinar, we completed an online program. The key points that I took away were: always be brave enough to ask questions; create visions of where you want to go with your team and what you want to achieve; always be positive; develop high resilience: with good resilience you need to know that you will have bad days and it is okay; learn from failures; play your role in the team and ensure you are the best prepared, leave nothing to chance; and support and encourage everyone.

The Leadership breakfast in May this year was a great opportunity to meet all of the girls who did the program. The guest speakers included Kim Garth (an Irish cricketer), Sophie Day (an Australian Cricketer) and Isobel Anstey (Australian and UCLA basketball player). It was great to hear about their individual pathways and their experience during COVID-19 and how they overcame their struggles. I have enjoyed being part of this program and believe it will help me become a more complete and effective leader in the future.

Olivia Powell

Year Nine



From the Archives

Brigid Cooper Archivist

150th Celebrations 2021 - 2022

1946 and 1947 - A Snapshot from 75 years ago

The immediate post World War II period was one of change and growth for the Essendon / Moonee Ponds area. At this point in the school's history there were two schools - Essendon Grammar School - a boys' school on the current Junior School Boys' site at Raleigh Street, and Penleigh Presbyterian Girls' School - a girls' school on the current Junior School Girls' site at Park Street.

Penleigh Presbyterian Girls' School

For the Penleigh community, this was the end of an era. The retirement of the Limerock Sisters, who spent over 30 years running almost every aspect of school life, would be a major change. The new Principal, Miss Isobel Taylor, took over in 1946.

Another change was that of ownership. It was announced that the Limerock Sisters had sold the school to the Presbyterian Church, after nearly 30 years of being a "recognised" school. The Advisory Council, which was set up in 1918, was to have a more formal role.

"Now the Church will assume full responsibility, and will be administered by a Council. The Misses Limerock, who had been very anxious that the future of the school should be assured before they relinquished control, will now work under the Council, and bridge over the change in ownership."

The Penleigh Record 1945, p.2

On the sporting field, routines were returning to normal after wartime disruptions. Interschool and House competitions resumed in Athletics, Basketball and Tennis. The school grounds still being quite small, the students were allowed to use local tennis courts belonging to Mrs Cockburn and Mrs Gibbs. School numbers had expanded, so Park House was added to the existing Chaucer and Dorset Houses.

Wartime sacrifices were still having an impact on resources in the school:

"We wish to thank the Misses Smith, Miss Doris Chambers and Miss Betty Bennett for their donations of books for the library. We are very grateful for these, as books are difficult to come by at present, and our shelves are sadly in need of replenishment." *Penleigh Magazine 1946, p.8*

Boarding was still a part of school life for some students who lived too far away to attend daily. The boarders lived onsite under the care of Miss Muriel Limerock and then Matron Davis. Many fun activities were organised outside of school hours to entertain them, including Saturday outings to the Zoo, the Art Gallery, the Aquarium, the Museum, the Shrine and the Botanical Gardens. There were also social events:

"Late in third term it was quite a social function for us when we entertained sixteen Lowther Hall boarders to a tennis afternoon and a buffet tea. Thanks to Matron Davies, who worked hard in the kitchen, the buffet tea was sumptuous, and we thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon despite Melbourne's wintry weather." *The Penleigh Magazine 1947, p.11-12*



All the students of Penleigh Presbyterian Girls' School pose on the front lawns in 1947. You might have noticed at least 4 boys in this photo. (PEGS Archives [PH00129])



Miss Lilian Limerock, along with her sisters, Elma and Muriel, lead the girls' school from 1912 to 1946. Their retirement was a huge change for students and staff. (PEGS Archives [PH04815])



After the Limerock Sisters retired in 1946, Miss Isobel Taylor took over the Principal role. She remained Principal until 1949. Photo: Ruth Hollick. (PEGS Archives [PH05380])



Penleigh Presbyterian Girls' School Boarders 1943. (M Matthews (née Crutch) [PH04713])

Essendon Grammar School

There were 150 boys, including Boarders, at Essendon Grammar School in 1946. By current standards, the grounds were still small, encompassing the Main Building (now mostly used for Administration) and the Assembly Hall (now known as Woollacott Hall) which was officially opened in 1941. Luckily the Essendon Football Ground was at close quarters for Sports Days and matches.

Like the girls' school, Essendon Grammar School strengthened its church ties by coming under the full control of the Presbyterian Church in 1948. Leadership was very stable, with Mr C R (Rodney) Woollacott as Principal, ably assisted by Mr A B (Bert) Foxcroft as Senior Master and Sportsmaster.

Alongside their studies, the boys were enjoying the return of pre-war activities, such as excursions, dances and inter-school sporting fixtures. One such visit was a cricket and tennis trip to Hamilton, which included a social event with girls from Alexandra College.

"From April 4th to 8th, Mr Foxcroft, and twelve E.G.S. boys, were the guests of Mr and Mrs Shann, Hamilton College, and the townspeople of Hamilton. The resumption of these visits, which had had to be abandoned during the war, provided a never-to-be-forgotten experience for this year's touring party." *The Triune* 1946, p.9

There was also a trip to the Royal Agricultural Show:

"Mr Foxcroft took a group of senior boys to the first Royal Show for seven years. The party concentrated on seeing exhibits relating to primary production, notably those on pasture improvement, varieties and breeds of grain and stock, and soil erosion, in the Government Pavilion; the State Rivers exhibit in Centenary Hall; the livestock and farm machinery exhibits. These were most interesting and instructive." *The Triune* 1946, p.11

From 1946 there were three sports houses: Raleigh House, Fletcher House and the new Napier House. These were all named after the streets around the school. Inter-house competitions were held in Swimming, Cricket, Football and Athletics.



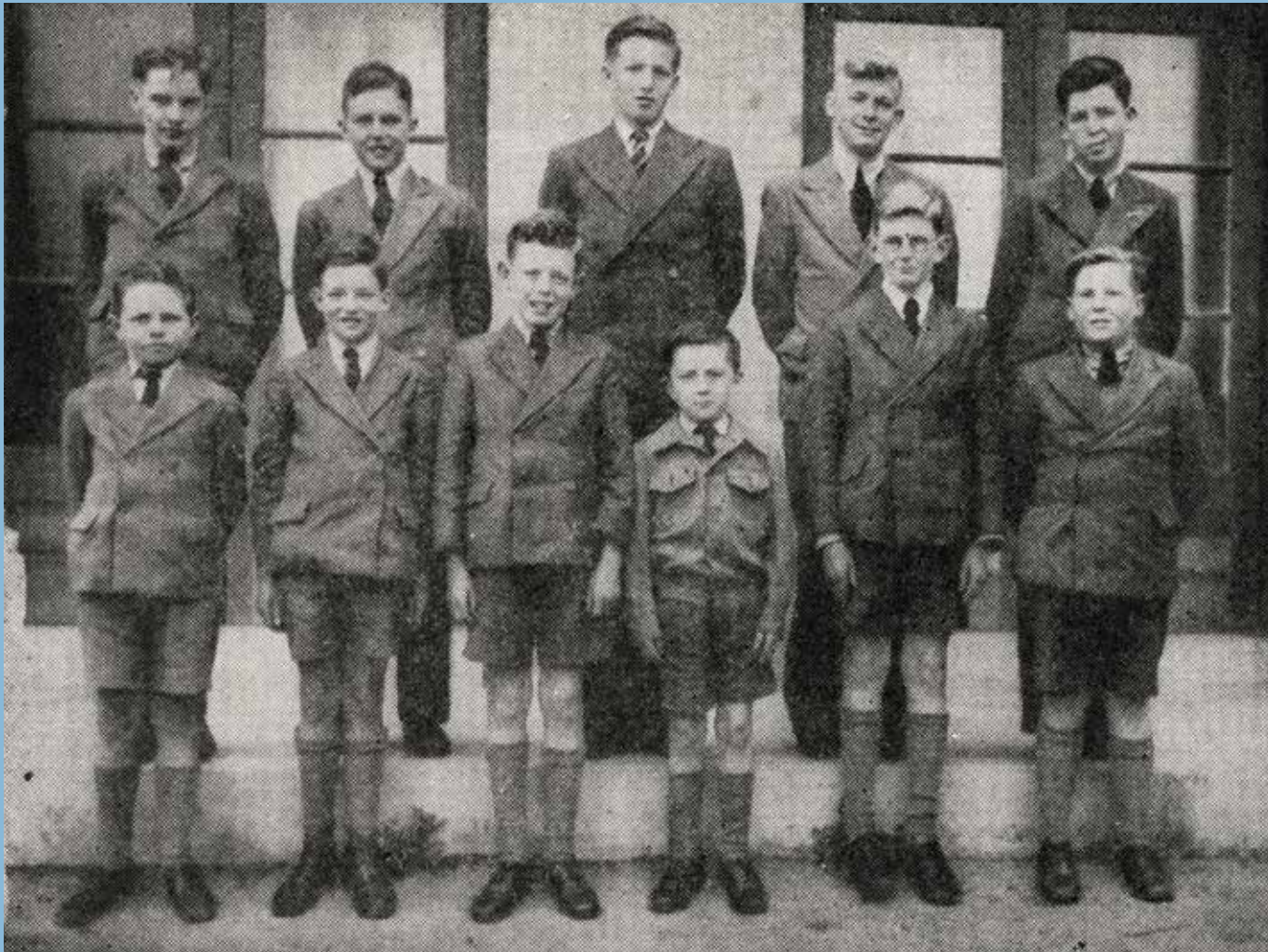
In 1923 Mr Charles Rodney Woollacott became Principal at Northern Presbyterian College, which he promptly renamed Northern Grammar School. He was later Principal of Essendon Grammar School after Mr Gresham Robinson's retirement in 1940. He remained Principal until 1950. (Donor: Australia-China Friendship Society [PH05487])



Essendon Grammar School view from Raleigh Street 1947. (Donor: L O Rogers [PH04238])



Essendon Grammar School's First XVIII Football Team proudly holding the 1946 Buckley and Nunn Cup from the Schools' Association of Victoria (S.A.V.). This was a successful period for the school's sports teams, which included Gregory Sewell (back row, 3rd from left) who went on to play 171 games with the Essendon Football Club. (Donor: G G Sewell [PH00126])



Essendon Grammar School Boarders 1945 standing proudly in front of the Assembly Hall doors. (PEGS Archives [PH06515])

PEGS Former Students Association and Business Network

PEGSHUB

PEGSHUB is the home of PEGS Business, Parent and Former Student Community. The place to connect with businesses, former students, jobs 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 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

2021 Events

PEGS Business Network Functions

Event 2 – Mental Health, Wellbeing, Culture and Leadership

Date: POSTPONED

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 or contact the PEGS Business Network Coordinator, Lisa Leask on 03 9016 2181 / 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 – POSTPONED

30 Year Reunion – Class of 1990 and 1991 – POSTPONED

Please visit www.pegshub.com.au to register your attendance

PEGSHUB

Visit www.pegshub.com.au to subscribe and join PEGSHUB

LinkedIn:

PEGS Business Network's specific purpose is to connect former PEGS Students and Alumni in business, creating business opportunities for all members while also keeping 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.

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 Joanne Kakafikas, Class of 1995

Joanne Kakafikas is the General Manager of Asylum Seeker Resource Centre which is Australian's largest independent not-for-profit who support and empower people seeking asylum and refugees.

What have you been doing since leaving PEGS in 1995?

I went straight in to a Commerce degree at Melbourne Uni and then completed my honours year. When I finished with a bit of a generalist degree I wasn't sure where it would take me. I spent many years working in recruitment, and quickly found myself in business management roles. After quite a stretch in this industry I realized I felt a large disconnect between the work I was doing and my personal values. It was time for a change. And I am grateful every day that I made the move in to the NFP sector. I cannot imagine ever going back to the corporate world.

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

I think the variety of opportunities we were given. Sport, drama, music: we were able to give it all a shot. To varying degrees of success.

Was there anyone who inspired you?

My Year Eight English teacher – Mrs Griffiths. While I had always loved to read she really encouraged a love of the 'classics'. I remember her telling me to read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and once I realized it wasn't 'Tequila Mockingbird' and found it at the library I was on my way to appreciating a whole world of reading which had been opened up to me.

Tell us about the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre?

We are the largest advocacy and aid organization for people seeking asylum and refugees in the country. Supporting people through their journey of seeking asylum, we have services that assist people from surviving (food, material aid, casework, legal) to thriving (education, employment and social connectedness programs). We are a community. Our office in Footscray is called the Home of Hope and honestly little miracles happen here every day.

What is your biggest professional accomplishment?

I think my current role as General Manager of the ASRC. I joined the organization seven years ago as their Office Manager and have worked through being the Director of People and Services to my current role. We have a staff of approximately 220 paid staff and 1200 volunteers. We also have two social enterprises where we employ people seeking asylum and offer pathways to further employment. If you need a cleaner get in touch with ASRC Cleaning, or if you need a delicious vegetarian meal call ASRC Catering.

What's your favourite memory of PEGS?

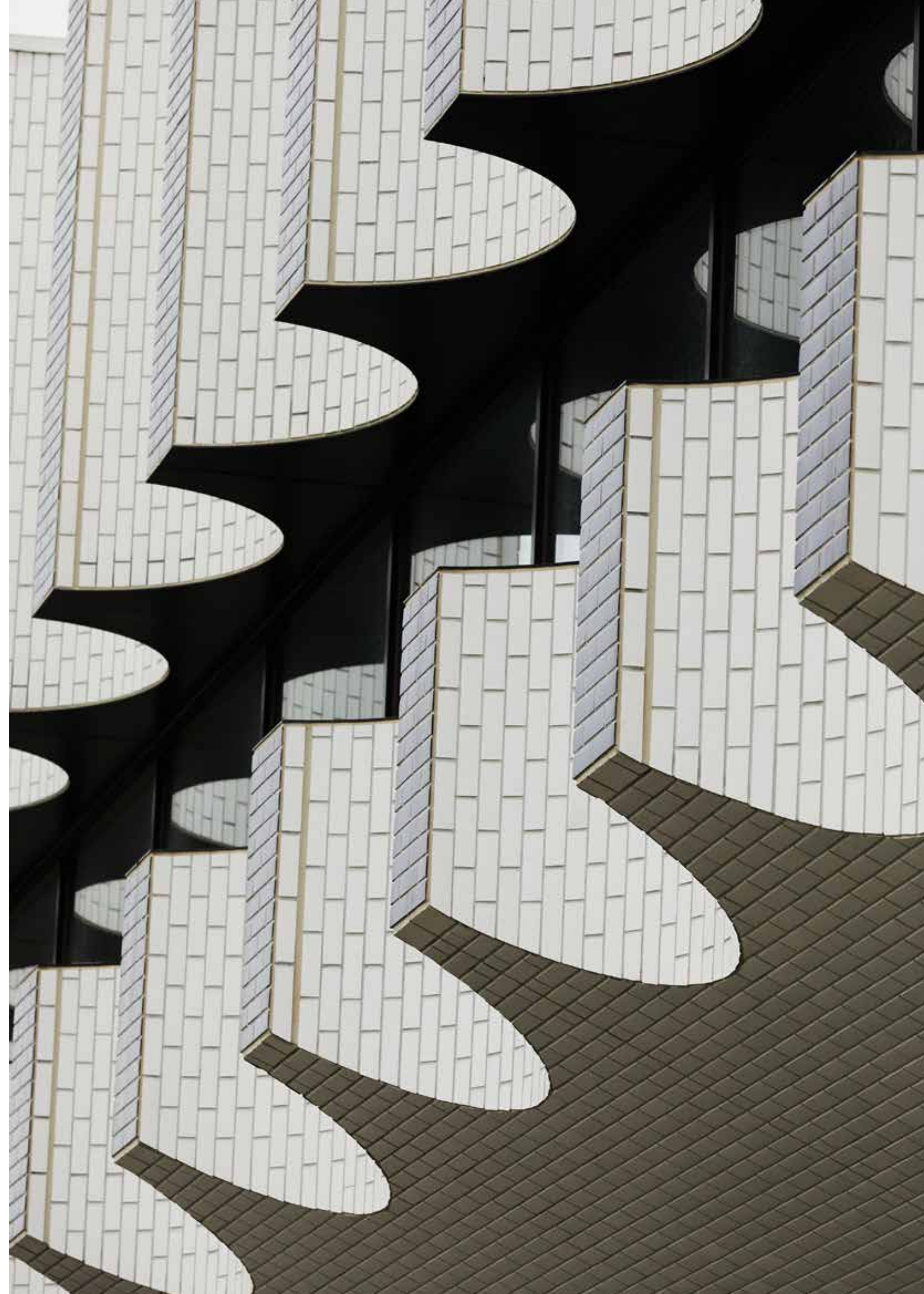
Honestly, it is the friendships that I still have and hold dear. There is something to be said of school friends who have known you since you were five – it is a special kind of friend that has been there through every phase of your life.

What advice would you give to young PEGS alumni?

Stay connected. Opportunities arise through networks and connections. And use your skills and talents for good! We need more smart, talented and connected people in the NFP sector.

What do you do in your spare time?

Well, as old as I feel, I have a three year old – so that is plenty! I love to travel (somewhat restricted right now) and we have just bought a campervan so that we can do more off the beaten track trips when allowed. I am a sucker for a dating reality TV show and a crime/thriller novel – because we all need downtime sometimes to escape the world.





2021 Dates for the Diary

Term Four

October

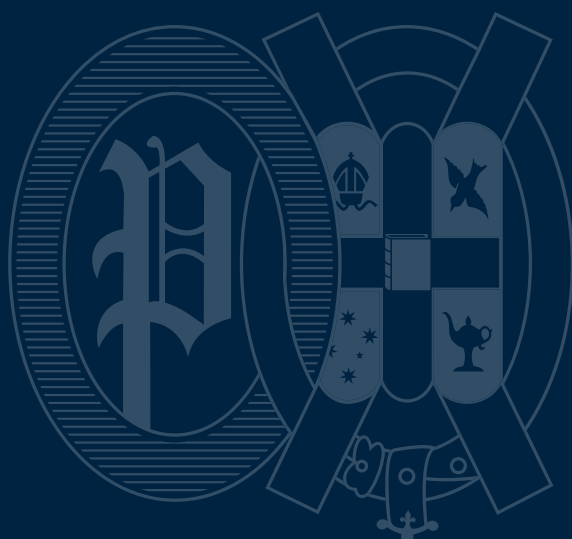
4 October – Term Four begins
6 October – VCE Visual Arts Viewing
11 October – Piano Concert Three
14 October – String Concert Three
19 October – Valedictory Dinner
25 October – Suzuki Concert Five

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



Contact details: newsletter@pegs.vic.edu.au

