

HOPE for the Future

2025

ANNUAL REPORT

 **HESTER
HORN BROOK**
ACADEMY



Always was,
always will be,
Aboriginal Land.



At Hester Hornbrook Academy we acknowledge the Bunurong and Wurundjeri peoples of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which we teach, learn and work. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We also acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff, students and families within our community.

Our school recognises that the education system in this country is a colonial construct, and we commit to decolonise our teaching, learning and wellbeing practices. Our staff honour the educational customs that have existed as part of the oldest continuous living culture on Earth. We have a deep appreciation for the sacrifices and ongoing resistance of the Wurundjeri and Bunurong peoples. We acknowledge that we all continue to benefit from their protection of culture, land and waterways.

We live on unceded Land.



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“THIS SCHOOL MEANS SO MUCH TO ME. IT COMES WITH FRIENDS, GOOD TEACHERS. I HAVE SUCH AN AMAZING BOND WITH MY TEACHERS”

– A quote from one of our students

Sally Lasslett

EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL OF HESTER HORN BROOK ACADEMY



At Hester Hornbrook Academy, doing school differently means honouring each young person’s story, nurturing their strengths and providing opportunities for them to discover their unique interests to support their positive pathways. We do this through our Healing Oriented Program of Education™ (HOPE). HOPE is more than an idea at Hester Hornbrook — it is the framework on which we build futures.

Welcome to our 2025 Annual Report, a reflection of a school community committed to wellbeing, learning and the healing-oriented practices that help young people thrive. This report shares the many ways our students have built confidence, resilience and a sense of purpose over the past year. Their courage inspires us every day. Their achievements — academic, personal and relational — remind us why this work matters.

In 2025, the Hester Hornbrook Academy community celebrated a significant milestone with the opening of our first stand-alone campus in Werribee and a new City and Hybrid campus at 333 Exhibition St. These purpose-designed environments provide calm, welcoming and engaging spaces that support students to reconnect with education and to improve their wellbeing. The new campuses reflect Hester Hornbrook’s commitment to creating safe and inclusive environments where every young person can re-engage with dignity, build a sense of belonging and experience success.

Throughout the year, the Hester Hornbrook staff team continued to deliver an equity-driven framework of education grounded in the belief that every young person can succeed when barriers to learning are actively addressed. Through the ongoing implementation of the Healing Oriented Program of Education™ (HOPE), staff strengthened a whole school approach that integrates wellbeing and learning, bringing together teachers, youth workers and allied health professionals to respond to the complex needs of each student. This approach has enabled a sustained shift from measuring attendance alone to a broader, more meaningful focus on engagement. Young people are supported to re-enter education through flexible pathways and personalised supports resulting in increased confidence, improved emotional regulation and greater readiness to learn, alongside accelerated growth in literacy and numeracy.

The impact of this work is driven by the collective expertise and commitment of staff across all campuses. Teams have collaborated to support students to build foundational skills, strengthen social and emotional capabilities, and stabilise wellbeing and mental health. This consistent and coordinated approach ensures that each student is known, supported and able to progress toward their individual goals. The commitment of staff continues to create meaningful and sustained change in the lives of students facing complex challenges, contributing to improved engagement, wellbeing and learning outcomes across the whole of school.

Hester Hornbrook Academy continues to demonstrate the impact of a flexible, healing-oriented and student-centred framework of education. The program of education offered at Hester Hornbrook Academy shows that when wellbeing is embedded as a foundation for learning, students re-engage in meaningful ways, reconnect with education and transition to positive pathways beyond school. This work not only transforms the lives of individual students but also contributes to broader systems understanding of how education can be delivered differently to support the most vulnerable learners.

Introducing the Board

2025 was a milestone year for Hester Hornbrook Academy. We opened three new campuses, Werribee, City and Hybrid campus and kick started planning for a new campus in Geelong. This growth has increased our student capacity from four hundred and seventy-nine students to over seven hundred students. As we continue to grow, we are proud to provide quality education and wellbeing support to more young people in Victoria.



David Wild
Finance, Investment & Audit Committee, Innovation & Research Committee
MSW, BSW, FGLF, GAICD

With a clinical background in mental health, David has made significant contributions across the education, health, and community sectors. His extensive experience includes forging partnerships to enhance health and wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable communities, including refugees, asylum seekers, Indigenous communities, and youth. David is committed to driving positive change and fostering inclusive environments, aiming to inspire and lead the way to a brighter future for our community. David has held the positions of Board Director and Chair for the Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service (STTARS) and served as CEO of the Specialised Assistance School for Youth (SASY). He currently holds the role of CEO at Omnia Community Health and serves as a Non-Executive Director on the Adult and Community Further Education Board of Victoria.



Dr Ros Otzen
Quality, Safety & Risk Committee
BA (Hons), BEd, PhD, ASDA

Ros is a passionate supporter of education for all. She has served on The Hester Hornbrook Academy Board since May 2016, and is the inaugural Chair. Ros was Principal of Korowa Anglican Girls' School from 1991–2003 and was instrumental in establishing the Alliance of Girls Schools of Australia, which has now become a major member of the International Coalition of Girls' Schools. Ros was the inaugural President of the Alumni Council of the University of Melbourne and is the former Deputy Chair of the Melbourne City Mission Board. Ros is also an author and historian. She has published Hester Hornbrook and her Ladies', a study of the life and work of Hester Hornbrook, after whom the Academy is named.



Sarah Rogers
Quality, Safety & Risk Committee, Board Deputy Chair, Innovation and Research Committee
BA, BAppSc-OT, MPH

Sarah is a passionate public health professional with a strong systems focus and commitment to equity in children and young people's health, wellbeing and development. She is an Occupational Therapist with a Master of Public Health, and has held multiple roles across the education, health, government and not-for-profit sector. Sarah is currently employed as Director Evidence and Impact at Orange Compass, a small for-purpose consulting firm dedicated to supporting change makers on their journey to transform systems and build better futures. Sarah joined the Hester Hornbrook Academy Board in 2020.



David Rennick
BEC, LLB
David brings over 30 years' experience in the professional services and property industries to his role as a Chair of Hester Hornbrook Academy, which he joined in August 2016. He is a director on the Melbourne City Mission and the Quantum Support Services boards. David is also a director of Melbourne Football Club and the Jim Stynes Foundation, Chair of the Advisory board at Villawood Properties Group, a board adviser to Carr Design and a senior advisor to Inspired Companies. Previously he was a director of an ASX 200 company, director of international law firm Pinsent Masons and CEO of Maddocks. David's legal expertise includes property development, corporate real estate and retail property.



Dr Greg Trainor
Finance, Investment & Audit Committee, Innovation & Research Committee
DBA, MBA, Bachelor of Business Studies, Grad.Dip. Business Studies
Greg has over 35 years' experience in the private and public sector having held leadership roles in the areas of strategy, logistics, software development and consulting. He has worked in a number of public utilities before joining organisations like GE, Accenture, Sensis and Engie. Greg has been involved as an Advisory Board member on a number of start-ups and SME's and has also been on Faculty in MBA programs at Melbourne Business School, RMIT and Latrobe Business School. Also Director on Melbourne City Mission and MCM Housing Ltd boards.



Di McDonald
Nominations & Remuneration Committee
BAppSc, GradDipEd, GradDipRehab, GradDipBusMgt, MMgt (Organisational Systems), MAICD
Di has an extensive background in healthcare, disability, management, and occupational health and safety, and has held a wide range of senior leadership roles including at a CEO level. Di is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has broad experience in executive and non-executive board positions across privately-owned and not-for-profit organisations. Di is Chair of MCM Housing, Non-Executive Director of Hester Hornbrook Academy; Chair of the Law and Advocacy Centre for Women (LACW); a member of the Cabrini Foundation Board; Non-Executive Director of Aged Care Justice; Advisory member of Psychology Melbourne; and past Chair of the Melbourne City Mission Board.



Elida Brereton
Nominations & Remuneration Committee, Quality, Safety & Risk Committee
BA, DipEd, FACE, FACEL
Elida has extensive experience as a teacher, principal and educational leader. Elida was a principal in government schools for over 17 years and was National President of the Australian College of Education. In addition to her role on the Hester Hornbrook Academy Board from August 2016, Elida is a member of MLC Kew Foundation and is an executive member of various state bodies including the Victorian Secondary Past Principals Association, and the National Council of Women of Victoria (President).



Dr Garry Wilkes
Quality, Safety & Risk Committee, Innovation & Research Committee
MBBS, FACEM, AFRACMA, GIACD, GCert Hith Prof Ed, PRiMed, CMC
Garry is an experienced Medical Administrator, Emergency Medicine Specialist and Clinical Associate Professor with more than 30 years experience at a Specialist level in public and private hospitals across Australia. Garry is a keen educator in a variety of areas including the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS). Garry's interest include leadership development, clinical governance and redesign, clinical communication skills, conflict management and coaching.



Nate Keily
Finance Investment & Audit Committee
CPA, CGMA, GAICD, B Int Bus, B Int Std
Nate is a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA), Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA) and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD) with over 15 years Senior Finance and Commercial Leadership experience at General Electric (GE) spanning many industries including Software, Energy, Healthcare and Financial Services. With Commercial Leadership responsibility across 19 countries within the Asia Pacific region, as an integral member of the APAC senior executive team, Nate motivates and manages commercially oriented teams to meet organisational goals and objectives with a focus on growth and value creation for customers and shareholders alike. Nate is a company director for GE's Australian software business unit.

Our People

The Foundation of Our Impact

Throughout 2025, our staff continued to bring Hester Hornbrook Academy’s mission and purpose to life by creating learning environments that support and empower our students to succeed. Through high-quality teaching, individualised learning programs, wellbeing support, and positive relationships, staff helped students re-engage with education and build positive pathways for their futures.

A significant contribution to HOPE for the future was the ongoing focus on student-centred practice. Staff worked collaboratively to implement targeted interventions, educational adjustments, and flexible learning opportunities that recognised the diverse needs of our students. Through observations, reflective practice, curriculum development, and the implementation of the Graduate Profile, HOPE pillars of practice and 4E’s framework, staff strengthened student engagement, agency, and overall achievement.

The unique skills and suitability of Hester Hornbrook staff remain one of the organisation’s greatest strengths. Our educators, wellbeing professionals, allied health professionals, education support staff, careers staff, administration staff and leaders bring expertise, adaptability, compassion, and a deep commitment to inclusion.

HOPE for the future is built on the belief that every student can achieve positive outcomes. The dedication, innovation, and resilience demonstrated by staff throughout 2025 ensured Hester Hornbrook Academy remains well positioned to continue transforming lives and creating brighter futures for the young people and communities we serve.



Sally Lasslett

Executive Principal

Sally has been an educational leader in a variety of school settings for over 25 years. Sally has led school turnaround initiatives and significant educational improvements, often advocating to government for improvement opportunities for re-engagement and wellbeing resources for schools. An active home economics professional with a passion for developing real-life skills, Sally is on the board for Home Economics Victoria and is an accomplished secondary textbook author. Sally is an advocate for successful pathways and transitions for disengaged young people and is truly passionate about the flexible school setting which incorporates essential wellbeing supports.



Cengiz Hulusi

Business Manager

Cengiz brings over 30 years of experience as a CPA, with a career spanning both the education and private sectors. He is passionate about aligning strategic and operational planning to ensure resources are used effectively in support of the school’s mission. With a strong belief in the power of education to change lives, Cengiz values the opportunity to contribute to the growth and development of young people. His work is grounded in a commitment to inclusion, sustainability, and creating environments where every student has the opportunity to thrive.



Michael Freedman

Assistant Principal Teaching & Learning

As an experienced educational leader with over 27 years of experience, I am proud of my current position as an Assistant Principal of Hester Hornbrook Academy, leading the teaching and learning in this special assistance school. The team I lead have built a strong, healing-oriented pedagogy to support the educational development of a diverse range of young people. I am proud of our achievements and strive to continue developing and advocating for the special assistance school sector. Each young person is unique and authentic. I am grateful and honoured to be able to play a role in their journey.



Amanda Amato

Assistant Principal, Wellbeing & Inclusion

Amanda has experience in supporting young people disengaged from education across several different settings. Amanda recognises that education can have a lasting positive impact on young people as education increases access to future pathways and overall strengthens one’s wellbeing. Amanda believes a school environment needs to be safe and inclusive with a strong relational focus that also prioritises student agency.



Cameron Rowe

Assistant Principal, Operations

Cameron has been an educator and leader in several different educational settings and context both in Australia and the UK. He is the Assistant Principal: School Operations at Hester Hornbrook Academy and brings a wealth of experience in Teaching and Wellbeing, combined with passion and drive towards building culture and a positive learning environment with both students and staff. Cameron entered education as a physical education teacher but quickly found a joy and a strength in working with students who had struggled to find success or enjoyment in the traditional education settings. This led him into vocational teaching and helping students succeed in finding positive pathways that may not come from receiving an ATAR. Cameron strongly believes that a strong foundation of student wellbeing is what meaningful learning can be built on.

Our People Heads of Campus

The continued success of our school is underpinned by a strong Senior Leadership Team that lead either our campuses or wrap around programs both strategically and operationally. This team plays a key role in the overall success of Hester Hornbrook Academy, as well as the experiences and outcomes achieved by both students and staff.



Sacha Sammut
Head of Campus, South Melbourne

Sacha comes with over a decade's worth of experience and knowledge working in the flexible education system and supporting young people who have been disengaged from education and training. Sacha's careers started in the homelessness and justice division of community services where she recognised the hope and strength that education can provide for young people. Sacha has experience working with young Aboriginal women from remote communities as a Head of Wellbeing which adds to the wealth of knowledge she brings to our school. Sacha believes in the fundamental human right that all children deserve access to an education, but we need to do the work to make it an equitable, inclusive, and within a healing orientated environment. Sacha is incredibly proud of the growth at Hester Hornbrook Academy and looks forward to being a part of its future.



Jessica Paegert
Head of Campus, Prahran

I love that Hester Hornbrook embraces both Wellbeing and Learning. Having a background in Social Work, it is a privilege to work in an organisation where my knowledge is embraced, and I can apply my skill set and passion in working alongside both students and staff at the Prahran Campus.



Patrick Nicholls
Head of Campus, Sunshine

Paddy is a passionate leader who has valuable experience in mainstream and special assistance education. He believes that all people should have the opportunity to develop a lifelong love of learning.



Andy Cowper
Head of Campus, Sunshine

Andy is an empathetic and fun-loving leader who firmly believes in building a safe and inclusive community. 30 years' experience working with and walking alongside youth, has created a strong passion for building on the best practice to engage and support our students on their wellbeing for learning and learning for wellbeing pathway.



Rebecca Robinson
Head of Campus, Hybrid

With a background in social work and extensive experience in student wellbeing, Bec is an experienced leader committed to creating inclusive and responsive learning environments where young people and staff can thrive. She is passionate about supporting students whose educational journeys may look different helping them find connection and confidence. With a keen interest in technology and wellbeing she champions approaches that create meaningful opportunities for growth, engagement and belonging for both staff and students.



Karen Dileo
Head of Campus, City

Karen has spent more than two decades building the kind of school cultures where both young people and staff can thrive. Having worked in education across ages and sectors, she leads with warmth, purpose, and a deep belief in what's possible when the right supports are in place.



Renee Liprino
Head of Campus, Werribee

Renee Liprino joined the Education Department in 2003 as an English/ Humanities Teacher working in many schools across the Western Suburbs - including Copperfield College and Williamstown High School. Renee started her education leadership journey at Manor Lakes P-12 College as Secondary Principal. She later worked at the Department of Education for schools requiring an Acting Principal.



Amy Farrell
Head of Campus, Werribee

Healing Oriented Program of Education™ (HOPE)

In 2025 the HOPE framework was a key focus to further strengthen our focus on 'Wellbeing for Learning and Learning for Wellbeing'. We welcomed a Head of HOPE and HOPE Implementation Consultant to focus on this important work.

Within HOPE we continued to focus on student and staff voice, alongside research and evidence, to drive clarity, consistency and simplicity in our approach. This focus ensured that the work remained grounded, responsive and aligned in supporting meaningful outcomes and strengthening the impact of HOPE across all our campuses.

Through working with staff explicitly on what the HOPE framework looks like in a Hester Hornbrook campus, we developed a shared language and consistency in how we all approach implementation to ensure our students get the maximum benefit from their time with us.

Some reflections from staff and how they have articulated the impact of the HOPE framework for their practice are below.

"THE HOPE FRAMEWORK SUPPORTS ME BY OUTLINING THE FOUNDATIONS OF A POSITIVE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE FOR MY STUDENTS. USING THE 4 PILLARS OF HOPE I STRIVE TO CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT BY MAINTAINING A CONSISTENT AND PREDICTABLE APPROACH. THROUGH BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH MY STUDENTS, I'M ABLE TO BE A TRUSTED ADULT FOR THEM AND HOLD THEM ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR WORK OUTPUT AND CHALLENGE THEM SAFELY. STUDENT AGENCY IS SUPPORTED BY MEETING EACH STUDENT WHERE THEY ARE MENTALLY EACH DAY, OFFERING CHOICE IN THE TASKS THEY ENGAGE WITH EACH DAY AND SUPPORTING THEM IN FINDING THEIR VOICE. WITH THESE SUPPORTS IN PLACE ENGAGEMENT WITH THE CLASSWORK AND ACTIVITIES HAPPEN NATURALLY, MAKING THE CLASSROOM AN ENJOYABLE PLACE FOR ALL STUDENTS TO BE IN."

- Teacher, Hybrid

"THE HOPE FRAMEWORK GUIDES MY PRACTICE BY ENCOURAGING ME TO RECOGNISE THE UNIQUE POTENTIAL IN EVERY YOUNG PERSON I'M PRIVILEGED TO SUPPORT. IT PROVIDES THE STRUCTURE THAT ALLOWS FOR ME TO HOLD OPTIMISM, CREATE MEANINGFUL PATHWAYS, AND EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE TO SHAPE THEIR OWN FUTURE WITH CONFIDENCE AND CURIOSITY."

- Senior Youth Worker, City



Professional Learning

Across the year, staff pursued learning that was genuinely diverse in form and focus: from specialist clinical training and leadership development to school shadowing visits, and study tours. All of it was intentional, data-driven, and tightly aligned to our 2023–2025 Strategic Plan. Every investment was designed to lift the outcomes that matter most: student engagement, attendance, academic growth, wellbeing, and life beyond school.

A Year of Learning in Depth

Our curriculum and learning teams deepened their expertise in literacy and numeracy intervention with multiple staff completing SpellEx, MacqLit, Writer’s Toolbox, and Science of Language and Reading training. This Professional Learning equips staff to deliver evidence-based, targeted Tier 3 support. Wellbeing staff expanded their clinical capability across trauma-informed practice, youth justice, borderline personality disorder, substance use, and self-harm response. Staff undertook postgraduate study including Master of Social Work, Graduate Certificate in Counselling, and a Graduate Certificate in Trauma Aware Education. Our Leadership and Operations teams built strength in supervision practice, HR, and systems leadership through ISV programs and the Aspiring Principals Program.

Staff not only engaged in individual and role specific learning. Throughout the year Professional Learning Communities met regularly and provided opportunities for staff from separate roles to share, experiment and improve together.

The Masterclass Days: Staff Teaching Staff

One of the most distinctive features of our 2025 professional learning year was how it ended. On Wednesday 10th and Thursday 11th December, staff came together for a two-day Masterclass program designed and delivered entirely by Hester Hornbrook staff. The program spanned more than forty sessions across the two days, covering everything from Evidence-Informed Mathematics and the Science of Language and Reading to Adventure Therapy, Distress Tolerance Strategies, AI in Education, decolonial approaches to student voice, and “HR for Dummies.”

Staff had the opportunity to choose the sessions they were most interested in attending. The Masterclass Days were not an add-on, they were the culmination of a year of deliberate, connected professional learning, proving that when you invest consistently in your people, the knowledge does not just accumulate, it multiplies.



2025 External Professional Learning

In addition to our internal masterclasses, staff attended a wide range of external events and programs throughout 2025, including:

INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIAN CHILDHOOD TRAUMA CONFERENCE (POSTER ABSTRACT ACCEPTED)	EFFECTIVE MENTORING PROGRAM (CAMBRIDGE EDUCATION / VIT)
BRIGHT FUTURES NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM — CONTEXTUAL PREVENTION IN ACTION	ISV ASPIRING PRINCIPALS PROGRAM
SCHOOL SHADOWING VISITS: MONTESSORI HIGH SCHOOL, TEMPLESTOWE COLLEGE, DOVETON COLLEGE	VALA APPLIED LEARNING INDUCTION CONFERENCE
EDUTECH 2025 CONFERENCE	VCE VM & VPC NEW TEACHER INDUCTION
WYNNOVATION SUMMIT	USER LEVEL B ASSESSMENT TRAINING (PEARSON CLINICAL)
WILDERNESS FIRST AID RECERTIFICATION	ORYGEN: SKILLS FOR RESPONDING TO SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE RISK
SUBSTANCE USE & YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH: WORKING WITH REALITY (ORYGEN)	WILLIAM ANGLISS INSTITUTE CAREER PRACTITIONERS’ EVENT
WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE WHO USE VIOLENCE, AGGRESSION OR ARE JUSTICE INVOLVED (ORYGEN)	VICTORIAN CAREERS & EMPLOYMENT EXPO
FOUNDATION TRAINING FOR WORKING WITH BPD IN NON-CLINICAL SETTINGS (SPECTRUM)	NATURE / FOREST THERAPY FOUNDATION COURSE
TRAUMA-FOCUSED CBT TRAINING	ADVANCED ACCREDITATION IN NATURE BASED THERAPY
SPELLEX AND MACQLIT LITERACY INTERVENTION WORKSHOPS (MULTILIT)	GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN COUNSELLING THEORY AND PRACTICE
WRITER’S TOOLBOX — MASTER THE CRAFT OF WRITING WITH DR IAN HUNTER	MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK
SCIENCE OF LANGUAGE AND READING — INTERMEDIATE (LA TROBE UNIVERSITY)	GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN TRAUMA AWARE EDUCATION
INTRODUCTION TO BEST PRACTICE FOR SUPERVISION (AASW)	BANKSIA EDUCATION OPEN CLASSROOM
	AUTISM IN SCHOOLS CONFERENCE
	DOING SCHOOLS DIFFERENTLY CONFERENCE

“I AM A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON FROM BEFORE I STARTED AND I’M GLAD I CHANGED FOR THE BETTER.”

– A quote from one of our students

OUR VISION

An inclusive and just community where all young people have equal access to education and the opportunity to create their own future.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide an innovative, inclusive and engaging educational experience that will:

- **Engage** young people by welcoming them into a community where they are safe, valued and heard.
- **Equip** young people with the skills, knowledge, resilience and values they need to build their vision of a positive future.
- **Empower** young people to lead a purposeful life and be a positive contributor to the community in which they belong.
- **Extend** young people to reach further, broaden their educational opportunities and effectively use wellbeing strategies to achieve positive future pathways and transitions.



Educational Philosophy

We believe that education is a critical tool for giving young people a passport out of disadvantage.

Education should not just focus on an academic outcome but be holistic in meeting the wider needs of a young person. Therefore, measurement of success should be unique to the individual and not universal. The school is driven by 5 principles, underpinned by our mission to transform the lives of young people facing disadvantage.

THESE PRINCIPLES ARE:

- Access to education is a basic human right: Hester Hornbrook Academy will offer any young person the opportunity to engage in education and opportunity to succeed in life regardless of background, place or circumstances. Critical to any educational experience is the ability to address barriers that prevent access.
- Every young person and their journey is unique: Hester Hornbrook Academy's curriculum will be flexible and centred around a young person's unique talents and passions. Progress and outcomes should recognise every young person's starting point. The focus of any learning plan will support the young person in fulfilling their unique potential.
- Young people thrive in a community where they are safe, valued and heard. Hester Hornbrook Academy will offer young people the opportunity to participate and contribute fully to the life of their immediate and wider community.
- Meeting a young person's wellbeing needs is fundamental to their success: Education at Hester Hornbrook Academy will be holistic in its delivery, ensuring there is appropriate support given to the physical, social and mental wellbeing of the young person.
- Resilience and character development is fundamental to ensuring lifelong personal growth: Hester Hornbrook Academy will support young people in developing resilience and character to successfully navigate the challenges they may encounter through their life.



“I WANT TO SHARE MY DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO EVERYONE AT HESTER HORN BROOK ACADEMY. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR EVERYTHING”

Bakr

STUDENT FROM HESTER HORN BROOK ACADEMY



In 2022, Bakr enrolled at Hester Hornbrook Academy to further his education. Bakr had previously experienced significant educational and personal barriers. He was considered by many a 'hard to reach and troubled young person'.

During his time at Hester Hornbrook, Bakr's confidence grew, he reflected that it was the first time he had truly been 'seen'. Bakr attended school regularly and became a respected social leader within the school community. Whilst attending Hester Hornbrook, Bakr was able to complete a Certificate II in VET Music and Units 1 and 2 towards the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) - Vocational Major (VM).

With support from our Careers, Alumni, Pathways and Employment (CAPE) team, Bakr embarked on further study at Melbourne Polytechnic, where he received an award for 'Emerging Leader and Outstanding Student of the Year.'

“I WANT TO SHARE MY DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO EVERYONE AT HESTER HORN BROOK ACADEMY. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR EVERYTHING. I ALWAYS STRUGGLED IN SCHOOL AND FOUND MYSELF GETTING IN TROUBLE, AND I CAN HONESTLY SAY HESTER HORN BROOK ACADEMY IS THE BEST SCHOOL I EVER ATTENDED, AND I HOPE OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE WILL CONTINUE TO BENEFIT FROM THIS TYPE OF EDUCATION AND SUPPORT. I WILL FOREVER CHERISH ALL THE AMAZING MEMORIES, EXPERIENCES, AND FRIENDSHIPS I MADE ALONG THE WAY”.

OUR STUDENTS

In 2025, Hester Hornbrook Academy continued to demonstrate HOPE for the future by expanding opportunities for young people across Victoria through growing enrolments, new campuses, and innovative learning programs.

Student achievement data highlights significant success in academic outcomes, demonstrating strong engagement in learning and positive educational growth. These achievements reflect the school's commitment to creating opportunities for young people to thrive, attain meaningful qualifications, achieve their goals, and confidently pursue future pathways.



“I’M DEFINITELY A DIFFERENT PERSON; I HAVE SO MUCH MORE CONFIDENCE.”

- Current Student

FEMALE IDENTIFYING STUDENTS



MALE IDENTIFYING STUDENTS



OTHER OR NON-BINARY STUDENTS



ABORIGINAL TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS



YEAR LEVEL SPLIT



10 Victorian Pathways Certificate

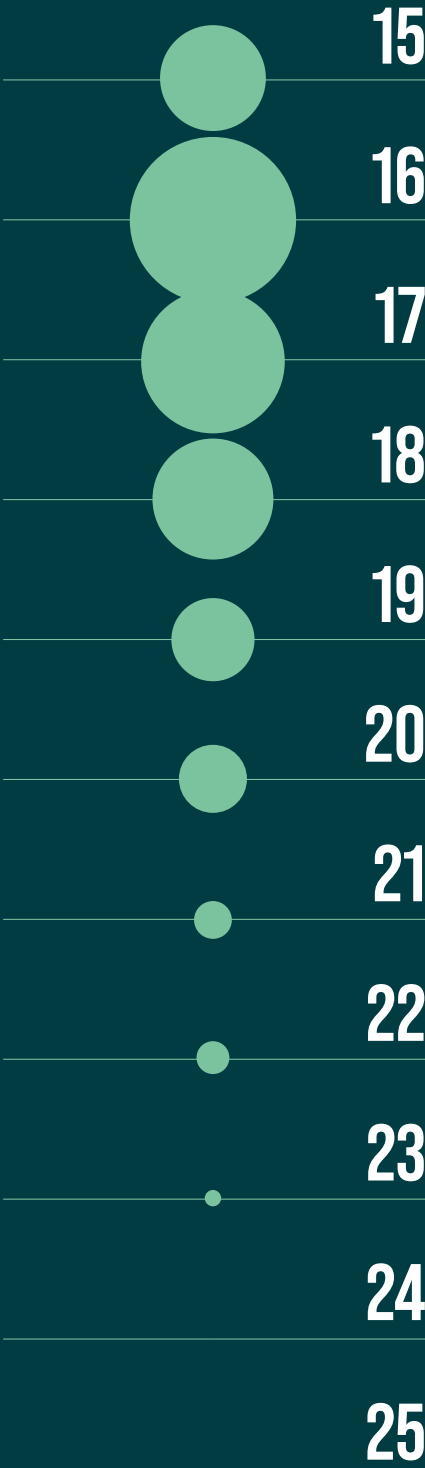


11 Vocational Major 1 & 2

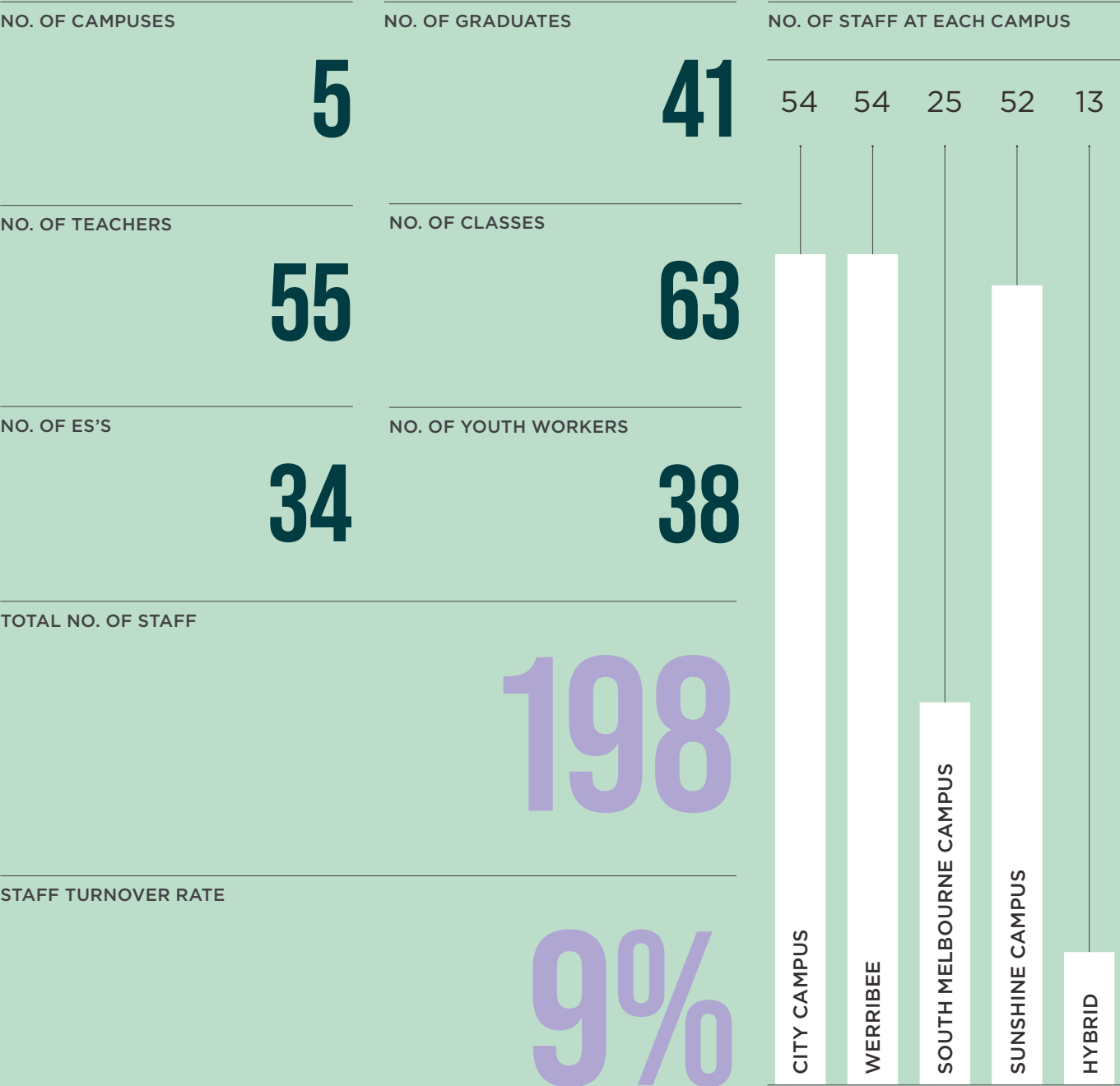


12 Vocational Major 3 & 4

STUDENT AGE



Our year in numbers



Diversity and Inclusion

In 2025, Hester Hornbrook Academy joined with other services in the Melbourne City Mission Group, to collaborate on the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Equality Index (HWEI) through Pride in Health and Wellbeing.

The HWEI is Australia's only benchmarking tool dedicated to LGBTQ+ inclusion in the health and human services sector. The HWEI provides opportunity for organisations to undergo a submission-based assessment, allowing services to measure their success of LGBTQ+ inclusion and measure themselves against other organisations in the sector. It provides opportunity for ongoing growth and development in inclusion for this community. This in turn allows the organisation to shape a safer, more equitable and inclusive environment.

Hester Hornbrook will progress to a submission in 2026 by learning from our peers at MCM Youth Housing as they made their submission in 2025.

Hester Hornbrook Academy continued to foster a diverse, inclusive, and connected community where every student - regardless of their background or circumstances, felt a genuine sense of belonging. A key focus throughout the year was strengthening the wrap around supports that underpin our Healing Oriented Program of Education™ (HOPE) framework.

Staff built connections with local community organisations across Melbourne to better support students. Opportunities for connection were reinforced through lunchtime clubs, which provided safe and welcoming spaces for students to build friendships, share experiences, and connect with peers who had similar backgrounds and lived experiences. These gatherings helped reduce feelings of isolation and reinforced that Hester Hornbrook is a place where every student is valued and accepted for who they are. Throughout the year, all campuses celebrated significant cultural and inclusion events, providing opportunities for students to share their culture, identity, and experiences with the broader school community. These meaningful events fostered pride, visibility, understanding, and respect. Hester Hornbrook continues to provide students HOPE for the future and confidence that they belong in a community that believes in their potential.



Diversity and Inclusion

Supporting our First Nations Students

Hester Hornbrook Academy provides HOPE for the future by taking meaningful action to strengthen cultural safety, visibility, and opportunity for First Nations students and staff.

In 2025, Hester Hornbrook Academy implemented its inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), guided by a committed Working Group of nineteen members. Throughout the year, key initiatives were delivered, including cultural education sessions facilitated by the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, the creation of First Nations libraries on every campus, and an increased commitment to engaging certified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and operated businesses. These actions deepen cultural understanding, reduce cultural load, and create safer, more empowering spaces for First Nations people within our school community.

In 2026, Hester Hornbrook remains dedicated to progressing this work. The introduction of the Leader of First Nations Community Engagement role will further strengthen relationships, elevate First Nations voices, and embed cultural knowledge across the school.

Through these commitments, Hester Hornbrook continues to build a future grounded in healing, opportunity, pride, and empowerment for First Nations students and staff.



IN CHARLIE'S FINAL YEAR AT HESTER HORN BROOK, HE OVERCAME MANY PERSONAL CHALLENGES TO ACHIEVE HIS GOAL OF GRADUATING.

Charlie

STUDENT FROM HESTER HORN BROOK ACADEMY

Charlie (he/him) enrolled at Hester Hornbrook Academy in October 2023. During his time at Hester Hornbrook, Charlie was welcoming and inclusive of all, often advocating for this quality amongst staff and students. This was especially apparent during his time as a Student Leader in 2024 and 2025.

Charlie is a young person who speaks with bravery and passion. Throughout his time at the school, he built insight for others by sharing his own experiences and personal growth.

In Charlie's final year at Hester Hornbrook, he overcame many personal challenges to achieve his goal of graduating. Charlie's self-determination and perseverance saw him complete his work and embark on a pathway beyond our school.

In November 2025, Charlie completed his VCE VM Certificate (Units 1- 4), graduating into a journey that will lead him to studying nursing.



SOUTH MELBOURNE CAMPUS

The South Melbourne Campus demonstrated exceptional performance in 2025, delivering wonderful student wellbeing and learning outcomes within a thriving community framework.

By integrating values-driven recognition, inclusive cultural events, and practical applied learning activities like the coffee cart program, the campus reinforced a safe, respectful, and productive environment. High levels of student participation in these community-led initiatives further solidified a campus-wide culture of engagement and solidarity. In 2025, the South Melbourne campus successfully paired deep community engagement with high expectations. By celebrating values-based awards at termly campus assemblies, the school established a clear standard for student expectations. This approach brought our HOPE framework to life, utilising strengths-based positive reinforcement to cultivate and sustain a thriving campus culture at South Melbourne campus in 2025.

Rate of Attendance

64%

Rate of Attendance

56%



SUNSHINE CAMPUS

2025 was a year of opportunity and achievement for students at our Sunshine Campus.

Highlights included a behind-the-scenes visit to the Melbourne Grand Prix, where students explored the cars and met members of the support teams. Another standout was our hospitality students catering for an RACV Executive Team meeting, impressing guests with their professionalism, service and quality food.

At Sunshine Campus, students are encouraged to pursue their aspirations and embrace new experiences. These successes reflect the dedication of our staff in creating a positive learning environment and the enthusiasm with which our students seize every opportunity.

Rate of Attendance

59%



CITY CAMPUS

2025 brought significant change to our City Campus, and our students met it with extraordinary grace. In preparation for farewelling Bourke Street and Prahran Campuses, both campuses started to build connections through campus visits and local excursions.

We formally came together as one campus at the start of Term 3 in a newly refurbished Exhibition Street campus with seven new classrooms. Throughout this significant transition, students embodied what it means to be a Hester Hornbrook Academy graduate: resilient, inclusive and genuinely optimistic, shaping a campus culture that is unmistakably their own.



WERRIBEE CAMPUS

In the first year at Hester Hornbrook Academy's Werribee Campus providing HOPE meant building community, establishing campus culture and creating a strong sense of belonging for all students.

When young people experience acceptance, positive relationships and small successes, the future can begin to feel not only achievable, but exciting. At Werribee, students were empowered to celebrate their identities, acknowledge achievements and share their stories, struggles and hopes in a supportive environment. This foundation of connection and belonging helped students build confidence, purpose and hope for their futures.

Rate of Attendance

64%



PRAHRAN CAMPUS

Prahran Campus opened in April 2018 and is one of Hester Hornbrook Academy's original locations. 2025 saw the final days of this wonderful 3 classroom campus, whose tight knit community provided hope for so many students over the seven years it was open.

At the end of Term 2, students and staff said au revoir to the building, nestled behind Chapel St and Melbourne Polytechnic and started the journey to 333 Exhibition Street, Melbourne – the school's new city location. This transition, like moving house, was initially met with trepidation. However, with the support of staff, and visits to the beautiful new City Campus building, students ultimately built on their readiness to embrace change. Thank you to our students for their ongoing resilience and engagement during the move. We are forever grateful for the memories we have of our Prahran Campus.

Rate of Attendance

63%



Rate of Attendance

69%



HYBRID CAMPUS

2025 was a landmark year for Hybrid. For the first time, all Hybrid classrooms came together under one roof at our brand-new City Hybrid campus. With a new model of learning two days online and three days in person we gave students the flexibility to engage in ways that truly worked for them.

Our brand-new campus was purpose built for both online and in-person learning, with well-equipped spaces designed with our students in mind. The new building created safe environments where students felt able to come to school. The innovative approach to learning fuelled growth and expanded our classroom numbers. We continued to support students to engage in learning, whether continuing their journey with Hybrid or building attendance and confidence towards full-time face to face learning.

Individualised Learning

At Hester Hornbrook Academy, we know every young person arrives with their own story, strengths and experiences. Our individualised learning approach is built on this understanding, ensuring each student is seen, supported and challenged to grow.

We work through a continuous cycle that begins with a clear and respectful assessment of need. Using literacy and numeracy screeners, BKSb adaptive diagnostics, targeted assessments, educational reports and teacher professional judgement, we build a detailed picture of each student's strengths and areas for growth. This helps us meet students where they are and design learning that is meaningful, achievable and future-focused.

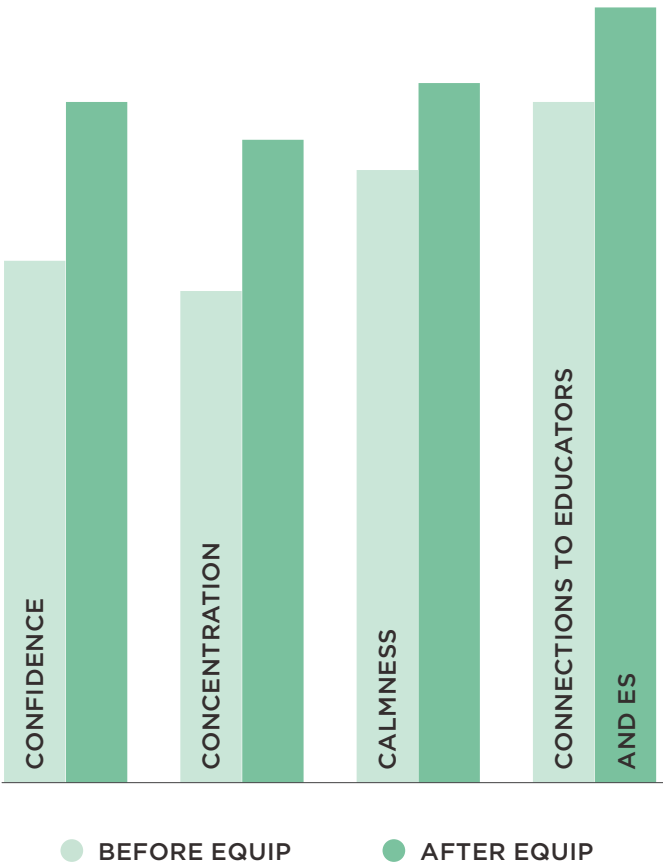
From this foundation, we deliver targeted, responsive support tailored to individual needs. Students access specialised learning tools, structured classroom support and evidence-based interventions such as MultiLit, Spell-Ex and Math-U-See. Our Education Support staff play a vital role, working alongside teachers to create inclusive classrooms where barriers are reduced and every student can participate with confidence.

Progress is closely monitored through ongoing formative assessment and data tracking, allowing us to adjust teaching and support at the right time. This keeps learning dynamic and aligned with each student's development.

We then return to reassessment, refining learning plans and setting new goals. We are building strong literacy and numeracy skills through this collaborative, data-informed and student-centred approach. At the same time students are empowered, to move successfully into further education, training or employment.

EQUIP WELLBEING SURVEY FOR STUDENTS

This survey compares how students felt in the classroom before and after participating in the Equip program.



FOR STUDENTS THAT SCORED BELOW THE FUNCTIONAL LITERACY LINE



FOR STUDENTS THAT SCORED BELOW THE FUNCTIONAL NUMERACY LINE



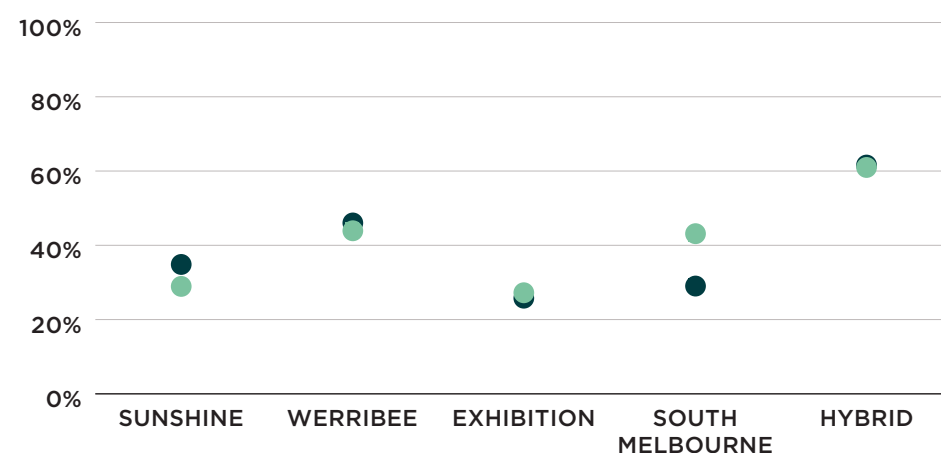
FOR TIER 3 STUDENTS



Attendance for Tier 3 interventions,
according to intervention type

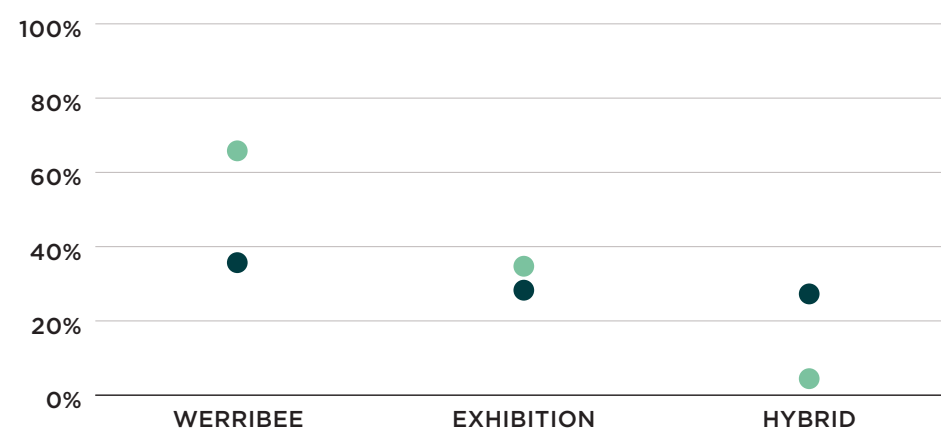
MathUSee

● TERM 1
● TERM 2



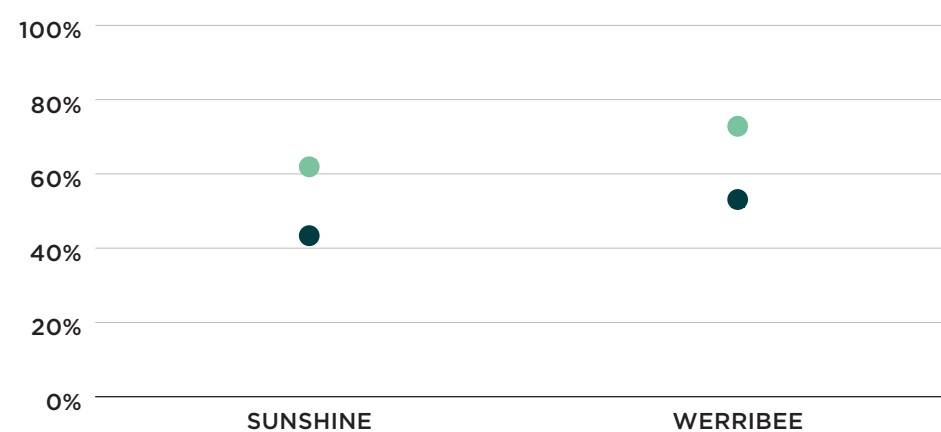
Multi-Lit

● TERM 1
● TERM 2



Spellex

● TERM 1
● TERM 2



Applied Learning

At Hester Hornbrook, we focus on learning that feels real, purposeful and connected to the world beyond the classroom. Through applied learning, students build practical skills like communication, teamwork and problem-solving by working on meaningful projects. For example, when our Unit 3/4 City Campus students partnered with senior citizens to write and publish a book, they not only strengthened their literacy skills; they learned to listen, ask thoughtful questions and value different life experiences. These moments build confidence, creativity and a genuine sense of achievement.

This is different from traditional schooling. Instead of expecting every student to fit one model, we meet students where they are. We learn alongside them,

“I’M REALLY PROUD OF MYSELF. WHAT HELPED ME GRADUATE WAS THE HELP FROM MY CLASSROOM TEAM BUT ESPECIALLY MY TEACHER BEN. HE JUST REALLY TIED EVERYTHING INTO THINGS THAT I LOVE TO DO, WHICH MADE SCHOOL FUN.”

– Current Student

creating opportunities that reflect their strengths, interests and goals. Learning is hands-on and collaborative, grounded in real experiences rather than abstract tasks. It’s about doing, reflecting and growing. Our approach to applied learning connects naturally with our **Healing Oriented Program of Education™ (HOPE)** framework by embedding personal growth within each experience. As students work on projects that matter to them, they build the skills and self-belief needed for life beyond school. We see students step into their potential, supported by learning that is engaging, inclusive and genuinely meaningful.



“ALL THE STAFF MEMBERS HERE WANT TO SEE YOU DOING YOUR BEST, YOU KNOW, SEEING YOU DOING THINGS YOU NEVER THOUGHT YOU COULD DO”

– A quote from one of our students

Key Achievements

2025 was a profound year of growth for our school. We opened our first stand-alone campus with green space in Werribee, welcoming 220 young people from the local area through its doors in January. A partnership formed with RACV also saw solar being provided to our Werribee campus.

Additionally, we opened a new campus at 333 Exhibition St in Melbourne's CBD, which also holds a dedicated space for our Hybrid students. We said farewell to two of our original campuses in Prahran and Bourke St and saw students from those wonderful campuses display great courage and resilience integrating into their new home at Exhibition St.

We saw our campus staff cohort including Allied Health, Careers, Alumni, Pathways and Employment (CAPE) and **Healing Oriented Program of Education™ (HOPE)** teams expanded with the opening of new campuses. We built on our staff professional learning offerings to include 2 days of peer to peer, masterclasses. This unique learning experience provided teaching, wellbeing and support staff with a platform to share knowledge with one another. This was well received across the staff community and is something we will continue in 2026.

Hester Hornbrook's EXTEND Tour offerings expanded to include a trip to Central Australia, allowing students to experience the power of the Australian desert, learn about our country's history and First Nations culture. The continuation of our Singapore and Vietnam EXTEND tours also occurred in 2025, providing meaningful overseas experiences for interested students.

We were thrilled to see students engaged in unique work experience opportunities such as making a podcast at Triple M/Southern Cross Austereo and creating a TV gameshow from scratch with Humdinger Studios.

WE SAW MORE STUDENTS GRADUATE IN 2025 AND FIND POSITIVE PATHWAYS VIA HIGHER EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIPS THANKS TO OUR AMAZING CAPE TEAM.

2025 was the most exciting year the school has seen to date in terms of innovation, growth and student outcomes.

CAPE

Careers, Alumni, Pathways and Employment

Every Campus of Hester Hornbrook has its own CAPE (Careers Alumni Pathways and Education) team who play a vital role in supporting students to build meaningful, successful futures. With a strong focus on our Healing Oriented Program of Education™ (HOPE)—helping students to feel empowered and see possibilities, opportunities and pathways—the team works closely with each student to guide them toward positive life outcomes.

“I HAVE BEEN ATTENDING HESTER HORN BROOK ACADEMY FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, SO I AM A BIT NERVOUS, BUT EXCITED TO MOVE ON FROM SCHOOL AND PURSUE MY INTERESTS, SO I CAN GET EMPLOYMENT IN MY DREAM FIELD OF WORK.”

– Graduate Student

While students are at school, the CAPE team offers personalised careers guidance, career education, and pathway planning. They support students to identify their strengths, explore interests, and develop the skills needed to make informed decisions about their futures. This includes help with VET subject selection (for VCE VM), career exploration, work experience opportunities, and connections with training and employment pathways.

Importantly, the CAPE team’s support extends beyond graduation. Students are not alone once they leave school—the Pathways and Transitions team continues to provide guidance, advice and connections to ensure a smooth transition into further education, training, or employment. This ongoing support helps build confidence and resilience as students take their next steps.

Through this consistent and individualised approach, our students are empowered to move into positive pathways—whether that be further study, apprenticeships, traineeships, or meaningful employment. The success of our students reflects the dedication of the CAPE team in fostering aspiration, building capability, and instilling hope for the future.

83%

GRADUATES
SECURED
POSITIVE
PATHWAYS

ALUMNI COORDINATORS

3

ALUMNI SERVICED

209

TOTAL ENGAGEMENT

1,012

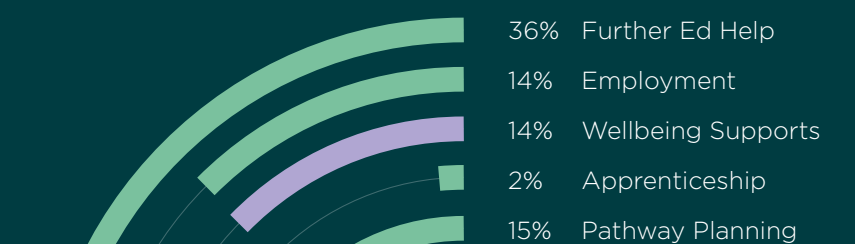
SCHOLARSHIPS RECEIVED

11

EMPLOYMENT

24

ASSISTANCE TYPES DELIVERED BY THE ALUMNI TEAM



● PATHWAYS
● WELLBEING

FURTHER EDUCATION

67

Propel



2025 was an incredibly successful year for Propel. Running across all campuses, there was a focus on getting out into the community, making genuine connections, and running authentic applied learning projects.

The standout was the City Hub initiative. Successfully winning a Creative Learning Partnerships grant enabled partnership with production studio, Humdinger Studios, giving students hands-on experience to create their own television show. Every student got involved: operating cameras, directing, editing, script writing, and performing. They weren't just learning about media; they were doing it. The project equipped them with future-focused skills in technical production, confidence and personal communication. It culminated in a documentary about the project being screened at Cinema Nova. Seeing their work on the big screen, and the pride that came with it, crystallised what Propel is about: genuine connection, real purpose, and young people discovering what they're capable of. 2026 will build on this foundation, with Propel aligning with Victorian Pathways Certificate outcomes, creating pathways that are meaningful for students heading into their futures.

“PROPEL ALLOWED ME TO ENHANCE THE SKILLS THAT I ALREADY HAD AND IT ENCOURAGED ME TO FIND MY OWN WAY OF DOING THINGS. IT MADE ME APPRECIATE MYSELF EVEN MORE!”

– Moni, Propel Student

EACH TERM OFFERS HANDS-ON, REAL-WORLD LEARNING EXPERIENCES:

- Term 1

Life skills and short courses
e.g. food handling, first aid
- Term 2

Creative TEAM-based projects
- Term 3

Job readiness and work exploration
- Term 4

Community connection and work immersion

“I AM HAPPY THAT I COMPLETED MY VOCATIONAL MAJOR CERTIFICATE, GAINED USEFUL APPRENTICESHIP SKILLS THROUGHOUT MY TIME AT SCHOOL, AND CAN PURSUE A CAREER THAT INTERESTS AND EXCITES ME.”

Grace

2025 GRADUATE FROM HESTER HORNBrook ACADEMY

At Hester Hornbrook Academy, I studied a Certificate II in Business, where I developed new workplace skills such as organisation, communication, and professionalism. I graduated in 2025, and soon after began my electrical apprenticeship at Gordon McKay. I’ve since been working on different industrial sites, and I’ve enjoyed all of it - from gaining experience working on different projects to getting to know good people every day, I couldn’t imagine myself doing anything else.

Through my apprenticeship, I have learned the importance of working safely, asking questions, and taking initiative where I can. I enjoy the variety that comes with electrical work, as there are never two days that are the same. Each project comes with different challenges, and with the help of my workmates, continues to build my confidence in the trade.

Trade school has helped me find out more about domestic and commercial work and create new connections with people interested in the same career as me. I am happy that I completed my Vocational Major certificate, gained useful apprenticeship skills throughout my time at school, and can pursue a career that interests and excites me. I am looking forward to continuing my training and progressing within the electrical industry.

VETDSS

Vocational Education and Training Delivered to Secondary Students

At Hester Hornbrook Academy, our Vocational Education and Training Delivered to Secondary Students (VETDSS) program continues to strengthen its impact, equipping VCE VM students with practical skills, industry knowledge, and confidence for life beyond school.



Students participate in a diverse range of Certificate II courses, all carefully selected to ensure a wide range of industries are included in our offering to provide better choice for our students. These hands-on learning experiences are enriched by strong industry engagement, enabling students to explore career pathways, connect with industry, and gain valuable insight into real-world workplaces.

In 2025, we expanded our approach through the Job Camp program, delivering targeted one-day programs across each campus. Job Camp included food handling, barista training, and White Card certification. These short courses support students to build their resumes, prepare for entering the workforce, and develop confidence. The experiences provide immediate, practical skills that enhance employability and independence.

The VETDSS program is designed to engage, equip, empower, and extend learners by connecting classroom learning with industry-aligned outcomes. Students develop essential employability skills while gaining competencies that contribute to their VCE VM, supporting successful transitions into further education, training, or employment.

Our VET certificates are delivered by highly skilled trainers with extensive, current industry experience, who bring real-world knowledge, expectations, and standards directly into the classroom. This ensures students are learning industry-relevant practices and are prepared to meet employer expectations. Through this expert guidance, students are empowered to pursue positive post-school pathways with confidence, capability, and a clear sense of direction.

“I REFLECT ON MY TIME AT HESTER AS A GOOD, ENJOYABLE AND INTERESTING TIME ON MY LIFE. I WENT FROM BEING VERY SHELTERED AND QUIET TO AN EXTROVERT WITH A LOT MORE FRIENDS AND A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF MYSELF AND WHAT I’M LIKE. I HAVE ENJOYED MY TIME AT HESTER AS IT’S ALLOWED ME TO EXPLORE MANY DIFFERENT THINGS AND LEARN A LOT OF SKILLS FOR WHEN I EXIT AND ENTER THAT SCARY THING KNOWN AS *THE REAL WORLD*.”

- Graduate Student

Certificate II

COURSE NAME	WERRIBEE	SUNSHINE	CITY
MUSIC	●	●	●
CREATIVE INDUSTRIES	●		●
VISUAL ARTS		●	●
HOSPITALITY		●	
SPORT COACHING	●	●	
WORKPLACE SKILLS	●	●	●
COMMUNITY SERVICES			●
ACTIVE VOLUNTEERING	●	●	●
APPLIED DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY		●	●

Certificate III

COURSE NAME	WERRIBEE	SUNSHINE	CITY
MAKE-UP	●		

Job Camp one day programs

COURSE NAME	WERRIBEE	SUNSHINE	CITY
FOOD HANDLING	●	●	●
WHITE CARD	●	●	●
BARISTA COFFEE COURSE (NON-ACCREDITED TRAINING)	●	●	●

OSCAR

Outdoor, Sports, Community, Art and Recreation Program

In 2025, HOPE for the future is cultivated through meaningful, engaging opportunities that allow students to explore who they are and who they can become. At Hester Hornbrook, the Outdoor Sports Community Art Recreation (OSCAR) program plays a vital role in this journey. Through tailored excursions such as horse riding, pottery workshops and chocolate making, students are offered experiences beyond the traditional classroom—experiences that are hands-on, purposeful and memorable.

These opportunities create pathways for students to discover new interests and potential passions. By stepping into unfamiliar environments, students are encouraged to challenge themselves, build confidence and develop a sense of achievement. Just as importantly, these excursions foster connection—students engage with peers, staff and the wider community, strengthening their personal and social capabilities in authentic settings.

“ONE THING THAT’S HAPPENED TO ME SINCE I STARTED IS I HAVE BECOME FRIENDS WITH MORE PEOPLE IN MY CLASS AND I’M TALKING TO A LOT MORE PEOPLE THAN I TYPICALLY WOULD AND I’M MORE SOCIAL AND GOING OUT MORE NOW.”

– Current Student

This sense of connection and exploration nurtures hope. When students begin to see what they enjoy, what they are capable of and where they find belonging, they gain a clearer and more optimistic vision of their future. OSCAR supports students to re-engage with learning by making it relevant, relational and grounded in real-world experiences. Learning is not only about academic growth but about understanding how to interact, collaborate and thrive alongside others. Programs like OSCAR ensure students are not only learning—but learning how to live, connect and look forward with hope.



“WORKING AT HESTER HORN BROOK ACADEMY HAS STRENGTHENED MY CONVICTION THAT, WITH THE RIGHT SUPPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES, EVERY YOUNG PERSON CAN SUCCEED AND THRIVE.”

Semra

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION LEADER AT HESTER HORN BROOK ACADEMY



Working at Hester Hornbrook Academy has been a deeply transformative experience. The educational model prioritises nurturing each young person’s potential while fostering hope, resilience, and connection, even in the face of significant challenges. Through firsthand experience, I have witnessed the positive impact of our approach, seeing students who once struggled with confidence grow into motivated, engaged learners.

Our personalised support, inclusive environment, and strong sense of community create a space where students feel valued, empowered, and capable of achieving success. One particularly memorable experience was supporting a student who had become disengaged and uncertain about their future to rediscover their voice through mentorship and tailored learning programs. Watching their confidence grow, alongside the development of new aspirations and goals, reaffirmed my belief in the importance of this model of education.

Working at Hester Hornbrook Academy has strengthened my conviction that, with the right support and opportunities, every young person can succeed and thrive. It is this belief that makes our work not simply a profession, but a meaningful and purposeful commitment to creating positive futures for all students.

Extend Tours

Vietnam, Singapore, Central Australia

Now in its third year since the inaugural Singapore Extend Tour in 2023, the Extend Student Tour program expanded in 2025 adding a third tour offering to Central Australia alongside tours to Singapore and Vietnam.

"I WAS PROUD OF MYSELF FOR GOING ON THIS TRIP... I'M A PERSON WHO LIKES TO STICK TO THE SAME THINGS... I WAS PROUD OF MYSELF FOR TRYING AND DOING NEW THINGS I WOULDN'T DO BACK AT HOME."

- Current Student



Hester Hornbrook Academy's Extend Tours are designed to open doors for a cohort of students who have often

"THE TRIP TO SINGAPORE BROADENED MY HORIZONS WITH NEW CULTURE, FOODS, AND EXPERIENCES... THOUGH THERE WERE HARD TIMES ON THE TRIP, WE OVERCAME THEM AS A GROUP. OUR GROUP HAD A SUPPORTIVE DYNAMIC AND MADE LIFELONG MEMORIES."

- Current Student

been told they were too high risk, too complex or simply not ready for such experiences. For many of our students, these trips are filled with monumental firsts: a first flight, first passport, first night in a hotel. Each "first" becomes a stepping stone toward something greater—greater confidence, independence and belief in themselves.

Overseas travel challenges students beyond their comfort zone allowing them to discover new capabilities within themselves. Travelling as a group is part of that challenge, encouraging a sense of community and shared experience that requires collaboration and emotional resilience. The benefits of these experiences extend far beyond the trips themselves. Confidence carries home. Independence becomes part of daily life. A sense of pride takes root. Supporting students to envision new opportunities and pathways previously considered unattainable through "opening their world".

"IT HAS CHANGED MY VIEWS ON TRYING NEW THINGS AND VISITING PLACES... I WAS PROUD OF MYSELF FOR EXPANDING THE RANGE OF FOODS AND TRYING NEW FOOD."

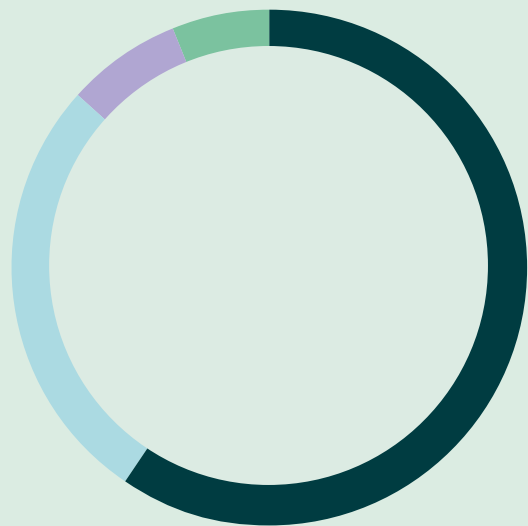
- Current Student

"SHE SEEMS HAPPIER AND CONFIDENT AFTER SUCH A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE."

- Parent of a current Student

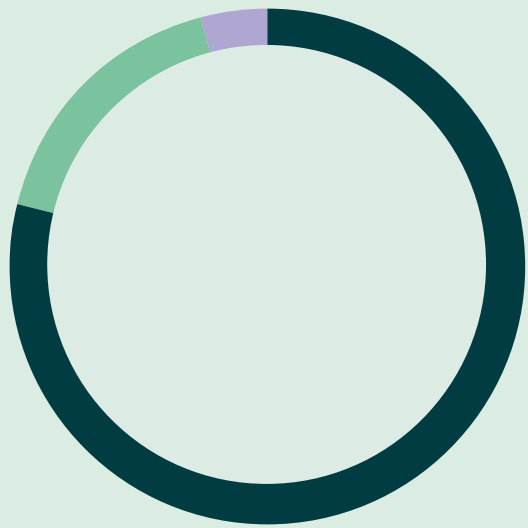


2025 Financial Report



Expenditure Breakdown		%
STAFF		59
INFRASTRUCTURE		27
ADMINISTRATION		7
STUDENT WELLBEING AND CURRICULUM		6
OTHER		0

Expenditure from Operating Activities		\$
STAFF	22,216,741	
INFRASTRUCTURE	10,437,012	
ADMINISTRATION	2,825,289	
STUDENT WELLBEING AND CURRICULUM	2,340,005	
OTHER	135,847	



Income Breakdown		%
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS		79
STATE GOVERNMENT GRANTS		17
OTHER INCOME		4

Income		\$
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING	36,161,741	
STATE GOVERNMENT FUNDING	7,836,075	
OTHER INCOME	1,934,092	

Government Breakdown		%
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS		82
STATE GOVERNMENT GRANTS		18

Government Recurrent Funding		\$
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING	36,161,741	
STATE GOVERNMENT FUNDING	7,836,075	

SURPLUS FOR REINVESTMENT	\$ 7,977,014
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Into the Future Where to from here?

2025 saw our **Healing Oriented Program of Education™ (HOPE)** grow from strength to strength. In 2026 we’re looking forward to sharing HOPE with schools and organisations within and outside of education.

Across Australia, there is a rising demand for evidence-based frameworks that promote wellbeing, belonging and trauma-informed practice in education. Our aim from 2026 is to amplify the reach and influence of HOPE by welcoming visitors to our campuses to see HOPE in action, sharing HOPE at

“HOPE IS A DISCIPLINE. IT’S A COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE THAT MUST MANIFEST ACTION.”

– Mariame Kaba

conferences and through our education networks, and creating and offering accessible and evidence-based resources to those interested that reflect Hester Hornbrook Academy’s expertise and ethos.

Through storytelling and shared learning, we will celebrate impact, build trust, and ensure HOPE remains responsive, inclusive, and guided by our learnings right here at Hester Hornbrook Academy.

Extending HOPE beyond Hester Hornbrook offers opportunities to:

- Establish HOPE as a proven, research-backed framework in education and broader settings
- Expand its application into business and organisational settings, supporting employee wellbeing and potential alumni employment pathways
- Grow a movement of HOPE-aligned communities, leaders, and organisations dedicated to healing-oriented practice.



**“I’M EXCITED FOR
FINALLY COMPLETING
MY HIGH SCHOOL
EQUIVALENT LEARNING,
GOING INTO UNI
AND FINDING MORE
THINGS I CAN BECOME
PASSIONATE ABOUT.”**

– A quote from one of our students



Our Supporters

RACV

MR JOHN BURDEKIN

THE SHINE FOUNDATION

CRIPPS FOUNDATION

THE ROSS TRUST

THE EDWARDS FOUNDATION

ANONYMOUS DONORS

CITY CAMPUS

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Melbourne VIC 3000

PRAHRAN CAMPUS

PH 1800 517 218
160 High St,
Windsor VIC 3181

SUNSHINE CAMPUS

PH 1800 517 218
131 Harvester Rd,
Sunshine VIC 3020

SOUTH MELBOURNE CAMPUS

PH 1800 517 218
24 Tope St,
South Melbourne VIC 3205

HYBRID CAMPUS

PH 1800 517 218
Level 3, 333 Exhibition St,
Melbourne VIC 3000

WERRIBEE CAMPUS

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23 Roth St,
Werribee VIC 3030