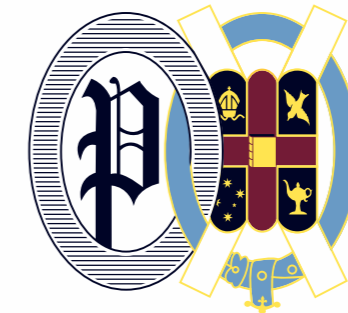


PENLEIGH AND ESSENDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Altior et Sapientior

July 2026



From the Principal

Recently, *The Age* visited PEGS to tell a story that began well beyond our gates. They had come following the achievement of Connor Metcalfe, now one of only eleven people to have scored a goal for Australia at a Men's FIFA World Cup, and were interested in what it meant to our students to know that part of his journey had taken place on these same fields.

What they found was something more than a story about elite sport. As some of our students who are currently pulling on the PEGS colours in our boys' and girls' First XI teams, there was a quiet but unmistakable shift in how possibility was understood. The idea that someone had progressed from this place, not abstractly, but tangibly, from these classrooms, these training sessions, and this community, carried weight. It made the pathway real.

That moment of recognition sits powerfully alongside the phrase *Altior et Sapientior*: higher and wiser.

To go higher is to aspire. To imagine what might be possible beyond the present moment. But to go wiser is to understand that such moments are not defined by singular achievements, but by what precedes them: commitment, consistency, and the accumulation of effort over time. It is this interplay between aspiration and understanding that shapes the experiences reflected throughout this edition.

We see it first in the youngest members of our community, whose learning begins with curiosity. Their willingness to ask questions, to explore, and to see themselves as capable participants in their own growth. As students progress through the School, that curiosity evolves into something more disciplined: a capacity to engage with challenge, to learn from experience, and to recognise that progress is often gradual and, at times, unseen.

Beyond the classroom, that same trajectory is evident in the breadth of opportunities available to our students. Experiences such as the Year Six Canberra Tour bring to life the structures that underpin our society, prompting students to see themselves as active contributors to the world around them. International experiences extend this further, embedding a deeper sense of respect and curiosity through engagement with different cultures and

perspectives. Our Camp and Co-curricular programmes, in turn, remind students that growth is often shaped through collaboration, perseverance and the willingness to step beyond comfort.

Across all of these experiences, our values of excellence and accountability are not simply articulated. They are practised. Students are encouraged to strive, to extend themselves, and to take ownership of their development. These are the habits that underpin achievement, whether that is realised in the classroom, on the stage, on the field, or in ways that may only fully emerge in years to come.

At the same time, there is a consistent expression of heart within our community. It is evident in the way students contribute to shared endeavours, support one another, and recognise that success carries with it a responsibility to others. It is also reflected in the stories of our alumni, whose contributions beyond the School continue to embody the values that first shaped them here.

Importantly, the significance of the moment observed by *The Age* is not that it establishes expectation, but that it expands perspective. For the students who were interviewed, the achievement of a former student did not diminish the effort required to reach such heights; rather, it clarified the connection between where they are now and what might be possible in the future.

This, in many ways, is the deeper promise of *Altior et Sapientior*. It is not simply about reaching higher, but about understanding how that journey unfolds. It is about recognising that possibility is not distant or abstract, but grounded in the daily habits, choices and experiences that define school life.

As you read this edition, you will see many such moments. Some of these are significant, others seemingly small. But all contribute to this broader arc of growth. Together, they reflect a community in which aspiration is encouraged, effort is valued, and possibility is made visible.

And, for our students, that makes all the difference.

Kate Dullard



Turning the Sod: A New Chapter for Junior School (boys) at Essendon

On a clear afternoon at our Essendon campus, members of the PEGS community gathered to mark a significant milestone in the life of the School: the official turning of the first sod for the Essendon campus building project. While ceremonial in nature, the moment carried a deeper significance. It represented the beginning of a carefully considered and long-planned project; a project grounded in the School's responsibility to provide learning environments that meet the needs of contemporary primary education, while remaining true to the character and history of the site.

The Essendon campus has long been a place where generations of students have begun their educational journey. Over time, however, it became clear that some existing facilities no longer fully supported the learning, accessibility and wellbeing needs of today's students. This development responds thoughtfully to that reality, reflecting a commitment to ensuring that the School's physical environment continues to support high-quality teaching and learning for years to come.

Rather than simply replacing buildings, the project introduces a new "learning neighbourhood" - a connected and purposeful environment designed to reflect how young boys learn best. The design brings together classrooms, library spaces, makers spaces and shared areas in a way that encourages movement, collaboration and curiosity. Equally important is the relationship between indoor and outdoor spaces, allowing for a more dynamic and engaging learning experience.

Care has also been taken to respect the heritage of the site. Gresham Robinson House, a longstanding feature of the streetscape, remains an important reference point in the design, ensuring that the development honours the past while looking confidently to the future.

The sod turning event itself brought together many of those who have contributed to bringing the project from vision to reality. Board members, school leaders and staff were joined by our project partners from McBride Charles Ryan and Building Engineering, whose expertise in educational design and construction will guide the next phase of the work. Also present was a group of our current students, whose enthusiasm for the project was unmistakable. Donning hard hats and fluoro vests, they looked entirely at home on what will soon become their new learning environment, offering a glimpse of the life and energy the precinct will one day hold.

Projects of this nature are always the result of sustained collaboration and careful stewardship. From the strategic leadership of the Board, to the professional insight of our consultants, to the adaptability and commitment of staff who have worked within the constraints of existing facilities, this milestone reflects a shared investment in the future of the School.

At its heart, this development is about our students - those currently at Essendon, and those who will follow. It is about creating spaces that nurture confidence, independence and curiosity; environments where boys feel connected, supported and inspired in their learning.

As the first sod was turned, there was a strong sense of both continuity and momentum. This project is not simply about what is being built, but about what will happen within those spaces in the years ahead. It reflects a long-term perspective, thoughtful planning, and a commitment to ensuring that PEGS continues to evolve in ways that serve its community well.

We look forward to following the progress of the build and to sharing further updates as this important project takes shape.

Kate Dullard
Principal



Challenging Opportunities

Our school values explicitly encourage us to REACH, and ambition is palpable in our classrooms as our students wrestle with new and more complex ideas, and practise more finely honed skills.

Beyond the classroom, they have a host of opportunities to reach for deeper understanding and ever higher standards. In Term Two, aspiring orators competed in the Rostrum Voice of Youth competition, and Year Nine and Ten debaters continued their competition for the right to represent our region in the State finals. A junior debating programme, hosted here at McNab House, will begin in Term Three for students in Year Seven.

The University of Melbourne's Mathematics Competition, the Maths 'CAT' and the AMC are complemented by our Mathematics Camp to provide aspiring mathematicians with opportunities to flex their growing mathematical muscles. In Term Three we will see teams of students from all year levels competing against students from other schools in the Maths Games Days.

The Berthe Mouchette French Poetry speaking competition, the Goethe German poetry competition and the Chinese speaking competition all provide opportunities for enrichment and extension in languages, while the 2026 da Vinci Decathlon saw more than a thousand students from a vast array of schools join us for a ten-discipline problem solving competition. PEGS in Concert, followed by our major concert series, gave student musicians a chance to shine, and in Term Three the crescendo will be our Concerto Concert.

All of these challenging opportunities mean our students can strive for Excellence, pursuing the highest standards, inside the classroom and beyond.

Anthony Simmons
Head of McNab House

Tony Larkin OAM



It is with great pride that we share the news that Mr Tony Larkin, Principal of PEGS from 1998 to 2019, has been recognised in the 2026 King's Birthday Honours with the Medal of the Order of Australia in the General Division.

This honour acknowledges Mr Larkin's outstanding service to secondary education and school sport, his official citation reflecting the breadth and depth of a contribution spanning more than four decades as a teacher, educational leader, and generous contributor to the wider Victorian and national education landscape.

Mr Larkin's impact on PEGS has been profound and enduring. From his leadership as Principal, through his earlier years of service as Vice Principal and teacher, to the lasting legacy of the Larkin Centre, his influence is woven deeply into the fabric of our school.

When asked what the award meant to him, Mr Larkin characteristically reflected on the PEGS community, saying, "(The) honour also reflects on the hundreds of staff with whom I worked during my years at PEGS. There is also the honour, by association, it gives to my wife and two daughters. The award helps them to remember that we were doing something purposeful."

Mr Larkin's contribution also extends well beyond PEGS. Through his work with organisations including the VCAA, Independent Schools Victoria, and the AGSV, he has helped shape educational policy and practice more broadly. Despite his characteristically

self-deprecating declaration of a "lack of sporting talent", Mr Larkin played a significant role in the development of the combined AGSV/APS girls' sporting competition, an initiative that greatly expanded opportunities for young women across our schools and which remains an important legacy today.

The affection and esteem in which Mr Larkin is held across the PEGS community have been evident in the many hundreds of texts and emails he received after the award was announced. "It was quite overwhelming and lovely to hear from so many former students, including some I taught during my first year of teaching," he said.

Asked whether he had a message for the community, Mr Larkin offered a reflection that speaks strongly to the spirit of PEGS: "It should never be forgotten that PEGS is an exceptional school. To ensure its ongoing effectiveness it needs the support of its community for all of its programs. For students to be successful academically, which must be the primary aim of every school, they need to value the school experience. Engagement in one area, be it sport, drama, music, social initiatives, etc, leads to a broader engagement in the full life and primary purpose of the school."

We warmly congratulate Mr Larkin on this richly deserved honour and celebrate, with deep appreciation, the remarkable contribution he has made to education, to PEGS, and to the many people whose lives have been shaped by his leadership and service.



Sustainability at Moonee Ponds



Reach for Green, Keep it Clean has become a lively and meaningful focus for students this term, as the Junior School (girls) embraced a new sustainability initiative with enthusiasm and purpose.

Sustainability Captains, Sylvia and Kira, explained how the initiative came to life across the term. In the final ten minutes of lunch, students in each play area paused to sort both playground litter and lunch waste into clearly designated bins, under the careful guidance of members of the Sustainability Team. Sylvia noted with pride that even Prep students were confidently separating their rubbish into compost, recycling, plastics and general waste.

At the end of lunch, the Captains and their fellow team members conducted a waste audit to review the results of their efforts. While the task was certainly messy, gloves and tongs ensured the students could work safely and efficiently. When asked about the group's goal, Sylvia was clear: they hope to reduce the amount of plastic used in food packaging brought to school.

The team is encouraging students to bring "nude food" and is also advocating for the canteen to adopt further biodegradable alternatives. With close to one hundred students involved, the Sustainability Team reflects a strong and growing commitment to action, supported by the school's REACH values.

Christine Hallman
Head of Junior School (girls)



Learning with Heart: Ethics and Religion

In Ethics and Religion, students are encouraged to live our REACH values. In Prep to Year Two, students explore stories from the Bible and children's literature to consider characters' motivations, choices and feelings.

Through discussion, drama and shared learning experiences, the students consider different perspectives and deepen their social and emotional understanding. Stories such as *Fox Makes Friends*, along with well-known biblical accounts, including those of *Noah's Ark* and *Zacchaeus*, invite students to reflect on characters' actions and make meaningful connections to their own lives.

These experiences help students see how words and actions shape relationships, while building their understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. They are also supported to communicate clearly, work cooperatively and make thoughtful choices each day.

In the upper primary years, students explore how relationships are shaped by choices, actions and responsibility. Through real-life scenarios, they identify emotions, discuss behaviour, and examine issues using words, images and symbols. These conversations help students understand why some actions are harmful and how respectful, healthy relationships can be nurtured within a school community.

Learning also extends to cyberbullying, where students consider why harmful online behaviour occurs and reflect on its impact. Using *Padlet*, Year Six students shared ideas, listened thoughtfully to one another, and developed their understanding of online responsibility.

A key focus throughout the program is personal choice. Students learn that they can pause before responding to a negative comment or action, giving themselves time to reflect and choose a response that contributes to a positive and inclusive community.

Luisa Garcea, Stephanie Maccora and Jessie Maric
Ethics and Religion Teachers
Junior School





Small Acts, Big Impact

As winter approached, the Junior School (boys) community once again came together for the annual Winter Appeal. This much-loved initiative provided a meaningful opportunity for students and families to live out our REACH values, with a particular focus on Heart, as they cared for others in a practical and generous way.

Families responded with overwhelming generosity, donating food and blankets to support individuals and families experiencing hardship during the colder months. The donations were shared at a special assembly, where students were reminded of the power of small acts of kindness and the difference they can make in the lives of others.

We were delighted to welcome Belle and Dale from Uniting's Food for Families programme, who joined us to accept the donations and speak about the impact this support has within the local community. Food for Families provides emergency food relief and distributes more than 100,000 meals each year - almost enough meals to fill every seat at the MCG.

The response from the JSb families was truly heartening. We thank our students and families for their generosity and support. Through this collective effort, our students helped bring care, dignity and hope to others this winter.

Jessie Maric and Luisa Garcia
Ethics and Religion Teachers
Junior School (boys)



The Captain's View

Since the beginning of the school year, we have witnessed many extraordinary moments across the campuses. The Year Seven students approached their new environment with curiosity and enthusiasm as they settled into the Keilor East campus life. It has been especially encouraging to see the respect and support shown to them by their older peers across both Middle School sections. Our Year Ten leaders have also made a positive impact by launching lunchtime House activities, helping to strengthen school spirit and foster a greater sense of community. These small, but meaningful, initiatives play an important role in bringing students together and creating the vibrant school culture we thrive in.

The Kindergarten students have quickly made themselves at home, learning to interact, collaborate, and build friendships as they step beyond their comfort zones. Spending time in the Kindergarten felt like stepping into a time capsule, reminding us of the unique excitement and wonder of the early years of learning. It was inspiring to see that even at such a young age, respect for peers and teachers is deeply embedded within the PEGS community. Curiosity is evident at every stage of the PEGS journey, from Kindergarten through to the Larkin Centre. Across all year levels, students demonstrate a genuine enthusiasm for learning, embracing new experiences and asking thoughtful, insightful questions.

During our recent visit to Cottage 49, we shared a memorable moment with the Kindergarten students at the Light Atelier. Through the refraction of light, they created vivid and imaginative displays, working together to explore how their actions transformed the colours and patterns around them. It was a wonderful example of creativity and teamwork in a small part of our school community.

As the year progresses, we are confident that engagement and enthusiasm across the school will continue to flourish and we look forward to seeing the development along the way.

Harry and Jennifer
School Captains



PEGS in Concert

On 26 May, we proudly presented our second PEGS in Concert at the exceptional Elisabeth Murdoch Hall in the Melbourne Recital Centre. This inspiring professional venue continues to elevate our students' musical performances in a space which offers a truly transformative opportunity. Our flagship ensembles demonstrated outstanding commitment and artistry, culminating in a programme of depth, variety and flair. More than 230 students from Years Five to Twelve performed with confidence and polish, rising to the occasion before an appreciative audience of over 500 members of our community.

The evening showcased the remarkable breadth of the music programme, featuring Fanfare, Senior Choir Vox Populi, Junior Choir, Cheetham Singers, Guitar Ensemble, Chindamo Jazz Combo, Stage Band, Concert Band, Curro Strings and Symphony Orchestra. Each ensemble contributing to a vibrant and dynamic musical journey across styles and traditions.

A powerful finale of excerpts from *Carmina Burana* brought the concert to a thrilling close, leaving the hall resonating with energy, intensity and a shared sense of achievement.

Many wonderful comments were received as feedback.

"This was a performance of remarkable focus and spirit. Our students embraced the scale and significance of the venue, delivering music with energy and genuine expression."

"An impressive concert last night. It was a very high quality performance and enjoyable - from jazz that excites to symphony that moves!"

"The finale was breathtaking. The atmosphere in the room was electric, and it was a privilege to witness such a powerful performance from these young musicians."

Students also reflected on the experience with pride and enthusiasm.

"Singing Carmina Burana in that space was unforgettable. The sound was so powerful, and it felt like we were part of something truly special."

"Playing on such a special stage made us lift to a new level."

This concert was a celebration of excellence, collaboration and the joy of performance, hallmarks of music at PEGS. We hope you will join us again in 2027.



How inquiry and play grow powerful thinkers

At PEGS Kindergarten we intentionally weave inquiry-based learning into our play-based programme. Inquiry simply means learning that begins with curiosity. Instead of starting with the “right answer,” we begin with children’s questions, theories, and ideas.

Children are not empty vessels to be filled, but capable thinkers who actively make sense of their world.

In a play-based, inquiry-rich programme, a child might wonder, “Why does our shadow disappear?” – a thought considered recently in Cottage 53. From this simple question an investigation was born, leading children to explore light and dark in our Atelier of Light.

The children have transferred this thinking and their wonderings into other play experiences and encounters in their room. They have been creating shadows - overlapping objects, noticing how shapes change, and recording their observations through drawing or sculpture (clay, recycled materials, building blocks). Here, inquiry is both intellectual and creative. The children are engaged in the early work of scientists, but they are also developing language, social skills and perseverance at the same time.

Central to this approach is our belief in children’s agency. Agency means that children see themselves as active participants in their learning, with real choices and a voice that matters. When children decide which materials to try, how to approach a problem, or how to represent what they’ve discovered, they are practising decision-making, responsibility, and self-regulation. This has been strongly demonstrated by the children in Cottage 49 in their current inquiry about visible and invisible forces, and the experiences they have shared in constructing wind tunnels.

This sense of agency has a powerful impact on learning. Children who feel that their ideas are valued are more likely to take risks, persist through challenges, and engage deeply. They learn that “I can figure things out,” which is a far more important process than believing they must know the correct answer in the moment. Over time, they develop confidence as thinkers and collaborators.

As teachers, we are not standing back and watching from a distance. In Cottage 51’s inquiry into their vegetable garden, we carefully designed environments and chose materials, such as the research table, equipped with magnifying glasses, paper, markers, rulers and arrangements of seeds and produce from our garden to enhance the children’s curiosities and discoveries. We listened closely to children’s conversations to support the evolving design of our environment and direction of inquiry. We also posed thoughtful questions, offered new perspectives, and documented the children’s thinking through photos, transcripts, and displays. This documentation helps children see their own growth, offers opportunities to review and reflect, as well as making their learning visible to families and visitors.

For parents, it may sometimes be difficult to see all of this under the surface of play. But when your child comes home talking about what happens when their shadow disappears, the idea that wind can move, or the intricate patterns on a strawberry, they are sharing evidence of complex thinking, creativity, and agency in action.

In our kindergarten, play is not a break from learning. Play is the way children inquire, make meaning, and discover who they are as capable, powerful learners.

Lauren Olcorn
Director of Kindergarten



Not Just Flour and Water...

Unlike a recipe or a set of instructions designed for others to follow and achieve a specific result, Outdoor Education is about creating the recipe itself, one that is personalised and unique. The outcome is not always a physical or visible masterpiece, but rather a masterpiece within the mind, built through experience, challenge, and personal growth. The masterpieces created on camp may look similar side by side; however, the ingredients that shaped them differ for every student.

Nestled in the valley on the eastern side of Eildon Camp, Year Five students are tasked with creating damper. While the literal ingredients are flour and water, it is the hidden ingredients that truly determine the outcome. Ingredients such as collaboration, respectful communication, trust in one another, and the confidence to step beyond comfort zones.

For some, the quantities of these ingredients may vary. One pair may need an extra teaspoon of respectful communication as they learn to offer constructive feedback to one another. Another may discover they need an extra cup of trust, strengthened through a shared challenge experienced earlier in the week. As the damper cooks over the hot coals, an extra sprinkle of patience is often required, along with a pinch of appreciation for the traditional bush-cooking methods that have been used for generations.

Once covered with butter and jam, each chef is warmed by every mouthful. Yet it is not simply the taste of the damper that brings joy. Rather, it is the process that creates the deepest sense of accomplishment. The shared responsibility, laughter, problem-solving, and perseverance all become part of the recipe.

So, the next time you speak to a Year Five student, instead of asking, "How did you reach the top of Heartbreak Hill?", ask, "What were the hidden ingredients that helped you get there?" It is in answering this question that they may reveal what truly went into the experience.

Bonnie Morris
Outdoor Education teacher
Eildon Camp



Encouraging Confident, Capable Learners

It was recently exam season at Gotty House. To look through a different lens, an exam is like knowing that one's musical practice on a saxophone will involve a recital, or that soccer training will culminate in a match. Each is a recognisable and definable milestone in the journey of learning. A point to aim for but not the whole purpose of the learning. Exams provide 'punctuation' that segments one phase of knowledge acquisition and skill development from the next. They reveal whether the student is on track and making progress, or not, so that the appropriate next steps may be put in place.

Exams do far more than build resilience in terms of whether the student can 'bounce back from a bad result'. They can be the prompt for so much more, if they are seen as one element (and not the most important one) across a student's Middle School years.

Our students sit each exam on a specific day; however, the building of learning and understanding is an ongoing project, occurring across every day of every school term. If students are also guided to focus on 'learning' to become effective learners, they can build a strong framework of habits and attitudes that will allow them to learn effectively at school, and to continue as successful lifelong learners beyond.

With a daily focus on the present, each lesson is a valuable piece in the bigger picture of learning. The exam loses its hold as the 'scary character' of the story and becomes instead a chance to see how much has been understood and fully grasped, and crucially, what is yet to be managed and mastered. The desirable habits include regular retrieval of prior and connected knowledge, practising written responses, and embedding deep understandings by thinking, questioning and reinforcing.

Talking to students over the past few weeks, many admit to a few nerves about exams, but they are also keen to perform and relish the chance to demonstrate what they know and what they can do – the products of their diligence.

This is the kind of resilience we want to build for the benefit of our students.

Caroline Horton Andrews
Head of Gottliebsen House



Da Vinci Decathlon 2026

Earlier this term, PEGS hosted the da Vinci Decathlon State Final, an event inspired by the legendary Leonardo da Vinci, a man who somehow managed to be an artist, scientist, inventor and engineer all at once. Fortunately, we only had to compete in ten events based on the areas of his greatest knowledge .

Schools from across Victoria gathered, bringing together over 1000 students eager to put their knowledge, creativity and teamwork to the test. Teams from Years Seven to Ten competed in a range of challenges, including Mathematics, English, Science, Engineering, Creative Producers, Legacy, Art and Poetry, Cartography, Ideology and Code Breaking. Each event required students to think critically, work collaboratively and occasionally stare at a question wondering if it had been written in another language.

The challenges pushed us well beyond our comfort zones, encouraging us to think outside the box and sometimes outside several boxes. Whether we were solving complex problems, creating innovative solutions or attempting to crack seemingly impossible codes, every team relied on creativity, perseverance and teamwork to navigate the day.

The atmosphere in the gym was electric, with excitement, nerves and determination filling the room from start to finish. While there was certainly a competitive spirit, the day was about much more than rankings and trophies. Students had the opportunity to meet others with similar interests, share ideas and connect with peers who genuinely enjoy being challenged academically.

The event concluded with a celebration of everyone's hard work. A photo slideshow captured the highlights of the day, while the Creative Producers presentations and awards ceremony provided a fitting end to an exciting and memorable experience.

PEGS students achieved some outstanding results. The Year Seven team placed second in Science, the Year Eight team placed second in Art and Poetry, and third overall, while the Year Ten team placed second in Art and Poetry, and Cartography, and achieved first place in both Science and Legacy. These results reflect the dedication, talent and teamwork demonstrated by all students throughout the competition.

Regardless of the final placings, every participant should be incredibly proud of their efforts. The da Vinci Decathlon is designed to challenge students in unexpected ways, and everyone who took part embraced that challenge with enthusiasm and determination. Congratulations to all involved. Good luck to future PEGS teams who will no doubt discover that thinking outside the box is much harder when there isn't actually a box to begin with!

Methuki and Angela
McNab House students



Imagine if ...

“Imagine if” ... Two words that were oft repeated by our guest speaker Professor Veena Sahajwalla during our second Thinking Seminar for 2026, held on Tuesday 5 May. Together, these two words formed a fitting refrain for an evening that challenged all of us to reconsider long-held assumptions about waste, sustainability and innovation.

An internationally recognised scientist, engineer, and inventor, Professor Sahajwalla is renowned for her pioneering research into sustainable materials and the transformation of waste into valuable resources. Throughout her presentation, she invited the audience to “rethink” traditional approaches to consumption and disposal, encouraging us to see waste not as something to be discarded, but as raw material waiting to be repurposed in creative and meaningful ways.

Drawing on real-world examples from her research, Professor Sahajwalla demonstrated how science and technology can work hand in hand with imagination, creativity and artistry to address some of the most pressing environmental challenges of our time. Her presentation was not only intellectually stimulating, it was inspiring and deeply hopeful, reminding us that innovation often begins with the courage to ask a simple but powerful question: “Imagine if ...”

Did you know that across our campuses we currently have over 500 solar panels installed and operating? With sustainability as one of our key priorities and commitments to our community, these panels, and those planned for when upgrades occur in future, are one of the most visible examples of this commitment.

Schools are the ideal environment for solar electricity as they operate almost exclusively during daylight hours, and maximise the use of the energy produced. With this in mind, we believe the solar installations play an important role in promoting sustainable thinking within the student body and that they reinforce our commitment to minimising our carbon footprint.

Awareness and access to the data from the school’s solar panels can also be utilised in multiple subject areas as a teaching aid. Subjects like Geography, Business Studies and Science can all benefit from the ‘real world’ experience of generating clean energy. The Conservation Club at each campus can also learn about the benefits of solar energy and the minutiae of managing energy supply in the current electricity marketplace.

Most importantly, these initiatives demonstrate to our students that sustainability is not simply something we learn about, it is something we actively practise. By embedding responsible environmental stewardship into both our operations and our teaching, we are helping prepare students to be thoughtful and engaged citizens of the future.

Peter Bohmer
Director of Operations and Engagement





Maths + Fun = Double Fun

In Semester One, Maths Enrichment students had numerous opportunities to pursue their mathematical interest in various challenges and competitions. Some, such as the Melbourne University Mathematics Competition, made us experiment with ideas that extended beyond what we learnt in the classroom. Others, such as the Computational and Algorithmic Thinking competition, tested how we used maths to find patterns and solve problems logically.

The highlight of the semester was the Year Nine and Ten Maths Enrichment Camp at Eildon. Everything that we did there exceeded my expectations! During the weekend, we participated in numerous maths sessions that prepared us to tackle the challenging Gauss and Noether Competition (named after famous mathematicians). We also enjoyed many camp activities such as canoeing, archery, lantern stalk, hiking and a movie night. It all culminated in a thrilling maths game on Sunday morning, which involved solving complex problems at high speed. The camp proved my hypothesis that if doing maths is fun, then doing maths and fun is double fun!

All these activities reminded me once again of my first Maths Enrichment class in Year Seven. I was fascinated by all the interesting problems that we had to solve; they initially seemed totally different to what we did in our normal Maths class, but while working through them, we realised that they were connected to everything we learnt. I've since had a great time in the group; I cannot wait to see what challenges we tackle next!

Stefania
Year Nine student
McNab House



Walking Together: Reconciliation in Action

At Junior School (girls), the work of the RAP (Reconciliation Action Plan) Committee continues to guide rich and meaningful engagement with reconciliation across the school. This term, Reconciliation Week provided a valuable opportunity for students to reflect, learn, and connect with the histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In Prep to Year Three classrooms, shared reading of First Nations stories sparked thoughtful discussion and curiosity. Through these texts, our youngest primary learners explored ideas of Country, culture, and belonging, building on early foundations of respect and understanding through storytelling.

Across all year levels, students have contributed to a collaborative art installation, each class creating a piece inspired by their learning and reflecting on this year's theme of being "All In" for reconciliation. As these pieces are brought together, the emerging work captures a shared commitment, demonstrating that reconciliation is a collective journey strengthened by listening, active participation, respect, and many voices working together.

Junior School (girls) will continue this commitment during Social Services Week, supporting the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. Through this initiative, our community will directly support work in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by helping to provide culturally relevant books, strengthen early literacy through programs such as *Book Buzz*, and enable the sharing of stories in First Languages through community publishing.

Together, these experiences represent a vibrant snapshot of the thoughtful learning, creativity, and action taking place in Junior School (girls). Guided by the RAP Committee, our students are not only learning about reconciliation, they are beginning to live it with open minds, respectful hearts, and a shared sense of responsibility.

Bethany Sita
Classroom teacher
Junior School (girls)



Junior Schools Turn the Page

Thousands of children across Australia paused to share a story on Wednesday 27 May as part of National Simultaneous Storytime 2026, and students across our Junior Schools embraced the occasion with creativity, curiosity and enthusiasm.

At the Junior School (girls) campus, Prep to Year Four students gathered in the library to enjoy *Luna Roo the Kangaroo Baller* by Adam Wallace and Adrian Lloyd. While delighting students with humour and warmth, the story also explored themes of courage, resilience and self-belief.

Inspired by Luna Roo's journey, students reflected on challenges they had overcome in their own lives before creating personalised gold medals featuring affirmations and character strengths. These thoughtful keepsakes served as a reminder that stories can help us better understand ourselves and recognise our own potential. As one teacher reflected, "Stories can shape not only how we think, but who we become."

At the Junior School (boys), students enjoyed an exclusive pre-release reading of *The House That Walked Away* by Australian author and illustrator Simon Howe. Before the book had even reached store shelves, excitement was building amongst students through displays, commemorative badges and classroom discussions centred on the book's themes of family, home and belonging.

Students from Years One to Six explored the question, 'What makes my house feel like a home?' through the creation of three-dimensional house displays that celebrated their unique experiences and perspectives. These creations became a powerful talking point when Simon visited the campus, immediately connecting students to the story and its message.

During his visit, Simon captivated students as he shared not only his book, but also the creative process behind it. He spoke about developing ideas, illustrating characters and bringing emotions to life through storytelling. For many students, it was their first insight into the journey from a simple idea to a published book.

National Simultaneous Storytime may last less than an hour, but its impact extends far beyond a single reading. It celebrates the joy of stories, the power of imagination and the connections that books create between readers. The event highlighted a vibrant reading culture and a shared appreciation for the stories that inspire, challenge and bring us together.

James Durston, Frances Eames and Jemma Ritchie
PEGS Librarians





Big Blue Bonanza

On being appointed Big Blue Bonanza leader, I knew I had a challenging task ahead of me, but I felt up to the challenge as it gave me an opportunity to give something back to the PEGS community that has given me so much.

The logistics around planning, and the need for constant communication were very demanding, but I learned fast and one of the first things I learned is that I could not do it alone. There were so many people performing so many roles, and it was great to see everyone pulling together, setting priorities and solving problems. I think we all learnt the importance of adapting to changing needs and challenges.

After so much planning, it was such a relief when event day arrived. I was anxious for everything to go as planned and I walked my heart out – over 17 km in less than two hours – to try and make sure it did. I know that all who attended were impressed with the entertainment on the night. The hours of preparation put in by the musicians and the dancers was evident in their polished performances that delighted and entertained.

The volunteers who ran the stalls provided treats, activities and face painting, adding to the atmosphere. The smiles on people's faces and seeing the community band together was a highlight. The \$5,000 that was raised and that will go directly to *Beyond Blue* is another.

The wonderful work that *Beyond Blue* do is evident to everyone. The fact that over 750 people turned up to the BBB not only shows the willingness people have to support the cause, but also to support each other and the close community we have here at PEGS.

I would like to thank all the Year Twelves, volunteers, and Social Justice team and staff who helped out, both on the night and beforehand, to ensure the evening was a success. Without their support, effort, and willingness to help, the event would not have gone ahead.

Alex
Year Twelve student and Big Blue Bonanza leader
Larkin Centre

Exploring What Comes Next

More than three hundred PEGS Year Eleven students stepped out of the classroom and into a far broader question this term: what comes next?

The Victorian Careers Show offered a rare opportunity - one of the few occasions we take an entire cohort off campus - and it was wonderful to see students approach it with both curiosity and intent.

This wasn't a case of simply turning up and collecting glossy brochures (although the occasional free tote bag, pen and hat did make an appearance). In the week leading up, students were deliberately prepared during tutor time. They were challenged to identify at least two possible career or tertiary pathways and, importantly, to interrogate those options.

Armed with a structured set of questions covering entry requirements, course design, career outcomes, and student life, they were encouraged to move beyond passive browsing and into purposeful conversation. And that shift matters. Because choosing a pathway beyond school can often feel overwhelming, even abstract. What the Expo provided was something more tangible: the chance to ask, to listen, and to test assumptions. For some students, it affirmed existing ambitions. For others, it prompted a rethink.

Either way, it marked a step forward. It was much less about having the answers, and much more about learning how to ask the right questions.

Claire Hammond
Senior Careers Advisor



ANZAC Day

'*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*'. (It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country)

For two thousand years, these words, by the Roman poet Horace, celebrated the nobility and glory of giving one's life for one's nation. That was until Wilfred Owen, in 1917 condemned the idea as 'the old lie'.

On ANZAC day, representatives from our school leadership executive attended an ANZAC service at Christ Church Essendon, where Ollie and Daniel gave readings and Harry laid a wreath in commemoration of the losses and sorrow inflicted since the First World War. We met students and families from the PEGS community past and present.

In 1920, Brigadier 'Pompey' Elliot was quoted as saying: 'This square mile of North Essendon has given a greater number of men who paid the Supreme Sacrifice than any other square mile in the British Dominions'. We reflected on sacrifices made by members of our forces while a member of the ADF, along with Jo Briskey, our local MP, spoke movingly about the notion of service.

While remembering the nation's losses, we were encouraged also to consider the impact on people who had been on another side of the conflict and what they had experienced. This encouraged us to seek a balance between the school values of Respect, for courage shown, and Heart, for the humanity within us all, whatever our nationality.

As we left the church, I was reminded of an EM Forster quote. 'If I had to choose between betraying my country or my friend, I hope I'd have the guts to betray my country'. Our student leaders might now hope to balance the Respect of Horace with the Heart of Wilfred Owen.

Simon Hookins

Latin Teacher
Larkin Centre



On 24 April, Larkin Centre students and staff gathered at a special assembly to commemorate Anzac Day.

We often hear stories of war. It is easy to get wrapped up in the romanticism of it, imagining ourselves as valiant soldiers or Victoria Cross medal recipients. This year's ANZAC Day assembly was a reminder of the consequences of warfare, not only for those involved, but for their families, too.

Mr Crossley shared the moving tale of his father, a Vietnam War veteran. He explained how the horrors of war changed a once charismatic and gregarious man, into an anxious and traumatised version of his former self. At the end of the assembly, Mr Crossley's father's medals were available to look at. It was not the medals, but the small, faded photograph of Mr Crossley's father that moved me. Looking around at my friends, I realised it could have been one of us. It could have been me.

When the final shot is fired, the trauma and loss does not disappear. ANZAC Day is a time when, as Australians, we should balance solemnity and the commemoration of our fallen, with an assurance that we do not glorify war, or minimise the impact on those who serve and experience it. Bruce Dawe's poem *Homecoming* is part of a broader movement of Australian anti-war literature from the 1960s. The poem comments on the tragedy of the Vietnam War, lamenting young men being returned to their families in body bags – "they're bringing them home, now, too late, too early." Young Australian men died too young, too soon. Let us be thankful that it is not our boots hitting the dirt.

ANZAC Day is an opportunity to grieve and to remember, celebrating lives and mourning the fallen. This year's assembly provided many of us with an opportunity to reflect on our own grief and the importance of mateship. Unfortunately, grief and loss are familiar sentiments for us all this year at PEGS. For some, the grief does not vanish, it just becomes easier to live with, and everyday life takes on a new semblance. We have been reminded of the importance of gratitude and of kindness and of the power of a small gesture.

It does not take being a soldier in the trenches to fight for one another.

Peter

Year Twelve student
Larkin Centre



The Great Year Six Canberra Ballad

At four-thirty in the morning, while the world was fast asleep,
Our alarms began exploding with a loud and painful beep.
We dragged ourselves to school in darkness, tired beyond belief,
While parents held their coffees tight and tried to hide their grief.

By five-forty-five we gathered there, all freezing in the cold,
With backpacks, neck pillows, snacks, and stories to be told.
At six o'clock the buses left - no student could be late,
Though half of us were zombies in a barely-conscious state.

We toured the famous Parliament, our nation's place of law,
The House of Reps and Senate left us standing there in awe.
We sat where leaders argue and where huge decisions start,
And pictured what it might be like to play a politician's part.

The Australian Institute of Sport became a giant hit,
Where suddenly each student thought they were really fit.
We raced and kicked and tested skills and acted super tough,
Until some of the stations proved we weren't that strong or buff.

The teachers somehow stayed calm through every busy day,
Through airport lines and Parliament and buses on the way.
They kept us safe and organised wherever we would roam,
And somehow managed to bring every single student home.

Next morning brought the dinosaurs - enormous, huge, and scary,
The T-Rex looked so lifelike some students became quite wary.
We posed beside the giant beasts with terrified fake screams,
Creating photos we'll remember for many future years.

Questacon at nighttime was a highlight of the tour,
With giant slides and crazy gadgets waiting to explore.
The experiments and science shows had everyone amazed,
While teachers tried to count us all through every noisy maze.

At Mount Ainslie we saw Canberra stretching far and wide,
With Parliament House directly there with national pride.
The group photo took forever because somebody would blink,
Or somebody would pull a face right at the camera click.

The War Memorial showed us stories powerful and true,
Of courage and sacrifice, and mateship shining through.
It made us stop and think about the freedoms that we share,
And how so many Australians fought with bravery and care.

Then finally came the flight back home - exhausted beyond measure,
But full of memories and laughs, and moments we will treasure.
Our parents waited patiently inside Melbourne Airport gates,
While students returned with dirty clothes, missing socks, and funny mates.

Canberra taught us history, democracy and pride,
And gave us countless memories from every single ride.
From Parliament to Questacon and every stop between,
It truly was the greatest camp that most of us have seen.

We'll always remember Canberra and the memories that we made,
With our friends beside us laughing, through each tour and escapade.
As high school slowly waits ahead and Grade Six fades away,
We'll never forget the fun we had on our Canberra trip away.

Arjan, Joe and Oscar
Year Six students
Junior School (boys)



Year Six Canberra Tour 2026

Each year, our Year Six students are offered the exciting opportunity to attend our Canberra Tour; a memorable experience that brings their learning to life beyond the classroom.

This carefully organised trip provides students with a rich and authentic insight into Australia's civics and citizenship, as they visit significant national institutions including Parliament House, Government House, the Electoral Education Centre and the High Court. Highlights such as Questacon by Night and a visit to the Australian Institute of Sport ensure the experience is both educational and fun.

The Canberra Tour is often described by students as a highlight of their primary school years. It provides an opportunity to learn about the value of their voice in shaping our country and creates lasting memories of time spent with peers. Three of our Junior School (boys) students captured this experience beautifully in their poem, The Great Grade Six Canberra Ballad.

Amelia Turner and David Graham
Year Five and Six Coordinators
Junior School



Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!

The 2026 Year Nine drama performance was an exciting and entertaining event that brought lots of joy to the Prep students from both our Essendon and Moonee Ponds campuses. The Preps travelled by bus to the Keilor East campus, which made the experience feel very special and important. Everyone was excited on the trip and looked forward to watching the performance. The drama show was based on the popular children's story *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* and included plenty of humour, dancing, and audience participation.

Throughout the performance, the Year Nine students worked hard to bring the story to life. The actors used expressive voices, funny actions, and energetic dancing to entertain the audience. The costumes and movements helped make the characters easy to recognise and enjoyable to watch. One of the funniest parts of the performance was when the pigeon kept asking to drive the bus. The Prep students loved joining in and loudly telling the pigeon not to drive the bus. Their laughter and enthusiasm filled the theatre and created a fun atmosphere for everyone involved.

The performance was a wonderful opportunity for the younger students to visit the Keilor East campus and see the talents of the Year Nine drama students. It also encouraged confidence, creativity, and teamwork among the performers.

The excursion was a memorable experience for the Prep students, who enjoyed the bus trip, the lively acting, and the chance to participate in such a fun and interactive performance.

Ebony Paulka
Prep Coordinator
Junior School (boys)

Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! is a short play that my peers and I created in our 'Flipping the Narrative' Drama elective class. Following discussions between our teacher and the Prep team, we spent weeks researching the books by Mo Willems, brainstorming, scripting, rehearsing, and refining our play to produce something that six-year-olds would likely find hilarious. The performance was a mix of all our ideas put together, and I think the fact that it was our brains that created that play made it all the more special for us to perform.

From on stage, you could see the Preps smiling big, cheesy grins during the funny parts (which was essentially the entire play), and you could hear their laughter over all the sound effects. Whenever a line was accidentally skipped, or someone ended up on the wrong side of the stage, we were able to improvise our way through it and get back on track, which was a skill we learnt throughout our classes during the semester.

Getting to create and be a part of *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* was an amazing experience, and getting to see the Preps enjoy our performance, and to open their fan mail afterwards, made it even more memorable!

Mahek
Year Nine student
McNab House

Chinese Language Tour

In the early hours of April 11 the PEGS Chinese Language Tour departed Melbourne for Shanghai, via Hong Kong. Our itinerary in Shanghai included a visit to our sister school, Datong High and a Youth Activity Centre, where we participated in lots of fun activities such as calligraphy and tea making. We enjoyed a night cruise along Huangpu River, where we took in the dazzling neon lit Shanghai skyline. This included striking modern buildings affectionately known as The Screwdriver, The Bottle Opener and The Syringe. The captivating old-world charm of The Bund, once home to foreign concessions, was also a sight to behold on Shanghai's waterfront.

An excursion to Tong Li known as the 'Venice of the East' was one of many highlights of the trip. Here, we enjoyed a leisurely boat ride through the maze of canals that define this 'water town', providing us with a glimpse into Tong Li's rich history and way of life. At night we watched an amazing acrobatics show, where the performers pulled off increasingly death-defying stunts, which had us gasping and trying very hard not to look away.

Our next stop was Xi'an, the ancient imperial capital. Here we visited the Terracotta Warriors Museum. The sheer scale of the archaeological dig, which is still in progress, was awe inspiring. We enjoyed a morning of cycling atop Xi'an's city walls, followed by a visit to an International School where the students were quick to make friends with their Chinese buddies. In the evening, we attended a delightful Tang Dynasty dance and theatre show.

The next day we travelled with our new friends to Mount Huashan. Upon disembarking from the cable car we had the opportunity to explore the four peaks. A small group of students scaled the heights of the challenging West Peak, but most took the more leisurely route to the North Peak. Mount Huashan, shrouded in a veil of mist, was stunningly beautiful. We also spent a night strolling along the bustling Grand Tang Mall Street dressed in traditional Han Dynasty attire.

From Xi'an we boarded a bullet train to our final stop, the capital, Beijing. We reached speeds of 350 km per hour. The ride was incredibly smooth making it an ideal time to catch up on some much-needed sleep.

In Beijing, we explored the Hutongs, enjoying rickshaw rides through the charming, narrow alleyways. We were graced by the hospitality of a local family who showed us how to make dumplings, which we did with varying degrees of success! We also learned to play Jianzi, a traditional game, where players form a circle and aim to keep a coin-weighted feathered shuttlecock airborne with their feet, legs, chest and shoulders. It had our bodies contorting in all sorts of ways.

On a night walk through a popular Beijing shopping district some of us spontaneously joined a Guangchangwu (a public dancing group). Needless to say, some were more coordinated than others, resulting in lots of laughter.

While in Beijing, we visited the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven and the Summer Palace, where we soaked in the grandeur and captivating architecture of China's imperial past. We also traversed the enormous Tiananmen Square on a wet and cold day, which was rare, as we enjoyed amazing weather for nearly the entire trip. Our last major outing was to the Great Wall, one of the 'Wonders of the World'. It was a fitting way to finish the trip and no doubt will be a special memory for all of us.

The food was plentiful, varied and delicious. Of course, we ate Peking Duck in Peking (Beijing), indulged in Xi'an's famous belt noodles, and savoured an Ughur meal in Shanghai. There were also plenty of opportunities to hunt for the perfect souvenir, to indulge in some retail therapy and to sample some of the local culinary specialities.

The tour was a meaningful balance of cultural, historical, and educational activities, which the students will no doubt look back upon very fondly in years to come. A special mention to our tour guide, Terry, who was absolutely amazing. We learned so much from him and the city specialists, Jason and Ling.

Christopher Christies
Student Coordinator
Larkin Centre



Larkin Centre REACH Awards

Every day, students at the Larkin Centre embody the REACH values of respect, excellence, accountability, curiosity and heart in their actions and attitudes, enriching the school life of others around them. The REACH Awards seek to recognise these contributions. Peer nominated and peer reviewed, students were asked to nominate other deserving classmates, and to detail the ways in which their fellow students demonstrate REACH values.

Over eighty nominations were submitted, recognising the REACH contributions of Larkin Centre students. These contributions ranged from demonstrating heart through genuine care and interest in day-to-day interactions, to exhibiting curiosity through an infectious willingness to learn in the classroom. For the members of the Student Executive, it was an enjoyable experience to read through the broad range of nominations, and to see the appreciation students have for the positive contributions of those around them.

The Term One recipients were Maddie, Hayley and Roy from Year Eleven, and Harrison, Elise and Angus from Year Twelve.

It was extremely difficult to choose only three winners from each Year Level, and other worthy nominees will also be considered alongside new nominations for the Term Two and Three awards. We look forward to continuing to read students' nominations of their deserving peers.

Milly and Daniel
Year Twelve students
Larkin Centre



Diplomacy in the Classroom

This term, the VCE Politics cohort had the privilege of a visit from His Excellency, Arto Haapea, the Finnish Ambassador, who works from the Embassy of Finland in Canberra. Mr Haapea has been a diplomat for just over 20 years, having worked as Minister Counsellor, Deputy Head of Mission, at the Embassy in New Delhi, India, and as Deputy Director and Team Leader for East Asia. Mr Haapea obviously has extensive experience in foreign diplomacy, which only made his visit more valuable to the cohort.

During his presentation, he brought insights into the highly contentious Russian-Ukrainian conflict being studied by Year Twelve Politics students. Although we had previously studied Finland's stance in the conflict, it was beneficial to hear from a representative of the country directly. Mr Haapea deepened our understanding of the vast impacts of the conflict felt by Europe and, in particular, the Finnish population.

From this experience, we were able to not only expand our knowledge but also to sympathise with the impacts of the conflict on a broader scale than previously understood before Mr Haapea's insights. Mr Haapea also allowed us to ask questions, answering each one thoughtfully and in detail, dedicating time to hearing our concerns and inquiries. He met each question with an open mind and conveyed both reason and the Finnish perspective, not only promoting the values of his country as ambassador but also ensuring we received the correct information.

We greatly appreciated Mr Haapea making the time to visit our cohort and to answer our questions. It will definitely aid our studies of Politics, not only for the rest of the year, but also into our tertiary education.

Olivia
Year Twelve student
Larkin Centre



Coding at Gotty House

Throughout Term Two, Gotty House students have been running a Coding Club. This club is about developing creativity and critical thinking skills using the coding program, *Scratch*. This program requires you to use a type of programming language which is then translated into binary so that the computer can use it to do what you tell it to do.

So far, the students within the club have learned a variety of skills related to *Scratch*. These include playing with the basic motion blocks to make a cat move across the screen, using variables for a simple clicker game, and assigning random operators to make dice. Future sessions will work towards making the classic mobile phone game, *Snake*.

The sessions run every Friday during lunch time. The club is run by students for students, with the group open to anyone interested in learning about the basics of coding or anyone wanting to extend their knowledge. The club will continue running throughout Semester Two.

Sean
Year Nine student
Gottlieb House

Preparing for the Future

Over 360 Year Nine students, parents and caregivers attended the PEGS Next Step Career Conversation Expo this term - our largest event to date. With more than 40 presenters from a wide range of industries, the evening provided a valuable opportunity for students to explore future pathways. In Year Nine, our goal is to encourage students to think broadly before forming any fixed ideas about their futures. That is why the Expo is organised around six Career Clusters, helping students see connections across fields rather than focusing on a single job title.

In a world shaped by AI, this approach is more important than ever. Students are likely to have multiple careers, with roles changing over time. Rather than choosing one job early, students can explore broader career cluster areas - such as business within the Coordinators/Informers cluster, technology within the Innovators cluster, or health within the Guardians cluster - and build skills that allow them to move within these related fields (for example, progressing from marketing to data analytics and then into AI strategy).

Events like this highlight the value of transferable skills such as problem-solving, teamwork and creativity, alongside the ability to work effectively with AI while applying human judgement, empathy and interpersonal strengths. The key message is clear - success is no longer about choosing one job, but building adaptable, future-ready skills.

We extend our sincere thanks to our alumni, parent community and presenters who made this event possible.

The PEGS Careers Team





Junior School House Cross Country

The 2026 Junior House Cross Country once again brought together Years Three to Six students from both campuses in what is now the third year of this combined event. With over 600 students participating, the day was a fantastic celebration of competition, connection, and school spirit.

The atmosphere was vibrant from the outset, with students eagerly supporting their House. A highlight of the day continues to be the opportunity for siblings to share in the experience together, while families lined the course to cheer on all competitors.

Throughout the event, students demonstrated outstanding determination, resilience, and sportsmanship. Whether pushing through the final stretch of their race or encouraging their peers from the sidelines, each participant contributed to a positive and inclusive environment that reflects the values of our community.

Now firmly established as a key event on the Junior School calendar, the combined Cross Country reinforces the strong sense of unity across PEGS. It is pleasing to see the event continue to grow in both participation and spirit each year.

Congratulations to Rose House for taking out the Boys' competition, and to Park House for their success in the Girls' division.

Students who performed strongly across the day were invited to join the Junior Cross Country Squad and competed throughout Term Two.

We congratulate all students on their efforts and thank staff and families for their continued support in making this event such a success.

Swimming Programme

The junior swimming programme commenced in Term Four of 2025, providing a strong foundation leading into the competitive season. Time trials were held to determine squad selection and to prepare students for the House Swimming Carnival early in Term One. Throughout this period, squad training and class swimming lessons were delivered by Swim Academy Network, giving students access to expert coaching focused on refining stroke technique, improving efficiency and developing race strategies for the season ahead.

Our swim squads had the valuable opportunity to train and compete in Olympic size pools to challenge themselves and further improve their performance. These experiences not only helped students apply skills learned during training but also fostered teamwork and positive connections between the two campuses of junior swimmers in a supportive and encouraging environment.

The PEGS House Swimming Carnival was a highlight of the season, with students enthusiastically participating across a variety of strokes they had practised throughout the term. It was fantastic to see swimmers of all abilities displaying resilience, determination and a strong growth mindset while competing proudly in their House colours. The energy and support from the wider PEGS community created an outstanding atmosphere. Congratulations to Bradman and Park for claiming the 2026 House Swimming trophies.

The season was further celebrated through strong representation at School Sport Victoria (SSV) events. Through consistent effort and perseverance, several of our students progressed through district, division, regional and state level competitions. We are incredibly proud to acknowledge Daniel, Karsten, Edward and Cruz for representing the school at the State Championships in their respective individual events and relays. A special mention goes to our 9/10 Girls' Freestyle Relay team, who achieved an outstanding bronze medal performance.

The swimming season concluded with the AGSV Swimming Carnival held at MSAC. This event provided the entire squad with the opportunity to compete in both relay and individual races they had been preparing for all season, showcasing their progress in a highly competitive environment. We would like to sincerely thank our swim coaches for their dedication, professionalism and continued support of our students throughout the season.

Callum Glassford and Brett McQueen
Junior School Coordinators of Sport



Dancing With a Star

The *Pride of Erin*, the *Parma Waltz*, the *Modern Waltz*, the *Tango*, *Cha Cha*, *Samba*, and *Merengue* - if you have learned any of these dances at PEGS, anytime within the past 55 years, then you will have learned them from the legendary Glennis South, who, after an extraordinary career, has decided that it is time to pass the microphone on to the next generation.

Since she was first approached in 1971 by Mrs Hocking from the Penleigh Old Collegian's Association to prepare the girls for their "debut", Glennis has taught the steps and etiquette of formal ballroom dancing to scores of PEGS students. For many years, the focus of these dance lessons remained on the annual Debutante Ball, held originally at the Stardust in Toorak and later at the Kew Civic Centre.

In the early 90's it was decided that a Formal for all students in Years Eleven and Twelve would be better than a Debutante Ball. At this point, Glennis started teaching dance at McNab House (when it was the Senior School campus) and the Formals were held in various venues throughout Melbourne CBD.

And while the length and colour of students' hair (as well as their attire!), may have changed considerably, Glennis is quick to point out that "teaching dance at PEGS has always been a privilege and such a pleasure." She has taken great pride in seeing students develop from cautious and nervous starters, to enthusiastic ballroom dancers, ready to show off their skills at the Formal in the hope of scoring a trophy from Glennis. In fact, so sought after are these trophies that one former student, now a successful business owner, could not wait to show Glennis the trophy he had won from her some fifteen years earlier!

Along the journey, Glennis has been ably assisted by many staff members, but it is perhaps her long-standing working partnership with Mr Ken Fletcher that she remembers most fondly. As she puts it, they were the "Fred and Ginger" of PEGS.

Fifty-five years of service is an extraordinary achievement by any measure. Over that time, Glennis has done far more than teach students how to dance. She has helped generations of young people develop confidence, poise, courtesy and connection with others, and in doing so, has been part of the fabric of the PEGS community.

Thank you Glennis and congratulations on an extraordinary career.



The Hippest of Hops

If you happened to pass the Ian Morton Centre after school at Junior School (boys) in early Term Two you might have found something out of the ordinary. Rhythmic beats, nodding heads, fast-moving feet and the most powerful of power poses.

Just like previous years, Hip Hop dancing took the Year One cohort by storm. The students eagerly changed into their dancing attire on a Tuesday afternoon and headed over to join their instructor, Mayel. With not a minute wasted, they warmed up and were then put through their paces, learning moves that built into a new dance routine each session, drawn from a variety of themes and inspiration. This was then followed by a short, but well-received, performance in front of their parents. It was wonderful to see the enthusiasm, the respect, and above all else, the 'energy' (as Mayel put it) that went into these 45-minute sessions.

There was no such thing as doing a dance wrong, but listening, interpretation and the amount of energy given to the task at hand were the sole judgements for what made a great Hip Hop dancer. Given the evidence from those sessions, the future of Hip Hop dancing is in great hands!

Hayden Wardrop
Year One and Two Coordinator
Junior School (boys)





Year Seven Police Visit

Sergeants David and Meredith visited PEGS and spoke to the Year Seven cohort about online safety and how to stay protected when online. They provided a range of insights over a lot of topics and tailored their information especially for us to make sure we are prepared for this now.

To begin with, they talked with us about image sharing and online safety when it comes to texting. Using some real-life examples, they showed us the risks and dangers associated with these actions. David and Meredith showed us that this was not a joke, and the consequences would be serious if we decided to go down that path.

The other part of online safety they spoke about was online friends and knowing when to talk to a trusted adult. They showed us that when we are caught by people online who wish to do us harm, the best option we have is to immediately talk to a trusted adult who can help us deal with the situation.

The talk provided us with a view of the world that we might not already have, preparing us to deal with these situations if they arise in the future. This experience was a great stepping stone in our learning, as it gave us insights into how to stay safe online.

Jenson and Christopher

Year Seven students
Gottliebsen House

Generations in Jazz

At the beginning of Term Two, the Stage Band, Chindamo Jazz Combo, Middle School Jazz Combo and Swing Syndicate travelled to Mount Gambier to participate in the annual *Generations in Jazz* festival. Each year, the small town of Mount Gambier transforms into the largest big band and youth jazz festival in the southern hemisphere, hosting schools from across Australia, and this year, New Zealand as well! It is hard to describe the atmosphere of excitement and anticipation as we all boarded the bus on the Friday morning, ready for what is considered to be the highlight of the year for young jazz musicians!

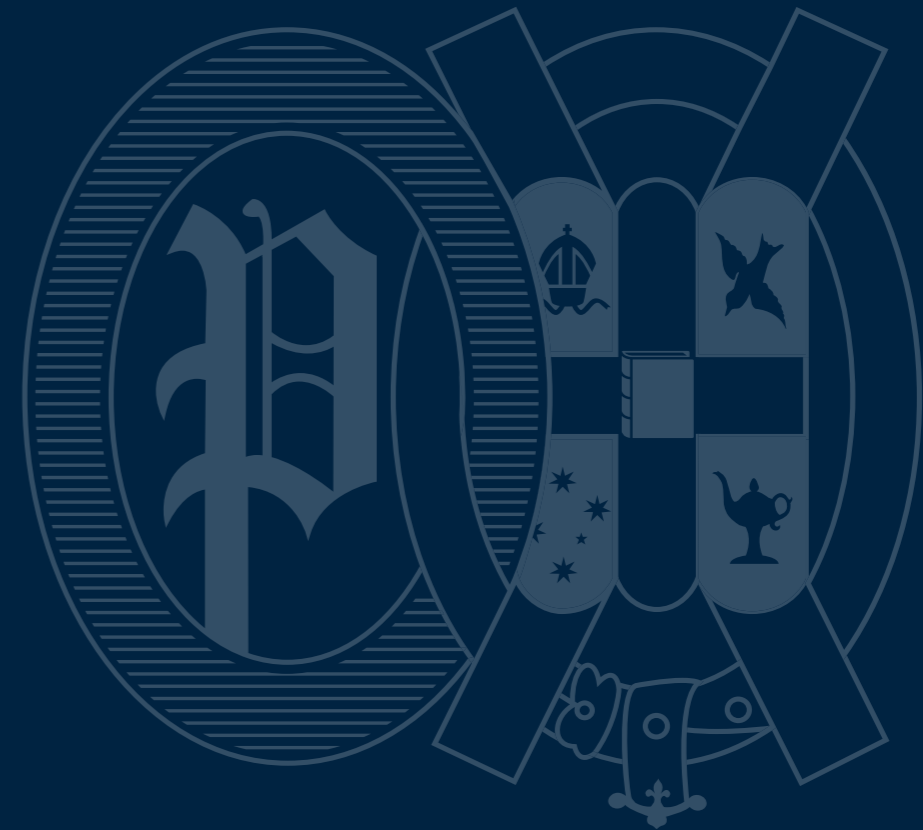
For those who haven't attended *Generations in Jazz*, it can be hard to picture what all the hype is about. Imagine this; as you travel to the festival, the enormous 'James Morrison Tent' comes into view. Evenings are spent sharing meals with students from across the nation and every night, the dining hall erupts into another round of 'Happy Birthday' for someone in the dining room. Then an hour later, you are watching Tower of Power, an award-winning jazz band, perform incredible music with the crowd dancing along. Later, back at the house that we stay at, the day finishes with competitive card games until lights out, ready to do it all again the next day.

Alongside the fun and excitement, the weekend also showcased the dedication and hard work of all the ensembles who had been rehearsing for months in preparation. Each band performed to an audience and a panel of judges on the second day of the festival. Swing Syndicate achieved an impressive seventh place out of 26 schools in Division 3 of the Vocal Groups, while Lucas impressed the judges and was selected for the prestigious Division 3 GiJ Superband!

The trip was an incredible experience, full of music, friendships and moments that brought us closer together as a band. It truly is something that none of us will ever forget!

Madeline

Year Eleven student
Larkin Centre





Keilor Park Indoor Sport Complex



With growing rates of student participation in indoor sports, the school's indoor sport facilities have been placed under increasingly high demand over recent years.

With the opening of the school's new Keilor Park Indoor Sport Complex this strain on resources has significantly eased. The availability of this facility enables more flexibility of match scheduling on Saturdays, as well as providing the opportunity to further expand our programme offerings.

The new facility, housed in a pre-existing building, was magically transformed from a cold storage warehouse into a versatile and sleek stadium. The complex features three multi-use courts which hold the ability to host basketball, netball, badminton and volleyball training and matches. The three caged indoor cricket nets will also greatly reduce the impact variable weather has on the cricket programme.

In addition, the facility also has ten table tennis tables spread across two enclosed internal levels. All of this is conveniently located right next door to the school's Keilor Park sports grounds, creating the ultimate school sport hub.

Ben Bailey
Director of Sport



New Firsts Sport Uniforms

The 2026 Winter season has seen the introduction of a new Firsts uniform across the secondary sport programme. The new range means our Firsts teams, while playing different sports, now have a streamlined look of navy with maroon vertical stripes.

As dark colours are very popular within both the AGSV and AGSV/APS competitions, the new uniforms are also reversible for those fixtures when colour clashes occur. The reverse side is predominantly white, with side panelling featuring Simone Thompson's PEGS commissioned artwork, creating an ongoing connection to Indigenous culture. In addition, the white reverse side matches the style of our Firsts tennis and cricket teams who traditionally wear white.

Another benefit of the new uniform is that it utilises the shorts, socks and other uniform items worn by the school's year level teams. Moving forward, future Firsts players will not be required to purchase additional items beyond their playing top, resulting in positive economic and environmental outcomes.

Ben Bailey
Director of Sport



From the Archives Brigid Cooper Archivist

Keilor Park Sports Ground

The School's newest campus, the Keilor Park Sports Ground, has a new indoor sports facility but can you remember what it looked like before all those curated ovals and courts were there?

In 2005 PEGS purchased a total of 24 hectares of paddocks previously used by a pony club. Only nine hectares was flat enough for playing fields. The remaining 15 hectares are a rural conservation zone, leading down to the Maribyrnong River.

Between 2007 and 2008 Stage One of the development took place, with the installation of underground water tanks and a complex drainage system, so water can be sustainably harvested and stored.

The first to be ready were the artificial turf courts and, once the fencing, lighting and dugouts were ready, sports teams began to use the facilities.

In May 2008 the School encouraged all of its community members to invest in the future of the Keilor Park Sports Ground by planting a tree. Bus after bus of students and teachers from all campuses were brought to Keilor Park and, under the watchful eye of members of the Grounds Staff, led by Bob McLennan, everyone learnt the art of getting a tiny plant safely from a pot into the ground.

Since those early days, Keilor Park has become an important part of PEGS life involving sport training and matches for hundreds of students each week, including many bus-loads of visitors from other schools.

The rural conservation zone continues to be developed and revegetated through the important work of the Conservation Club.



Music Teachers, Mr Derrent, Mr De Bolfo, Mr Walker and Mr Hughes, create a carnival atmosphere for our young tree planters 2008



Creating playing fields from a paddock at Keilor Park May 2008



2008 Year 12 students, Eleanor and Sophia, complete their tree planting



Mr Norman demonstrates his excellent shovel technique to Year 1 boys 2008



Middle School Environmental Club plant native trees at Keilor Park 2013

Reverend Robert William Renton

February 9, 1946 - April 29, 2026

Reverend Rob Renton was an important part of school life at Park Street for a decade. Ordained in the Presbyterian Church in 1974, Rev Rob became the Chaplain at Penleigh (later the Park Street Campus / Moonee Ponds Campus of Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School) in 1975, remaining until 1985.

After many years as Chaplain at Wesley College, and then as Head of the Elsternwick Campus, Rev Rob served as Presbytery Minister, Administration Presbytery of Port Phillip West before his retirement in 2017. Retirement enabled him to foster his love of history and he was very active in the Uniting Church National History Society and the VicTas Historical Society with his writing and editing.

We extend our condolences to his family, in particular PEGS Alumni Simon and Damien, his friends, and the many lives he touched through his ministry at PEGS, Wesley College and beyond.



Penleigh Presbyterian Ladies' College Staff in 1976 with Headmistress Mrs Margarete H M Klen (centre front) and Rev Bob Renton (centre back) (PEGS Archives [PH00337])



Rev Bob Renton at the 1980 Penleigh Sports Day at Aberfeldie Park (PEGS Archives [PH09094])



A farewell to Rev Bob Renton at the MSg Year 10 Concert in Limerock Hall 1985 (PEGS Archives [PH05106])

PEGS Alumni Association

2026 Reunions

Reunion Program

The School reunion program offers PEGS former students the chance to catch up with their fellow alumni and reminisce about those wonderful school years.

Upcoming Reunions

Class of 1986 Forty Year Reunion – 24 April, 7pm, Penny Young, Young St. Moonee Ponds

In order to hear about upcoming reunions please make sure we have your recent contact details by emailing us at alumni@pegs.vic.edu.au. You are also encouraged to join your 'PEGS - Class of' Facebook group for event information, booking details and photos of your reunion afterwards. Even if you don't have a milestone event coming up please join us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/PEGSAA> to see what the School and your fellow alumni are up to.

DEATHS

Belinda Kate Lucas (Class of 2005), sister of Alana Lucas (Class of 2023), on 2 May 2026, age 38.

Rev Robert William Renton (Penleigh Chaplain 1975 - 1985), father of Simon (Class of 1987) and Damien (Class of 1988) on 29 April 2026, age 80.

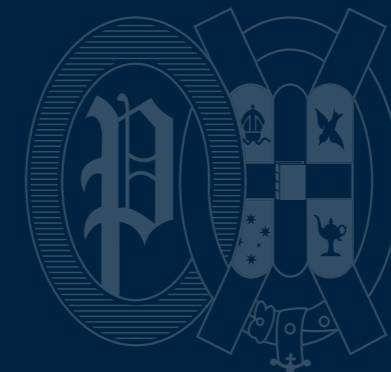
Jane Barbara McNab (PEGS2005), sister of AJ McNab (PEGS2002) and Lou McNab (PEGS2008), daughter of Ros and Ian McNab (EGS1969), granddaughter of Finlay McNab (NPC/NGS1932 & EGS/PEGS Council/Board 1957-1988) and Jean McNab (nee Stewart) (PEN1936), great granddaughter of Frank McNab (NGS/EGS Council), on 24 June 2026, age 38.

AWARDS

Pam Ann Ahern OAM [PEGS1979] received OAM (Medal of the Order of Australia) in the General Division of The King's Birthday 2026 Honours List "for service to animal welfare" through *Edgar's Mission*, her Victorian farm animal sanctuary and animal welfare charity.

Anthony (Tony) Larkin OAM (Staff 1978 - 2019; Principal 1998 - 2019; Vice Principal 1988 - 1997) received OAM (Medal of the Order of Australia) in the General Division of the King's Birthday 2026 Honours List "for service to secondary education, and to school sports."

Mary-Jane Welsh APM (PEGS1985) received APM (Australian Police Medal) in the Meritorious Awards of The King's Birthday 2026 Honours List "for distinguished service as a member of an Australian police force" in Victoria.



Creating a Kinder World

A true friend to both two and four legged creatures, no one is more deserving than Pam Ahern (PEGS 1979) who received the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the 2026 King's Birthday Honours for her outstanding service to animal welfare.

Pam is the founder and director of *Edgar's Mission*, one of Australia's most respected farm animal sanctuaries. Since establishing the organisation in 2003, she has dedicated her life to advocating for kindness, compassion and the protection of vulnerable animals, inspiring countless people to make a positive difference. She credits the award to the countless cats, dogs and pound animals of her early rescue years as well as the Central Highlands Animal Shelter she created.

"Long before social media could amplify our work to the world, those were challenging, solitary days, and it was those animals who first taught me that every single life matters".

In addition to her leadership of *Edgar's Mission*, Pam has served as an ambassador for a range of animal welfare initiatives, authored *The Gift of Kindness: Inspiring True Stories of Rescued Farm Animals*, and has been a passionate voice for animal advocacy across Australia and beyond. Her tireless commitment has earned widespread recognition and has helped transform the lives of thousands of rescued animals.

This well-deserved honour recognises more than two decades of service and dedication to creating a kinder world. As she herself says "An award like this is a powerful reminder that empathy and care have true value in our world".

We congratulate Pam on this remarkable achievement and thank her for the compassion, leadership and inspiration she continues to share with the broader community.



A Fitting Honour

It was only a matter of time but now Dustin Fletcher (PEGS1993) sits officially among the greats of the game with his induction into the Australian Football League Hall of Fame, a fitting honour for one of the most accomplished and enduring players the game has seen.

Dustin's connection to both PEGS and the Essendon Football Club runs deep. He is the son of Ken Fletcher, an Essendon champion who played 264 games for the Bombers, captained the club and later became a respected teacher and coach within the PEGS community.

While completing his final year at PEGS in 1993, Dustin made his AFL debut for Essendon. In a story that has become part of PEGS and AFL folklore, Dustin chose to represent his school rather than his club against cellar dwellers Fitzroy on a fresh Friday night in May. (Luckily for him the Baby Bombers came from behind in the second half to record a four point victory!)

What followed was an extraordinary career that cemented his place among the game's greats. Across 23 seasons with Essendon, Dustin played 400 AFL games, making him Essendon's all-time games record holder, and one of only a handful of players to reach this milestone. He was a two-time AFL Premiership player (1993 and 2000), a dual All-Australian (2000 and 2007), represented Victoria in State of Origin football and Australia in the International Rules series.

His remarkable longevity saw him become only the second player in VFL/AFL history to play 400 games for a single club, while his career spanned parts of four decades—from the 1990s through to the 2010s. Renowned for his athleticism, ability to read the play and trademark long kicking, Dustin redefined what was possible for a key defender and remained one of the competition's most reliable performers.

Beyond the statistics, Dustin earned universal respect for his professionalism, humility and commitment to team success. His induction into the Australian Football Hall of Fame is recognition not only of an outstanding playing record but also of the lasting influence he has had on the game.

Image credit: Essendon Football Club

Careers Dedicated to Justice



The PEGS community proudly congratulates alumni Jane Welsh APM (PEGS1985) on being awarded the Australian Police Medal (APM) in recognition of her outstanding service and leadership within Victoria Police.

Joining Victoria Police in 1988 at just 19 years of age, Jane has built a distinguished career spanning nearly four decades. Her service has included operational policing, prosecutions, detective roles across Melbourne's west and significant work with the Homicide Squad, where she investigated some of Victoria's most notable cases.

An innovative leader, Jane established a specialist cybercrime division within Victoria Police, creating dedicated teams to investigate cryptocurrency related crime, expanding digital forensic capabilities across regional Victoria, and introducing advanced technologies to identify victims and support investigations. Her leadership also strengthened the work of the Joint Anti-Child Exploitation Team, a collaborative initiative between Victoria Police and the Australian Federal Police that protects vulnerable children and brings offenders to justice.

Beyond her operational achievements, Jane has made a lasting contribution to the ethical and professional standards of policing. Through roles in Professional Standards and as a discipline inquiry officer, she has helped strengthen Victoria Police's integrity framework. Today, as Assistant Commissioner, she leads workforce support initiatives and chairs the organisation's first ethics committee, guiding the responsible use of artificial intelligence in policing.

Jane's commitment to justice extends beyond policing. She has also served as Chair of Women's Legal Service Victoria, advocating for greater equity and addressing discrimination within the legal system.

Jane's remarkable career exemplifies service, leadership, innovation, and integrity, and we congratulate her on this well-deserved recognition.

Congratulations to Judge Tara Hartnett (PEGS1987) on her appointment to the County Court of Victoria. The appointment marks an exciting new chapter in a legal career that has spanned more than 20 years and included extensive experience both at the Bar and on the bench.

Judge Hartnett was appointed a Magistrate in 2018 and has served as the Regional Coordinating Magistrate at the Melbourne Magistrates' Court since 2022. During her time there, she worked exclusively in the Criminal Division, managing major trial and case management lists while also helping oversee the day-to-day operation of one of Victoria's busiest courts.

Before becoming a Magistrate, Judge Hartnett built a highly regarded criminal law practice after signing the Bar Roll in 2003. She appeared in numerous complex criminal trials and developed a strong reputation within Victoria's legal profession.

Her appointment to the County Court reflects both her considerable experience and the respect she has earned throughout her career. It is a well-deserved recognition of her contribution to Victoria's justice system and her commitment to public service.

We extend our warmest congratulations to Judge Hartnett and wish her all the best as she takes on this important new role.



Recent Reunion

Most recently the class of 1986 was brought together to celebrate their special milestone.



Friends of PEGS

Mother's Day Stall

The search for the ideal Mother's Day gift drew excited and eager students from both of the junior campuses to the Friends of PEGS Mother's/Special Person's Day Stalls in May. FoPEGS Committee members, class representatives, and parent and caregiver volunteers were at the ready to assist with the purchase of a wonderful gift for their special person on Mother's Day.

Following their purchases, happy smiles accompanied children back to the classrooms. The FoPEGS hopes all the mothers and caregivers had a very special day.

Book now for Trivia Night!

The much loved and anticipated Trivia Night returns early in Term Three and this year we're groovin' back to the '70s! There will be good vibes and jive talking on Saturday 18 July, at the Ukrainian Hall in Russell St, Essendon.

Quizmasters, QuizzaMe, will be getting their groove on and interactively guiding all the peace loving people through a night of buzzers and impromptu performances.

So, get a table together of your hippest dudes for a dose of competitive spirit as you battle for points and the many Far Out raffle prizes on offer!

Friends of PEGS will be setting the groovy scene for a fun filled out of sight event where parents and friends can participate together, rise to the occasion and leave laughing, smiling and of course, very cool!


Friends of PEGS - Enriching the life of the school

Friends of PEGS is the school's parent association which strengthens and enlivens the school community with a calendar of celebratory events for parents and students. We are grateful to the dedicated volunteers of the FoPEGS Committee. The FoPEGS also provides funding for new projects to directly benefit all students.

If you are interested in joining or contributing to our committee in 2026 and beyond, we would love to hear from you. For more information, please contact Lyn Rogers: 9016 2183 or email lyn.rogers@pegs.vic.edu.au

2026 FoPEGS Events for Term Three and Term Four

Saturday 18 July	Trivia Night
Thursday 3 September	Father's Day Stall at Junior School (girls)
Friday 4 September	Father's Day Stall at Junior School (boys)
Sunday 11 October	Annual Craft Market/Fair
Date TBA	End of Year Event


FRIENDS OF PEGS


70s

Trivia night

18 July 2026
6.30pm to 12.00am
Dress in your favourite '70s outfits

Quiz Master - QuizzaMe

Lots of prizes and fun to be had!



Bookings close Wednesday 15 July 2026



2026 Dates for the Diary

2026 Term Dates

Term Three

Tuesday 14 July to Friday 11 September

Term Four

Monday 5 October to Wednesday 9 December

Term Three Special Events

Friends of PEGS Trivia Night

Saturday 18 July

Major Concert 3

Tuesday 21 July

Thinking Seminar with Nicole Livingstone

Wednesday 22 July

Winter Dance Showcase

Sunday 2 August

Senior Musical (42nd Street)

Thursday 13 - Saturday 15 August

One School Day

Monday 17 August

Concerto Concert

Thursday 3 September

As we continue in our efforts to develop sustainable environmental practices, we would like to inform you that this will be the final printed edition of *Altior et Sapientior*. Future editions will be made available electronically. We appreciate your support of this initiative.

