

HESTER HORNBrook ACADEMY

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022



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# WOMINJEKA

We, as a school, acknowledge the traditional caretakers of our land. We accept the truth behind what really happened in the past, and we respect the voice of First Nations people. We seek to understand and build connection to country for all.

Always was,

Always will be Aboriginal land.

Each year we achieve so much at Hester Hornbrook Academy. The number of students who engage with wellbeing and learning in our school increases and the ability of our staff continues to astound me.

While I have worked in the background to develop our Strategic Plan for 2023 to 2025 and bring our future campuses to life, our committed and dedicated staff have continued their amazing work. Many have also shown a commitment to continued learning and improvement in all things wellbeing, teaching and learning. I thank each and every one of you for everything that you do to bring our vision of an inclusive, flexible and individualised learning environment to life.

Our students, you have bounced back after COVID-19 lockdowns and been resilient in the face of all that life throws you. Your commitment to our school and ensuring a safe, respectful and productive environment in our learning hubs is so important in your success for future pathways.

Michael Phelps, a US 28 Olympic medal winner, says, "Don't put a limit on anything. The more you dream, the farther you can go". I hope that you remember this, with the support and guidance of our staff, you really can achieve anything.

I am truly very lucky to be the leader of such a wonderful school. I thank you, our students and staff for allowing me to be your leader.

**Sally Lasslett**  
Principal



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# OUR BOARD

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The Hester Hornbrook Academy is on the cusp of an exciting leap forward, as the opportunities provided by consistent government funding are allowing us to open our doors wider and hone our work with young people across Melbourne.

This amazing school can now bring its unique education model to more and more of those not engaged with the standard school system. We are creating new communities of learners, and they are achieving!



**Dr Ros Otzen**  
(Chair)

BA (Hons), B Ed, PhD, ASDA

Ros is a passionate supporter of education for all and has chaired The Hester Hornbrook Academy Board since May 2016. 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 and is currently writing a biography of Hester Hornbrook, the remarkable founder of the nine 'ragged schools' in Melbourne between 1859 and 1862.



**David Rennick**

B Econ, LLB

David brings over 30 years' experience in the professional services and property industries to his role as a director of Hester Hornbrook Academy, which he joined in August 2016. He is a director on the Melbourne City Mission board. David is also director of Melbourne Football Club, a board advisor to Proximity and Carr Design and a senior advisor to Inspired Companies. Previously he was a director of an ASX 200 company, board member of international law firm Pinsent Masons and CEO of Maddocks. David's legal expertise includes property development, corporate real estate and retail property.



**Louisa Ellum**  
(Deputy Chair)

BA (Hons), DipEd, GradDipEdit&Publ, M Comm

Louisa is a vocal advocate for educational access and equity in Australia and currently works at Swinburne University of Technology. Louisa has worked in both the educational and mental health sectors and was recently working with Teach for Australia, Beyond Blue and Headspace. She has also held the positions of CEO of Bayside Glen Eira Kingston Local Learning and Employment Network (BGKLEEN), CEO of the International Specialised Skills Institute and Chair/ Deputy Chair of the Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic) Board and Chair of the Southern Metropolitan Adult Community and Further Education Council.

Louisa is currently undertaking a PhD in Education at the University of Tasmania under Associate Professor Kitty te Riele in flexible learning and partnerships. Louisa joined the Hester Hornbrook Academy Board in June 2017.



### Garry Wilkes

MBBS, FACEM, AFRACMA, GCert  
Hlth Prof Ed

Garry is a Clinical Associate Professor with 30 years experience at a Specialist level in public and private Emergency Departments 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 clinical redesign, communication skills, leadership development, conflict management and coaching.



### Dr Greg Trainor

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 small to medium enterprises and has also been on Faculty in MBA programs at Melbourne Business School, RMIT and Latrobe Business School.



### Elida Brereton

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 Board member and Chair of the Education CHANCES Foundation, member of the MLC Kew Foundation, and chair of the Board of Korus Connect. Elida conducts reviews of inexperienced principals and is an executive member of various state bodies including the Victorian Secondary Past Principals Association (President) and the National Council of Women of Victoria (Vice-President).



### Di McDonald

B AppSc (Speech Pathology),  
GradDipEd, GradDipRehab,  
GradDipBusMgt, M Mgt  
(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 The 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.



### Sarah Rogers

BA, BAppSc-OT, MPH

Sarah is a passionate public health professional with a strong focus on children and young people's health, wellbeing and development. Sarah is an Occupational Therapist with extensive experience across the Health, Education and Community sectors. After completing a Master of Public Health, Sarah has held multiple health project and Government roles and is currently working for Our Place. Sarah joined the Hester Hornbrook Academy Board in 2020.



### Nate Kelly

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 14 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.



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# LEADERSHIP TEAM

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**Sally Lasslett**  
**Principal**

Sally has been an educational leader in a variety of school settings for over 25 years. She has led school turnaround initiatives and significant educational outcome improvements, often advocating to government for improvements to re-engagement opportunities 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.

She is an advocate for successful pathways and transitions for disengaged young people and is truly passionate about the flexible school setting, and the essential wellbeing supports it provides.



**Michael Coate**  
**Assistant Principal, Data & Student Outcomes**

Michael brings years of Youth Services experience, mainly focused on education re-engagement programs and crisis services. "We are showing disengaged young people that learning can be a fun and positive experience, setting them up for a journey of lifelong learning."



**Michael Freedman**  
**Assistant Principal, Innovation, Teaching, and Learning**

With years of experience in adolescent welfare in government schools, Michael believes a school's culture should enable students to be authentic, build a growth mindset, and experience success. He looks at every interaction as an opportunity to build trust and make the young person feel safe, valued and included in the school community.



**Amanda Amato**  
**Assistant Principal, Wellbeing and Inclusion**

Amanda brings years of Youth Services experience and believes that creating a safe, inclusive environment that focuses on relationship building is essential. "With safe, supportive relationships, young people can freely express themselves and actively lead and engage their wellbeing and learning journey".



**Linus Lane**  
**Head of Campus, City**

Linus comes with over a decade of experience as a VCAL educator. "Seeing students reclaim agency in their lives and go on to contribute positively to their communities is deeply rewarding. If I can help students feel connected to and valued by their communities, I feel like I've made an important contribution."



**Adriana Bonifacio**  
**Business Manager**

Adriana has over 20 years of experience in the education sector. She commenced her early career as a secondary school teacher. She has since completed an MBA and worked in faculty and school management in the university and independent school sectors.



**Daniel Brown**  
**Head of Campus, Prahran**

Daniel has been a leader in Specialist Education for over a decade. His roles have largely been working with students with complex and diverse backgrounds in independent schools.

Daniel has a Master of Special Education and a Master's of Educational Leadership. "My vision is for all students to receive quality education that will equip and enable personal empowerment."



**Sam Barrett**  
**Manager, Living Learning Program**

Sam's journey with disengaged youth started in 2000, and he has since led in a wide range of policy and program development roles.

His passion for advocating for young people, particularly those with multiple and complex needs, led him to return to MCM in 2020 to lead the implementation of the Living Learning program, which focuses on students' mental health.



**Cameron Rowe**  
**Head of Campus, Sunshine**

Cam worked in Mainstream Education Leadership for almost 10 years. He started out in education as a PE teacher before making the move to leadership and being dedicated to affecting and influencing positive change in education, based on the philosophy that leadership is a choice, not a rank. "I believe that a strong sense of safety and sound wellbeing is the foundation on which meaningful and engaging education is built."



**Elise Leadbetter**  
**Head of Engagement**

Elise brings a wealth of knowledge in youth services and the wellbeing of disengaged youth. She believes student engagement increases when we create a safe and respectable space for them to be productive. "Consistency and unconditional positive regard always bring out the best in young people, allowing them to become active participants in their own journeys."



## WHERE WE ARE

### We're in the community

Our campuses are located in the heart of vibrant communities across Melbourne, close to other youth services and public transport.

Our Healing Oriented education setting provides a safe, welcoming space for students to grow their skills and confidence.

### Hester Hornbrook Academy campuses

- 📍 Melbourne CBD
- 📍 Sunshine
- 📍 Prahran

## WHAT WE DO

### We focus on learning and wellbeing

At the Hester Hornbrook Academy, we combine education and wellbeing support with a teacher and youth worker in every classroom.

Our experienced, passionate team sees potential in each individual learner. We're here to support students in every aspect of life and to learn at their pace, their way.

Our innovative healing-oriented model enables students to pursue their learning journey and access a range of choices and opportunities. We offer a range of learning options that support young people to gain practical skills, work towards their goals, and take charge of their future.

- Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning: Foundation, Intermediate and Senior
- Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS), enabling students to gain hands-on skills in visual arts, business, community services, music and front and back-of-house hospitality
- Young Parents classrooms where students can be pregnant and can bring their baby to class when they are ready to return to learning
- Engage Youth program, providing outreach education, small group-based workshops and case management support
- Assistance to access external training providers, including TAFE and private providers







### We give students a voice

Our Student Association and Leadership (SALP) continue to play an important role in forming our trauma-informed school setting. They are active in decision-making, taking a key role in the brand review project, among others. Students' voice is important at the Hester Hornbrook Academy.



### We provide ongoing support

Our Alumni Program provides students with ongoing support and a continuous connection to the school community after leaving the Hester Hornbrook Academy. Led by a Youth Worker, the program works with students through their transition from the classroom to further education and employment options.



### We see the big picture

As part of MCM and with partner organisations, we provide young people with access to:

- support through the TAC L2P Learner Driver Mentor program;
- support to re-engage with school via the School Focused Youth Service;
- education, training and employment support for young people currently in or leaving out-of-home care; and
- specialist homelessness support through Frontyard Youth Services, a support hub in Melbourne's CBD, providing a range of co-located services for young people.



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# OUR STUDENTS

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Hester Hornbrook Academy was established to respond to the needs of young people who have not flourished in traditional education systems and settings. These young people have often experienced personal, social and/or systemic trauma.

We work with young people with a range of life experiences and complex barriers to engaging in traditional education, which is why our focus on wellbeing support is critical.

Students at the Hester Hornbrook Academy are more likely to have been exposed to adverse childhood experiences such as abuse, neglect, family violence, parental mental illness or problematic substance abuse (personal or parental) than the general population.

Often, the students we support have significant gaps in their education of up to three to five years.

We welcome enrolments at all times throughout the year to ensure we can engage young people in meaningful learning opportunities as and when they are ready.



The students of the Hester Hornbrook Academy complete a senior school certificate as part of educational programs that are all individually developed. Those who are ready and able have access to some VCE studies through Virtual School Victoria.

All our students participate in VET, and some are involved in work experience, Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) and School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT).

Using this approach, we engage young people back into education through a relationship lens. Using an individual curriculum, we equip our students with the skills and experiences that empower them and develop their feelings of autonomy and personal agency that can continue to foster improvement in personal development. Many of our students continue their learning at the Hester Hornbrook Academy for a number of years as they pursue their learning aspirations.

While attendance rates are below that of a mainstream school context across all year levels, despite the complexities of our students' lives, attendance rates have improved significantly over the past year. For a more nuanced understanding of school attendance and our approach, we welcome contact via email to [admin@hhacademy.vic.edu.au](mailto:admin@hhacademy.vic.edu.au).

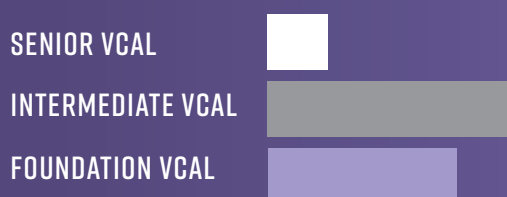


# 407 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 2022

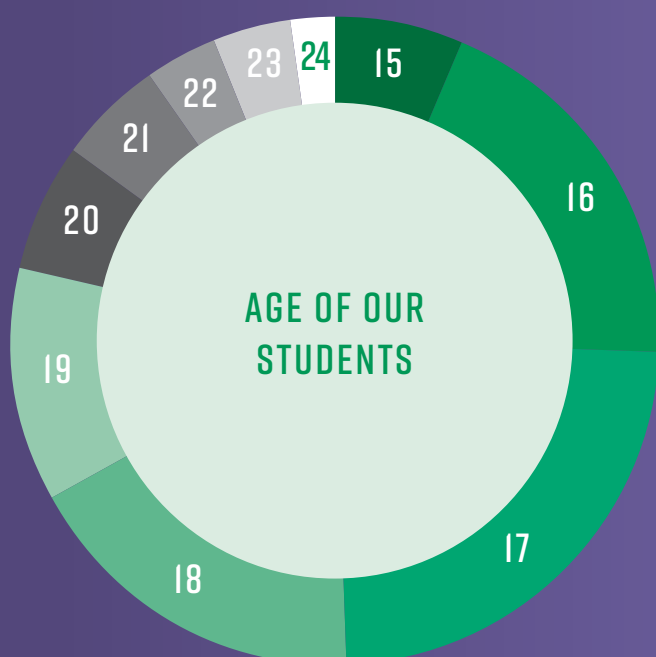
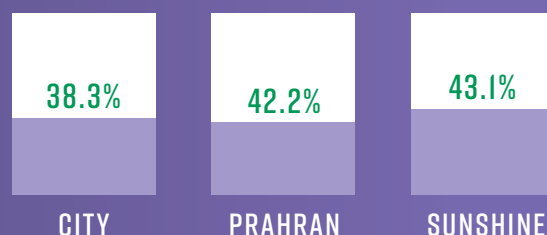
## CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR STUDENTS



## YEAR LEVEL SPLIT



## STUDENT ATTENDANCE (AVERAGE)



**70** CERTIFICATE GRADUATES

In our seventh year of being an independent school, our students achieved a total of 70 certificate graduates across foundation, intermediate and senior grades. Quite a feat considering the remote nature of a lot of the learning this year.

# OUR CAMPUSES

## Melbourne City

 **Linus Lane** | Head of Campus

 **Felicity Gibbons** | Wellbeing Team Leader


2022 was another fantastic year for the City Campus - a site that prides itself on our inclusive, vibrant and creative community. This year we focused on rebuilding the friendly, interpersonal connections that define our campus and that had become strained after the lockdowns of 2021.

We were thrilled to see students from the City Campus participating in community events throughout the year, including Wear It Purple Day and Homelessness Awareness on the steps of Parliament House (building Lego and getting into the media!). There were a raft of exciting trips, including excursions to Collingwood Children's Farm, Bounce and Fortress for an eSports competition, bushwalking, rock

climbing and a ropes course at the camp at Doga. The City campus's sense of humour and quirky creativity was also on display in the site's first-ever student play, a theatrical adaptation of an episode of Adventure Time!

It was an honour to lead the City Campus in 2022. We thank all the City staff for their incredible work ethic and skills in engaging and supporting young people, whilst wishing the best for those who have moved on from the campus in 2022. We look forward to supporting exiting students in their post-Hester Hornbrook Academy pathways, as they take everything they have learned at Hester Hornbrook Academy to make a positive difference in their lives and the wider community.

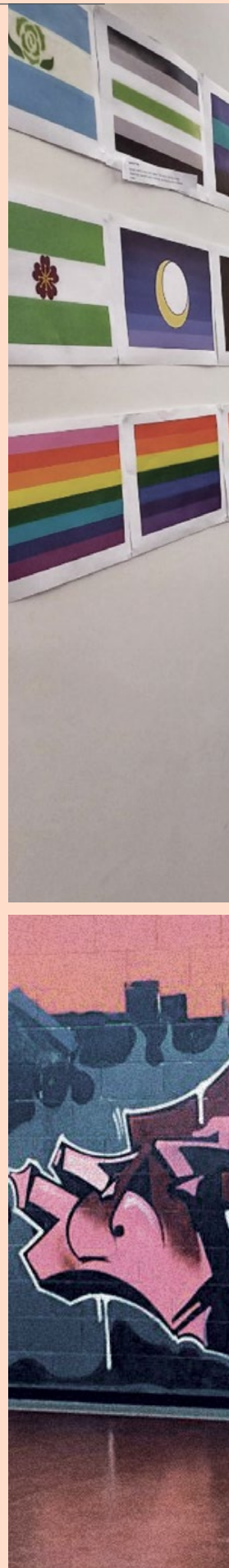
## Prahran

 **Dan Brown** | Head of Campus

 **Rebecca Stella** | Wellbeing Team Leader

It's been a privilege leading our site in Prahran. This year we have seen 22 students graduate with their VCAL certificate. This is a testament to the young people and their dedication to learning. It also reflects the tremendous work our staff have done with our students. I acknowledge all the teachers, youth workers and support staff that have truly made the educational journey at Hester Hornbrook Academy rich and rewarding for all our young people.

I will be leading our new site in South Melbourne in 2023. Although this is an exciting opportunity, it is also with sadness that I will leave our Prahran campus. Wellbeing Team Leader, Rebecca Stella, will remain as a wonderful colleague and a great support to the school.







## Sunshine

 **Cameron Rowe** | Head of Campus

 **Jess Pageart and Andy Cowper**  
| Wellbeing Team Leader

Our Sunshine Campus is one of a kind due to its size. We have 10 on-site programs within Foundation, Intermediate and Senior VCAL-level classrooms. Additionally, we have specialised learning environments that include re-engagement programs, a young parents program and themed classes that appeal to students' interests in hospitality, sport & recreation and art & technology.

What makes Hester Hornbrook Academy and its Sunshine Campus special isn't the building, the classrooms or the facilities; it's the community. The students, carers, staff and community members that show kindness, generosity, genuine care and compassion every day, are what make this such a special place to be: a safe place of inquisitive curiosity where students are respectful and productive.





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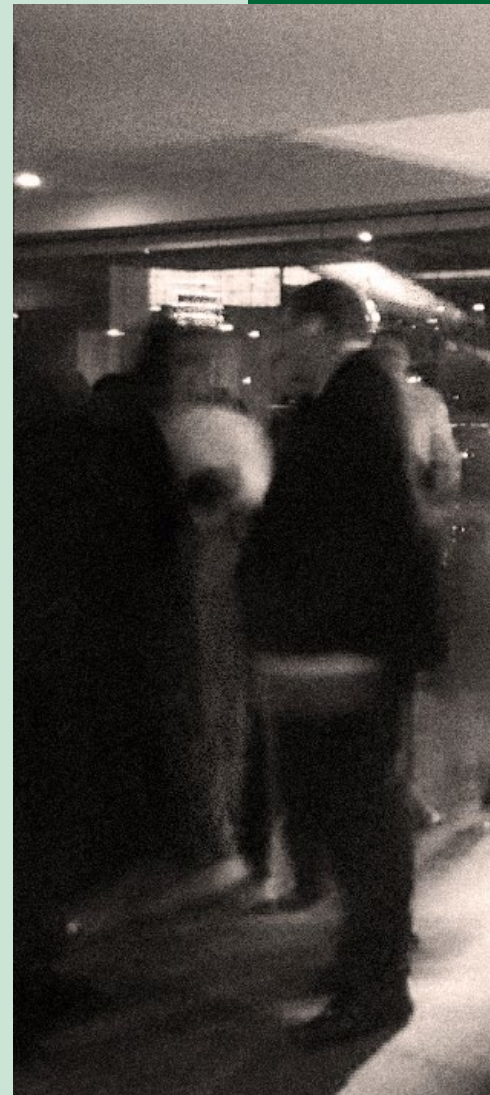
# THE FORMAL

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After two years of waiting, we were finally able to hold our School Formal! With upwards of 130 students and staff in attendance, it was a wonderful evening at River's Edge on the Yarra River. It was wonderful to see everyone dressed up and looking lovely.

Students took the lead with the Student Association Leadership Program arranging the decorations, photo wall, speeches, invitations and making the decisions around food and how the event would run.

An incredible student, DJ did an amazing job on the photography, and students from the cooking elective catered dessert! Staff and students enjoyed letting their hair down and having a dance, as well as sharing a lovely meal, and enjoying views of the river.









# OUR TEAM

At Hester Hornbrook Academy, we have a workforce which includes Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) qualified teachers, Victorian Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) trainers, Youth Workers, Administration staff and Educational Support staff, all of whom support the educational and wellbeing outcomes of our young people.

There is a high ratio of adults working in all spaces with our young people; this reflects our supportive, individualised setting and allows for each student to grow and develop both academically and personally, throughout their journey at Hester Hornbrook Academy. This includes our Living Learning program, which offers additional support for students experiencing high levels of complexity and barriers

to education. Living Learning is delivered within the Hester Hornbrook Academy environment.

Professional development is important for all our staff. Staff participate in a range of whole school and personal learning; this assists our team to be lifelong learners and develop their knowledge and capacity to work with all of the young people in our school.

## Hester Hornbrook Academy Team

	Living Learning staff	Hester Hornbrook whole school staff	Sunshine Campus	City Campus	Prahran Campus
Principal		1			
Living Learning Manager	1				
Assistant Principal		3			
Business Manager		1			
Head of Campus			1	1	1
Wellbeing Team Leader			2	1	1
Teacher	1	2	11.1	4	3.5
Youth Worker	5	2.6	11.9	5	4
Education Support	3	5	6	1	1
VET Trainer			1.3	1.3	
Admin Support		4			
IT Support		3			
Other Wellbeing and Specialist Support	3	2.4			
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>10.5</b>





## Our Approach to Wellbeing

Hester Hornbrook Academy has made a commitment to recognising and responding to the impacts of trauma and traumatic stress on health and wellbeing across the lifespan. We recognise the prevalence and impact of trauma and traumatic stress across the community.

As part of One MCM, we have an organisation-wide Healing Oriented Framework, a holistic, person-centred approach, recognising the

impacts of context and experiences in people's lives. We prioritise collaboration and mutuality, dignity and choice, and meaningful participation in community life.

Our Framework centres on lived experience and a commitment to prioritising transparency, predictability and consistency across services and programs, recognising safe and supportive relationships as a source of healing.

We recognise that repair and recovery are possible, building on the strength and determination of individuals and communities and our innate capacity to heal. All of our staff understand that healing occurs in the context of safe, supportive relationships and in environments of predictability, transparency and trust, working to prioritise these every day in our Senior School setting.

### City

At the City Campus, our staff provide students with an inclusive, vibrant and creative learning environment. This year City staff have met the challenge of transitioning our students from VCAL to the new Vocational Major and Victorian Pathways Certificate. Whilst we have welcomed many fresh faces to the site, our returning and new staff alike have helped create a friendly and welcoming culture.

The City Campus teachers, Youth Workers, ESOs and Campus Leaders work alongside travelling staff to offer a holistic experience for our students that takes advantage of our unique and centralised location. By tapping into our students' diverse backgrounds, courage, quirky individuality and commitment to social justice, we are able to facilitate exciting student-led activities, including Cultural Day, IDAHOBIT celebrations and NAIDOC Week events. The trust, support and comradery that the City team offers each other and our students, is what makes our site such a fun and special place to work.

#### City Full Time Staff

1.0 FTE Head of Campus

1 Wellbeing Team Leader

4 Teachers

4 Youth Workers

2 Education Support Officers

4 VET trainers on a Tuesday

Other support staff as required (travelling)

#### City Classes

1 VCAL Foundation

1 VCAL Intermediate

1 VCAL Intermediate and Senior

1 VCAL Engage Youth (a part-time re-engagement program)

### Prahran

Nestled amongst the hustle and bustle of Chapel Street you will find the calm oasis of the Prahran campus. Our educational offerings at Prahran have changed and now we offer a Vocation Pathways Certificate, Vocational Major 1 & 2 and our unique Young Parents-friendly classroom that offers our Vocational Major 3 & 4.

By celebrating our colourful and unique student cohort we have built an environment that promotes a positive and welcoming atmosphere. We enable learners, regardless of their backgrounds or life experiences, to achieve their full potential while feeling safe, comfortable and able to express themselves.

Our staff at Prahran are dedicated to ensuring our students receive the tailored support they require. We were so full of pride to have farewelled over 20 Senior graduates in 2022. A huge testament to the determination and resilience of our students.

#### Prahran Full Time Staff

1 Head of Campus

1 Wellbeing Team Leader

4 Teachers

4 Youth Workers

2 Education Support Officers

3 VET trainers on a Tuesday

1 L2P Program Coordinator

#### Prahran Classes

1 VCAL Foundation

1 VCAL Intermediate

1 VCAL Intermediate and Senior

1 Young Parents

### Sunshine

In 2022, the Sunshine Campus ran 10 various classroom programs; this allowed the campus to employ a large staff group that brought a richness of diversity and culture that was multiplied by the breadth and depth of the different programs offered to young people. Students have utilised the multi-award-winning facilities to access education in a way that resonates with them, be that one of the specialty-themed classes or the general learning classrooms. The campus continues to refine practice in preparation for its model to be taken to future Hester Hornbrook sites.

#### Sunshine Full Time Staff

1 Head of Campus

2 Wellbeing Team Leader

13 Education Staff

10 Youth Workers

7 Education Support Officers

4 VET trainers on a Tuesday

1 School Focus Youth Service Facilitator

#### Sunshine Classes

2 VCAL Foundation

1 VCAL Intermediate

1 VCAL Intermediate and Senior

1 VCAL Engage Youth (a part-time re-engagement program)

1 Hospitality, Education And Training (HEAT)

1 Art and Technology

1 Sport and Recreation

1 Young Parents

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# EQUIPPING OUR STAFF THROUGH PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

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Our staff embrace lifelong learning and are supported to continually expand their expertise and share their knowledge and learnings through our professional learning program.

Personalised professional learning opportunities are linked to our strategic plan and staff's Annual Implementation Goals. It aligns nicely and works similarly to a student's Individual Education Plan, with goals that are reviewed at regular progress meetings. Our staff review their annual goals each semester around report writing time.

External experts are invited to present on their field of knowledge, and other times our staff will lead in their area of expertise. This year saw a strong emphasis on curriculum development, as we look towards the senior secondary reforms rolling out in 2023.

Staff also attend external courses and participate in study tours, gathering continuous improvement strategies. This year's study tours provided excellent opportunities for networking with educators, wellbeing professionals, administrators and leaders in like schools and exploring how curriculum and technologies can be developed and implemented in different ways.



## **This year staff attended:**

- Study Tours to South Australia; Newcastle & Perth
- Dyslexia Orton-Gillingham Basic & Morphology Training
- Mental Health First Aid Training
- First Aid Training
- Food Safety Training
- Leadership Coaching
- GROWTH Coaching
- and much, much more







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# ALUMNI, CAREERS AND PATHWAYS

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The Alumni Program is an important part of the CAPE team (Careers, Alumni, Pathways & Employment) at Hester Hornbrook Academy. You will often find us around campus running career exploration events or workshops. Once a student finishes studying at Hester Hornbrook Academy, the Alumni Program is available to ensure each pathway runs as smoothly as possible.

As a student is investigating options for life after Hester Hornbrook, career practitioners are available for a one-on-one conversation to maximise opportunities during a student's time with us. This can include work experience, structured workplace learning or practise interviews, to name a few.

Once a student is ready to leave, an alumni worker will develop a pathway plan with a student to assist in identifying gaps in support needs and future pathway options, but also financial situation and access to relevant programs. The exit process for each student is based on their individual needs and goals. Some of our students will choose to graduate, while others will choose to transition when the time is right for them.

In 2022 we held a Jobs Fair at each campus during National Careers Week, allowing our students to safely engage in career exploration activities in the safe environment of their campus. 65% of students reported they had never attended a career expo prior to this event.

We have recently launched Extend Club in collaboration with Living Learning. This drop-in service available to former students who would like assistance in further

education, employment, homework help, or a quiet space to study.

## Partnerships and Collaborations

Finding employers and employment programs to assist our students into the world of work is an important aspect of the work for the CAPE team. In 2022 we partnered with a broad range of community organisations, education providers and private companies, including Tradeswomen Australia, Inner Eastern LLEN, City LLEN, Future Connect, CVGT, MAS, RMIT Skills & Job Centre, Victoria University, Kangan, Citywide, Good Cycles, Bunnings, Department of Transport and more. We also had several wonderful volunteers from our MCM executive team conducting practice interviews for 48 of our students over three days.

Thank you to the Shine On Foundation for their continuous and generous support of the Alumni Program.

**70** students transitioned  
into alternative  
pathways

**50** students  
graduated







## SEAN'S STORY

Sean started at Hester Hornbrook because VCE in a mainstream school was not working for him. He hoped to reconnect with friends, have a supportive structure and concentrate on his wellbeing. For Sean, 2019 was not the right time to study; it was all too much.

After talking to healthcare professionals, he attended the Hester Hornbrook Academy HEAT lunch in 2020 and got to meet our amazing staff.

When starting in Prahran, Sean wasn't sure how it would go at first, but he knew that it was time to get out of his comfort zone, and after one week, he knew it would be good, and then it got better and better! From the outset, every class had a Youth Worker, which was a big factor for someone whose mental health was a top priority. The wellbeing sessions were both proactive and preventative, which Sean feels was really good.

"The HEAT class was good for me because of the practical learning; it was visual. Eating your creations is good, too," Sean laughs.

Sean graduated in 2022, and while bitter-sweet, he was ready to move into the Hester Hornbrook Academy Alumni Program. The Alumni Program encouraged him to read about STREAT Youth Programs and learn about the 'Fast Track 2 Work' pre-vocational course that gives young people experience in horticulture and hospitality. When it was time to call STREAT, Sean remembers being

told, "You can do it!" with Alumni there to lend a hand if needed. "There's always support", he said.

"I signed into 'Fast Track 2 Work' with Streat. I was nervous and daunted, but I knew the next step was to transition into work, and this was the right program for me, and it felt similar to Hester Hornbrook. Whenever I was feeling a bit overwhelmed, my Alumni Youth Worker used a double approach; on the one hand, Alumni took the mystery out of the career pathway process because I knew what to expect; and on the other hand I learnt to use strategies to cope at work. This is how I got out of my comfort zone without being overwhelmed.

Having tried both hospitality and horticulture, Sean is already planning his next exciting step into the horticulture 'Paid To Work' STREAT Program that will give him nine months of paid work and experience with an employer.

"My advice to others is to acknowledge the people in your support network and keep doing things to get out of your comfort zone and find your sweet spot where you're not too overwhelmed".

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***"The HEAT class was good for me because of the practical learning; it was visual. Eating your creations is good, too," Sean laughs.***

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# OUR SUPPORTERS

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Many people generously donate to Hester Hornbrook Academy. We would like to thank the following donors for their commitment and ongoing support.

Malcolm Anto

Eleanor Bastow

Mark Collette

Roy Douglas

Chris Flipo

Jill and Nick Gough

John Green

Ian Jamieson

Jennifer Labrum

Peter and Meredith Opie

Reverend Dr R Redpath

The Shine On Foundation

Ann Smith

Sonic Human Resourcing P/L

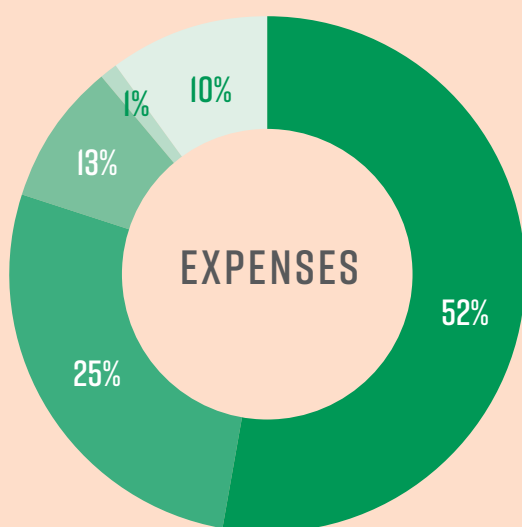
Drs Tony Weeks and Fiona Johnson

Ruth and Matt Weir





# FINANCIALS

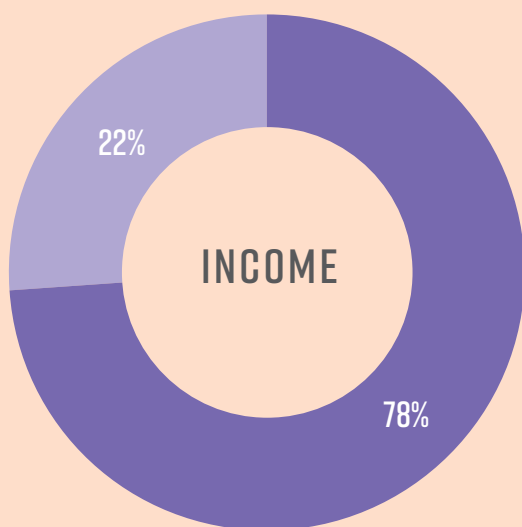


## Expenses Breakdown

Staff	52%
Infrastructure	25%
Administration	10%
Wellbeing and Curriculum	13%
Other	1%

## Expenditure from Operating Activities

Staffing	\$7,928,965
Infrastructure	\$3,764,754
Administration	\$1,499,153
Student Wellbeing and Curriculum	\$1,992,606
Other	\$85,237



## Income Breakdown

Federal Government Grants	76%
State Government Grants	24%

## Revenue from Operating Activities

Federal Government Grants (recurrent)	\$14,658,277
State Government Grants (recurrent)	\$4,706,984
Other income	\$210,707

## Total Operating Profit

\$4,255,253

NB. Donations for the Hester Hornbrook Academy are distributed through MCM.



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# INTO THE FUTURE

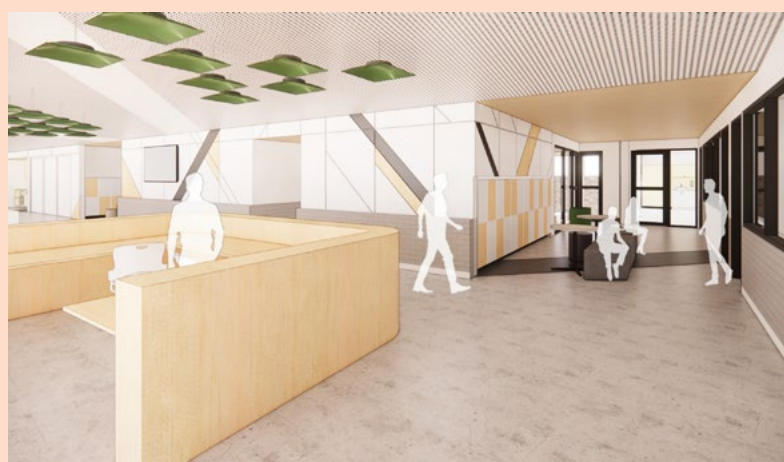
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## Werribee Campus January 2025

The Hester Hornbrook Academy waiting list and overarching community demand for an alternate option to traditional schooling continue to grow significantly. Recognising the increased need for more campuses, Hester Hornbrook Academy conducted extensive due diligence resulting in the business case for a new campus in Werribee, Wyndham local government area, as the priority. This was based on a substantial young NEET (Not in Employment, Education or

Training) population in Wyndham, no other supportive, flexible secondary schools in the area, and partnership opportunities close to the campus site, including multiple tertiary providers and key industry pathways.

The new campus will deliver positive outcomes for the students educationally and ensure future opportunities for further training and employment, with benefits for their health and wellbeing and significant overall community and economic benefits. This is part of the Hester Hornbrook Academy's master plan for growth to ensure access to education for all young people.





# 2022 IN PICTURES









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# HEALING ORIENTED PROGRAM OF EDUCATION

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We recognise that education is one of the most powerful ways to give people hope: hope for a better quality of life and hope for success. We aim to provide a learning environment that teaches students life skills that will support them in their future outside our environment and within their personal lives.

We launched our HOPE Program this year. We now have a therapeutic framework and curriculum delivered through weekly health and wellbeing sessions within the classroom space. This involves our Educators, Youth Workers and Education Support Officers working alongside our students in a group setting to deliver life skills relating social and emotional intelligence.

This can include effectively problem-solving, understanding intrusive thoughts, taking care of themselves holistically, advocating for themselves and their rights, and building upon their resilience.



## Brain Break

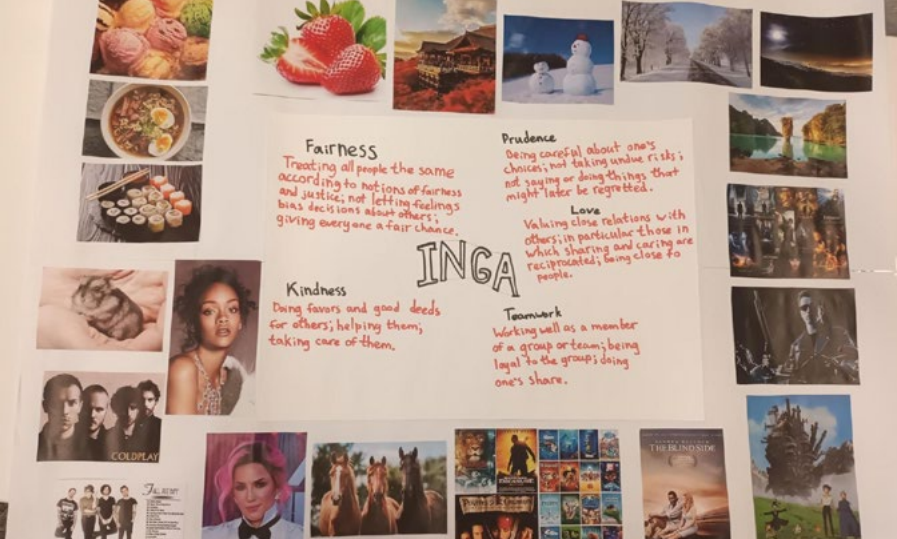
Classrooms have been enjoying fun brain breaks like YouTube step-by-step drawing tutorials. First, everyone in the class gets a blank folded A4 piece of paper and a pencil. Then, each draws a section before passing on. Finally, at the end of the video, the masterpieces are unveiled. Some favourites of the year were the flaming marshmallow man, a turtle with a huge head, a lazy sloth and a cute lemon meringue pie!



## External Support

Across all of our campuses, we offer a range of additional supports to ensure that our young people can engage in education. These external supports include; School Lawyer Program, YSAS, Detour, Occupational Therapists, and Speech Therapy. We ensure the same therapists attend, allowing them to build relationships with the young people so that students will feel comfortable to accessing support when needed. We have also accessed more specific services, such as Body Safety Australia, to run workshops in areas they are experts in.





## Restorative Practices

Students enjoyed engaging in a self-awareness exercise by developing collages and maps of their identity, titled "Who Am I?". Here, students delved into their identities, including how they perceive themselves and how others do. From this activity, students gained insight and skills in exploring aspects of social awareness, how they present in their community and how they can move towards confidently expressing who they are.

## Everyday Wellbeing Check-ins

Each morning when students arrive at school, we invite them to complete their Wellbeing Check-in using the Ripple website. Students are asked to rate themselves from 1 to 9 on food, sleep, safety, friendships, confidence, happiness, calmness, concentration and health. Classroom teams use the information day-to-day to adjust activities and their approaches in the classroom and follow up with students if they show they are feeling low. We also use this information to tell us what kind of resources, activities and approaches we need to use and if what we are doing is working for the students.

# APPLIED LEARNING & LIVING LEARNING

## Applied Learning

One of the most important aspects of learning at the Hester Hornbrook Academy is that it is interesting, fun and relevant! We make sure of this through applied learning. Applied learning means that students can apply what they're learning to their lives while also picking up the skills that will help get them where they want to go next. Here are some examples from the year.

## Whole School BBQ

For many of us it was our first time in the Hester Hornbrook industrial kitchen and the cold steel was daunting. Thankfully, we had our resident MasterChef James on hand to guide us all through the process. We were responsible for cooking a few hundred sausages, veggie burgers, cutting and cooking onions and separating the bread into individual slices. We worked tirelessly to have everything ready in under 2 hours and just met that deadline.

All the hard work (and onion tears!) was worth it, as we kept the full cohort fed and happy. The BBQ was absolutely deemed to be a huge success.

## Energy Poverty Project

Some Sunshine intermediate/senior (SIS) students spent 2022 researching Energy Poverty for their PDS project because of the staggering fact that almost 800 million people worldwide live in extreme energy poverty. This means that when the sun sets at night, they are plunged into darkness or rely on unsafe fuel sources like kerosene or diesel.

The class have been assembling small portable solar lights to send overseas to students experiencing energy poverty so they don't need to use kerosene for lighting. With their own portable solar light, students can read and study at night to improve their education. Each SIS student attaches a handwritten letter to their solar light introducing themselves. This project is a small way to make a difference in people's lives.



## Sport and Rec

The VCAL Sport and Rec class organised a 4-way basketball tournament for the VET Sport and Rec class, inviting other flexi schools to participate. It was a fantastic day with all teams and players playing games in the right spirit!

Hi, my name is Jazmyne (like the jasmine flower). I am 18 years old and live in Victoria, Australia. I was so excited to be able to send this solar light to you! I hope you have fun using it to do all sorts of your favourite things. I love to read, and I hope you do too because now you can read day AND night. My favourite book series is Harry Potter because it's fun and creates a whole new world for me. It's about a boy who finds out he's a wizard and goes on crazy adventures. You deserve to read a book that brings you joy. I know you'll do great things. As Dumbledore once said, "Happiness can be found even in the darkest of times if one only remembers to turn on the light." Remember that. It's been a blast making this light for you.





## Living Learning

The Living Learning program combines flexible learning with mental health support, outreach case coordination support and adventure activities. It is designed to welcome disengaged students back into school and provide the opportunity for them to go on to a positive pathway of their choice.

In 2022, the Living Learning team worked with 96 students, providing the first of three years of support in education, engagement and health. The education team provides a range of supports, including individually tailored education interventions, learning tools, focused literacy and numeracy, and staff professional development. The engagement team provides case coordination and support to ensure students have the right people around them, so they can manage anything preventing them from getting to school and being able to focus on their study. The allied health team focuses on providing students with direct therapeutic interventions, assessments and reports. They also provide secondary consultation and referrals to external services.

The Living Learning program also operates an extensive adventure experience program which is designed to expose students to natural environments and provides a safe place to extend their physical capabilities and sense of self-achievement.

## Wear It Purple Day

Hester Hornbrook students participated in activities to foster supportive, safe, empowering, and inclusive environments for LGBTQIA+ young people. Sunshine student Jacob utilised his Personal Development Project to create resources and activities for students. A big congratulations to Jacob on an outstanding project.

“ The Living Learning WILD program has inspired me to look for an outdoor recreation pathway after school and to invest more time physically doing things outdoors. Over the past 4 weeks, this program has provided great opportunities to connect with the Victorian outdoors, like going on a scavenger hunt, exploring the Yarra River and paddling down rapids.

It was a fulfilling experience connecting with people from other campuses. Watching them face their fears and engage with amazing landscapes in a safe environment has made every Wednesday a highlight of my week. Many laughs, many shared gratitude and reflections each session, listening to each other, encouraging each other, and having fun without judgment, are some of the key ideas we decided would be our group culture. These key ideas made each session a safe space where I felt as though I belonged and was able to contribute to the group. ”

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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## Edgars Mission

Edgars Mission is an animal sanctuary in Lancefield for abused and neglected farm animals from across Victoria. The Prahran senior class drove to Lancefield in our two new Hester Hornbrook vans and met Ruby, the rescued farm dog. The class also fed chickens and sheep, patted pigs, and watched the turkeys being turkeys. There were two mini donkeys, Hamish and Andy, who followed the group around for most of the visit!



## Driving School

For the VCAL Foundation crew at Prahran, 2022 was an exciting year. Working hard to complete the practice L's drivers test in time for an excursion to METEC meant that some students got to practice driving an automatic car with an experienced driving instructor. This was a huge highlight; for some, it was the first time behind the wheel!



## City immersion excursion

In Term 1, the city intermediate class went on a city immersion excursion designed and organised by a small group of students. The excursion started with a tram ride to the State Library of Victoria, where they explored the beautiful reading room and museum, before lunch in Chinatown.

After eating, a walk through Chinatown towards Federation Square via Hosier Lane for a quick photography stop. The tour finished at Southbank, overlooking Flinders Street Station and all the big city buildings. A fun day was had by all!





## Doxa Camp experience

At the start of Term 2, City and Prahran students spent two nights and three days at Doxa in Malmsbury. You could feel the energy change as soon as the bus left the city. Everyone was excited to get away for a few days and have fun. By the end of camp, the group had conquered the giant swing, the leap of faith, the high ropes course, the trampolines and more! Everyone enjoyed sleeping in cabins and sharing meals together; the teachers and youth workers and students alike.



## Wollangarra Camp

Wollangarra is an independent, non-profit outdoor education centre set in the bushlands of Gippsland, working towards a healthier environment, stronger community and happier young people.

Students and staff got to enjoy a forgotten way of life: up with the sun and down when the work is done. Food cooked on an open fire or wood oven, no technology - just you and the entertainment of nature's music.

The group hiked and enjoyed the outdoors for five days. No matter how tough it seemed at the time, everyone should be very proud of themselves for accomplishing what they did that week.

## Visiting the Aquarium and Melbourne Museum

In term 2, the intermediate class went on excursions to the Aquarium and Melbourne Museum, with an added bonus of Nando's for lunch! Inside the Aquarium, the group saw the 'Bay of Rays', the rock pools, jellyfish, reptiles including frogs, blue-tongue lizards, a snake and a crocodile, and many more aquatic species. They also visited the King and Gentoo penguins in the penguin playground.

The group visited the Melbourne Museum and enjoyed the many plants and small animals on the 'Forest Walk' and the huge range of insect species at 'Bugs Alive'. They also visited the Mini Mega Model Museum, the university student projects exhibit, and the 'Dinosaur Walk'. They learned about the history of the land and First Nations People's culture and history on a tour of the First People's Gallery at the Bunjilaka Cultural Centre, led by one of the museum staff.

## Mock election at the city campus

On Monday 16 May, students ran a city campus-wide mock election. The aim was to help inform young people about how to vote and why it is an important right to exercise. First, the group organised a candidate speech and Q&A session for all staff and students to observe "real" federal candidates from all the major parties. The voters really got to know the political candidates! Then, the group set up the classroom like a real polling place and made all city staff and students line up outside the room, ready to vote in real voting booths. After everyone voted, the votes were counted up, and the winner of the mock election was determined - Labor candidate, Grace!

Looks like this election predicted the real Australian Federal Election of 2022...





# FIRST NATIONS



At Hester Hornbrook Academy, we know that our First Nations students' connection to culture and community is an important part of child and adolescent development.

We want to ensure that we support our First Nations students' wellbeing and learning in a culturally safe, inclusive, and sensitive way to empower our young people to be the leaders of tomorrow. One of the specific changes this year was introducing a new role to allow us to better understand, relate to and work with First Nations peoples in our school. Amy, a proud Yuwi woman, has been welcomed as the new First Nations Coordinator and has already made a huge impact on our school and our students.

Amy has spent her time creating moments and opportunities for students to engage in cultural activities and learn more about culture from Elders, artists, and each other, empowering our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to be proud and engaged members of the First Nations community.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Club

One of Amy's initiatives is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Club. It encourages a sense of community and belonging among its members, enjoying activities together as a group. In this first year, the group were lucky enough to get an exclusive, behind-the-scenes experience of the archives held at the Melbourne Museum, followed by a delicious feed at the Mabu Mabu restaurant in Federation Square. This involved four of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students holding and learning about cultural artefacts from their own cultures and tasting crocodile, emu and kangaroo in style!











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