



## Weekly Newsletter #81 - 17 December 2025

### From the Executive Director

I would like to begin by acknowledging the deeply distressing events that occurred in Bondi, which have been felt deeply across our communities.



I encourage all staff to take time to read Bishop Paul's message below, along with the statements issued by the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP, and the Victorian Council of Churches. These reflections offer guidance, reassurance and a strong call to prayer and solidarity at a time when many children, young people and adults are struggling to make sense of what they have seen and heard. As highlighted in the guidance shared earlier this week, our schools play a vital role in helping students process distressing events in age-appropriate and compassionate ways. Through prayer, wellbeing circles and trusted relationships, our school communities provide safe spaces where fears can be named, questions can be asked and hope can be gently restored.

Further support and resources have been shared in the wellbeing section of this newsletter. I encourage staff to make use of these materials and to remain attentive to the needs of students, colleagues and families, particularly as media coverage continues. At times such as these, the strength of our Catholic school communities is evident in the care, calm and consistency you provide each day.

As we now reach the end of term and the school year, I want to thank you sincerely for all you have given in 2025. It has been a demanding year, yet one marked by extraordinary professionalism, compassion and commitment to our students and families. I wish you all a well-deserved, restful and joyful Christmas, and I hope the coming weeks provide space for renewal, reflection and time with those you love.

With best wishes,  
**Tom Sexton**  
Executive Director

## A message from Bishop Paul

Dear Principals,  
Staff and School  
Communities,

Please find attached a media statement from Archbishop Anthony Fisher following the attack on the Jewish gathering in Bondi yesterday. Also attached is a statement from the Victorian Council of Churches.



I ask you to join me in prayer for the Jewish community in our diocese and throughout Australia in this stressful time.

I have spoken with John Abraham, President of the Ballarat Hebrew Congregation, to express support for the Jewish community in Ballarat and beyond.

John is very appreciative of the kind messages he has received from religious groups and from the community as a whole.

May God grant comfort to all who have suffered because of this attack.

Blessings to you all.

Bishop Paul

### Media Statement from Archbishop Anthony Fisher

[https://ceob.schoolzineplus.com/\\_file/media/7537/251215\\_media\\_statement\\_bondi\\_shooting.pdf](https://ceob.schoolzineplus.com/_file/media/7537/251215_media_statement_bondi_shooting.pdf)

### VCC Statement Bondi Beach Hanukkah

[https://ceob.schoolzineplus.com/\\_file/media/7566/vcc\\_statement\\_bondi\\_beach\\_hanukkah.pdf](https://ceob.schoolzineplus.com/_file/media/7566/vcc_statement_bondi_beach_hanukkah.pdf)

## Reflection of the Week

*Two Reflections to end our year .....*

### Prayer for the days after

God of all compassion,  
We come before you full of confusion and grief  
In the aftermath of the inhuman massacre at Bondi Beach.  
We love the beach, a place where the world usually shines.  
We love the way our sisters and brothers celebrate Hanukkah,  
A festival of light and family fun.  
Yet now all joy seems fragile  
As we witness the pain caused by hatred and violence.  
We give thanks for those with grace and courage to stand up in the moment.  
We pray that we too may stand up  
And find our voice and, even more, work for the peace which Jesus taught.  
We know that Hanukkah means 'dedication'.  
Today, in our sorrow, we dedicate ourselves to a more loving future.  
It is easier to destroy than to create, to knock down than to build.  
We will choose the more difficult path  
As we help to heal this terrible atrocity  
And wait in active hope  
For the coming of your kingdom.  
Amen.



*With thanks to Michael McGirr from Caritas Australia*





We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all our Year 6 Graduates, Class of 2025! Your hard work, resilience, and achievements are something to be proud of.

A special thank you to the schools below for sharing their wonderful celebrations:

- St Paul's Primary School, Mildura
- St Mary's Primary School, Swan Hill
- Lumen Christi Primary School
- Ss Michael & John Primary School, Horsham
- St Patrick's Primary School, St Arnaud
- St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Alfredton
- St Alipius Parish School, Ballarat East
- St Joseph's Primary School, Red Cliffs
- Sacred Heart Primary School, Mildura

## New Principal Appointed – Loreto College Ballarat

Catholic Education Ballarat acknowledges Mrs Christine Shaw, who will commence as Principal of Loreto College Ballarat in 2026.



Mrs Shaw is a highly respected member of the Loreto community, having served as Deputy Principal for the past four years, including periods as Acting Principal. She brings extensive experience in educational leadership across regional and metropolitan independent schools, along with a strong commitment to girls' education.

During her time at Loreto, Mrs Shaw has contributed significantly to the College's strategic direction, educational vision and inclusive culture. Her leadership is grounded in faith and purpose, with a focus on ensuring every student is known, valued and supported to thrive.

Catholic Education Ballarat looks forward to supporting Mrs Shaw as she leads Loreto College Ballarat into its next chapter and acknowledges the service of Mrs Michelle Brodrick, who will conclude her time as Principal at the end of 2025.

[Photo shared from the Facebook page of [Loreto College, Ballarat](#)]

Congratulations once again to every graduate - we are excited to see the amazing things you will accomplish!



## St Patrick's School Camperdown – Spreading Joy in the Community

Last Friday, our Foundation students from St Patrick's School, Camperdown brought Christmas cheer to the local community by delivering handmade cards to nearby businesses and residents.

Their thoughtful gesture was met with smiles and gratitude, reminding us all of the true spirit of giving during this festive season.

To top off a wonderful morning, the children enjoyed a well-deserved treat of delicious ice cream – a sweet ending to a day filled with kindness and joy!

[Photos from the Facebook page of [St. Patrick's School Camperdown](#)]

## Our Schools in Action

### Congratulations to Our Year 6 Graduates – Class of 2025

As Nelson Mandela once said, *“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”* True to these words, our Year 6 students - supported by their dedicated parents and teachers - are ready to make a positive impact on the world.



## With Gratitude to Our Jewish Neighbours in Ballarat East

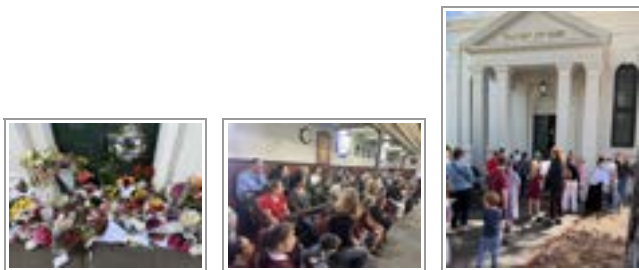
Last Monday, students and staff of St Alipius Parish School—together with representatives from DOBCEL, including Executive Director Tom Sexton - expressed heartfelt thanks to the local Jewish community for their extraordinary generosity and hospitality at a time of deep grief.

In their sorrow, our neighbours opened the doors of the synagogue and welcomed everyone in. They invited everyone to lay flowers, to stand alongside them, and to pray together. This simple yet profound act of openness and grace was warmly received by our staff, students and parents.

We are deeply grateful for the way they allowed our community to share in prayer and solidarity at such a difficult time.

Moments like this remind us that there is no place for division or hatred in our community—only compassion, solidarity and shared humanity.

*[Photos from the Facebook page of St. Alipius Parish School]*



## Distressing Content Online – Fact Sheet for Schools and Families

In light of recent events, we are aware that distressing and harmful content may be circulating online and across social media platforms. At times like these, schools often become important points of support for students, staff and families seeking guidance.

The eSafety Commissioner has prepared a **Distressing content online – fact sheet** to help schools and communities respond appropriately. The resource provides clear advice on managing exposure to upsetting content, outlines the responsibilities of online platforms, and offers guidance for communicating with students without increasing unnecessary worry or distress.

The fact sheet also includes practical strategies to reduce the risk of children and young people being exposed to disturbing material, along with links to trusted support services for those who may be impacted.

Schools are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this guidance and share it with staff, wellbeing teams and families as appropriate, in line with school and sector policies.

Further information and support resources are available via the [eSafety Commissioner website](#).

## Class of 2025: Celebrating Every Journey

Across our Diocese, Catholic secondary schools are proudly celebrating the achievements of the Class of 2025. This year's results reflect not only impressive academic outcomes, but also the resilience, independence, and care shown by every student, coupled with the dedication and support of staff and families. Schools have emphasised that each graduate, VCE VM and VCE, is more than a number – success is measured in growth; spiritual, physical, academic, emotional and social.

### Highlights from Our Schools VCE Results

- **Emmanuel College:** Nearly 25% of students achieved an ATAR of 80 or above, with 18 scoring 90+, and the median study score rising to 31. The College celebrates not just scores, but the growth and collaborative spirit of all students.
- **Mercy Regional College:** Marked a significant improvement in English and overall median study scores. College Dux, Rose Beasley, achieved an ATAR of 94.35, but the school's message is clear: every student's journey is valued, and vocational achievements are celebrated alongside academic ones.
- **Damascus College:** Eleven students achieved ATARs above 90, with a median study score of 30. VCE Dux Kylan Jans achieved an ATAR of 99.5 and hopes to go on to study medicine. The College highlights collective responsibility and celebrates all forms of achievement.
- **St Brigid's College:** Achieved two ATARs over 90, with a median study score of 29. The school focuses on the unique journey of each student and celebrates a wide range of pathways and successes.
- **St Joseph's College:** The highest ATAR was 96.15, with several students scoring above 90. The school recognises both academic and vocational accomplishments, and the effort of every student.

- **Marian College:** 14% of students achieved ATARs above 80, with the Dux earning 95.5. Marian College celebrates the character and care of all graduates, emphasising that every student's story matters.
- **Trinity College:** Five students received ATARs of 90 or above, and 13 achieved study scores above 40. The school celebrates the collective achievement of the cohort.

While academic results are important, every school has made it clear that the true measure of success lies in the character, resilience, and aspirations of their students. Whether heading to university, TAFE, apprenticeships, broader employment, or other pathways, the Class of 2025 is being celebrated for their hard work, growth, and the positive impact they have made on their communities.

We thank the graduating Year 12's for the contributions they have made and congratulate them on their achievements.

Please hold the Class of 2025 in your prayers as they move into the next exciting phase of lives journey:

*May the road rise up to meet you.  
 May the wind be always at your back.  
 May the sun shine warm upon your face;  
 the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet  
 again,  
 may God hold you in the palm of His hand.  
 (Irish Blessing)*

*[Photos below: Damascus College DUX recipients, several of the 90+ students, and staff who gathered to celebrate their achievements.]*



## Congratulations to Marvin Tran: 2025 Fr James Wall Bursary Recipient

St Mary MacKillop College in Swan Hill is proud to announce that Marvin Tran has been awarded the 2025 Fr James Wall Bursary. This prestigious honour recognises Marvin's outstanding leadership, commitment to service,

and dedication to making a positive impact within both the school and the wider community.

Marvin has consistently demonstrated initiative and inclusivity, from organising school events and supporting new students, to mentoring peers in mathematics. His leadership extends beyond the classroom, with active roles in community organisations such as "SHOP Active" and "A Good Kitchen," where he has helped organise sporting events and provided support to people living with disabilities and those facing hardship.

A passionate learner, Marvin has excelled academically, earning top prizes in programming competitions and achieving outstanding results in mathematics after just one year in Australia. His work experience at the Walter & Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research has inspired him to pursue a future in medicine, driven by a desire to serve others.

Marvin's commitment to service is also evident in his involvement with parish activities, fundraising events, and support for the elderly through programs like "Join Hands, Make a Difference." Guided by strong Catholic values, Marvin strives to treat everyone with respect and dignity, embodying the spirit of the Fr James Wall Bursary.

We congratulate Marvin on this well-deserved recognition and look forward to seeing the continued impact of his leadership and compassion in our community.

*[Pictured: Marvin with Michelle Heusler (Principal St Mary MacKillop College) and Gerard Bibile (CDF Executive Manager, Client Relationships)]*



## Remembering Our Lady's: Honouring 62 Years of Community

Earlier this year, the DOBCEL community shared

the difficult news that Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School, Murtoa, would close at the end of the 2025 school year. As the school's final days approach, the community came together on Sunday, December 14, for a heartfelt commemoration – *Remembering Our Lady's* – to honour the school's proud 62-year history and the many staff, students, families and parishioners who have shaped its story.

The day began with Mass at St Mary's Church, Murtoa, where DOBCEL was represented by outgoing Chair of the DOBCEL Board, Terry Harney; Board Director, Anne Pekin; Monsignor Glynn Murphy; and DOBCEL Education Consultant, Janet Claassen. This was followed by lunch at the school and an evening gathering at the Railway Hotel. The event was open to all, with invitations extended to anyone connected to OLHC Murtoa.

Throughout the afternoon, the atmosphere was reflective and respectful, with a series of speeches that acknowledged the school's legacy and the enduring bonds within the community. Principal Chris McCumstie delivered a moving address, capturing both the sadness of the closure and the commitment to carrying forward the school's values and sense of community in ways that will continue beyond the school itself.

DOBCEL extends its heartfelt thanks to everyone connected with OLHC Murtoa for their dedication, resilience and ongoing support. The commemoration was a meaningful opportunity to honour the past while recognising the spirit that will continue within the parish and wider community.



## Shaping the Future: A Year of Strategic Progress in Catholic Education

This year has marked a transformative chapter for our Catholic school system, as we embarked on a journey of sensemaking guided by the bold vision of the DOBCEL Strategy 2035 – *“Pursuing fullness of life for all.”*

Co-designed with our community, this strategy sets an ambitious direction, aiming to elevate our schools from good to great by 2035.

Throughout 2025, our commitment to collaboration, innovation, and empowerment has been evident in the wide range of initiatives we've led and participated in. These efforts have sparked meaningful dialogue and shared learning, helping us navigate complex challenges and explore creative solutions. By enacting our theory of change, we have demonstrated a collective dedication to shaping the future of Catholic education in our region.

At the heart of our progress is a deep-rooted Catholic identity, which continues to underpin all that we do. We strive to create a system where every student feels safe, valued, and engaged, and where compassion, service, and respect for human dignity are central to learning.

This year's highlights include several landmark events and initiatives:

- **DS2035 Initiatives for 2025:** From keynote presentations by renowned educators like Professor Andy Hargreaves and Professor David Hopkins, to international collaborations with Alberta, Canada, our community has engaged in rich professional learning experiences.
- **Network Collaboration Days:** Across four zones, over 1,200 participants came together to share insights and strengthen connections.
- **DOBCEL Baseline Survey:** With more than 1,100 responses, this survey provided valuable feedback to inform our ongoing strategy.
- **Masterclasses and Workshops:** Participants focused on educational transformation and school improvement, fostering a culture of continuous growth.
- **Enhancing Catholic Identity:** The introduction of the Leuven Project saw 60 participants, with several completing a credentialed unit, further strengthening our Catholic ethos.
- **Aurora – Flare Initiative:** This partnership between DOBCEL schools, La Trobe University, and the Bertalli Foundation will continue into 2026, supporting innovative educational practices.
- **AI Digitech Initiative:** Our Digital Positioning Plan and guidance on artificial intelligence are helping schools navigate the evolving digital landscape.
- **Student Agency – Schools that Listen:** The first educator workshop engaged over 100 participants in exploring ways to amplify student voice.
- **Collaborative Innovation Research Prototypes (CIRPS):** Thirty schools are involved in developing 13 research prototypes, driving collaborative innovation.
- **ACU Research Opportunities:** Submissions are underway for advanced research degrees, with new opportunities opening in 2026.

- **Secondary Network Collaboration Days:** Looking ahead, four locations are set to host collaboration days in Term One of 2026.

Linked below are a few documents to continue your engagement with our Strategy:

- *DOBCEL Strategy 2035 – the full version*
- Reinventing Schools
- *Strategy as a Living System*

As we reflect on these achievements, we extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed to this year's initiatives. Together, we are shaping a future where fullness of life is possible for all, guided by compassion, service, and a shared commitment to excellence.

[DOBCEL Strategy 2035 – the full version](#)

[Reinventing Schools](#)

#### Strategy as a Living System

[https://ceob.schoolzineplus.com/\\_file/media/7567/sneakpreviewvol29issue1fall2025.pdf](https://ceob.schoolzineplus.com/_file/media/7567/sneakpreviewvol29issue1fall2025.pdf)

## Catholic Identity & Mission Updates

### Induction Materials for staff New to Catholic Education 2026

A short Canvas course has been developed around the Mission and purpose of Catholic Education titled **What makes Education Catholic?**

Employees can join this course via two methods:

If employees **already have a DOBCEL Canvas account** – you can access the course via the DOBCEL Learning Library!

[Log into your DOBCEL Canvas account](#)

- Select 'Courses' from the left-hand side menu options
- Select 'All Courses'
- Select 'Browse More Courses'
- Join the "DOBCEL Learning Library Directory" course
- Team members can enjoy any of the available courses, including **What Makes Education Catholic?** by enrolling onto any course as they please!

For employees **who do not yet have a DOBCEL Canvas account** – you can access the course via the following link and creating a new account

[Click HERE to create an account and join into the course!](#)

Alternatively, if you would like this presented as a professional learning face to face or online session/s tailored to your context to suit your community, contact Jim Waight Education Officer: Formation for Mission Primary & Secondary on 0417869912. There is also the possibility of several schools/colleges joining together to explore professional learning opportunities. Professional learning will attract TAP hours for those involved.

This course and professional learning is being road tested at the beginning of 2026, thus feedback will be sought regarding what it may look like in the future.

The intention of the course is to give an overview of the purpose and Mission of Catholic Education as part of an overall induction process for all new staff joining Catholic Education.

### Social Justice Updates

#### Caritas' Ecological Ethical Advent Calendar

Caritas Australian Earthcare have shared an ecological Advent calendar to help us live a more ecological Christmas season.

Download the calendar from the link below.

#### An Ecological Ethical Advent.pdf

[https://ceob.schoolzineplus.com/\\_file/media/7365/an\\_ecological\\_ethical\\_advent.pdf](https://ceob.schoolzineplus.com/_file/media/7365/an_ecological_ethical_advent.pdf)

#### Upcoming Key Social Justice Dates:

| Term 4, 2025 Dates:                  | Events:                    |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 18 <sup>th</sup><br>December<br>2025 | International Migrants Day |

| Term 1,<br>2026 Dates:               | Events:                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> January<br>2026      | <a href="#">World Day of Peace</a>                                                                                 |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> January<br>2026     | <a href="#">Australia Day / Survival Day</a> <a href="#">Uluru Statement from the Heart - Secondary Caritas</a>    |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> February<br>2026     | <a href="#">World Wetlands Day</a>                                                                                 |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> February<br>2026     | <a href="#">Feast of Saint Josephine Bakhita</a> , Patron Saint of Victims of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking |
| 16 <sup>th</sup><br>February<br>2026 | <a href="#">World Whale Day</a>                                                                                    |
| 20 <sup>th</sup><br>February<br>2026 | <a href="#">World Day of Social Justice</a>                                                                        |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> March<br>2026        | <a href="#">Clean Up Australia Day</a>                                                                             |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> March<br>2026        | <a href="#">World Wildlife Day</a>                                                                                 |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> March<br>2026       | <a href="#">International Day of Forests</a>                                                                       |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> March<br>2026       | <a href="#">World Water Day</a>                                                                                    |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> March<br>2026       | <a href="#">Earth Hour</a>                                                                                         |

sorrow conveyed in the news and the emotions it stirs. Moments like these remind us of our shared humanity and the enduring importance of compassion, connection, and care for one another.

It is natural to feel unsettled, saddened, or even overwhelmed when confronted with such news. For some, these feelings may be immediate; for others, they may surface later. What matters most is that we acknowledge the impact and ensure that support is available.

We encourage everyone to take time to check in with themselves and those around them. If you are finding this incident difficult, please know that confidential support is available through our Employee Assistance Program (EAP), provided by Converge International. Free resources, tipsheets, and counselling services are accessible to help staff navigate the emotional impact of traumatic events. You can explore these resources and book support via the [Converge Service Hub](#).

We hold in prayer all those directly affected, their families, and the first responders who acted with courage and care. We also pray for peace and healing across our nation.

**Your Employee Mental Health & Wellbeing Program is:**

- A free, confidential service
- Available to all employees 24/7, anytime, anywhere

Details of your discussion will not be shared with your manager or workplace. You can read our Privacy Policy on our website.

Book an appointment to speak with us:

Scan the QR code or click here to book. Don't forget your organisation code:

Visit [convergeinternational.com.au](https://convergeinternational.com.au) to Live Chat with a counsellor.

Call 1300 687 327 (Australia) 0800 666 367 (New Zealand)

## People & Development Updates

### Converge EAP Staff Support



Our thoughts and prayers are with all those affected by yesterday's incident in Bondi—those directly involved, the witnesses, first responders, and members of the community who are feeling its impact. Such events can bring distress in many different ways. This tragedy has touched hearts across Australia, and although our schools and communities are in another state, we too are moved by the

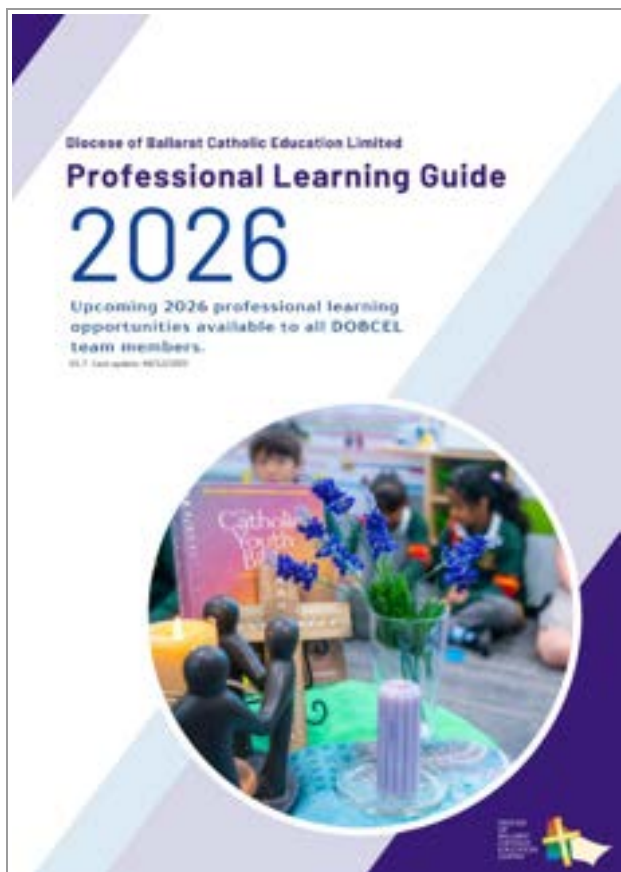
## 2026 Professional Learning Guide

Be sure to check our newest release of the DOBCEL 2026 Professional Learning Guide for new events and updated details!

- **New!** Additional Safeguarding Masterclass sessions have been added including Understanding Peer-to-Peer Harmful Sexual Behaviours events
- **New!** Effectively Teaching Mathematics in a Primary Context
- **New!** Primary Leaders of Learning Network
- **New!** Crucial Conversations: Colac Area Schools (Invite Only)
- **Update!** Attendance and Data Professional Learning will now be held on 23rd April
- **Update!** School Speech Programme: LSOs/Early Year Teachers (Central) will now be held on 5<sup>th</sup> May

We encourage all team members to review the Learning Guide and invite team members to explore the many opportunities available for professional growth and collaboration in 2026.

2026 Professional Learning Guide (as of 04 December 2025)



## Sharing the Story of MHiPS at St Mary's, Donald

We are pleased to share a new video case study celebrating the positive impact of the Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHiPS) program at St Mary's School, Donald.



Produced by the Victorian Government, the video highlights how MHiPS and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader (MHWL) role are supporting a whole-school approach to student mental health and wellbeing. It showcases the close-knit community at St Mary's and the dedicated work of staff to ensure students feel supported, connected and able to thrive.

St Mary's has been recognised as a strong example of best-practice implementation of MHiPS in a Catholic school setting, with the case study now featured on the Victorian Government's MHiPS webpage and shared across key education and mental health networks.

We invite you to watch the video below and celebrate the important work happening in our schools to support the wellbeing of every child.

<https://player.vimeo.com/video/1135152799>

# Student Wellbeing Updates

## Christmas message from our the Student Wellbeing team

We hope your year has been a productive and successful one .

Congratulations to all our MHWLS, Student Wellbeing leaders from F-12 who work extremely hard to create a positive learning environment for all in their care.

On behalf of the Student Wellbeing team, we would like to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas .

We look forward to working with you all in 2026.

Thanks

Anne , Jane, Mons

## Holiday Crisis and Emergency Support

### Community Health and Wellbeing Service Directories

As we approach Christmas and the holiday season, we recognise that this time can be challenging for many in our community. It may be helpful to share with your school communities the relevant local supports in the table below or by including the local links and resources available via [SharePoint](#): Under C for 'Community Services and Supports Health and Wellbeing Directory'.

### In an emergency phone 000

| Organisation                              | About                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Telephone number                                                |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Lifeline</a>                  | Provides access to crisis support and suicide prevention services.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 13 11 14                                                        |
| <a href="#">Suicide Call Back Service</a> | Provides immediate telephone counselling and support in a crisis.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 1300 659 467                                                    |
| <a href="#">SuicideLine Victoria</a>      | Free, professional telephone counselling service to support people at risk of suicide, concerned about someone at risk, bereaved by suicide and people experiencing emotional or mental health issues.                                                                                                                                                      | 1300 651 251 (24 hours, 7 days)                                 |
| <a href="#">Beyond Blue</a>               | Supporting people affected by anxiety, depression and suicide.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 1300 224 636                                                    |
| <a href="#">MensLine Australia</a>        | Telephone and online support, information and referral service for men with concerns about family and relationships, mental health, anger management, family violence (using and experiencing), substance abuse and wellbeing. The service is available from anywhere in Australia and is staffed by professional counsellors, experienced in men's issues. | 1300 789 978                                                    |
| <a href="#">The Orange Door</a>           | Help for people who are experiencing or using family violence or who need support with the care and wellbeing of children and young people.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <a href="#">Find support near you</a>                           |
| <a href="#">Head to Health Victoria</a>   | Free mental health and wellbeing service for anyone who needs support.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 1800 595 212 (Mon to Fri 8.30am to 5pm, except public holidays) |
| <a href="#">Safe Steps</a>                | Family Violence Response Centre 24/7                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 1800 015 188                                                    |
| <a href="#">Wellways</a>                  | Free service offering mental health information, wellbeing support and referral advice for people with a mental health issue, as well as carers and family members.                                                                                                                                                                                         | 1300 111 500                                                    |
| Children and Young People                 | Headspace                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 1800 650 890                                                    |
|                                           | Youth Beyond Blue                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 1300 224 636                                                    |
|                                           | Child Protection Hotline: 24 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 1300 556 729                                                    |
| <a href="#">Kids Helpline</a>             | Telephone and online                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                 |

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>1800RESPECT</u>                              | counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25.                                                                                                                       | 1800 551 800                                                                                    |
| Child Abuse Report Line                         |                                                                                                                                                                          | 13 14 78                                                                                        |
| Child Protection Hotline                        |                                                                                                                                                                          | 1300 556 729                                                                                    |
| <u>ReachOut</u>                                 | Online mental health service for under-25s and their parents.                                                                                                            |                                                                                                 |
| <u>National Alcohol and Other Drugs Hotline</u> | Hotline for anyone affected by alcohol or other drugs. Support includes counselling, advice and referral to local services.                                              | 1800 250 015                                                                                    |
| <u>Family Drug Support</u>                      | Help for individuals and families dealing with drug and alcohol use. Also provide support groups, education programs, counselling and bereavement services for families. | 1300 368 186                                                                                    |
| <u>1800RESPECT</u>                              | National domestic, family and sexual violence counselling, information and support service.                                                                              | 1800 737 732                                                                                    |
| <u>13YARN</u>                                   | Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander crisis support line for people feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping.                                                      | 13 92 76                                                                                        |
| <u>Ask Izzy</u>                                 | Search tool to help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness find shelter, food, health and other critical support services.                                   |                                                                                                 |
| <u>Rainbow Door</u>                             | Rainbow Door is a free helpline and specialist support service for LGBTIQ+ Victorians, their friends and families.                                                       | <a href="mailto:support@rainbowdoor.org.au">support@rainbowdoor.org.au</a><br>SMS: 0480 017 246 |

# Learning & Teaching Updates

## Flare Calendar 2026 - Open for Registrations



The Flare Calendar is now live on the website. Click [here](#) to access the calendar directly.

Please consider registering for Term 1 events as early as you can, especially if your school will be entering Phase C in 2026. Phase C schools have the option of attending a face-to-face Professional Learning Day on 31 March, and for planning purposes we will need to confirm numbers early in Term 1.

All Flare events are open to any colleagues who would like to attend. While each session is designed with a particular phase in mind, staff from self-guided literacy improvement schools or other phases will be warmly welcomed.

Agendas for all Term 1 events are available via the calendar.

**The Flare Team wishes everyone a merry and blessed Christmas and a truly rejuvenating break. See you next year!**

## Mathematics Professional learning for 2026

### Effective Teaching of Mathematics in a primary context

Professional learning facilitated by Michael Minas the founder of *Love Maths*.



***Please note that the content of this PD is different to what was presented in 2025***

### Focus / Learning Intentions:

To explore researched and evidenced based effective practices in the teaching and learning of Mathematics

### Content

- Develop common understandings of how mathematics is planned for and taught within each school context within a lesson, over a week, over a unit of work
- Exploring cognitive load/ working memory

- What does effective retrieval practice look like and how do you plan for it within your Mathematics lessons?
- What does the research say?

### Target Audience

- Classroom teachers
- Leaders' of Mathematics

This spaced **online professional learning** will provide the opportunity for participants to engage with their learnings between the sessions.

### 2026 Dates:

- February 24<sup>th</sup> 1.30-3.30pm
- March 24<sup>th</sup> 1.30-3.30pm
- May 12<sup>th</sup> 1.30-3.30pm
- June 16<sup>th</sup> 1.30-3.30pm

**Cost:** \$200 per participant

If you have any questions, please contact Teresa Hadden [thadden@dobcel.catholic.edu.au](mailto:thadden@dobcel.catholic.edu.au)

[Register Here](#)

## New 2026 Introduction to Pedagogical Coaching course with Mr Christopher Thomas, PWRD Leadership

The 2026 'Introduction to Pedagogical Coaching program' is offered to Middle Leaders at primary and secondary schools and is aligned to the Teach Like a Champion approach. It will enable participants to build their knowledge and skills in coaching so they can review, reflect, and plan for sustained improvement in teacher capability and student learning. Coaching skills will be developed through the essential elements of coaching (affiliative, instructional, and didactic), feedback, emotional Intelligence, and professional conversations.

The course will be facilitated by Mr Christopher Thomas from PWRD Leadership.

### Course dates

- **Session 1:** Thursday 5 March, 00 - 10.30am (online)
- **Session 2:** Wednesday 13 May, 9.00 - 10.30am (online)
- **Session 3:** Wednesday 29 July, 9.00 - 10.30am (online)
- **Session 4:** Friday 13 November, 9.00 - 3.30pm (face to face, Ballarat or other regional location dependent on participants TBC)

**Program overview, objectives, features and course facilitator details**

- Please click [here](#).

## Registrations

- [Register here](#)

### SAVE THE DATE! Extensive Processing Instruction (EPI) Principles Workshop with Dr Gianfranco Conti

DOBCEL proudly presents a full day Ballarat workshop with Dr Gianfranco Conti (co-author of the best-selling 'The Language Teacher Toolkit' and award-winning blog 'The Language Gym') to explore the principles of the Extensive Processing Instruction (EPI) approach.

Current cognitive science and applied linguistics research will be unpacked and explored through impactful instructional strategies to ensure language learning is accessible for all students.

- **Date:** Friday 15 May
- **Venue:** Siena Primary School, Ballarat
- **Audience:** Primary and secondary language specialist teachers
- **Cost:** Free for Catholic Education teachers
- **Registration link:** Available early Term 1, 2026



## CDF Payment Processing – Holiday Period / Account Signatories Process - Add/Remove

Please find below some important information regarding the CDF payment processing schedule over the holidays:

### Standard Payment Schedule

CDF Online payments process Monday to Friday at:

- 9:00 am
- 1:00 pm
- 4:00 pm
- 5:00 pm

*Our CDF Client Services Group has advised the following, please note for your attention.*

### Holiday Period

CDF will operate as usual through the holiday period, except:

- Christmas Day – 25 December 2025
- Boxing Day – 26 December 2025
- New Year's Day – 1 January 2026

### Important Notes

- Periodic payments will process prior to public holidays
- Batch and payroll payments scheduled on public holidays must be rescheduled and fully authorised beforehand, otherwise they'll process the next business day

### Keep watch for Updates:

[www.catholicdevelopmentfund.org.au](http://www.catholicdevelopmentfund.org.au)

We'll provide updates on our website as we approach year-end.

### Account Amendment Process

Need to add or remove signatories on your accounts?

- Add new signatories to your accounts
- Remove existing signatories

The process is quick and easy :

[www.catholicdevelopmentfund.org.au/organisations/resources](http://www.catholicdevelopmentfund.org.au/organisations/resources)

Access the **Account Amendment Form** here:

### Questions?

Contact our Client Services Group: 1800 134 135 | ✉  
[csg@melbcdf.org.au](mailto:csg@melbcdf.org.au)

## Quick Links

### DS2035 – Stay Connected to the Strategy

- [DOBCEL Strategy 2035 – Full Document \(PDF\)](#)
- [Strategy Portal](#) – Resources, videos, and key messages
- [CIRP Page](#) – Details and application form

### Catholic Identity & Mission

- Professional learning offerings will be updated via the following [calendar link](#) as they emerge

### Teaching & Learning

- **Expression of Interest – Sounds Write Training**
  - **Training Dates:** 9th, 10th, (11th-Real time teaching day across the school observation) 12th & 13th February 2026
  - **Location:** Siena Catholic Primary School, [150 Eleanor Dr](#), Lucas
  - To express your interest, please contact [sryan@slucas.catholic.edu.au](mailto:sryan@slucas.catholic.edu.au)

### Student Wellbeing Updates

- Professional learning offerings will be updated via the following [calendar link](#) as they emerge

## Career Opportunities

### Schools

- **STEM teacher** – St Mary's School, Swan Hill – fixed-term position at 0.4 FTE (**closes 18 December**)
- **Maths Teacher** – St Joseph's College, Mildura – fixed-term position at 0.8 FTE (**closes 18 December**)
- **Learning Support Officer** – St Patrick's Primary School, Stawell – ongoing, part-time position (**closes 19 December**)
- **Casual Relief Teachers** – St Patrick's Primary School, Ballarat – casual positions (**closes 31 December**)