



PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Begin As We Intend To Proceed

Welcome to the second edition of our School Newsletter in its 'new look' format.

Student Leadership Investiture

On Friday 27 February 2026, we had the great pleasure of hosting our annual Student Leadership Investiture. This important event formally acknowledges and celebrates the students who have taken on leadership roles at Ashwood High School in 2026.

My Acting Principal's Address focused on student engagement, voice and agency, encouraging our leaders to reflect on how they can demonstrate leadership in their everyday actions. I reinforced a message previously shared in my Acting Principal's Address at our Whole School Assembly earlier in the term, outlining my clear expectations for our school community:

"Ashwood High School is a richly diverse learning environment. Every person in this community has the right to feel safe, valued and respected for who they are. Anyone who interferes with the safety or learning of others will face appropriate consequences. Our school is inclusive, structured and built on strong values. We celebrate positive behaviour guided by our CHOIR values, and we recognise that discipline is not a negative concept. Each of us is a keeper of our culture. We do not tolerate bullying. If you see something, you must say something. This is what Vision Inspired Action looks like in practice."

During the Investiture, we explored what it means to "do our part" in maintaining and strengthening a safe, inclusive and aspirational school culture. Students contributed a range of thoughtful ideas, including being upstanders, living the CHOIR values, creating inclusive environments, setting high standards, leading with kindness, supporting learning, and caring for our shared community. The Address was well received, and I sincerely thank all Student Leaders for their commitment to their roles and the expectations that come with them.



Ms Meg McLellan
Acting Principal

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Annual Public Reporting Meeting and School Council Members 2026

It was also a privilege to present our 2025 Annual Report at our Annual Public Reporting Meeting held on Wednesday 25 March 2026. I was proud to share the many achievements and highlights of the past year, along with our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. The Report is now available on our school's website and provides a comprehensive overview of our performance and progress in 2025.

Following the meeting, we convened as a newly formed School Council and voted on our Office Bearer positions in 2026. There was a genuine sense of warmth and shared purpose around the table, and I feel very optimistic about the future of our school. On behalf of our community, I extend my sincere thanks to both past and current members for their continued investment of time, skills and expertise in supporting the governance of our school.



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Here are a list of School Council members in 2026:

- **Ms Meg McLellan** Acting Principal, Executive Officer of School Council
- **Ms Nicki Dear** School Council President 2026
Parent of former students Thomas, James, William, Hamish (Year 11) and Samuel (Year 11)
- **Ms Sarah Reynolds** Senior School Assistant Principal
- **Mrs Caroline Servadei** Acting Middle School Assistant Principal
- **Gilly McCann** School Captain 2026
- **Ava Morrin** School Captain 2026
- **Mr Colin Lillywhite** School Council Vice President 2026
Parent of Ava, Class of 2025, and Christopher (Year 11)
- **Mr Paul Towler** School Council Treasurer 2026
Parent of Michael (Year 7)
- **Mrs Vicky Dernikos** School Member
- **Ms Ruby Cameron** School Member
- **Ms Rebecca Rangas** Parent Member
Parent of Theo (Year 11), Sophia (Year 10) and Mark (Year 7)
- **Ms Lauren King** Parent Member
Parent of Daniel (Year 8)
- **Mr Nigel Hedges** Parent Member
Parent of Atlas (Year 7)

Ashwood High School – Instagram Account Re-launch

We are also excited to re-launch the Ashwood High School Instagram account. This platform will allow us to share and celebrate the everyday moments that make our school such a vibrant and positive place in a more regular and contemporary way.

New Members of Staff

Finally, I am pleased to announce the appointment of four additional staff members who will support our growing school community:

- **Ms Gilli McKenna** – Mental Health Practitioner
- **Ms Jenny Mihan** – Jobs, Skills and Pathways Assistant Coordinator
- **Ms Sabriah Peterson** – Education Support Staff (Integration Aide)
- **Ms Clare Thawley** – Instrumental Music Teacher (Flute)

I wish all members of our community a peaceful and enjoyable term break and look forward to welcoming everyone back in Term Two.

COMMUNITY

of Learning and Trust

Year 7 Transitions and Year 7 Welcome Barbecue



Ms Edwina Nolan
Middle School Student Engagement,
Wellbeing and Transitions Leader



Ashwood High School proudly welcomed its newest cohort of Year 7 students through a comprehensive Transitions Programme designed to ensure a smooth and confident start to secondary school. The programme focuses on building connections, developing independence, and fostering a strong sense of belonging within the school community from the very beginning.

Throughout Term 1, students have participated in a range of practical and supportive activities to help them navigate their new environment. These have included school tours, timetable reading, and Compass tutorials, enabling students to confidently access schedules, learning materials, and school communications. Students have also developed important organisational skills through the use of their school planners, establishing routines that support effective learning.

A key feature of the Transitions Programme has been the opportunity for students to build friendships and connect with peers and staff. Tutor Group time and House-based activities have supported students to form positive relationships while fostering a strong sense of community and House pride. Students have also been encouraged to explore a variety of co-curricular opportunities, from lunchtime clubs to interschool sport, helping them discover new interests and feel more connected to school life.

A highlight of the transition was the Year 7 Welcome BBQ, held on Tuesday 24 February 2026. This valued event brought together families, students, and staff in a warm and inclusive environment. It provided an important opportunity for parents and carers to connect with key members of the school community, while students formed and strengthened early friendships.

The evening featured a warm welcome address from Acting Principal, **Ms Meg McLellan**, who highlighted the importance of strong partnerships between home and school in supporting every student's success. The Welcome BBQ played a significant role in building a sense of community and ensuring all families felt welcomed, connected, and supported from the outset.



COMMUNITY

of Learning and Trust

Spotlight on Student Leadership at Ashwood High School



Ms Andrea Van Olst
Student Leadership Coordinator



An annual highlight in our Term 1 calendar is our official Student Leadership Investiture, where our student leaders meet as a group to receive their leadership badges. Additionally, students had the privilege of hearing from our Acting Principal, **Ms McLellan**, who shared her insights on the expectations of student leadership at Ashwood High School.

Our students had the following to say about the event:

"I found the Student Leadership Investiture to be a great representation of outstanding fresh leaders for Ashwood High School in 2026, and no doubt future years. I am always happy to see the sheer quantity of leadership positions that allow students to gain experience in being a role model, leading and encouraging student voice."

Laura Gosbell (Year 12) School Vice Captain and SRC President

"It was wonderful to see all the up-and-coming leaders, both returning and new, getting their badges and taking on their responsibilities. As a student leader I am striving to increase the visibility of student voice, allowing those without formal positions to see the effect they can and do have on our school."

Josh Wilson (Year 12) School Vice Captain and SRC President

Interact Leadership and Fundraising Excursion

"In February, Interact Club had the privilege of attending a face-to-face workshop in the city hosted by the Leukaemia Foundation. This experience allowed us to connect with other local students and learn from those who run the World's Greatest Shave campaign. We were able to hear real stories and experiences from people who have battled leukaemia, which gave us all a greater perspective of the impact it has on people. My biggest takeaway from the day was the scary statistics presented to us regarding leukaemia in Australia, and the huge role schools like ours can play in assisting. Overall, this incredible day gave us the motivation to run our own fundraising events and strengthened our connection as a club."

Liyah February (Year 11) Interact President and
Lily Wingate (Year 11) Interact Vice President



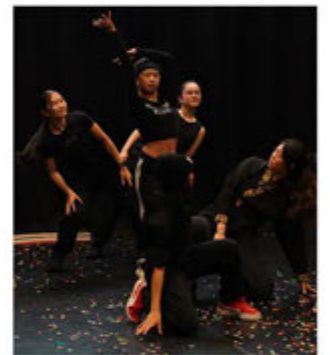
Harmony Day Celebrations – Thursday 19 March 2026

Our annual Harmony Day celebration was a vibrant and uplifting showcase of cultural diversity and unity. The event featured a calligraphy workshop as well as numerous captivating performances, including Chinese Lion Dancing, Japanese Karate, Irish dancing, a K-pop dance, and engaging cultural music and drumming. It was a wonderful opportunity for our school community to come together and celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures that make our school unique.



COMMUNITY

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The SRC also hosted a Harmony Day fundraiser, collecting gold coin donations for the non-uniform day and selling food items during lunch. A special thanks to our International Student families who supported us in the kitchens on the day to ensure everyone had enough to eat. A great day was had by all!





HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Aspire to be Your Personal Best

Mathematics Learning Area Report



Mr Jay Chan

Mathematics Learning Area
Coordinator

The 2026 school year commenced on a very positive note, with students demonstrating strong engagement and enthusiasm in their learning across the Mathematics Learning Area. It has been particularly pleasing to see students return with a focused mindset and a willingness to challenge themselves academically.

We would also like to extend our congratulations to the Class of 2025 for their outstanding VCE results. Their dedication and perseverance have set a high standard, and we are proud of their achievements. We wish them every success in their future endeavours. To our current Year 12 cohort, the Class of 2026, we extend our very best wishes for the year ahead as you work towards your own goals.

This year, we are delighted to welcome a new member to our team, **Mr Parth Davda**, who joined the Mathematics Learning Area. We look forward to the expertise and enthusiasm he brings to our learning community.

Students and families are encouraged to regularly check Compass for updates on upcoming Mathematics events. The first major event for the year is the Computational and Algorithmic Thinking Competition in May. Later in the year, students will also have the opportunity to participate in the Maths Challenge and the Australian Mathematics Competition. These events provide valuable opportunities to extend problem-solving skills and engage with Mathematics beyond the classroom.

In the meantime, students with a passion for problem solving are encouraged to attend **Mr Cifra's** Puzzle Club, held every Friday at lunchtime in G01. All students are welcome.

We look forward to a productive and rewarding year ahead and wish all students continued success in their mathematical learning.



HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Aspire to be Your Personal Best

Exams Process Years 7 to 11



Mr Rob Gray

*Middle School Student Outcomes
Leader*

The Years 7-11 Exam Period runs each semester, affording students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in an academically rigorous and equitable setting. Exam conditions reinforce the importance of learning to not only write to time, but also to think critically within time constraints as students practise recalling and applying their knowledge and skills. Such skills are rapidly becoming paramount in the age of AI, as exams are taking an integral place in the authentication of assessment in schools and universities across the globe.

At Ashwood High School, each exam is facilitated in a centralised space, maintaining rigour and fairness across classes. Middle School students sit exams for English and Mathematics, with Year 9 students additionally completing exams in Science and Humanities. During the exam period, Middle School students attend their regular classes when not undertaking an exam. For Senior School students, students attend an exam for each subject they are taking, while regular classes do not run and Senior School students are not required at school between exams. We wish all our students a productive and rewarding exam period for Semester 1, 2026.





OPTIMISM

Reflection and Resilience

Mullum Division Swimming Carnival



Mr Tom Grbac
Director of Sport



Mr Declan McLaughlin
Assistant Director of Sport

There were 31 Ashwood High School students that attended the Aquanation Pool to battle it out with the other Mullum Division schools. All students showed tremendous skill and fortitude and represented Ashwood High School to the best of their abilities. The highlights included Ashwood High School students winning the following events:

Individual Events

- **Jayden Thach** 15 Yr Male: 50m Breaststroke, 50m Butterfly, 50m Freestyle, 50m Backstroke
- **Sarah Labza** 15 Yr Female: 50m Butterfly
- **Grace Lee** 18-20 Yr Female: 50m Butterfly, 50m Freestyle, 50m Backstroke

Team Events

- 13 Yr Female 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay
- 15 Yr Female 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay
- 17-20 Yr Female 4 x 50m Medley Relay

A further congratulations to **Jayden Thach** (15 Yr Male), **Erika Ting** (17 Yr Female) and **Grace Lee** (18-20 Yr Female) for winning the Age Group Champions medallions. The winning students have progressed to the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) Swimming Carnival on Monday 30 March 2026.





OPTIMISM

Reflection and Resilience

Music at Ashwood High School - Autumn Soirée



Mr Sam Bugeja
Director of Music



Mr Navin Gulavita
Director of Instrumental Music

It has been a great Term One for the Ashwood High School Music Department. We have been lucky enough to have countless musical opportunities, with one of them being a selection of students representing our Music Program at Glen Iris Primary School on Friday 20 February 2026, playing well-known hits such as Riptide by Vance Joy, featuring a rare but incandescent vocal exhibition from **Grace Lee**, and the band Monday giving the kind of seismic performance that they have become known for.

On Thursday 26 March 2026, we put on the first concert of the year, our Autumn Soirée, at which our astounding senior ensembles, bands and VCE Music soloists delivered luminous and transfixing performances to the delight of the audience. It was a beautiful, atmospheric event for all involved despite the pluvial evening. We would like to thank all the students who performed in the event and regaled our ears with the dulcet, euphonious sounds of their instruments.

We also had students who gave up their evening to create and execute lighting cues that, we have to say, looked absolutely spectacular. The students spent many hours meticulously planning each setup throughout the day to capture the heart and soul of each performance. Thank you to our wonderful lighting technicians, **Izzy Gullan, Aubrey Parry, CJ Baker** and **Riannah Simos**. We must also acknowledge **Bethany** and **Elisabeth Oh** who conceived the fake Kraken attack that occurred half-way through the concert, that was expertly realised by the lighting crew.



We are similarly indebted to **Luella El-Khalil** and **Hannah Cree** who kindly volunteered to facilitate the arrival of our guests, even going as far as to, at their own initiative, establish a cloakroom for the many umbrellas and raincoats, as well as assisting the audience with finding their seats. Thank you also to all of the amazing Music Team for their continued encouragement, support and contributions on the night, especially to our instrumental music teachers who took on various roles to ensure the concert ran smoothly.



OPTIMISM

Reflection and Resilience



Lastly, all who were in attendance will have become aware of the pure comedic gifts, impeccable timing and effortless wit of our phenomenal hosts for the evening, **Grace Lee**, Music Captain, and **Miranda Cheng**, Music Vice Captain. We are extremely grateful to them for 'grace'-ing the stage with the warm and genial manner in which they presented the night's proceedings. The kind words they had to say about all of the performers went a long way to creating the positive, wholesome tenor of the concert. The audience were in great spirits as well, and were generous enough to participate in many of the shenanigans that we had planned, to ensure none of the jokes fell flat.

"Overall, we have had an absolute blast in music this term and have been so proud to be able to have a positive influence, and we hope music only continues to thrive as this year continues."

Miranda Cheng, Music Vice Captain





INNOVATION

Creativity and Sustainability

Tutor Group (Years 7-9) – Purpose, Content and Expectations



Ms Edwina Nolan
*Middle School Student Engagement,
Wellbeing and Transitions Leader*

The Tutor Group Program at Ashwood High School plays a central role in supporting students as they transition into and progress through the early years of secondary school. As part of the broader Transitions Program, Tutor Group time provides a consistent and supportive environment where students can build strong connections, develop confidence, and feel a genuine sense of belonging within the school community.

Tutor Groups are organised by both House and year level across Years 7 to 9, creating a structured approach that supports continuity and connection as students move through the Middle School. Within their Houses, Cowan, Flynn, Melba, and Paterson, students develop a strong sense of identity and pride, while also building relationships with peers in their year level. This structure fosters both peer support and healthy competition, strengthening community connections across the school.

Meeting regularly in their Tutor Groups, students are given valuable opportunities to connect with peers and form positive relationships. These sessions are designed to support students socially and academically, helping them navigate the expectations of secondary school while developing important organisational and communication skills. Tutor Group teachers play a key role in guiding students, offering support, and ensuring each student feels known, valued, and supported.

The program also reinforces school values, supports student wellbeing, and encourages active participation in school life. Through House-based activities, goal setting, and reflection, students are supported to grow in confidence and independence.

Overall, the Tutor Group Program is instrumental in creating a positive and connected experience for students across Years 7 to 9, supporting them to feel confident, engaged, and ready to succeed.





INNOVATION

Creativity and Sustainability

Form Group (Year 10) and
VCE Special Programs Days
(Years 11 & 12) – Purpose,
Content and Expectations



Mr Tom O'Toole

Senior School Student Engagement,
Wellbeing and Pathways Leader

Ashwood High School continues to uphold high expectations and a strong commitment to continuous improvement. Our Year 10 cohort in 2026 has engaged positively with the school's Form Group program targeted at the delivery of pathways and wellbeing programs and assisting students to prepare for their senior years of schooling. Students have participated in a range of experiences designed to support both personal development and future planning, developing a deeper understanding of the importance of making informed decisions about their educational and career pathways.

A key strength of this cohort has been their willingness to reflect on their individual strengths, interests and aspirations. Through structured Form Group sessions, students have explored a variety of schooling options, including VCE, VCE VM, VET and apprenticeship pathways. Many students have shown initiative in seeking guidance and actively engaging in conversations about their future directions. This important work has been led by Year 10 Coordinators, **Ms Georgia Kazis** and **Mr Jeff Newman**, who have done an outstanding job engaging students and supporting staff in the delivery of this program.

Our school also continues to lead innovative practice in health and wellbeing. Under the leadership of Senior School Assistant Principal, **Ms Sarah Reynolds** and Student Wellbeing Manager, **Ms Renee Callander**, a number of new initiatives have been developed and introduced in 2026. These include the CREATE program and dedicated Year 11 and 12 Special Program Days, led by the Senior School Student Management Team.

The Special Program Days place a strong emphasis on student wellbeing, recognising the pressures often associated with senior studies. Students participate in targeted sessions focused on stress management, maintaining balance and building resilience. These workshops provide practical strategies to support students' mental health and wellbeing, particularly during assessment periods.

Across the coming terms, **Ms Callander** will continue to work alongside the Senior School Team to deliver targeted sessions that support students in developing effective strategies for stress management, self-regulation, inclusion and respectful relationships. This work is central to ensuring our students are well prepared not only for their senior years, but to thrive beyond school.



RESPECT

for Teachers, Students, School and Community

End of Term Reminders



Ms Sarah Reynolds
Senior School Assistant Principal



Mrs Caroline Servadei
Acting Middle School Assistant Principal

As Term One concludes, it is timely to reflect on the wonderfully strong sense of Community at Ashwood High School and the many achievements of our students throughout the term. Our teachers have taken pride in delivering an outstanding teaching and learning programme for all students, encouraging critical thinking, building skills and knowledge and applying knowledge in new and real-life scenarios. Co-curricular events and activities have also enabled our students and staff to showcase their talents, leadership and commitment to excellence at the school through key events including; Interschool Debating, the Autumn Soirée - Senior Music Concert, the Swimming Carnival, Student-Led Conferences, Harmony Day, and the Cross Country Carnival to name a few. These experiences highlight the strength of our school community and the dedication of our students and staff to holistic learning at Ashwood High School. Congratulations to all students and staff on a successful Term One.

We wish everyone a safe, rejuvenating, and enjoyable Term Break and look forward to welcoming you back for Term Two on Monday 20 April 2026.

Reach Out

If you're having a hard time, or worrying about how to help others, here are some ways to get support.

School wellbeing support

Talk to your coordinators or teachers, ask them to connect you with our wellbeing team, they are here to support you during school time.

Talk to the Doctor (GP), they can check your health and connect you with support

Information, resources and someone to talk to, they can support you with all kinds of problems, and are available all the time (24/7), via phone or online chat.

kidshelpline
Anytime | Any Reason
1800 55 1800
kidshelpline.com.au/

headspace
National Youth Mental Health Foundation
headspace.org.au 1800 650 890

Mental health support for young people. Visit their website for information, or go into one of their centres - the closest is Syndal Headspace in Mount Waverley.

Monash Youth Services
monashyouth.org.au 9518 3900

Youth support (they will help you with your goals) and activities, with a Youth Centre in Glen Waverley.

Beyond Blue
beyondblue.org.au
1300 22 4636

Counselling support for people feeling distressed, over the phone or online, available 24/7

Youth Drug and Alcohol Advice
yodaa.org.au
1800 458 685

Helpful information on their website and you can call their youth workers during business hours.

1800RESPECT
NATIONAL SEXUAL ABUSE, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNSELLING SERVICE
1800 737 732
1800respect.org.au

For support with family violence, visit their website, contact them anytime by phone, text or online chat.

Rainbow Door
Specialist LGBTIQ+ support
rainbowdoor.org.au

1800 729 367
0480 017 266
support@rainbowdoor.org.au

13YARN
Specialist First Nations support
13yarn.org.au

000 EMERGENCY

If you are worried about immediate safety call 000

KEY DATES

Monday 20 April	First Day Term Two
Tuesday 28 April	Years 11 & 12 Interschool Sport
Wednesday 29 April	Ashwood Revealed – Open Day and Open Night (Students dismissed at 12:40pm)
Monday 4 May	Athletics Carnival
Thursday 7 May	Years 9&10 Interschool Sport
Monday 11 May	Intermediate/Senior (Years 9-12) Girls AFL and Boys Netball
Thursday 14 May	Years 11 and 12 Formal
Tuesday 19 May	School Review Day
Thursday 21 May	Junior (Years 7 & 8) Girls AFL and Boys
Tuesday 26 May	Mullum Division Cross Country
Tuesday 26 May	Year 10 Subject Selection Evening and Future Focused Careers Fair
1 - 11 June	Years 7-11 Exam Period
Thursday 4 June	Year 8 Interschool Sport
Monday 8 June	King's Birthday Public Holiday
Thursday 11 June	Region Cross Country Carnival
Thursday 11 June	Year 7 Immunisations
Friday 12 June	Report Writing Day (Pupil Free Day)
Tuesday 16 June	General Achievement Test (GAT) Units 3&4 VCE Studies
Wednesday 17 June	Ashwood High School Winter Music Concert
Friday 19 June	Year 7 Interschool Sport
22 - 24 June	Year 10 Camp - Waratah Beach
Friday 26 June	End of Term Two