

Footprints

St John's Anglican College
JUNE 2026



Middle & Senior School Open Morning

Discover what makes our community so special at our upcoming Open Morning.

Join us to explore our vibrant learning environment, meet our passionate staff and students, and see how we bring our values to life every day

Faith. Service. Courage. In Action.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Join us

**Thursday
27 Aug 2026**



A photograph of two students, a boy and a girl, sitting in a classroom. They are both wearing red school uniforms. The boy is on the left, looking down, and the girl is on the right, looking forward. They are sitting in black plastic chairs. In the background, there is a window and some classroom decorations.

Footprints

JUNE 2026 EDITION

Editor

Mrs Libby Duffin

Graphic Design

Ignition Creative

Photography

Mr Doug Shobbrook

Mr Mitch Hollywood

Studio Kirby

Queensland School Photography

Contributors

Mrs Maria McIvor

Mr Russell Bauer

Mrs Shirley Sun

Ms Kai Hannah

Ms Erika Kotaniemi

Ms Helen Clapham-Burns

Mr Kyan Lambie

Mrs Chelsea Manuel

Mr Andrew Landroth

Ciara Lewis

Hou Meng Lei

Nève Wintersgill

Dr. Michael Carr-Gregg, AO

Ms Alysia Thomas

Mrs JoMercy Buckingham

Rev. Juliana Bate

Acknowledgement of Country

St John's Anglican College acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which we gather; the Yuggera (Jagera) people. We recognise their continuing cultural and spiritual connection to land, water and community. We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We are grateful for the diverse cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their contributions, wisdom and memories.

From the Principal - The Future Takes Shape

Year to Thrive: Growing with Purpose

As I walk across our College grounds, I am often drawn to the Liquid Amber trees that stand proudly throughout St John's.

Through changing seasons, they continue to grow, adapting to conditions around them while remaining strong and enduring. They remind us that growth is rarely instant. It takes time, perseverance and a willingness to learn through both success and challenge.

Poet Douglas Malloch captured this beautifully when he wrote, "Good timber does not grow with ease. The stronger wind, the stronger trees." These words resonate deeply with our College theme for 2026, **Year to Thrive: Growing with Purpose**.

Thriving is not about avoiding obstacles or seeking the easiest path. It is about developing the confidence, character and resilience to navigate challenges and emerge stronger because of them. It is about embracing opportunities for growth and recognising that every experience contributes to who we are becoming.

At St John's, this understanding sits at the heart of our College Formation Framework.

Formation is about more than academic achievement. It is the intentional development of the whole person. It reflects who our students become, not simply what they achieve. Through learning, relationships, service, leadership opportunities and faith, students develop the knowledge, skills and values that prepare them for life beyond the College gates.

Our values of Faith, Service and Courage guide this journey. They shape our culture, inform decision-making and provide a framework for how we learn, lead and contribute to our community.

The Year to Thrive provides a practical expression of this vision. It encourages every member of our community to grow with intention, embrace new opportunities and contribute positively to the lives of others.

This commitment is also reflected in our renewed Strategic Enterprise Model and the introduction of Enterprise Pairings.

The pairings recognise that learning does not occur in isolation. The opportunities and challenges facing today's students require them to think across disciplines, consider multiple perspectives and apply knowledge with wisdom and purpose.



Through **Wisdom and Faith**, students learn to think critically while remaining grounded in values and ethical decision-making.



Personal Learning and People with Purpose encourage students to connect their individual growth with meaningful contribution, understanding that success is most powerful when it benefits others.



Global and Social develop cultural understanding, empathy and awareness of our shared responsibility within an increasingly interconnected world.



Entrepreneurial and Sustainability challenge students to think creatively, solve problems and consider the long-term impact of their decisions on people, communities and the environment.

Together, these pairings help students make connections between learning, character and purpose. They reflect our belief that education should prepare young people not only for future careers, but for meaningful and fulfilling lives.

This approach is particularly important as we continue to explore the opportunities presented by artificial intelligence and emerging technologies.

Artificial intelligence will play an increasingly significant role in the world our students inherit. While these technologies offer exciting possibilities, they also raise important questions about ethics, responsibility and human connection.

At St John's, we believe our role is not simply to teach students how to use technology. Our responsibility is to help them understand when, why and to what purpose it should be used. The Enterprise Pairings provide a framework through which students can engage with innovation thoughtfully, balancing curiosity and creativity with discernment, integrity and care for others.

As educators, our focus remains firmly on developing the qualities that technology cannot replace. Empathy. Judgement. Character. Wisdom. These qualities will continue to define effective leaders, engaged citizens and compassionate human beings.

As we embrace the Year to Thrive, we do so with optimism and confidence in the future.

We believe every student has the capacity to grow, contribute and flourish. We believe challenges can become opportunities for learning. We believe purpose gives direction to achievement and meaning to success.

Most importantly, we believe education is about shaping people who will make a positive difference in the world.

Like the Liquid Amber trees that continue to grow across our College grounds, our students are developing strength, capability and purpose with every season of their journey.

The future is taking shape before us, and it is an exciting future indeed.



Mrs Maria McIvor | Principal



Queensland Students Unite at QSAC for **MEGABAND 2026**



More than 550 school-aged musicians from across South East Queensland came together this March to establish a World Record for Australia's largest school-aged concert band at the Olympic-standard Queensland Sport and Athletic Centre (QSAC).

Held on Monday, 30 March and spearheaded by Mr Russell Bauer and our Performing Arts team, MEGABAND 2026 brought together students from as far as the Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, Darling Downs / Toowoomba, and Brisbane. Together, they formed a massed ensemble on a scale rarely seen in school music, a powerful reminder of what can happen when young people unite through a shared passion.

MEGABAND organiser and music educator Mr Bauer said the idea was inspired by a world-record performance more than a decade ago.

"I played trombone in a huge ensemble led by James Morrison at Suncorp Stadium, and it was such great fun," Mr Bauer said. "When I looked into it, I realised there had never been an official attempt at Australia's largest school concert band, so here we are."

What began as a vision for around 300 students from ten schools quickly grew beyond expectations. In the end, fourteen schools took part, with approximately 550 musicians performing side by side, something truly special to be part of, whether you were on stage or cheering from the stands.

"As an educator, it's incredibly exciting," Mr Bauer said. "These students had never played together before, yet they rehearsed in a very short time frame and were ready to perform just one hour later. That kind of collaboration is powerful."

Staging the event at QSAC added a real sense of occasion. For many students, performing in an Olympic-standard venue was an unforgettable experience, one that elevated the day and created lasting memories.

In a distinctive twist, all students memorised their music, and performed without amplification or electronic assistance.

"In this digital age of artificial intelligence, we formed a huge band that used no electricity," Mr Bauer said. "I hope students walked away realising





just how powerful the human brain really is."

Looking ahead, Mr Bauer hopes this is just the beginning.

"Our wish is that this becomes an annual event, and that St John's Anglican College is known as the school that hosts MEGABAND," he said. "This year we established the figure, and will aim to beat it every year."

MEGABAND 2026 was more than a performance, it was a celebration of musical excellence, collaboration, and the spirit of young people across Queensland. And if you were part of it, you'll know just how powerful that moment felt.





The Heart of International Education at St John's



For almost three decades, Mrs Shirley Sun has helped shape the international student experience at St John's Anglican College, supporting generations of young people as they build confidence, independence and a sense of belonging far from home.

Mrs Sun joined the College 29 years ago when it was known as Forest Lake College, attracted by its innovative approach to language education and its commitment to preparing students for a global future.

"It was called Forest Lake College, and I started as a teacher of Chinese," Mrs Sun said. "Forest Lake College was the only school that made Mandarin Chinese a compulsory subject from Preschool to Year 10. I liked the founding principal's vision for the College."

What began as a classroom role soon evolved into a career dedicated to international education. Following a successful overseas marketing trip, Mrs Sun was invited to focus her efforts on growing the College's International Program.

"With some good fortune, I recruited over 15 long-term students as well as 400 students for study tours on my very first trip, which also marked the end of my teaching career," she said. "The Principal at the time believed I could benefit the College more than being a teacher."

Starting with just eight international students in 2002, Mrs Sun helped establish and grow a thriving international community. By the end of that year, enrolments had increased to 75 students, eventually growing to more than 200 international students, alongside hundreds of students participating in study tours and exchange opportunities. Her contribution to International

Education was recognised through a nomination for the Queensland Export Award by former Queensland Premier Peter Beattie.

While the growth of the program has been significant, Mrs Sun says the most rewarding part of her work has always been witnessing the personal development of the students she supports.

"To see the positive change in international students gives me the most joy," she said. "Many students come from affluent families back home and have never had to make decisions or do household chores. When they arrive in Australia, they have to become independent very quickly while learning in their second language."

She believes international students contribute enormously to the life of the College, bringing new perspectives, cultures and experiences that enrich the broader community.

"The College life has been enriched by students from overseas," she said. "The local homestay families also benefit from hosting International Students."

Reflecting on her years in education, Mrs Sun says one of the most important lessons she has learned is the value of patience and understanding.

"To have patience, and more patience," she said. "Teenagers are difficult to manage at the best of times, but international students face another level of difficulty living with homestay families and learning in their second language. I find them incredibly resilient."

Today, Mrs Sun is proud of the impact international education has had on the College community and the opportunities it has created for students from around the world.

"When I first started as a teacher, there were no students from overseas," she reflected. "Now we have more than 20 per cent International Students from Years 10 to 12 at any given time. International Students have changed the landscape of the College."

As she looks to the future, Mrs Sun hopes every international student leaves St John's with more than an education.

"That they had fun, enjoyed the good times, and developed skills they can use for the rest of their lives."

Through her dedication, care and unwavering support, Mrs Sun has helped countless students find their place at St John's. Her contribution has not only shaped the College's International Program but has also enriched the lives of students, families and the wider community for nearly 30 years.



Growing Through Challenge at Year 4 Camp

Year 4 students recently travelled to Luther Heights Youth Camp in Point Arkwright on the Sunshine Coast for an unforgettable experience filled with challenge, teamwork and personal growth.

Aligned with the students' Who We Are Inquiry Unit, the camp provided opportunities to apply growth mindset strategies while navigating new experiences, overcoming challenges and building resilience. Throughout the week, students were encouraged to extend their thinking, collaborate with peers, solve problems and persevere beyond their comfort zones.

Before attending camp, students created their own "toolbox" of social and emotional strategies to support themselves and others during challenging moments. These strategies became an important part of the experience, helping students build confidence while encouraging one another through each activity.

Among the highlights were the flying fox, crate climb, raft building, shape scramble and beach games. Each activity required teamwork, communication and perseverance, while providing plenty of opportunities for students to challenge themselves in new ways.

One of the most memorable experiences was the flying fox challenge. Throughout the camp, students gradually built their confidence and developed strategies to prepare for the final leap. By the final day, excitement was high as students encouraged one another and put their growth mindset learning into practice before taking on the challenge.



Teachers were particularly impressed by the independence and resilience demonstrated throughout the week. Many students successfully overcame fears and challenges they had identified before camp, drawing on the strategies developed in their personal toolboxes. The experience brought the St John's Way to life, with students consistently supporting and encouraging one another through unfamiliar situations and demanding tasks.

Experiences such as Luther Heights provide valuable opportunities for students to apply classroom learning in meaningful, real-world settings. Through each challenge, students strengthened their teamwork, communication, perseverance, resilience and problem-solving skills. Most importantly, they experienced the satisfaction that comes from working through challenges and achieving personal goals.

Year 4 Camp remains an important milestone in the Junior School journey. Over the course of the week, students strengthened friendships, developed greater independence and created lasting memories while discovering just how capable they are when they embrace challenge and support one another.





Exploring Future Possibilities at the Careers Networking Breakfast

Students at St John's Anglican College had the opportunity to explore a wide range of future career possibilities at the annual Careers Networking Breakfast in Term 2, an event designed to connect students with professionals from a broad range of industries.



According to Head of Future Pathways, Ms Helen Clapham-Burns, the breakfast provides students with valuable insight into life beyond school and the many opportunities available after graduation.

"Having students speak with members of the community about their varied career journeys and providing real stories from people who have completed university or TAFE pathways is incredibly valuable," Ms Clapham-Burns said.

This year's event featured presenters from a diverse range of professions, including Health, Law, Engineering, Journalism, Education, Psychology, Politics, Science, Paramedicine, Trades, Law Enforcement, Defence and Sports Training.

A key focus of the breakfast is helping students understand that there is rarely a single route to a successful career.

"For students to see and understand that there are a variety of pathways to their career destinations," Ms Clapham-Burns said. "Planning is important, but being flexible and understanding that there are many different roles they may play throughout their working life is valuable knowledge to hold."

The impact of these conversations often extends well beyond the event itself.

"Recently, Mrs Youell told me a story about an Old Collegian she met while shopping at Bunnings," Ms Clapham-Burns said. "The student shared that she was now studying Engineering because Mr Youell had spoken at the Careers Breakfast the year before. That discussion opened her eyes to a pathway she had not previously considered."

"It is feedback like this that makes all the hard work of organising an event for 250

students and 30 presenters worthwhile. I love being able to help students explore the many opportunities available to them."

Over the years, the Careers Networking Breakfast has evolved into a highly interactive experience designed to encourage conversation and engagement.

"I have worked very deliberately to make this an informal and interactive experience for both students and presenters," Ms Clapham-Burns said. "Presenters move to a different group of students every 10 minutes, and in the final sessions, students can choose presenters they have not yet heard from."

"This approach transforms the experience from a passive one into an active and engaging morning filled with discussion, questions and shared experiences."

For Ms Clapham-Burns, the event reflects the broader vision of the College's Future Pathways Program.

"As Head of Future Pathways, my goal is that every student who graduates from St John's Anglican College feels they have meaningful options for their post-school journey," she said. "The Careers Networking Breakfast plays an important role in bringing those opportunities to life by connecting students with people who can share their experiences and insights."

By hearing first-hand stories from professionals across a wide range of industries, students gain a deeper understanding of the opportunities available to them and the confidence to explore futures they may never have previously considered.





Meet Mr Lambie:

Teacher, Mentor and Water Polo Champion



Our very own Mr Kyan Lambie is making waves both in and out of the classroom.

A dedicated Secondary Mathematics Teacher and accomplished water polo player, Kyan has represented at interstate and international competitions, earning back-to-back interstate titles. He brings the same passion, resilience and team spirit to his teaching, inspiring students to embrace new challenges and pursue their goals.

Can you share a little about your sporting background and achievements?

I've been playing water polo for the past seven years. I started as a rookie, completely new to the sport, and have gone on to compete in interstate and international competitions. My proudest achievement to date is winning back-to-back interstate titles two years in a row.

What first inspired you to become involved in sport?

I was really looking for a sense of community. It can be easy to get wrapped up in everyday life and lose sight of what we enjoy most. Water polo has given me that connection through making new friends and staying active and healthy.

What has been one of your proudest moments or highlights?

By far, the highlight has been travelling around Australia and overseas to play water polo with friends and meet new people. I'm most proud when I see new players develop and compete. I'm also looking forward to competing in Spain this June.

How has sport shaped you personally or professionally?

Personally, sport has helped me develop confidence and perseverance. If you can score goals while people are trying to drown you, you can do anything!

Professionally, the values of team sport are the same as those in education: communication, collaboration and commitment.

What advice would you give to students pursuing their own passions or goals?

Never be afraid to try something new and chase your goals. You can overcome anything you set your mind to. We are all constantly learning and growing, so enjoy the process.



Introducing Mrs Chelsea Manuel – Aquatic Centre Operations Manager

I started in the aquatics industry in 2009, but my journey really began as a competitive swimmer. I originally took on work experience at the pool because it fit around my training schedule. I could stay after morning sessions, work, and then be there again for afternoon training. What started as a matter of convenience quickly turned into my career.



Swimming played a huge role in shaping who I am. As a child, I struggled with anxiety, and the pool became a place where I found confidence, structure and a sense of identity. It taught me discipline, resilience, accountability and how to push through discomfort, all skills that have carried into every part of my life.

I committed fully to the sport in my early teens and started to see success. By 15, I was competing at Commonwealth Games trials, and by 17, I had competed at Olympic trials. Along the way, I won multiple Queensland State Championships in Breaststroke across both long course and short course events and competed at National Championships every year from the age of 13. All of this came while balancing school, work and up to 12 training sessions each week, so hard work is something I have always been comfortable with.

What I loved most about swimming, however, was not just the results; it was the people. One moment that has always stayed with me was at a Queensland State Championship final. I was racing alongside my best friend, who was chasing a national qualifying time, while I was aiming for a podium finish. When I touched the wall, I turned straight to the scoreboard, not to check my result, but to see if she had qualified. I did not even realise I had won my first state title until everyone started calling my name.

That moment sums up swimming for me. It is an individual sport, but it feels like a team sport. You experience each other's wins and losses, and you grow together.

When I retired from competitive swimming, moving into full-time swim teaching felt natural. I quickly realised it was not just about swimming; it was about developing young people. Whether a child goes on to compete or not, they gain life skills such as resilience, accountability, respect, discipline and learning how to handle both success and failure. That impact has always been important to me.

From there, I worked my way through the industry, from lifeguard to supervisor and eventually Learn to Swim Coordinator. I was fortunate to have a strong mentor early in my career who encouraged me into leadership and helped me see potential in myself before I could see it.

Later, I moved to Cairns and joined Marlin Coast Swimming and Fitness, where I progressed into the role of Operations Manager, overseeing eight facilities across four local government areas. That is where I really discovered my passion for the operational side of aquatics: water quality, plant room operations and maintenance, staff management, training, and building safe, high-functioning environments.

What brought me to this role was a combination of timing and opportunity. I wanted to move closer to family, and when I saw the chance to be part of a brand-new aquatic facility within a school, it immediately stood out. Opportunities to start with a blank canvas are rare, and I was drawn to the chance to build something meaningful from the ground up while being part of a strong community.

What excites you most about joining our school community?

For me, it is the opportunity to be part of something from the beginning and genuinely contribute to the culture of the school. There is a real chance to shape how aquatics fits within the College from day one. That is exciting because we can build strong foundations, not just in programs, but in how students feel about being in and around the water.

I also value the connection that comes with a school environment. You are part of something bigger than just a facility, and creating a space where students feel safe, supported and motivated is something I find incredibly rewarding.

Why do you think swimming and water safety are so important for students?

In Australia, swimming and water safety are not optional; they are essential.

We grow up around water, whether it is pools, beaches or rivers. While water is a significant part of our lifestyle, it also comes with real risks. Drowning remains one of the leading causes of accidental death in children, and in many cases, it is preventable.

What drives me is knowing that every skill a child learns adds another layer of protection. No one is ever completely drown-proof, but teaching a child how to roll, float, hold onto a wall or call for help can genuinely save their life.

Beyond safety, swimming builds confidence and capability. Even if a student never pursues the sport competitively, the process of learning, facing challenges and improving over time has a lasting impact. We are not just teaching children how to swim; we are shaping how they approach challenges in life.

What are you most looking forward to introducing or developing in the aquatic program?

I am looking forward to building a clear pathway for students, from their first experience in the water through to squad and performance levels.

I want it to be a program where students can start young and continue progressing without needing to leave. That means strong foundations in learn-to-swim programs, consistent teaching standards and an environment that keeps students engaged over the long term.

With Stage 1, the focus is on getting the fundamentals right: quality lessons, clear progression and a welcoming environment. Then, with Stage 2, there is a real opportunity to expand into a high-performance space and take the program to another level.

Ultimately, I want the Aquatic Centre to be a place where students do not just learn to swim but develop a genuine connection to the sport.

What are your goals for the aquatic centre moving forward?

My goal is to build a program and facility that people genuinely want to be part of.

That starts with creating an environment where students feel comfortable, supported and motivated to improve, regardless of their ability level. It also means building a strong team that takes pride in what they do and consistently delivers high standards.

From an operational perspective, I want the facility to operate at a high level: safe, efficient and well-maintained. What happens behind the scenes is just as important as what happens in the water.

More importantly, when I look back on my childhood, my best memories are from being at the pool, laughing with friends, pushing through challenging training sessions and achieving things I never thought possible. That environment shaped who I am.

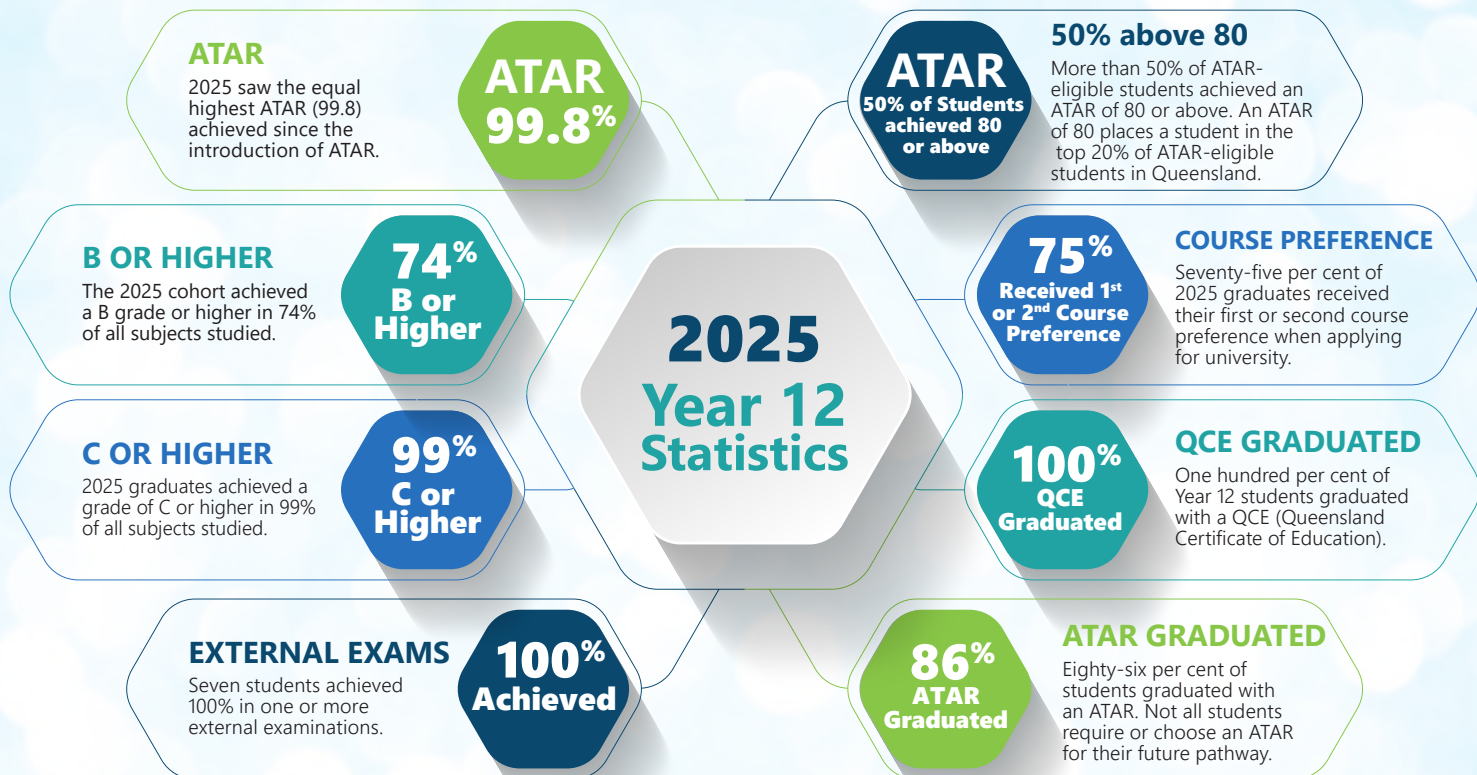
I want to create that for the next generation. I want this to be a place where students build confidence, form friendships, challenge themselves and, years later, still remember what it gave them. Because if we get that right, we are not just teaching swimming; we are helping shape young people with skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

Supporting the future of St John's



The future of St John's Anglican College is strengthened by the generosity of our community. Contributions from current and past parents, Old Collegians and supporters help strengthen learning environments, enhance facilities and create opportunities for students, now and into the future.

The Aquatic Precinct is currently under construction and will include a state-of-the-art learning hub with nine classrooms and flexible learning spaces, along with a heated indoor program pool supporting learn-to-swim from babies through to Junior School students. A future phase will include an Olympic-sized 10-lane swimming pool, spectator grandstand and amenities.



Some Statistics – All Year Levels

Note: Grade data is not calculated below Year 4.

Eighty-two per cent of students in Years 4–12 achieved a GPA of B- or above in 2025.

Years 4-12

More than 95% of St John's Anglican College students in Years 4–12 could be described as thriving academically.

Less than 2% of students in Years 4–12 were identified as being academically at risk (achieving a grade of C- or lower in three or more subjects).

55%
of St John's Anglican College students spoke a language other than English at home in 2025.

56
different languages and dialects
were spoken across the College community.

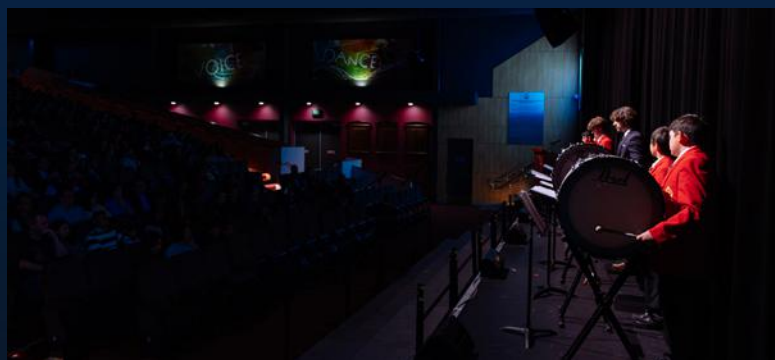
Emerge Showcase Celebrates the Next Generation of Performers

The annual Emerge Showcase provided an opportunity for some of St John's emerging musicians to share their talents with family and friends, celebrating the progress, commitment and enjoyment that comes from participation in the Performing Arts.

Featuring students from the College's junior and developing ensembles, the evening showcased a wide range of musical styles and performance experiences. Audiences enjoyed performances from Drumline, Capriccio Choir, Corelli Strings, Bellissimo Strings, the Year 6 Concert Band, String Ensemble and Wind Ensemble.

One of the highlights of the evening was Capriccio Choir, the College's largest Performing Arts ensemble. With almost 90 students from Years 1 to 3, the choir provides young singers with opportunities to develop music-reading skills, rhythm, harmony and confidence while performing as part of a group.

Drumline opened the showcase with two energetic performances, demonstrating the ensemble's continued growth as students take on increasingly challenging repertoire. The Year 6 Concert Band embraced a rock theme, with every student featured through solo moments across the performance.



The String Ensemble delighted audiences with a preview of next year's College musical through a performance of *Beauty and the Beast*, while the Wind Ensemble shared a sample of its recent participation in Megaband 2026, where more than 500 students from 16 schools combined to form Australia's largest school-aged band.

The Emerge Showcase highlighted the many pathways available within the College's Performing Arts program and reflected the confidence, skill and enthusiasm being developed by the next generation of St John's performers.



Performing with Purpose

Our Performing Arts students bring creativity, dedication and courage to every rehearsal and performance. We sat down with some of these talented young performers to learn more about what inspires them, the moments they are most proud of, and the advice they would share with others pursuing their passions.

Ciara Lewis

Can you outline some of your performing arts achievements and highlights during your time at St John's?

My most significant performing arts achievements during my time at St John's include receiving the Senior Performing Arts Award in 2025 and being selected as Choir Captain for 2026. These accomplishments made me incredibly proud, particularly knowing that my name is engraved on the Senior Performing Arts Award plaque alongside many talented students who came before me.

A major highlight for me was being involved in the Academy of Music Production and its annual Battle of the Bands. It was amazing to see students come together and apply their musical skills, creativity, critical thinking and organisation to produce polished and highly enjoyable performances within a short timeframe.

What first inspired you to get involved in Performing Arts?

My involvement in Performing Arts began when I started piano lessons in Year 7. As my passion for music grew, I also took up cello lessons in Year 9 and taught myself to play the saxophone to broaden my skills as a musician. I was encouraged by my teachers and mentors to join various ensembles, including dance, which helped me develop my confidence and musicianship. Through these experiences, I also discovered a passion for composition, and I am now fortunate to be working with a local professional orchestra on my original music.

Can you tell us about a school performance, production or event that was especially memorable for you?

The Interschool Battle of the Bands in 2025 was a particularly memorable experience for me. After placing second in the intraschool competition, my band, The Afterburners, earned the opportunity to perform against

bands from other schools on our stage. Performing in front of such a large audience was both exciting and rewarding, and it was inspiring to witness the high standard of musicianship across all participating groups. It strengthened our bond as a band and created memories that I will always look back on fondly.

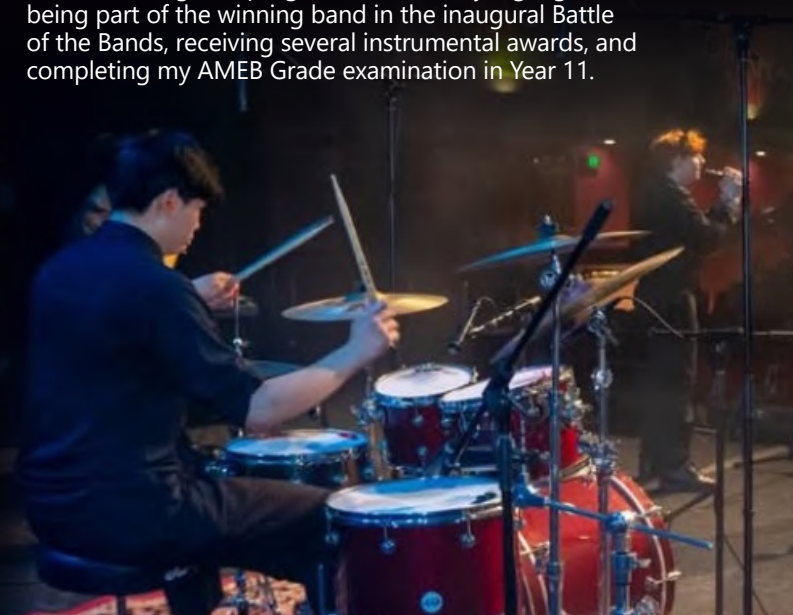
How has being involved in Performing Arts at school helped you grow as a person?

Being involved in Performing Arts has helped me grow in confidence both on and off the stage. Through rehearsals, performances and leadership opportunities, I have developed stronger communication, teamwork and organisational skills. It has also taught me resilience and discipline, and that making mistakes is a crucial part of learning and growth. Most importantly, Performing Arts has allowed me to form meaningful friendships and be part of a supportive community that has shaped my experience at St John's.

Hou Meng Lei

Can you outline some of your performing arts achievements and highlights during your time at St John's?

At St John's, I have been fortunate to be heavily involved in the Performing Arts program. Some of my highlights include being part of the winning band in the inaugural Battle of the Bands, receiving several instrumental awards, and completing my AMEB Grade examination in Year 11.



The College's music program also encouraged me to seek performance opportunities beyond school, including performing at Queen Street Mall with the Young Conservatorium Jazz Combo, at the Jazz Music Institute with the Talkin' Jazz Big Band, and at various other performances across both Macau and Brisbane.

What first inspired you to get involved in Performing Arts?

I was first inspired to become involved in Performing Arts through playing with bands and other like-minded musicians in Macau who shared a passion for music. It was there that I was introduced to jazz and a variety of fusion genres, which sparked my interest in exploring different styles of performance.

What do you love most about being involved in our Performing Arts program?

I love the sense of community that comes with being involved in the St John's Performing Arts program. Through AMP and various ensembles, I have made some of my closest friends and have been fortunate to receive valuable guidance from teachers who are genuinely passionate about what they do.

Can you tell us about a school performance, production or event that was especially memorable for you?

The inaugural Battle of the Bands last year was a particularly memorable experience because it gave me the opportunity to perform in a large-scale, professional-style environment. It was also a great chance to connect with students from other schools and make new friends.

How has being involved in Performing Arts at school helped you grow as a person?

Through Performing Arts, I have developed valuable skills such as self-discipline and effective practice habits. Most importantly, however, it has taught me the importance of communication. As a drummer, performing is never a solo act, and through the many performance opportunities available to me, I have gained a deeper understanding of how to collaborate and interact musically with others.



A Remarkable Year of Performance Excellence for Nève Wintersgill

We proudly acknowledge the outstanding achievements of Year 12 student and Performing Arts Prefect for 2026, Nève Wintersgill, who has enjoyed an exceptionally successful performance season.

A highlight of her journey included the exciting opportunity to perform and spend time with Bluey and bingo at Bluey's world, a special and memorable experience that showcased her talent within one of Brisbane's most famous homes.

She was also selected to perform as part of the Bluey's World Christmas Choir at the Lord Mayor's Christmas Carols 2025, a prestigious event showcasing Brisbane's finest performers. Throughout the Christmas period, she further demonstrated professionalism, resilience, and artistic excellence by performing nightly over two weeks in King George Square at Queen Street Mall, engaging large public audiences in a high-profile performance setting.

In recognition of her dedication and potential, she was offered a place for her second year in the QAEMT Musical Theatre Pre-Tertiary Program with Griffith University, a highly regarded program supporting emerging performers at an advanced level of musical theatre.

Most recently, she was invited to perform at a traditional Scottish Burns Night celebration on Bribie Island, highlighting her versatility and confidence across diverse cultural and performance experiences.

These achievements reflect not only Nève's exceptional talent, but also her commitment, work ethic, and leadership within the performing arts. We congratulate her on these remarkable accomplishments and look forward to seeing her continue to shine in 2026.



Why Kindness Isn't Soft, It's the Smartest Thing You Can Do

In nearly three decades of working with young Australians, teenagers battling cancer, young people spiralling through anxiety, parents at their wits' end at midnight, the single most underrated psychological tool I've encountered isn't a medication, a therapy protocol, or a bestselling app. It's kindness. Plain, old-fashioned, roll-up-your-sleeves kindness.

We've somehow convinced ourselves that kindness is soft. A bit soppy. Something you do when you can afford to. But the science tells a radically different story, and it's time Australians started paying attention.

Here's what the research actually shows. When you perform an act of kindness, your brain releases a cocktail of feel-good neurochemicals: serotonin, dopamine, and oxytocin. Serotonin stabilises your mood. Dopamine gives you that warm glow of reward. Oxytocin, sometimes called

the "bonding hormone", lowers blood pressure and reduces cortisol, the stress chemical that, left unchecked, slowly wrecks your cardiovascular system. In other words, being kind to someone is genuinely good for your physical health. Researchers call this the "helper's high," and it's as real as any runner's equivalent.

Dr David Hamilton, a former pharmaceutical scientist who has spent years studying the biology of kindness, goes even further. In his research, Hamilton identifies what he calls the

"molecules of kindness", oxytocin and nitric oxide, and their remarkable effects on the body. When we act with genuine kindness, oxytocin is released into our arteries, where it triggers the production of nitric oxide, a molecule that helps regulate blood pressure by altering the texture of arterial walls, dilating them and improving circulation throughout the body, including the brain. Put simply: a kind act is, at a cellular level, a cardiovascular workout.

But wait, it gets better. Research now shows that the oxytocin we produce through emotional warmth reduces levels of free radicals and inflammation in the cardiovascular system, two of the key drivers of ageing and heart disease. Hamilton also points to compelling evidence that practitioners of loving-kindness meditation have longer telomeres than non-practitioners, and telomeres are closely linked with how fast the body ages, with shorter telomeres associated with accelerated ageing. In other words, habitual kindness may actually slow down the clock. I don't know about you, but that's the most affordable anti-ageing strategy I've ever come across.

And there's more. When we're kind, we inspire others to be kind, and research shows this creates a ripple effect that spreads outwards to our friends' friends' friends, up to three degrees of separation. Hamilton illustrates this with a remarkable real-world example: a single anonymous kidney donation set off a chain reaction across the United



States in which ten people ultimately received a new kidney. Just one act of generosity, rippling outward.

Studies out of the University of British Columbia found that performing acts of kindness measurably reduced social anxiety in participants. Other research has shown that people who volunteer regularly live longer, report higher life satisfaction, and are significantly less likely to suffer from depression. The psychologist Sonja Lyubomirsky, one of the world's leading researchers in positive psychology, has spent decades demonstrating that kind acts are among the most reliably effective ways to boost personal happiness, more effective, it turns out, than buying yourself something nice.

And here's the kicker: the person witnessing an act of kindness gets a boost too. Psychologists call this "elevation", that warm, chest-expanding feeling you get when you see someone help an old man pick up his shopping, or watch a teenager give up their seat on the tram. It motivates prosocial behaviour in observers. Kindness, it turns out, is genuinely contagious.

So why on earth aren't we teaching this more deliberately? I spend a lot of time in Australian schools, and I can tell you there's been a welcome push toward social-emotional learning. But too often, kindness is treated as a soft add-on, a poster on a wall, a feel-good assembly speech. What we need is to treat it like literacy. A core skill. Something practised, modelled, and celebrated daily.

Because here's what three decades of clinical work has taught me: children who are taught to notice others, to act generously, and to build empathy don't just become nicer people. They become more psychologically resilient. They have stronger friendships, better conflict resolution skills, and a more stable sense of identity. Kindness is, in the most literal neurological sense, scaffolding for a healthy mind.

And this isn't just for kids. Australia, Japan, the UK, we're all in the grip

of a loneliness epidemic, one that predates COVID but was dramatically worsened by it. We have record rates of anxiety, depression, and social disconnection. GPs are overwhelmed. Mental health waitlists are growing. There is no magic bullet. But there is a freely available, zero-cost, scientifically validated intervention that every single one of us can deploy today, without a prescription or a referral.

Say something genuine to your neighbour. Let the car in during morning peak. Put a positive note in your kid's lunchbox. Call your mate who went quiet six months ago. These aren't trivial gestures, they are acts of psychological maintenance, for you and for them.

I want to be clear: I'm not asking anyone to be a pushover. Kindness is not the same as being a psychological doormat. Healthy boundaries matter. But there is an enormous amount of

real estate between being a doormat and being the person who cuts in the queue, snaps at the barista, or scrolls past a friend's cry for help. Most of us live somewhere in that space and could nudge ourselves a few degrees warmer without any great cost.

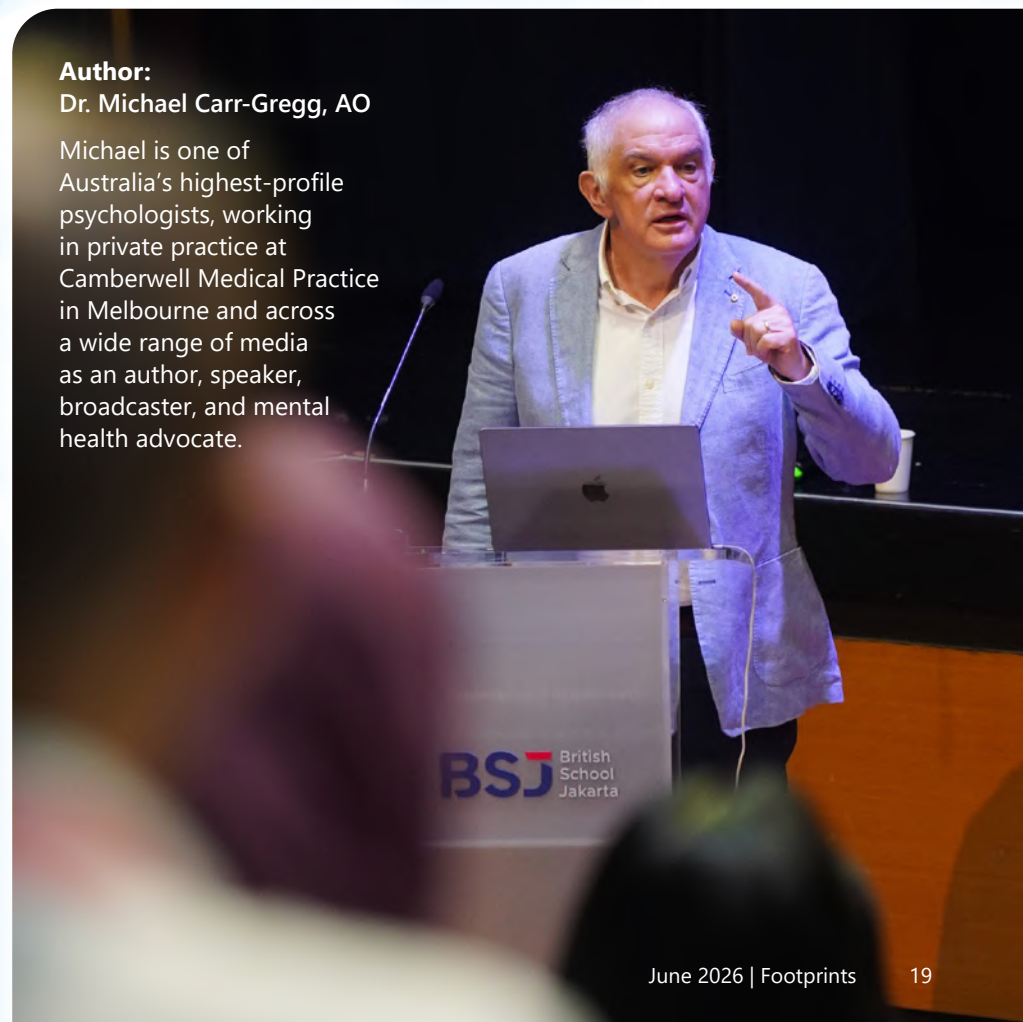
Eleanor Roosevelt, not a psychologist, but no fool, once said that no one can make you feel inferior without your consent. I'd add a corollary: no one can stop you from being kind. It's one of the few things in this chaotic world entirely within your control.

The mental health crisis in this country is real and serious. It demands government action, better funding, and systemic reform. All of that is true. But while we wait for the cavalry, kindness is available right now, free of charge, with scientific backing and zero side effects. Use it. I think I'll go buy the receptionist at my office a coffee.

Author:

Dr. Michael Carr-Gregg, AO

Michael is one of Australia's highest-profile psychologists, working in private practice at Camberwell Medical Practice in Melbourne and across a wide range of media as an author, speaker, broadcaster, and mental health advocate.



Celebrating **Mother's Day** Across Our Community



Mother's Day was marked across both campuses at St John's Anglican College through two well-supported events that brought students, families and special guests together.

The Junior School *Coffee and Connect* offered mothers and special mother figures a relaxed way to begin the day alongside their student. Over coffee and a light breakfast, families shared time before classes commenced, while

students enjoyed a Mother's Day colouring activity and created something meaningful to take home.

Our annual *Mother's Day High Tea*, held in the Performing Arts Centre of Excellence, provided another opportunity to recognise and celebrate the mothers and mother figures who play such an important part in the lives of our students. Guests were welcomed with roaming canapés before enjoying a beautifully presented high tea in a warm and inviting setting.



Anglicare

Southern Queensland

Both gatherings were warmly received and highlighted the sense of belonging and shared spirit that sits at the heart of St John's.

Alongside the celebrations, families also supported an important cause. Raffles held across both events raised \$1,000 for Anglicare's Youth Homelessness Accommodation Project.

We were grateful to welcome guest speaker Zareena Rajan, Relationship Manager – Corporate and Community, Mission, Research and Advocacy at Anglicare, who spoke about the growing need for youth homelessness accommodation and the difference community support can make in the lives of vulnerable young people.

Thank you to all families and supporters who attended and contributed. Your generosity helped ensure these Mother's Day events were not only a celebration, but also an opportunity to support young people in need.





Welcoming Millfield: A Global Exchange at St John's

Earlier this year, St John's welcomed five students from Millfield School in Somerset, England, as part of the 2026 Global Exchange Program.

Over four weeks, the visiting students were immersed in Australian life, attending classes at St John's and experiencing the warmth and hospitality of our community. Hosted by St John's families, they quickly became part of everyday life, sharing meals, participating in family routines and joining weekend adventures across Brisbane and Queensland.

For the St John's students involved, the exchange provided an opportunity to step into the role of mentor and ambassador. They supported their Millfield partners as they navigated a new school environment, helping them understand timetables, routines and campus life while introducing them to the traditions and values that make St John's unique.

The program highlighted that some of the most meaningful cultural learning happens in ordinary moments: chatting over dinner, travelling to and from school together, exploring local attractions and building friendships through shared experiences.

"What is most meaningful about the Global Exchange Program is watching students move from uncertainty to confidence as they immerse themselves in a completely different environment," said Ms Alysia Thomas, our Global and Service Learning Coordinator

"Through everyday interactions, new challenges and shared experiences, they do not just learn about another culture; they learn how to navigate unfamiliar situations with resilience, independence and growing confidence."

The Global Exchange Program continues to foster curiosity, empathy and connection, encouraging students to view the world through a broader lens. Through opportunities such as these, lifelong friendships are formed, perspectives are





MILLFIELD

DISCOVER BRILLIANCE

expanded, and students develop a deeper appreciation for the diverse communities that shape our global society.

We look forward to continuing this valued partnership with Millfield School and to the many opportunities it provides for students to learn, grow and connect beyond the classroom.



Reconnect. Revisit. Celebrate.

Old Collegians Reunion Weekend

Saturday 7 November 2026

St John's Anglican College warmly invites all Old Collegians to return to campus for a special Reunion Weekend celebrating the connections, memories and community that continue long after graduation.

Hosted in collaboration with the Old Collegians' Association and Principal Mrs Maria McIvor, this event is open to alumni from all graduating years since the commencement of the College. We encourage Old Collegians to reconnect with classmates and share this invitation with friends from their year level and wider networks.

The afternoon will begin with a guided College Tour, offering the opportunity to revisit familiar spaces, reconnect with former staff and friends, and experience the growth of the College, including a visit to the nearly completed Swimming Precinct.



College Tour

Location: St John's Anglican College, Forest Lake

Schedule

- 3.00 pm – Tour begins
- 4.00 pm – Light refreshments
- 4.45 pm – Event concludes

A complimentary bus will depart following the tour to transport guests to the evening event at Chu The Phat, South Brisbane.

This portion of the event is complimentary; however, registrations are essential for catering purposes.

Evening Networking Event

Continue the evening with fellow Old Collegians as we reconnect, build networks and celebrate the shared experiences that continue to shape our community.

Time: 5.30 pm

Location: Chu The Phat, 111 Melbourne Street, South Brisbane

Ticket Inclusions

Five canapés and one substantial item. Drink on arrival

Ticket Prices

\$55 Old Collegian Ticket
\$65 Partner Ticket



Register to Attend

Registrations for all events close on **10 October 2026.**

We look forward to welcoming you back to St John's to reconnect with classmates, revisit cherished memories and celebrate our Old Collegians community.





Strengthening Anglican Connections Across the Philippines and Australia

Reverend Juliana Bate | College Chaplain

One of the beautiful things about being Anglican is our global connection through the Anglican Communion. Present in more than 165 countries, the Anglican Communion is expressed through parishes, medical facilities, and schools around the world.

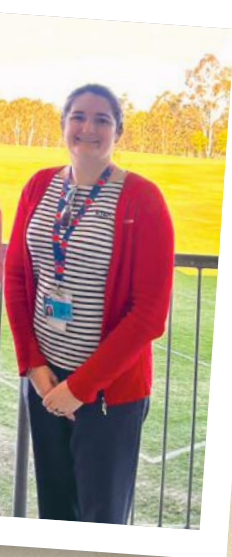
In 2025, I was fortunate to visit the Philippines with the Anglican Board of Mission and make connections with a number of Episcopal and Anglican schools in the region. One school I visited was St Paul's Memorial School (SPMSK), located in Balbalasang, Kalinga. The school stands as a living memorial to local soldiers who gave their lives during World War II.

This remote boarding high school is nestled among the mountains, with the Saltan River flowing through the village. This clean and crystal-clear river provides fishing opportunities for eels and crabs, while its deep, cool pools offer a place where the school's approximately 100 students swim during the summer months. Although its idyllic and remote setting differs greatly from our own, both schools share

a commitment to Christian education, strong values, and nurturing communities that support and encourage young people.

During last year's visit, it became clear that chaplains in the Philippines would welcome additional support and professional development opportunities. It was suggested that a chaplaincy exchange program be established between the Episcopal Church in the Philippines (ECP), the Anglican Board of Mission (ABM), and the Anglican Church Southern Queensland (ACSQ), enabling chaplains from the Philippines to visit Anglican schools and chaplains here in Brisbane. Just over a year later, St John's has had the privilege of hosting some of the first visiting chaplains from the Philippines.

Of the seven visiting chaplains, three were people with whom I had connected and whose schools and universities I visited last year. We had the privilege of hosting two younger chaplains who are just beginning their ministry. Sunshine Gallebo from SPMSK was appointed chaplain to the school in 2026 and is expected to be ordained as a deacon this June. The Rev'd Grace Pagipag, formerly a high school teacher, is the Assistant to the Integrated Mission Office of the Diocese of Central Philippines. Rev'd Grace has particular responsibility



for lay (non-ordained) programs and organisations within the diocese and is currently working to develop a national curriculum for Christian education in ECP schools.

Both Sunshine and Rev'd Grace joined us on the Junior Campus as we celebrated the admission of several students to Holy Communion. They also attended our Middle School Chapel service and met with staff and students to discuss ways Australian Anglican schools can collaborate with Episcopal / Anglican schools in the Philippines.

The visiting chaplains also spent time in other Anglican schools and accompanied

our Chapel Prefects to the annual Loaves and Fishes lunch held at the Cathedral, where we heard from Queensland Human Rights Commissioner Debbie Platz APM and speakers representing MND and ME, for whom funds were being raised.

While the differences between our schools are immediately apparent, there are also many striking similarities. Comparatively, we occupy a much larger campus, have significantly more buildings and resources, and offer students a broader range of subject choices. Yet the desire of students to learn, the sacrifices families make to provide educational opportunities for their children, and the aspirations of young people to pursue tertiary education and follow their passions are every bit as strong in both communities.

Interestingly, SPMSK is one of the few schools in the region that offers classes in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), meaning its graduates complete high school with valuable computer literacy skills. However, while our students have the benefit of individual devices, students at SPMSK share laptops throughout their high school journey.

Likewise, the dedication, compassion, and commitment of educators and support staff to help young people flourish and achieve their potential are equally evident in both schools. Perhaps most importantly, we share a deep understanding that community is essential to the life of a school. It is through strong relationships, shared values, and a commitment to supporting one another that schools become places where young people can truly thrive.

Importantly, the chaplains developed a strategic plan for strengthening chaplaincy, wellbeing, and Anglican identity across ECP schools and universities. These connections remind us that, despite the distance between our communities, we are united through our faith, our vocation as educators, and our shared hope for the young people entrusted to our care.

The opportunity to learn from one another and strengthen these relationships is a blessing, and we look forward to continuing this partnership in the years ahead.

SAVE^{THE}DATE

SEMESTER 2 KEY DATES

**Senior College
Foundation Day
Assembly**

Thursday 06/08/2026

**Junior School
Foundation Assembly**

Friday 07/08/2026

**Junior School Fancy
Dress Ball**

Friday 07/08/2026

**Middle & Senior School
Open Morning**

27/08/2026

**Coffee & Connect -
Father's Day**

Thursday 03/09/2026

Dance Night

Friday 04/09/2026

Year 12 Formal

Monday 21/09/26

PACE Awards Jazz Night

Friday 16/10/2026

Sports Awards Evening

Monday 19/10/2026

**Kindergarten / Prep
Group Tour**

Thursday 22/10/2026

**Junior School College
Creations**

Friday 23/10/2026

**Senior School College
Creations**

Friday 23/10/2026

**Middle and Senior
School Group Tour**

Tuesday 27/10/2026

Year 12 Parent Lunch

Friday 13/11/2026

Prep - Year Two YOC

Tuesday 17/11/2026

**Year 12 Valedictory
Service**

Wednesday 18/11/2026

**Year 12 Valedictory
Dinner**

Wednesday 18/11/2026

Year 12 Retreat

Thursday 19/11/2026

**Year 12 Graduation
Ceremony**

Friday 20/11/2026

**YRs 3-11 Christmas
Chapel**

Tuesday 24/11/2026

**Years 10-11 Year of
Celebration**

Wednesday 25/11/2026

**Year 3- 6 Year of
Celebration**

Thursday 26/11/2026

**Years 7-9 Year of
Celebration**

Thursday 26/11/2026



ST JOHN'S

Anglican College

St John's Anglican College

Junior School

Kindergarten to Year 6

Alpine Place, Forest Lake QLD 4078

07 3372 0888

Middle and Senior School

Years 7 to 12

College Avenue, Forest Lake QLD 4078

07 3372 0111

PO Box 4078 Forest Lake QLD 4078

ABN 14 060 936 576 CRICOS Provider #01406C

stjohnsanglicancollege.com.au

Connect with Us



Every care has been taken to ensure the information in this booklet is correct at the time of publication. The producers accept no responsibility for any errors, omissions or changes leading to such information being incorrect. This booklet provides general information only and may be subject to change at any time without notice.

