



Weekly Newsletter #43 - 12 Feb 2025

Reflection - Pilgrims of Hope



Pilgrims of Hope

As 2025 is unfolding, here is a blessing that may be suitable to use at Opening Year Liturgies, staff meetings or information sharing sessions with families.

A Friendship Blessing

Creator God, as Pilgrims of Hope, we pray for one another along the journey of 2025. With confidence we pray for one another using this reflection;

May you be blessed with good friends.

May you learn to be a good friend to yourself.

May you be able to journey to that place in your soul
where

there is great love, warmth, feeling, and forgiveness.

May this change you.

May it transfigure that which is negative, distant, or cold in
you.

May you be brought into the real passion, kinship, and
affinity of belonging.

May you treasure your friends.

May you be good to them and may you be there for them;

may they bring you all the blessing, challenges, truth,
and light that you need for your journey.

May you never be isolated.

May you always be in the gentle nest of belonging with
your *anam cara*.

Amen

Adapted from *Anam Cara: A Book Of Celtic Wisdom* by
John O'Donohue

In the Celtic tradition, there is a beautiful understanding of love and friendship. One of the fascinating ideas here is the soul-love; the old Gaelic term for this is an am cara. Anam is the Gaelic word for soul and cara is the word for friend. So anam cara in the Gaelic world was the 'soul friend.' In the early Celtic church, a person who acted as a teacher, companion, or spiritual guide was called an amam cara - John O'Donohue, Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom

May we all be and find an Anam Cara as we experience
everything 2025 brings.

From the Executive Director

It has been wonderful to see school communities gathering for liturgical celebrations in recent days to mark the beginning of the school year. These special occasions, often including commissioning of student leaders, welcoming of new families and staff etc, form an important part of our distinctive Catholic school identity.



Yesterday I was in Melbourne with Dave Runge (Future Schools) and Canadian colleagues, Jean Claude Couture and Stephen Murgatroyd, to present a workshop at the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI). The workshop entitled - 'An International Collaboration: Making sense of past reforms in current times' - reflected on the learnings and application of the Alberta (Canada) Initiative for School Improvement (AIS) to the development of our 'DOBCEL Strategy 2035 – Pursuing fullness of life for all'. The workshop attracted interest and affirmation from some high profile conference participants.

In further looking at global best practices to help inform our local directions, last Friday I was thrilled to join more than 100 middle leaders and Principals from across the Diocese to work with world-renowned education scholar, Professor Andy Hargreaves.

It was a real privilege to have someone of Andy's standing with us in the diocese to kick-off the system level initiatives designed to give life to our DOBCEL Strategy 2035.

Around 30 of the middle and aspiring school leaders will further develop their skills working with mentors for the next 12 months, including mentorship by Pasi Sahlberg and Dave Runge, alongside conversations

with global thought-leaders to help evoke innovative responses to action research projects.

In this vein, leading authority on system and school improvement, David Hopkins will be with us on 17th February to present a keynote address. Places are still available to attend in person or online. (Details later in this newsletter)

This week it has also been pleasing to witness the enormous energy across the diocese for the FLARE Literacy Improvement Strategy with hundreds of teachers and school leaders coming together for professional learning led by the FLARE Executive Team in Ballarat, Camperdown and Horsham.

Along with Pasi Sahlberg, Dave Runge and Canadian colleague, Jean Claude Couturel, I look forward to joining Principals for the first Diocesan Leadership Gathering of the year in Horsham next week.

With best wishes,

Tom Sexton, Executive Director



Pictured here: DOBCEL Executive Director, Tom Sexton with Andy Hargreaves, Pasi Sahlberg and Dave Runge.





Pictured here: DOBCEL Executive Director Tom Sexton joined Dave Runge (Future Schools) and Canadian colleague Jean Claude Couture, to present a workshop at the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) in Melbourne yesterday.

Liturgical celebrations mark beginning of the school year!

It has been uplifting to witness school communities coming together for liturgical celebrations in recent days as we embark on a new school year. These meaningful occasions, often featuring the



commissioning of student leaders and the welcoming of new families and staff, are essential to our unique Catholic school identity. Check out the photo gallery below to see photos from Monivae College - Hamilton, Trinity College - Colac and St Columba's - Ballarat North!

DOBCEL Catholic school leaders work with Professor Andy Hargreaves!

Last Friday, 100 middle leaders and Principals from Catholic schools across DOBCEL collaborated with world-renowned education scholar, Professor Andy Hargreaves. The session focused on “leadership from the middle” as a driver for transformational change. With a 12-month mentorship program ahead, school leaders will dive deeper into action research, global insights, and innovative leadership practices to shape the future of education.



Keynote Presentation Professor David Hopkins - 'Unleashing Greatness – a strategy for school improvement'

Event Overview

This 90-minute keynote, from **Professor Emeritus David Hopkins**, will focus on international best practice in School Improvement. David Hopkins has been Chief Adviser to three Secretary of States on School Standards in the UK, Dean of Education at the University of Nottingham and consultant to the OECD and WHO, as well as advisor to some 20 Ministries globally and a secondary school teacher.

The keynote is open anyone in our Diocese interested in School Improvement, either in person or online via video-conference.

Strategic Outcomes – Rich Pedagogical Practices, Collaborative Cultures, Sustainable Stewardship

Event Details

- **Date and Time:** Monday 17 February 2025 9.00 AM - 10.30 AM
- **Format:** Available in-person at Sovereign Park, 223 Main Road, Ballarat or online via video conference (VC).
- **Audience:** Open to anyone who is interested in School Improvement.

Registration

To register, [click here](#).

Registration Deadline - 4pm Thursday, 13 February 2025.

Confirmation

In person registrants will be sent confirmation of their registration after 5pm Thursday, 13 February 2025.

Virtual registrants will be sent a zoom link after 5pm Thursday, 13 February 2025.

Showcasing our Catholic schools in Action

Milan Pilmore will VLOG her Year 12 journey this year!



Congratulations to **Damascus College** Ballarat Year 12 student

Milan Pilmore on being selected to VLOG her Year 12 journey for the Careers Department, an online platform supporting students, parents, and teachers for the future of work.

Our DOBCEL community recognises the vital importance of 'student voice' and we can't wait to follow Milan's journey this year!

Read the full story and view the first vlog [here](#).

People and Development Updates

Leadership Development - Program Offerings for Term 1

Throughout 2025 a number of leadership development opportunities will run to support the implementation of the DOBCEL strategy 2035 and the development of our leaders.

During term one, the following opportunities are offered.

Crucial Conversations - DOBCEL facilitated

Date, time & location	February 27&28 in St Brigid's College, Horsham (9am – 4pm)
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David Hopkins

Chair of Educational Leadership at the University of Bolton, as well as Professor Emeritus at the Institute of Education, University College London and the University of Nottingham.

Program overview	Crucial Conversations teaches a model for effective communication, that can be applied to any situation, but particularly difficult or high-stakes situations. It focuses on fostering dialogue, managing emotions, and achieving mutual understanding. The model helps to navigate high-stakes discussions with openness, respect, and skill, enhancing relationships and driving positive outcomes.
Target Audience	This program is designed for anyone who would like to develop skills in providing effective feedback and fostering open dialogue.
Booking Link	https://www.trybooking.com/CYJJY
Cost	\$500

For further information (including additional program dates for 2025) on Crucial Conversations please click [here](#).

Personal Leadership - Facilitated by BTS Sparks

Date, time & location	March 5, Sovereign Park Motor Inn, Ballarat 9am- 4pm
Program overview	<p>Understanding your leadership style is essential for any leader. Regardless of how long you may have been in a leadership role this program enables the leader to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on their personal leadership and learn practical strategies to widen their 'leadership toolkit'. • Get clearer on your natural leadership strengths • Identify a key leadership shift that feels important in your current context • Gain a deeper level of self-awareness • Learn how to manage your state so you can increase your personal effectiveness • Learn some practical strategies to build rapport and influence others • Uncover the core values that motivate you to do your best work
Target Audience	This program is designed for current people leaders – eg: Early Career Principals, Deputy or Assistant Principals, members of school leadership teams and is also suitable for aspiring people leaders and CEB staff.
Booking Link	https://www.trybooking.com/CYJLQ
Cost	\$450

For further information please click [here](#).

(Minimum participant numbers apply for the program to run)

Feedback - Facilitated by BTS Sparks

Date, time & location	March 6, Sovereign Park Motor Inn, Ballarat 9am – 12:30pm
Program overview	<p>Feedback plays a crucial role in the development of collaboration skills.</p> <p>The focus of this program is shifting mindsets from –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a feedback culture is created by giving feedback, to, a feedback culture is created by asking for feedback, and; • Constructive feedback is necessary but creates distance, to, understanding that feedback can create connections and strengthen relationships, and; • I give feedback as part of the performance process, to, I give feedback because every person wants and needs it.
Target Audience	This program is designed for current people leaders – eg: Early Career Principals, Deputy or Assistant Principals, members of school leadership teams and is also suitable for aspiring people leaders and CEB staff.
Booking Link	https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1342196
Cost	\$275

For further information please click [here](#).

(Minimum participant numbers apply for the program to run)

Collaboration - Facilitated by BTS Sparks

Date, time & location	March 6, Sovereign Park Motor Inn, Ballarat 1:00pm – 4:30pm
Program overview	<p>The focus of this program is to deeply understand what collaboration means and how to bring the best version of yourself to collaborate.</p> <p>It focuses on shifting mindsets from –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am most effective when working by myself, to, I am most effective when collaborating with others, and; • I work best with people who think and work like me, to, we create the best results by having diverse backgrounds, opinions and ideas on the team, and; • Teams either work or they don't, to, effective teams require constant attention and evolve and grow over time.
Target Audience	This program is designed for current people leaders – eg: Early Career Principals, Deputy or Assistant Principals, members of school leadership teams and is also suitable for aspiring people leaders and CEB staff.
Booking Link	https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1342190
Cost	\$275

(Minimum participant numbers apply for the program to run)

For further information please click [here](#).

Click [here](#) to view the full list of leadership development opportunities for 2025.

If you have any questions related to Leadership Development opportunities please contact [Fiona Murphy](#).

Wellbeing Updates

CEB Wellbeing team initiative: Universal Speech Screening for Foundation Students – Term 1, 2025



Pictured here: CEB North region Speech Pathologist, Chelsea Harris, working at St Mary's Swan Hill with a student today.

Across **term 1, 2025**, Foundation students in **47 diocesan primary schools** will undergo speech screening as part of an initiative by the Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB) Speech Pathology Team. This initiative, based on research showing the importance of early speech screening for students, aims to address speech issues identified early in a student's education, as untreated speech problems can lead to long-term difficulties in reading, writing, mental health and employability.

The initiative builds on a successful pilot project in 2024 at several diocesan schools, which identified speech disorders in some students who hadn't received prior intervention before coming to school. The feedback from schools during this pilot was positive, highlighting the value of early support to students and intervention planning with classroom teachers.

In 2025, the speech screening project has expanded and will be supporting schools, with screening of **1,347 Foundation students**. This will strengthen collaboration between classroom teachers and speech pathologists, ensuring that students receive the support they require to develop strong speech skills and, if necessary, participate in additional speech sound programmes supported by the CEB Speech team.

Understanding and Responding to Harmful Child Sexualised Behaviour in Primary Schools

<p>Date and time</p>	<p>Date: 24th of February 2025</p> <p>Time: 9:00am – 11:30am</p>
<p>Learning outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand sexual development as a typical aspect of childhood, including the continuum of sexual behaviour and identify the characteristics of healthy sexual behaviours as well as those which are concerning, problematic or harmful • Understand the factors that contribute to these behaviours including the neurobiology of trauma, attachment, family violence and pornography • Identify risk and protective factors • Develop practical response strategies guided by the needs of those involved • Understand the policies, processes and teams that can assist in responding to and managing student sexual behaviour and apply best practice approaches to responding to sexual risk, sexual abuse disclosure or signs of sexual abuse • Understand the work of local support services
<p>Venue</p>	<p>MacKillop/Glowery Rooms St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat or online</p>
<p>Registration link</p>	<p>https://www.trybooking.com/CYJDS</p>
<p>For further information</p>	<p>For any further information contact Brooke Nester bnester@dobcel.catholic.edu.au</p>

Primary Student Wellbeing Leaders

It was great to see many new leaders on our first

online meeting this week.

At the network, the team shared data tools and resourcing. If you were unable to make the please reach out and we can walk through the presentation.

What came from our first online meeting was a need to build networks within the Zones to support Student Wellbeing leaders and MHWLS.

We have a date set for the **Northern Zone Student Wellbeing** meeting.

Save the date **Week 7 13th of March (location to BC)**.


Other Zones will be confirmed in the upcoming weeks.

MARAM Training for Nominated Staff in Schools

The Department of Education has partnered with the Centre of Excellence in Child and Family Welfare to deliver free and interactive family violence MARAM training to education workforces. This 4-hour training will support school and early childhood staff to build skills they already have to better identify and respond to family violence. Online training is available 1-2 times a week during school term time until June 2026, and in-person training will be held throughout Victoria until June 2026.

This training is for MARAM nominated staff. MARAM nominated staff are identified by school and service leaders and have qualifications, training, experience, or a role aligned with wellbeing, such as wellbeing coordinators, or leadership staff. The training includes activities that will support MARAM nominated staff to screen for violence, plan for safety, make referrals and reports, and provide ongoing support. Training hours count towards professional learning for Victorian Institute of Teaching registration, and Casual Relief Teacher reimbursement is available (the Centre will email you instructions about how to claim this). The training is based on the Department of Education's [Information Sharing and Family Violence Reforms: Guidance and Tools](#).

Register - Scan this QR code and follow instructions below.



You will then receive an email from the Centre's Learning Management System (LMS) within 24 hours asking you to set a password so you can login to the LMS at any time and see the training calendar.

Log in and enrol yourself in a session that suits you.

Register now for in-person training in South West Victoria Region:

24 March 2025	Deer Park
25 March 2025	Newport
26 March 2025	Geelong
27 March 2025	Ballarat
28 March 2025	Warrnambool

Save the dates

SWPBS refresher – 21st of March

The Student Wellbeing team is hosting a day in Ballarat as a SWPBS refresher day.

SWPBS is an evidence-based school improvement approach that creates a positive and supportive learning environment for all students. It focuses on teaching and reinforcing positive behaviours while providing targeted assistance to students who may need extra support, leading to a more successful and inclusive learning community. When implemented well, it ensures that all students receive support to maximise behavioural, wellbeing and academic growth.

The day will focus on unpacking the pedagogy of SWPBS and exploring systems and processes which support SWPBS.

Intended audience for PD will be all staff to deepen their understanding of SWPBS

SWPBS refresher – 21st of March

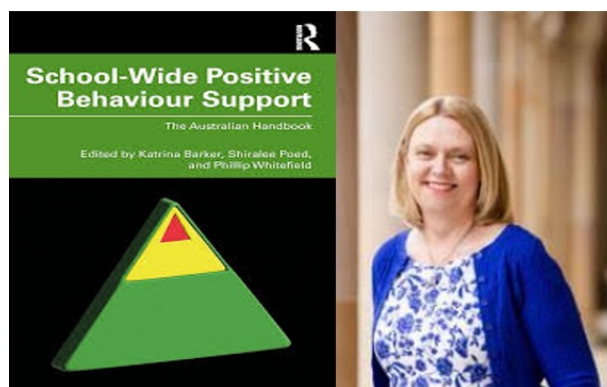
SWPBS Refresher Day – Ballarat:
<https://www.trybooking.com/CXXVF>

Dr Shiralee Poed

Professional Learning

24th of April – Horsham

Registration Link <https://www.trybooking.com/CXXTA>



QUIT Victoria - Resources for Grades 5-6 and Year 7-10

Quit has recently launched and updated their education resources to ensure that they remain fit-for-purpose, contemporary and aligned to new best practice messaging, research and evidence and national vaping reforms. Resources can be accessed [here](#).

Seeing Through the Haze Education Resources

Seeing Through the Haze develops health literacy and equips students with critical knowledge and critical thinking skills. Laid out as a sequence of learning activities over three modules, *Seeing Through the Haze* takes a whole-of-school approach, developing active learners with the capabilities to:

- Understand how vapes work and the health harms of vaping;
- 'See through the haze' of misinformation, understand social and commercial determinants of health, and investigate cessation techniques;
- Create their own campaign for smoke and vape-free places.

Teaching Guides

To support the delivery of *Seeing Through the Haze*, Quit has developed teaching guides for Year 5-6 and Year 7-10 delivery. The Teaching Guide is designed to be used alongside the student education resource. It explains the structure of the resources, contains lesson planning and delivery suggestions, curriculum links and answers to the activities.

Educators can select and choose which activities are delivered depending on their students' needs, interests, learning abilities and timetables. Possible extension activities are also included should you wish to deepen student learning further.

Student Education Resources

Student education resources are available for upper primary (Year 5-6) and secondary (Year 7-10).

Key learning outcomes include:

- Foundational knowledge to understand vaping and the impacts on health
- Explore the history of vaping, the science of vaping and the impact on the environment
- Gain awareness of how social factors, including peers, influence decisions about vaping
- Investigate vaping cessation support options
- Examine the marketing and advertising tactics used by industries when targeting young people
- Identify local community organisations and professionals who work to provide healthier environments for young people to live, work and play
- Create a campaign that advocates for smoke and vape-free areas

The student education resource has a coherent sequence of activities for students to complete.

Please note: the teaching guide is designed to be

used alongside the student education resource.

Learning and Teaching Updates

GENERAL NEWS

FLARE Professional Learning

Today, more than 200 teachers from Central Zone schools participated in professional learning in Ballarat as part of the FLARE Literacy Improvement Strategy.

The Phase A professional learning is intended to guide teachers and schools to improve literacy outcomes through an explicit instruction, phonics-based approach to teaching reading, as part of Structured Literacy.

The professional learning, led by the FLARE Executive Team of Holly Southwell, Breeana Wade and Emma Rutherford, has also been offered this week in Camperdown and Horsham.



English as an Additional Language

The EAL Grapevine

Please [click this link](#) to read the Term 1 EAL Grapevine.

This issue includes:

- Online EAL tutoring
- Professional learning opportunities.
- The Migrant Story: Nepal.
- Useful resources.

PAT News



ACER is pleased to offer a series of webinars targeted to schools using, or about to use, the PAT Progressive Achievement suite online.

Webinars Term 1:

Understanding PAT: a guide for new teachers
Wednesday 12 February 4:00pm

The PAT Teaching Resource Centre: supporting teachers with the next steps after assessment Tuesday, 18 February 4pm

PAT Administration: account setup tips and tricks
Wednesday 19 February 4pm

PAT Interviews: exploring the context of PAT in a school setting Wednesday, 26 February 4pm

Understanding PAT workshop: designed to deepen knowledge of PAT and analysis of student data
Wednesday 26 March 9am - 3pm

Click [here](#) to find out more information and to register for the PAT sessions

Early Career Teachers - Professional Learning 2025



The Early Career Teacher Program is a three-year integrated program designed to support early career teacher induction into the Ballarat Diocese and the teaching profession within the particular context of working in the ministry of Catholic education. The program reflects the partnership between DOBCEL and schools, who, together, support the professional growth of early career teachers. Elements of the program presented through these dedicated days will complement formation opportunities initiated by the school community.

Early Career Teacher program days will take place on the following dates throughout 2025. To encourage participation and decrease travel time for people in the north, program days in terms one and two will be repeated in two locations.

If you know an early career teacher, please share these dates with them!

Please note early career teachers who have been granted permission to teach are also welcome to attend.

2025 dates for your diary

First Year ECT Program

	Central Location	Northern Location	Cost	Mode of delivery
		Session will go ahead subject to numbers		
Term 1	Tuesday March 11 9am-3pm Ballarat - Glowrey Room – St Patrick's Cathedral Hall https://www.trybooking.com/CYLBI	Monday March 17 9am-3pm Mildura or Robinvale (TBC subject to registrations) https://www.trybooking.com/CYLCH	\$80	Face to Face
Term 2	Monday May 19 9am-3pm Ballarat - Glowrey Room – St Patrick's Cathedral Hall	Wednesday May 21 9am-3pm Mildura or Robinvale TBC (subject to registrations)	\$80	Face to Face
Term 3	Formation Retreat - August 13/14 Halls Gap	Formation Retreat - August 13/14 Halls Gap	TBC	Face to Face
Term 4	ECT Check-ins Weeks 3 & 4 20/10 – 1/11	ECT Check-ins Weeks 3 & 4 20/10 – 1/11	N/A	Online

Second & Third Year ECT Program

	Central Location	Northern Location	Cost	Mode of delivery
		Session will go ahead subject to numbers		
Term 1	Thursday, March 20 9am-3pm Ballarat - Glowrey Room – St Patrick’s Cathedral Hall https://www.trybooking.com/CYLDB	Tuesday, March 18 9am-3pm Mildura or Robinvale (TBC subject to registrations) https://www.trybooking.com/CYLCK	\$80	Face to Face
Term 2	Thursday June 12 Online check-in (1 hour) 3:45-4:45pm	Thursday June 12 Online check-in (1 hour) 3:45-4:45pm	\$80	Online
Term 3	Formation Retreat - August 13/14 Halls Gap	Formation Retreat - August 13/14 Halls Gap	TBC	Face to Face
Term 4	ECT Check-ins Weeks 3 & 4 20/10 – 1/11	ECT Check-ins Weeks 3 & 4 20/10 – 1/11	N/A	Online

If you have any queries about the program, please contact Julie Cooper jcooper@dobcel.catholic.edu.au or Sarah Hanley shanley@dobcel.catholic.edu.au

VIT Effective Mentoring Program



Calling mentor teachers!

The Effective Mentoring Program (EMP) is a free professional learning program developed and delivered in partnership with the Department of Education and VIT.

This two-day program equips participants with mentoring skills to support beginning teachers and guide them

through the provisional to full registration process.

Any teacher who wishes to become a mentor for a PRT moving to full registration can participate in a VIT-approved mentoring program.

Two-day EMP Course		
Location	Day 1	Day 2
Ballarat	10 February 2025	19 March 2025
Bendigo	12 June 2025	7 August 2025
Geelong	3 July 2025	28 August 2025
Horsesham	8 May 2025	26 June 2025
Mildura	21 August 2025	9 October 2025
Warrnambool	19 June 2025	14 August 2025

One-day EMP refresher course
Refresher courses are available for those who have completed the initial two-day training but would like to refresh their mentoring skills.

Location	Day 1
Melbourne	28 February 2025
Melbourne	30 May 2025
Melbourne	15 August 2025
Melbourne	20 October 2025

For further information and registrations, please click [here](#).

Children & Youth Cultural Gathering: Close the Gap Day

Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative are hosting a cultural day on Thursday March 30 for Yr 1-9 First Nations students from Ballarat and district. All Ballarat schools are encouraged to promote this event.

More information and register here:
<https://forms.office.com/r/Tiq1mvXB7p>

FIRE Carrier Program

Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education



The FIRE Carrier Program is a way that schools can show their outward commitment to authentic reconciliation and their support of self-determination in education for First Nations students and their families. All members of a school community are encouraged to share reconciliation with others under the lead of the Commissioned Staff and Student FIRE Carriers.

Each school creates a School Covenant that emphasises the ethos and faith belief of Catholic schools and the social justice responses they are committed to make as part of their Catholic identity. The school covenant focuses on the three core values of Spirituality; Cultural Recognition and Awareness; and Practical Recognition and Justice. Schools commit to actions that meet each of these values. This is a living document that is referred to throughout the year and has the input from the school community including staff and students. First Nations students and families are also invited to contribute if they would like to

part of the program.

The FIRE Carrier Program provides a framework for addressing School Compliance including Child Safe Standards and the [VCEA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan](#). It is a great opportunity for student leadership, voice and action for social justice.

We look forward to your school becoming a FIRE Carrier School in the future!

For more information about the FIRE Carrier Program send an email to firecarrier@openingthedoors.org.au

You can visit our [New FIRE Carrier School Information](#) folder containing our Information Booklet, PowerPoint presentation, Fee Schedule and Expression of Commitment Form ready to share the FIRE Carrier Program with your school leadership, staff and students.

Opening the Doors Foundation



Financial Grants for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students

The Opening the Doors Foundation provides grants to families to assist with the extra costs incurred in the schooling of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary or secondary school students. The 2025 Grant Round is now open, with a closing date of **14 March 2025**. For students to commence the 2025 school year with the necessary items, the ideal time to apply is now or before the start of Term 1.

Please note that due to a substantial increase in applications, the Foundation's Trustees have had to modify the eligibility criteria. The updated criteria and guidelines are outlined on both the [Opening the Doors Foundation](#) website and the [Opening the Doors Foundation Application](#). Please contact the Foundation (details listed below), **Helen Christensen** (0467 415 768) or **Jeanette Morris** (0408 360 098) for further information.

Pertinent information:

Website: [Opening the Doors Foundation; Foundation Application Criteria and Guidelines](#)

App link: [Opening the Doors Foundation Application](#)

Phone: 0401 487 414 or 1300 236 356

Email: applications@openingthedoors.org.au

Closing date: 14 March 2025 (applications will not be accepted after this date)

PRIMARY NEWS



Flare Primary Literacy Leaders Forum

The Literacy Leaders' Forum is an online networking opportunity for anyone leading Primary Literacy to join with their peers to celebrate progress, problem-solve, form partnerships, find out what's happening in other diocesan schools and learn with and from one another.

Unlike other Flare PL and Coaching offerings, these events are NOT phase-specific and are not tailored to the particular needs of Guided Improvement schools. The agendas for Forums 2, 3 and 4 will be co-designed with participants. *Please note that the Forums are OPTIONAL, even for Guided Improvement schools.*

The dates for the 2025 Literacy Leader Forums are listed below.

Forum 1: Tuesday 18th Feb 10-3 (*although this will likely finish earlier than 3pm*)

Forum 2: Tue 13th May 10-3

Forum 3: Fri 22nd Aug 10-3

Forum 4: Fri 7th Nov 10-3

The agenda for Forum 1 will include:

- Reviewing a video of real-life Structured Literacy teaching
- An interview/Q&A with Phase C leaders about assessment and data analysis
- Leading school improvement - literature review
- How the Flare initiative fits into the wider DOBCEL Strategy
- Collaborative planning for future Forums

Please register for Forum 1 by the end of this week via the [Flare Calendar](#).

English Bites

English Version 2.0 Familiarisation

Schools in the Ballarat Diocese will engage in familiarisation in 2025 and move to implementation in 2026. CEB will offer a series of three **online** workshops to assist schools to understand and implement the changes to English Version 2.0 curriculum.

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3
Wednesday 12 th March 3:45 – 4:45pm	Wednesday 19 th March 3:45 – 4:45pm	Wednesday 26 th March 3:45 – 4:45pm
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Compare V1.0 to V2.0Summary of changesModes and Achievement Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Auditing current units of workWhole school curriculum area plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Adapting current units of workReporting

Please use [this link](#) to register your attendance for session 1.

If you have any queries with regard to these sessions, please contact:

Sarah McKnight: SMcKnight@dobcel.catholic.edu.au
0427 406 918

Belinda Chiswell: BChiswell@dobcel.catholic.edu.au 0484 641 997

Joe Ewing: JEwing@dobcel.catholic.edu.au 0429 985 460



Primary Leaders of Learning Meeting Schedule 2025

Our Primary Leaders of Learning network aims to provide a platform for open dialogue, sharing of evidence-based teaching practices, and collaboration among primary school leaders.

By coming together, we can leverage our collective knowledge of learning and experiences to enhance the quality of education we provide to our students.

PLOL Meeting Dates 2025 and Agenda Items for Term 1

Please register your intentions to attend the Term 1 PLOL meeting [here](#).

Term 1: Wednesday 5th March 1:30 – 3pm

Agenda Items:

Educational leadership

Curriculum updates

Reporting to Mathematics V2.0

Term 2: Wednesday 28th May 1:30 – 3pm

Term 3: Wednesday 27th August 1:30 – 3pm

Term 4: Wednesday 22nd October 1:30 – 3pm

Teaching Mathematics to Foundation Students with Michael Ymer



Ballarat: 25 March

This day will be full of activities that teachers can readily take back and trial with their students.

Content for the day will include:

- Teachers enjoying teaching mathematics, children enjoying learning mathematics.
- A sensible approach to covering all the content in the new Victorian Curriculum Version 2.0.
- Managing mixed abilities so all students experience success.
- Resourcing the mathematics classroom.
- Integrating number with other strands to support a meaningful learning environment.

For more information and registration details click [here](#)

F-6 Mathematics Curriculum V2.0

Where are you currently on the Roadmap in preparation for the implementation of Mathematics V2.0 in 2025? Reflect on what you have in place and cross reference your progress against the 2025 Implementation Roadmap [document](#)

[Voices from the field sharing their journey about preparing to implement Mathematics V2.0](#)

For more assistance, please contact:

Sarah McKnight smcknight@dobel.catholic.edu.au

OR

Teresa Hadden: thadden@dobcel.catholic.edu.au

2025 SIMON User Conference - 8 & 9 May

The conference will be located at ENCORE Events Centre - Hoppers Crossing.

It offers easy access from major freeways, ample car parking, modern learning facilities and nearby hotel accommodation for those who wish to stay overnight.

Please [click here](#) to view the conference flyer.

Roll-out of new Finance, Payroll and HR Systems continues apace!

The roll-out of the new DOBCEL Finance, Payroll and HR Systems (NEXUS Project) is continuing apace!

The finance component of the new package has been launched this week with Business managers and key finance personnel from DOBCEL schools gathering for user acceptance testing (UAT) at Creswick.

With useability for schools at the forefront of thinking, the new platforms represent the best technology, people, and ethical standards that align with DOBCEL's current and future needs and vision.

Project Microsoft Partner 'Professional Advantage' is on site to lead the training.



Our Diocesan Community Magazine 2025 - Now inviting contributions

The Ballarat Diocesan print publication "Our Diocesan Community" (ODC), jointly sponsored by the Diocese and Catholic Education Ballarat, will again be published three times during 2025. The aim of "Our Diocesan Community" is to share the good news of the many initiatives taking place in our parishes, schools and agencies around the diocese. [Click here for the timeline and content for 2025.](#)

ODC is distributed to all parishes and families and staff of primary and secondary schools of the diocese. Contributors to ODC are the people of the diocesan community. The only way we all will hear of the good things happening in the various communities is if they are written and contributed from the local level. It is helpful if we have an ODC contact person in each parish / school / agency to assist with the gathering of news and distribution of the magazine. If you are able to provide a contact person please email their contact details to odc@ballarat.catholic.org.au

We now invite your contribution to the first issue for 2025. The focus for this year will be the **Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of Hope**. Pope Francis seeks to rekindle hope and trust in the future, encouraging Catholics to deepen their faith through acts of charity, penance, and pilgrimage during this Jubilee Year. We look forward to you sharing your stories with this theme in mind.

We are hoping also to gather stories and examples of new initiatives and experiences in the Catholic community – schools, parishes and agencies from all around the diocese. We also invite you to share significant events that may have taken place over the last few months in your parish,

school communities and agencies. We hope to have this first issue of “Our Diocesan Community” delivered in the week beginning March 31 so the latest date for submissions to this issue is Friday, February 28.

Articles should be approximately 250 words maximum in length and accompanied by photos where possible.

Photos should be sent as separate JPEG files (not inserted into a Word document).

Material can be sent to

odc@ballarat.catholic.org.au. A reminder that when sending in photos, permission should be sought from those in the pictures. From time-to-time, these photos will also be used in other diocesan publications. *Julie & Jane, for the ODC Editorial Committee.*

- **Classroom Teacher (Monday and Wednesday)** – Sacred Heart Primary School, Colac – fixed term position at 0.4 FTE (**closes 28 February**)
- **Casual Relief Teachers** – St Brigid’s School, Ballan (**closes 28 February**)

Career Opportunities in the Diocesan Education Community

Catholic Education Ballarat Vacancy

- **Education Officer: Student Wellbeing** - Mildura, Swan Hill or Horsham Office, ongoing position at 1.0 FTE (**closes 16 February**)
- **Education Officer: Positive Behaviour Specialist** – Ballarat or Horsham office – fixed term position at 1.0 FTE (**closes 16 February**)
- **Manager: Risk and Assurance** – Ballarat Office, ongoing position at 1.0 FTE (**closes 16 February**)

Principal Vacancy

- **No Principal Vacancies**

School Vacancies

- **Mental Health in Primary Schools MHiPS Coordinator** – St Mary’s Catholic Primary School, Warracknabeal – fixed term position at 0.4 FTE (**closes 14 February**)
- **Classroom Teacher** – St Mary’s Catholic Primary School, Warracknabeal – fixed term position at 1.0 FTE (**closes 14 February**)
- **Classroom Teacher** – St Malachy’s School, Edenhope – fixed term position at 1.0 FTE (**closes 14 February**)
- **Classroom Teacher** – St Joseph’s School, Charlton – fixed term position at 1.0 FTE (**closes 14 February**)
- **Part time classroom teacher** – Emmaus Catholic Primary School, Mount Clear – fixed term position at 0.2 FTE (**closes 25 February**)