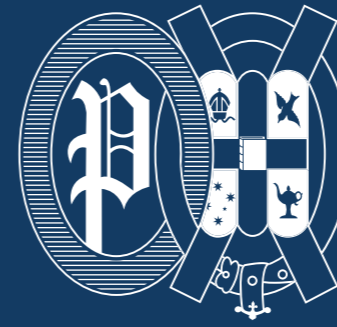


Strategic Plan Update

December 2025



Our School Values - REACH

In 2025, Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School undertook one of the most significant whole-school projects of recent years: the development and launch of our new school values - Respect, Excellence, Accountability, Curiosity and Heart (REACH).

This work drew on extensive consultation with our full community. Parents, students, staff and the School Board all contributed to the shaping of these values through surveys, workshops, forums and leadership discussions. Their insights helped us clarify the principles that both reflect who we are and articulate who we aspire to be.

REACH now serves as a shared compass, guiding the culture of every section of the School. These values inform the way we teach and learn, the expectations we hold for behaviour, the conversations we have with families, and the strengths we seek to develop in our students. REACH provides a consistent vocabulary and a unifying vision that connects Kindergarten, Junior, Middle and Senior School experiences.

The launch of our new values marks an important milestone. It affirms the strengths of our community, gives clarity and direction to our future, and ensures that every young person at PEGS understands the type of character we hope to help them build.



Learning and Thinking:

A centre of excellence where each person develops and grows

Strategic objectives

- Set high expectations for all to promote intellectual engagement, complex problem solving, growth and self-awareness
- Use evidence-based strategies that drive academic and personal success
- Challenge every student to apply new knowledge through deep learning
- Use rigorous assessment practices and feedback to improve teaching and learning
- Cultivate tenacity, courage and drive

Across the School, 2025 has been marked by strengthened consistency in instructional practice, deeper use of evidence-informed strategies, and a clear alignment of curriculum and pedagogy through work on our new instructional principles.

A new leadership structure, including Heads of Learning Area (Years 7 - 12) and a Director of Curriculum working across both Junior Schools, has provided a strong foundation for curriculum coherence, explicit teaching and improved instructional leadership. These roles are central to the development of a low-variance and knowledge rich curriculum and shared approaches to teaching and learning.

In the Junior Schools, teachers continued to embed responsive teaching, including daily review, checking for understanding and retrieval practice. Paired oral fluency lessons have become visible across year levels, and Celebration of Learning Days remained a highlight, with strong parent attendance. In the Girls' Junior School, alignment of Ochre English and Mathematics, UFLI phonics instruction and Essential Assessment data tools strengthened evidence-based practice.

Middle and Senior School staff deepened their understanding of explicit teaching through the La Trobe University Science of Learning course, Momentum Schools project, peer coaching, observations and instructional coaching with Bronwyn Ryrie Jones. School visits, structured faculty time and the development of Curriculum Design Principles and Assessment Principles have strengthened clarity and consistency. The Professional Learning program in the LC culminated with the Celebration of Learning on November 14th, where staff presented their findings from the work completed in their PLCs. Other teachers participated in the Quality Teaching Rounds ensuring that two thirds of the LC staff have now participated in a QTR.

Across the Middle Schools, Gottliebsen and McNab Houses embedded predictable entry routines - calm transitions, device-free starts, clear expectations and orderly endings - reducing cognitive load and maximising learning time. Teachers reviewed room layouts to support visibility and moved actively through classrooms to maintain focus and attention.

NAPLAN results reflected this sustained work. PEGS students achieved progress rates above students with similar starting scores

and backgrounds in the following key domains: Years 3 - 5: writing and numeracy; Years 7 - 9: reading, writing and numeracy. These results highlight the combined impact of consistent instruction, early intervention, data-informed teaching and strong transitions.

Support for learning was strengthened through MYAT testing for 2026 cohorts, enhanced transition meetings involving families and Individual Needs staff, and more refined approaches to L+ and N+ selection. Staff across both Middle Schools also completed NCCD modules to deepen understanding of equity and access. Learning beyond the classroom continued to expand. PEGS launched an invigorated Tour Programme, including the Conservation Club field experience (2025), the Chinese Language Tour (April 2026), Cape York Immersion Tour (June - July 2026), German and French Language Tours (September 2026) and planning for STEM, sport and arts tours in 2027. These experiences broaden student horizons, embed cultural and environmental learning, and provide authentic contexts for curiosity, courage and connection.



Care and Wellbeing:

A safe and inclusive culture where each person is known, valued and supported

Strategic objectives

- Foster of a culture of individual and community care
- Identify and develop initiatives to support the wellbeing needs of students and staff.
- Demonstrate our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

The School continued to prioritise predictable, inclusive environments that support connection, belonging and growth.

The launch of REACH provided students and staff with a clear, shared language for expectations, behaviour, relationships and personal development. Assemblies, form programmes and leadership structures across the School used these values to guide daily interactions.

Connections between the Middle Schools were strengthened through mixed assemblies, McGotty Day, shared events and cross-campus form gatherings. Middle Schools strengthened consistent behaviour procedures through a 6-stage response model.

The *Altior Awards* were implemented this year and students were acknowledged on a regular basis in assemblies. The winners of the *Altior Awards* were published in *Altior et Sapientior* and presented at the end of year colours assembly which further increased their importance and visibility.

To support student transition, a mentoring system was developed

for Year 9 Boys and Girls with Year 11 students, fostering awareness of the VCE. The Larkin Centre Student Learning Committee also worked with students during the subject selection period

Student wellbeing initiatives included the REACH Foundation workshops for Year 9, Form Assemblies focused on emotional literacy, Consent Education, Respectful Relationships and PERMA, and the presentation of new eSafety laws to all year levels. Staff in both Middle Schools completed Youth Mental Health First Aid training, and staff across the Junior Schools continued to embed consistent behaviour frameworks and recognition systems. Staff wellbeing initiatives included the Big Team Challenge, staff massage and Fitness Centre access.

The Kindergarten underwent national assessment this year and was rated "Exceeding National Standards" - the highest possible NQS rating - affirming the exceptional quality of care and education provided in our early years programme.



Engagement and Connections:

A focus on relationships that encourages growth and contribution

Strategic objectives

- Promote an environment of mutual respect
- Collaborate and share our story within and beyond the school community
- Build positive and productive relationships with parents and caregivers and alumni
- Promote a culture of open communication and feedback

Community engagement continued to be a hallmark of 2025, with increased opportunities for families to participate in School life. PEGS hosted the inaugural AGSV Music Festival, an ambitious three-day event at Keilor East. Students from across the AGSV performed, attended masterclasses, received adjudication, and learned from distinguished guest artists including Eliza Shephard and Syzygy. This landmark festival showcased student talent, fostered collaboration across schools and positioned PEGS as a leader in music education.

Our relationship with the community was further strengthened through large-scale events. In collaboration with the Friends of PEGS, the School hosted the PEGS Fair at the Keilor East campus - a significant logistical undertaking and a resounding success that attracted families from across the School and beyond.

The Music Department provided additional high-quality performance opportunities in 2025: Jazz Night, featuring Stage Band, Jazz Combos and Swing Syndicate (Vox

Ensemble), presenting Generations in Jazz repertoire to families; PEGS in Concert, held at the Melbourne Recital Centre, giving Junior and Senior students a professional, world-class performance experience.

Across the Middle Schools, parent engagement was strengthened through Year 7–10 Forums, Careers Evenings, and the Subject Expo. PEGSpeak articles provided families with insights into emotional development, effort, learning behaviours and academic expectations. Year level meetings at Gottliebse and McNab Houses deepened communication between staff and families and strengthened the home-school partnership.



Continuity and Sustainability:

Our commitment to long-term growth through resources, policies and procedures

Strategic objectives

- Embrace environmental, social responsibility and governance (ESG) best practice to ensure our school is sustainable for the future
- Ensure we follow best practice in compliance, and financial and risk management to continue to flourish regardless of external impacts
- Maintain the recruitment and development of outstanding and diverse staff
- Develop resources and create assets, including ICT and facilities

The School made substantial progress in 2025 toward ensuring long-term sustainability, strategic growth and high-quality infrastructure.

Development of a new indoor sports complex adjacent to our Keilor Park Sports Campus took place, which will see three new basketball courts, indoor cricket nets and a volleyball showcourt available for use from the beginning of the 2026 school year.

Large-scale planning is underway for the Essendon Campus, with early works launched in 2025 to prepare for a major building project that will begin in 2026. Older classrooms and amenities on the western side of the campus will be demolished and replaced with modern learning spaces that will connect to Gresham Robinson House.

At Moonee Ponds, an extensive refurbishment programme was completed. This included: a new shade sail over the running track; renovations to Before Care classrooms and Chinese rooms; complete refurbishment of the Year 5/6 bathrooms, canteen bathrooms and staff bathrooms; a new First Aid room; renovated Grade 3/4 classrooms and offices; fully

renovated Aftercare bathrooms, with new decking and glass doors; new decking and roofing at Tulloch House; new air conditioning in Prep/ Year 1 classrooms. These works significantly enhance safety, comfort and learning conditions across the campus.

The School also purchased two properties adjacent to the Moonee Ponds campus, increasing future capacity for facilities expansion, improved circulation and long-term planning.

The School transitioned to a new Managed Service Provider to streamline our ICT support and provide additional support with data management and cyber security.

In 2025, the School continued to build strong digital capability through the work of the e-Learning Champions, a cross-section of staff from all campuses and year levels. This group is leading the development of a new Digital Strategic Plan to guide technology use, innovation and digital literacy across the School. They also drafted the School's first AI Principles document, establishing a clear framework for the ethical, purposeful and safe use of artificial intelligence in teaching, learning

and administration. Their work ensures PEGS remains future-focused, technologically confident and aligned with national and global best practice in digital education.

Preparation commenced for the updated Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (Psychological Health) 2025 Compliance Code. These changes place a stronger emphasis on how employers – including Independent schools – must identify, manage, and reduce psychosocial risks in the workplace. Through staff consultation and surveys, the school gathered information about psychosocial hazards and their management in the workplace, and provided training and awareness for leaders and staff on their role in maintaining psychological health.

In 2025, PEGS was granted an exemption under the Equal Opportunity Act, confirming the School's ability to maintain balanced numbers of boys and girls in line with our diamond model. Without this exemption, demographic realities would create a gender imbalance affecting the educational, social and cultural experience of students. The exemption supports gender equity, preserves the integrity of our educational model,

and reflects our commitment to inclusivity, safety and respect.

Policy work continued, including updates to the Enrolment Policy and transition processes, enhancing transparency and ensuring that families are well supported through entry into the School.

Sustainability efforts expanded through green waste systems, additional solar panels, LED conversions and reduced material consumption in the Junior Musical, which achieved approximately 65% re-use of costumes and sets.

Our new reversible sports uniform was launched, designed to reduce the number of items students need to purchase while improving functionality and sustainability. Their reversible design also supports greater flexibility during inter-school sport and training. Work also progressed on the streamlined Firsts uniform, with samples produced featuring a reversible clash side incorporating the artwork created for the school by Melbourne-based Aboriginal artist, Simone Thomson. Together, these developments reflect the School's commitment to sustainability, inclusivity and a more efficient, student-centred uniform model.

Digital systems continued to evolve, with Clipboard now used for fixturing, team selection and sport administration. The Keilor Park indoor facility neared completion, with scheduling and planning for community use underway.

A new senior leadership structure was implemented, with the role of Director of Operations and Engagement providing additional support in key areas such as communications, operations, and cocurricular. Staff leadership continued to grow through expanded coaching, role development, and refined responsibilities for Heads of Section and their Deputies and Coordinators.

