



Excellence Cooperation Respect Courtesy  
 Enthusiasm Responsibility  
 Commitment  
 Friendliness

# The Lizard Link

Honesty  
Caring

## Murtoa College Newsletter

23<sup>rd</sup> August  
No. 12

Principal Dr Bec Carter  
 Phone 03 5385 2381  
 Fax  
 Email murtoa.co@education.vic.gov.au  
 Internet www.murtoasc.vic.edu.au

**MURTOA COLLEGE IS A CHILD SAFE SCHOOL.**

We acknowledge the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jardwadjali and Judpagulk peoples of the Wimmera region as the traditional custodians of the lands upon which Murtoa College is situated. We pay our respects to their elders – past, present, and emerging - celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and acknowledge their deep care and ongoing connection to land, water and community. We extend this respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples joining us today.



### Important Dates – more on last page!

TERM 3		
Week 8	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> September	Adelaide Camp Year 8
	3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Year 7 RACE Excursion
	4 <sup>th</sup> September	BR Yr 7/8 Junior Basketball
	5 <sup>th</sup> September	BR Primary Athletics at Stawell
	6 <sup>th</sup> September	Yr 9 Active Volunteering

### Whole School Leadership Reports

#### Principal - Dr Bec Carter

Dear Families, Students and Community Members,

#### MHIPS (Mental Health in Primary Schools) Program - Commencing in 2025

Children’s mental health is fundamental to a child’s development and learning. Good mental health means having a positive sense of wellbeing, coping with challenges and being able to realise individual potential. Unfortunately, not all children experience good mental health. Schools are an ideal platform for promoting children’s mental health. I am therefore delighted to announce that commencing in 2025, we will be introducing the Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHIPS) program in our primary school as part of the Wimmera South West region rollout. Developed by paediatricians, educators, psychologists, researchers, and teachers, the MHIPS program is a partnership between the Centre for Community Child Health (CCCH) at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) and the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) at the University of Melbourne that is specifically designed to upskill experienced teachers to become Mental Health and Wellbeing Leaders to increase the capacity of Victorian primary schools to support the mental health of their students.

#### Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey

A reminder that the annual Parent/Caregiver/Guardian survey conducted by Orima research is now open to all families to complete. I would encourage as many families as possible to complete this survey as it is a great opportunity to have your say. The results will assist us in gaining an understanding of families’ perceptions on school climate, student behaviour and student engagement, which will be used for future planning and development of programs and initiatives at the College. The survey will be open until Friday August 30. Details, including how to complete the survey, can be found in recent Xuno news posts to families.



## Big Weekend - Festival of Light Murtoa College Artist Workshops

Over the past three weeks, local artist Dave Jones has worked with many classes at Murtoa College to help prepare for the Big Weekend celebrations in October. The students were really engaged in the various activities. We look forward to seeing and enjoying the light installations at Rabi Park. My thanks go to Dave Jones for seeking out our College as a partner for this amazing initiative, all classroom teachers who generously accommodated interruptions to their lessons and all education support staff who assisted our students' creative efforts, and all families and local businesses who donated their empty milk containers.

Foundation - Year 2 making paper lanterns

Years 3- 6 making & testing their boats



## Students in Years 7-9 making plastic boats and paper cranes



## Welcome to our newest community members!



This week we welcomed the arrival of 18 new community members. With thanks to Emily Farragua who donated fertile eggs and the Elliot family for providing an incubator and brooding set up, we have patiently waited 21 days and have finally welcomed 18 chicks into the world.

This is a new initiative brought to the College by our amazing AgHort teacher, Mrs Tara Crowe to help our students learn about caring for animals, animal welfare and the poultry industry as they watch these little chicks grow and develop.

We are hoping to eventually replace our much loved hens - Nugget, Willie Wonka, and Pixel - that were sadly taken by a fox last Term. Today, as you can see, the chickens are a rainbow of colours and students have enjoyed listening to them cheep away.

## *Assistant Principal – Chad Frost*

### School-wide Positive Behaviours Update

At Murtoa College, we're excited to share updates on the implementation of School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS). This framework is designed to create a positive school culture and enhance the learning experience for all students. SWPBS is built on the principle that positive behaviour can be taught and reinforced, much like academic skills. By focusing on acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour, we aim to:

- Create a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning
- Establish clear behavioural expectations across all school settings
- Promote positive social interactions among students and staff

At this point of time staff and students have co-constructed a values-based matrix of expected behaviours (which will be published and shared with our community) and we are now working on developing our reward system.

SWPBS has led to several positive outcomes in many schools, including:

- Increased focus on instruction: With clearer behavioural expectations, teachers and students can dedicate more time to learning
- Improved social-emotional wellbeing: The system fosters positive relationships among students and staff.
- Enhanced school climate: Students report feeling safer and more engaged in their school environment

As we continue to implement and refine our SWPBS system, we're committed to using data-driven decision-making to ensure its effectiveness. We will regularly review and adjust our approach based on student outcomes and feedback from all stakeholders, including parents and families. By focusing on positive reinforcement and clear expectations, we're aiming to create a school environment where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Together, we're building a stronger, more supportive school community.

### School Uniform

The topic of school uniforms has once again become a discussion point amongst our school community. While some may view uniforms as a mere dress code, they play a significant role in fostering a positive school environment and promoting values that extend beyond the classroom.

One of the most compelling arguments for school uniforms is their ability to promote equality among students. When everyone wears the same attire, it minimises socioeconomic differences, allowing students to focus on their education rather than their clothing. This sense of equality can foster a more inclusive atmosphere where students are less likely

to experience bullying or peer pressure related to fashion choices.

Uniforms also contribute to a sense of belonging and pride within the school community. When students wear their school colours or emblem, it fosters a connection to our school and encourages school spirit. This identity can lead to increased participation in school events, sports, and extracurricular activities, creating a vibrant and cohesive school culture.

Our current school uniform policy can be viewed by following the link below:

<https://www.murtoasc.vic.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Uniform-Policy.pdf>

We need the support of our families to ensure your child has plain black covered in shoes, no hoodie jumpers, no black long sleeves and that they are in full school uniform when they leave home. We know that sometimes things occur, and students are unable to wear their uniform. If a child is out of uniform for a particular reason, we ask that they wear clothing that is similar to our uniform and that they obtain a pass from their Student Connect teacher after they provide a note from home.

We can also help with purchasing school uniform items if this is a barrier for your family. Please support us with following through on our expectations.

Together, we can create a positive and inclusive environment that allows every student to thrive.

### Sport and Recreation

Our Sport and recreation students recently completed their Officiating unit with the support of AFL Wimmera Mallee Umpires who provided us with a current VFL umpire (Ben) for two full days to teach our students the complexities, the rules and the skills associated with umpiring. Our students were taken through a broad range of activities, match simulations and demonstrations for them to be able to achieve competency. It was great to see the students so engaged with the sessions, with a number of students indicating that they would like to pursue umpiring into the future.

On behalf of the College and our students we would like to thank AFL Wimmera Mallee for their support and the Minyip Murtoa Football and Netball Club for allowing us to use their facilities for the days.





## Outdoor Education

As we dive into Unit 2 Area of Study 1 (AOS 1) of VCE Outdoor and Environmental Studies, our students have been embarking on a range of journeys to investigate and understand various outdoor environments. This unit focuses on the characteristics of different outdoor settings and how we can analyse them from multiple perspectives.

Our students have been getting out of the classroom and into nature, experiencing the environments of Banyena, Antwerp and Halls Gap. Students have been observing and interacting with diverse ecosystems. These practical outdoor experiences are essential, allowing students to:

- Observe the interrelationships between biotic and abiotic components
- Witness natural changes like tides, seasons, and climate impacts
- Analyse how these changes affect both the environment and human interactions

Students are not just observing; they're learning to view these environments through various lenses:

- Recreational Users: Understanding how different groups perceive and use outdoor spaces
- Scientific Viewpoint: Examining the ecological aspects and natural processes at work
- Land Managers: Learning how areas are delineated and managed for different purposes
- Cultural Insights: Exploring artistic, Indigenous, and historical understandings of these environments

This hands-on approach to learning about our outdoor environments is more than just an academic exercise. It's preparing our students to be informed, engaged citizens who understand the complexities of our natural world and the importance of sustainable practices.

As we continue through Unit 2, these outdoor experiences will form the foundation for deeper discussions on human impacts and conservation efforts. Stay tuned for more updates on our students' adventures in nature!





## Learning and Teaching Executive Team

### *Director of Responsive Teaching – Dr Cindy Thompson*

#### Pre-Service Teacher - Josh Lees

This week we farewelled Josh Lees who joined us for four weeks to complete his final teaching placement as part of his Bachelor of Health and Physical Education Teaching through Deakin University. Josh has worked primarily with Mr Ryan Metelmann during this time and has been a wonderful addition to our Murtoa College community. We wish Josh all the best in his future endeavours.

#### National Science Youth Forum Success

Congratulations to Adelle Weidemann of Year 11 who was recently accepted into the National Science Youth Forum Year 12 Program for January 2025. This is an amazing opportunity for Adelle to participate in tours of science and technology facilities; learn about cutting edge research; learn about university, training and STEM careers; and engage with like-minded peers. We look forward to hearing about Adelle's experiences early next year.

## *F-6 Curriculum Coordinator & Literacy Leader - Grace Coustley*

The F-6 students have had a busy few weeks in creating wonderful pieces of work that will be submitted into the Murtoa Show. This will continue across the term and I am sure that students will be excited to share their work with their family and friends.

Today, we celebrated Book Week. Please check out the next newsletter for photos from the day. Students came dressed as many different book characters and participated in a parade to show everyone their costumes. Students' did some buddy reading and then made a magical hat to fit this year's Book Week theme of 'Reading is Magic'. Students had a wonderful morning engaging in the activities.

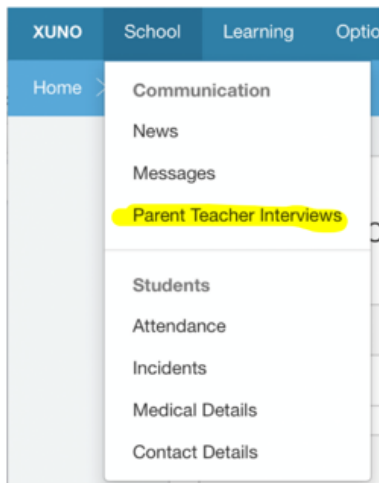
## *College Reports Co-ordinator – Jen Hagedorn*

### Parent Teacher Interviews

Parent teacher interviews for all Murtoa College students will take place on **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September**. Bookings are available from **1:30pm until 6:30pm** for all students with your student's teachers. These interviews are face-to-face at Murtoa College.

Please note that students will be dismissed at **12:30pm**. School buses will be running as normal (3:30pm) and those students who need to remain at school will be supervised until the end of the normal school day at 3:15pm.

If you wish to book interviews you can do so from Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> August 9AM by logging on to the XUNO portal at <https://murtoacollege.xuno.com.au/> You can find the interview page through the menus.



Bookings can be created and edited from Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> August 9AM until **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 9AM**.

If you cannot access the XUNO website, please contact the general office and they will arrange bookings with your student's teachers.

Come and visit the



Exhibit

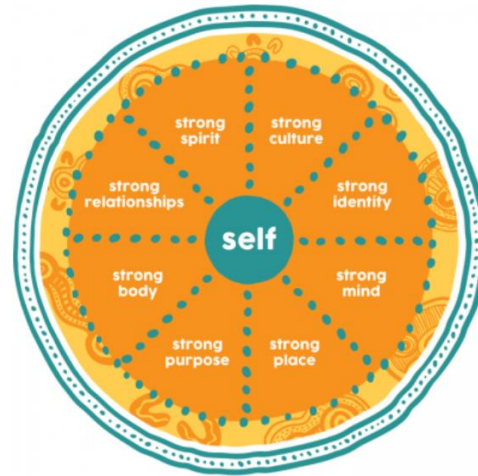
showcasing work from the junior Humanities classes which will be located in the library corridor.



## What makes a stronger you?

You are made up of many wonderful parts. These include your:

- strong spirit
- strong culture
- strong identity
- strong mind
- strong place
- strong purpose
- strong relationships
- strong body



Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will yarn about all of this as your whole self. Connecting to country, to culture and other things you find important strengthens the spirit. Our spirit then gives us good energy and healthy thoughts to power our mind and body. It's OK not to feel OK sometimes. When you are as strong and deadly in as many parts of you as possible, then you are a stronger you for your family, your friends, your community and most importantly you.

**the facts: navigating life**

**headspace**  
National Youth Mental Health Foundation

## understanding grief

**Grief is what happens when you lose someone or something important to you.**

Grief is personal and everyone grieves differently. Our culture, gender, age, past experiences of loss, and belief systems can shape the way we grieve.

**It's normal to feel a range of emotions after you experience loss, but that doesn't make it easy.**

**What is grief?**

**Grief is a normal and natural response to loss and it can affect many parts of our lives.**

**Changes to feelings**

You might feel some or all of these things:

- shock
- disbelief
- pain
- sadness
- longing
- anger
- resentment
- regret
- guilt (about the past, or about being happy in the future)
- abandonment
- anxiety
- worry.

**Changes to thoughts**

It can be hard not to think about the loss all the time. You might notice your mind wander and have trouble focusing.

Some people find it hard to care as much about things. It can feel like nothing matters. Some people might think that the world doesn't make sense anymore, and they can't figure out their place in it.

**Changes in your body**

Our mind and body are closely connected, so grief can have a big impact on our bodies too, such as:

- headaches
- body aches
- weight changes
- changes to your sleep
- changes to eating or appetite
- tiredness
- feeling sick or run down.

**Changes in what you do**

It can be hard to find the energy to keep up with day-to-day life. Some people might not want to see their family and friends or do things they used to enjoy. Other people find that keeping busy helps them to get through the day.

## How long will this go on for?

It's hard to know how long grief will last because everyone is different. However, it's important to know that eventually, things will get easier.

It might be helpful to think of grief like the ocean. Sometimes the power of the ocean is so strong you can feel out of control. Other times it feels manageable, and you can drift along with the waves.

## What else should I look out for?

Grief isn't depression. However, it's important to know that grief can leave you vulnerable to experiencing depression in the future. If you're not sure what's happening for you, it can be helpful to reach out for support.

During tough times, some people can turn to alcohol or other drugs to try to get through the pain. This might feel helpful at the time however it can create other problems in the long run.

## What can I do to help with my grief?

**Grief, and everything that can come with it, can be really intense. If you've experienced loss there are things you can do.**

### Healthy habits

Try to eat well, cut back on alcohol and other drugs and get a good night's sleep. Setting yourself small, easier goals can help keep up your motivation.

### Get into life

Doing stuff can be one of the best ways to help life improve, even when you might not feel like doing anything. Find something that works for you like playing or listening to music, walking, hanging out with family or friends or watching movies.

### Take it easy on yourself

Being kind to yourself is always a good idea, but it's even more important when you're having a tough time. Remind yourself that grief hurts, it's hard and it takes time to heal. Feeling confused, overwhelmed, angry (or anything else) and being upset is OK.

### Talk about it

Though it can be hard reaching out to others, it can help you feel supported and less alone. Whether you're speaking to a trusted friend, family member, teacher, Elder or a counsellor, it's up to you what you feel comfortable sharing. You might just want to say you're having a tough time.



Find something that works for you like playing or listening to music, walking, hanging out with family or friends or watching movies.

## Getting support

If you're finding it hard to cope and your normal activities like your social life, work or studies are being affected, then it's a good idea to ask for professional support.



If you or someone you know is going through a tough time you can get help and support from headspace, your school, TAFE or university wellbeing service or your local health provider. For more information, to find your nearest headspace centre, or for online and telephone support, visit [headspace.org.au](https://www.headspace.org.au)

If you need immediate assistance call 000 or to speak to someone urgently, please call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467.

headspace National Youth Mental Health Foundation is funded by the Australian Government.



The headspace Clinical Reference Group have approved this clinical resource. Fact sheets are for general information only. They are not intended to be and should not be relied on as a substitute for specific medical or health advice. While every effort is taken to ensure the information is accurate, headspace makes no representations and gives no warranties that this information is correct, current, complete, reliable or suitable for any purpose. We disclaim all responsibility and liability for any direct or indirect loss, damage, cost or expense whatsoever in the use of or reliance upon this information. 03 October 2022.

## Director of Transitions & Community Engagement – Nicole Noonan

### Transition and Enrolments at Murtoa College

We welcome all enrolment enquiries into Murtoa College. We hold tours of the school for any interested families on request. Simply contact Mrs Nicole Noonan to make an appointment time.

### Prep/Foundation

Starting school is an exciting time for children, parents and carers. We want to help make the transition and enrolment process as easy as possible for you.

In the coming weeks we will welcome the 4-year-old kindergarten students to the classroom for a transition visit. This will begin a series of transition sessions, allowing the students to get a feel for 'school' and familiarise themselves with Murtoa College and staff. Enrolment packs will also be sent home.

During term 4, a formal transition program will begin on a regular basis. Students will be invited to join the classroom for a couple of hours at a time, building up until we welcome them for a full day on the State Wide Transition day in December.

### Primary School Grade 6 to Secondary School Year 7

Commencing high school is a social and emotional shift that opens new and sometimes challenging experiences. We understand the importance of a positive transition for each student and have developed supportive programs and structures to build connections and a sense of belonging to our community.

Mr Frost and Mrs Noonan have been visiting the feeder schools and discussing high school with the year 5 & 6 classes. Students from both OLHC and Minyip PS had some very interesting questions and wonderings about what high school is all about.

Our visits have been an exciting experience. We focus on strong positive relationships and encourage active participation of students, families and carers, and primary schools in the transition process. Transition packs will be available shortly for families wishing to attend Murtoa College in 2025.

We look forward to inviting our future Year 7 students to Murtoa College for the first transition day later this term. Three more days will be organised during Term 4. This allows students to get a feel for 'high school' and an introduction to some of the activities on offer at Murtoa College.

For further information regarding Enrolments/Transition and tours please contact Mrs Nicole Noonan (03) 53852381 or via email [nicole.noonan@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:nicole.noonan@education.vic.gov.au)

### **Year 3/4 and 5/6 Camps**

Primary school camps are journeys filled with laughter, learning, and unforgettable moments. For many children, this might be their first adventure away from home, and we're here to make it a positive and memorable experience.

Planning is in full swing for both the Year 3/4 and 5/6 Cluster Camps. This is a great opportunity for our 5 primary schools in the Dunmunkle Cluster: Murtoa College, OLHC, Minyip PS, Marnoo PS and Rupanyup PS to come together.

We are carefully crafting a 3-day primary school camp blended with adventure and outdoor learning, offering age-appropriate activities and exciting challenges for students to forge new friendships and create lasting memories.

All forms including permission, medical and information regarding either camp will be sent home very soon. Please note that the cost of these camps has been subsidised with Murtoa College covering the cost of the buses, allowing us to keep the cost at a minimum.

Year 3/4 Cluster Camp – Ballarat/Creswick Camp: Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October – Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

Year 4/5 Cluster Camp – Urban Camp Melbourne: Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December – Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December.

## **PLASTIC MILK CONTAINERS THANKYOU**

**Thankyou everyone that provided the school with milk containers. We now have enough but really grateful for everyone's help!**

**Thank you.**

**Dave**



## *Sports – Nathan Sachse*

### **Black Ranges Volleyball**

#### **Grade 5/6 @ Horsham**

On Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> August two teams from Murtoa College competed in the Grade 5/6 Black Ranges Volleyball in Horsham.

Both Murtoa College teams won the Black Ranges division and received medals. It was great to see all 13 students have a go and have a fun time playing against other schools.

A big thank to Mr Shaun Bray, Paige Hemley and Mr David Berry for coaching the teams and Sam Gawith for her support.



*Back Row:*

Mr Shaun Bray, Darcey Barker, Ellie Cowan, Ella Wheeler, Mia Pendlebury, Paige Hemley.

*Front Row:*

Porsha McKenzie and Billie Coote

*Back Row:*

Cooper Shaw, Pippa Wilson, Mr David Berry, Jaxon Okely, Braxton Maher

*Front Row:*

Jagger Williams, Ethan Maher and MJ Lesser



# Finance, Operations and Facilities Team

## *Business Manager/Office – Jenny Huebner*

### Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF)

If you receive CSEF this year, please remember to tick the box on your excursion form to allow us to use your allocated money for camps, sports and excursions.

### Information for Parents

**Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund helps ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities.**

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors. Excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works while sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are a part of a healthy curriculum.

CSEF is provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. A special consideration category also exists for asylum seeker and refugee families. The allowance is paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

The annual CSEF amount per student is:

- \$150 for primary school students
- \$250 for secondary school students

Applications for 2024 have closed however please see below for application details for 2025 applicants.

---

#### HOW TO APPLY

New applicants should contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form.

If you applied for CSEF at your child's school last year, you do not need to complete an application form this year unless there has been a change in your family circumstances.

You only need to complete an application form if any of the following changes have occurred:

- **new student enrolments;** your child has started or changed schools this year.
- **changed family circumstances;** such as a change of custody, change of name, concession card number, or new siblings commencing this year.

Check with the school office if you are unsure.



### NEEDED – Second Hand Uniform

It would be a great help to the school if you have any uniform that you don't require anymore, we would really appreciate it. We have a second hand uniform storage room and donations are always welcome!

## CASUAL BUS DRIVERS NEEDED!!

If you, or someone you know, is interested in Casual Bus Driving for Murtoa College can you please contact Leigh McGinty on 0428 405 339.



All you need is a Medium Rigid License.

### *Important Dates-known at time of publishing*

<b>TERM 3 -</b>		
Week 8	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> September	Adelaide Camp Year 8
	3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Year 7 RACE Excursion
	4 <sup>th</sup> September	BR Yr 7/8 Junior Basketball
	5 <sup>th</sup> September	BR Primary Athletics at Stawell
	6 <sup>th</sup> September	Yr 9 Active Volunteering
Week 9	10 <sup>th</sup> September	TBC - GWR Junior Volleyball
	11 <sup>th</sup> September	Parent Teacher Interviews
	12 <sup>th</sup> September	2025 Year 7 Transition Day 1
Week 10	16 – 20 September	Bogong Ski Trip
	19 <sup>th</sup> September	LLEN Year 10 industry immersion
<b>TERM 4</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> October	Start of Term 4
Week 1	10 <sup>th</sup> October	GWR Track and Field
Week 2	14 <sup>th</sup> & 15 <sup>th</sup> October	BR Junior Cricket
	18 <sup>th</sup> October	Year 12 Students Last Day
Week 3	21 <sup>st</sup> October	BR Tennis
	21 <sup>st</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> October	Year 12 Exams Revision Week
	21 <sup>st</sup> – 23 <sup>rd</sup> October	Yr 3/4 Cluster Camp Creswick
	23 <sup>rd</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> October	Duke of Ed Camp
Week 4	29 <sup>th</sup> October	Year 12 English Exam
	31 <sup>st</sup> October	2025 Year 7 Transition Day 2
Week 5		
Week 6	11 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> November	Yr 11 Exam Week
	13 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> November	Duke of Ed Camp
Week 7	18 <sup>th</sup> – 22 <sup>nd</sup> November	Year 11 into Year 12 Classes
	19 <sup>th</sup> November	Year 12 Presentation Dinner (Horsham Golf Club)
Week 8	25 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> November	Year 11 into Year 12 Classes
Week 9	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 10 Melbourne Camp
	9 <sup>th</sup> December	2025 Year 7 Transition Day 3
Week 10	9 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup> December	Yr 5/6 Cluster Camp Melbourne
Week 11	20 <sup>th</sup> December	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL 2024