



# Annual Report

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# The Heathdale Story

*The Heathdale community welcomed its first students on the 10th of February in 1982 and has been providing authentic Christian education to families in the western suburbs of Melbourne ever since. Our educational approach is rooted in the Word of God and focuses on nurturing the whole child—academically, spiritually, physically and emotionally. This fundamental belief shapes our College's identity and helps each child thrive from a Christ-centred perspective.*

We value the partnership between parents and the school, fostering a love of learning and curiosity throughout each student's educational journey. As students grow into young adults, we aim to develop their deep understanding and wisdom.

Our goal is to instil Christian values such as integrity, honesty, respect, love, honour and truth, all which inspire students to discover their God-given potential and serve both locally and globally.

At Heathdale, a student's learning journey can begin in Kindergarten and continue through to Year 12. We offer a wide range of subjects and robust learning programs that encourage excellence in all areas of life. The early years focus on building a strong foundation in literacy, numeracy, science, and humanities. In early secondary school, students explore various subjects, learn up to three languages, participate in sports for personal growth and competition, study science, maths, creative and visual arts, embrace leadership opportunities, and engage in community service. This diverse curriculum leads to one of the most extensive selections of subjects for VCE, VCE VM and VET in the western suburbs. Our aim is to empower students to achieve outstanding results and feel confident as they move forward in their life's journey. With this solid educational platform, we provide each student with a unique pathway beyond school.

By August 2024, we had grown to 2332 students (Kinder to Year 12) across our Melton and Werribee campuses. The College's Federal Government's Direct Measure of Income (DMI) model, calculated Heathdale's capacity to contribute (CTC) score as 100.



*Thriving* in God's Grace

**In 2024, our Melton campus celebrated its 10th anniversary.**

At Heathdale, we deeply desire that everyone learns and thrives in the grace God has shown us — both individually and as a school community. We continue to build on the legacy of those who have gone before us, who have faithfully served at Heathdale for over 40 years in Werribee, and now for 10 years in Melton

This is echoed in Colossians 2:6-7, which says:

*“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught and overflowing with thankfulness.”*



# Annual Report 2024

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# Board Chair Report

**Matt Wilson**, Board Chair



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Over the past 10 years,  
Melton has blossomed into a  
vibrant campus...

**A**s we reflect on another year at Heathdale Christian College, we are reminded of the strength of being one community that spans across two thriving campuses. The heart of our school's mission—to nurture and develop each child's God-given potential—remains central in both our Werribee and Melton communities. And as we look back over how that unfolded across both campuses, there is a rich diversity to the stories we celebrate.

In celebrating 10 Years in Melton in 2024, we recognised that the history of our Melton campus is another reminder of how God continues to guide Heathdale's path. When the previous school at the Melton campus, Mowbray College, closed its doors, it left a profound emotional toll on the local community. Families and students were left searching for a new beginning. In response, Heathdale Christian College took a leap of faith, acquiring the site and reopening its doors in 2014. This decision was not made lightly; it was born out of a deep sense of calling from the Board and leadership at the time, who demonstrated a deep commitment to providing Christ-centred education for families of the West. We honoured that legacy during our celebrations, as well as those who came before and since.

Over the past 10 years, Melton has blossomed into a vibrant campus, now home to over 500 students, and a place where academic excellence and spiritual growth flourish hand in hand.

2024 marked a major milestone for Melton with the introduction of VCE and the anticipation of our first Year 12 graduating class in 2025. This growth reflects God's faithfulness and the dedication of staff, students and families.

Although our campuses have unique geographical and cultural expressions, they form one community that is of the same essence, committed to fostering each student's holistic growth. I want to thank our Executive Principal, Ross Grace, our senior leadership team and all our staff for their efforts to continue to deliver on our Christ-centred mission. I also want to thank every parent for their partnership. Together, we continue to support our students as they grow into the people God created them to be.



# Executive Principal's Perspective

**Ross Grace**, Executive Principal

**L**ooking back on 2024, I'm reminded of how each year as winter moves into spring, subtle changes begin to take place. At first almost imperceptible but gradually unfolding until the new season bursts forth in full colour.

Tesselaar's Tulip Farm in Silvan is a well-known springtime landmark. Each year, it draws thousands who come to marvel at the rows upon rows of vibrant tulips—flowers of every colour, size and shape stretching across the fields. Yet this incredible display doesn't happen overnight. It is the result of quiet, consistent work: preparing the soil, planting bulbs, and tending the garden through the seasons.

In many ways, 2024 at Heathdale Christian College unfolded in the same way: small shifts, steady effort, and the blossoming of something beautiful across both our Melton and Werribee campuses.

Towards the end of the year, as I walked through our grounds and classrooms, I was struck by the life and energy that filled our learning spaces. I found myself reflecting on what these places once were. Forty-five years ago, Werribee was still open paddocks, and the road outside was a single-lane dirt track. Fifteen years ago, the Melton site was a long-abandoned campus, marked by graffiti and neglect. Ten years ago, just sixty students and four staff came together to begin something new in Melton, and in 2024, that campus flourished with 500 students and 45 staff, all preparing to offer Year 12 in 2025.

The transformation has been nothing short of remarkable. What were once overlooked spaces became thriving, vibrant learning communities. Places families actively sought for a Christ-centred education, and students were proud to call their own.

But just like Tesselaar's tulips, none of this came about by chance. It was the fruit of faithful and sustained effort of teachers, support staff, leaders, parents and students alike. Each person played their part in building something lasting, and we remained deeply grateful for those who laid the foundations. We truly stood on their shoulders.

I was reminded of Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 3:16, when he wrote of how the early Church grew: "One planted, another watered, but God caused the growth." That was true of our story too. While people came and went over the decades, God's goodness, enabling, and faithfulness remained constant. He was the one who caused the growth.

In 2024, we celebrated 10 years of the Melton campus. We broke ground on exciting new developments at Werribee. We continued to shape young lives through Christ-centred learning, supported by a dedicated and growing team. And we rejoiced in all that God had done and was continuing to do.

I invite you to join the Board, Senior Leadership Team and I in giving thanks to God for the year we had—for His unfailing faithfulness, for the growth He caused and for the hope we carry into the future because of Him.

Each person played  
their part in building  
something lasting...

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# Strategic Directions

Our College Board has developed five key pillars that outline an agile and flexible approach to our College's Strategic Directions for 2020-2035.

Nurturing Christian culture and identity

Leading the education of tomorrow

Developing vibrant and purposeful spaces

Thriving communities

Growing for our future





# Nurturing Christian culture and identity

**Our strong Christian foundation and identity is evident in our community's story. This will not be taken for granted but nurtured and grown as the College's presence grows in the community.**

- Further developing and articulating a distinct identity through engagement with stakeholders.
- Embracing a culture of collaboration with other Christian learning communities and organisations.
- Continuing to develop a strong and comprehensive pastoral care program for students and staff to nurture wellbeing, anchored in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Fostering a cohesive Christian staff community that encourages professional development opportunities and supports personal and collective spiritual growth.

# College Captains' Q&A

**Getadegu Gebremichael & Chloe Zimmerman**, College Captain

**Michael Lozanovski & Endria Ang**, College Vice Captain

At Heathdale, it is a blessing to see our students flourish in their God-given potential. One of the ways we have the privilege of seeing this has been through our Captains expanding their leadership capacity. A few of our Captains participated in a Q&A to give us an insight into what their experience of 2024.

**L-r: Michael, Geta, Chloe & Endria**



## What goal did you set for yourself at the beginning of the year, and how did you achieve it?

At the start of the year, I mentioned that I wanted to connect with younger students during lunch or class time, lead devotions for each year level, explore ways to engage with older students and share God's love through everything I do. I helped with the Year 1s a few times, sitting in their class and assisting with their work, spelling and activities. I also joined them at lunch and recess, playing games like 'Duck, Duck, Goose' and tag! **Chloe**

At the beginning of the year, I wanted to make the year more enjoyable for everyone and to bring the school closer together as a community. We worked on bringing year levels closer to each other by going down to the Primary area and playing downball with the younger kids, as well as giving devotions across multiple year levels. We also aimed to make this year especially enjoyable for the Year 12s, as it was our final year. We helped achieve this by running a few games at our Year 12 camp and planning additional activities for the Year 12s during a wellbeing session. **Michael**

## How has being part of a Christian educational community at Heathdale shaped you personally?

Being a part of a Christian educational community was honestly a blessing. In my experience, Heathdale was always a safe haven from many worldly influences that could have completely changed my character. I was able to look up to and learn from my teachers through their example, whether it was their reliance on prayer or their devotion. **Geta**

One example that shaped me was 'Lunch with Jesus,' where a group of Year 11 and 12 students came together for a weekly lunch on Wednesdays and a student or teacher would lead a Bible study or conversation about the Word of God. It was really exciting at the start to see a large influx of students. It provided an open space for believers and those who had not yet decided, to come, hang out, chat about the Lord, pray for each other and encourage one another. **Chloe**

## What was your most rewarding experience as a College Captain/Vice-Captain?

My most rewarding experience as College Captain was how close I was able to get with the other students. When I was younger, I rarely talked to people outside of my year level, which kept me from connecting with the broader community. But over the years, especially in 2024, I became more involved, and I hope I made a positive impact on some of the students. **Geta**

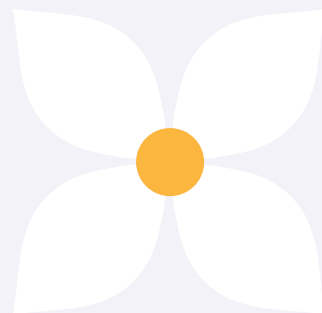
Getting to know my fellow Captains was one of the most rewarding experiences for which I am truly grateful. Together, we expanded our faith and formed deeper friendships. I enjoyed helping with the College's Open Days and talking with the parents during the tours. I was honoured to go to Canberra for the Compass School Leaders' Conference and learn a lot. The skills I gained throughout the year will help me in my future endeavours. I know that my life has been changed for the better by the multitude of experiences I had throughout Year 12. **Endria**

## What is your prayer for the 2025 College Captains?

To the 2025 College Captains, I hope and pray that you will trust and rely on one another and persevere throughout your Year 12 experience. There will be times when you must sacrifice your time, but it will be worth the effort because of the contribution you make to the school community. I pray that you will learn good leadership skills and use your gifts to benefit others for the glory of God. **Endria**

My prayer for the 2025 College Captains is that they appreciate their time as Captain and seize every opportunity to serve and lead. At the start of the year, it all seems so far away, but suddenly it's over and you haven't done half of the things you intended to. While assessments do creep up and it's easy to get busy, doing small things like organising a devotion for different year levels or hanging out with students from other cohorts at lunch can help bring the school together. **Michael**





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...although we are different in terms of heritage, we come together as one, in God's image.

## Belonging Day

**Martha,** Community Captain – Melton

We organised Belonging Day as a community to recognise the diversity within us, and how although we are different in terms of heritage, we come together as one, in God's image. We are continuously moving and changing, developing and evolving as a community. With this year marking 10 years of our incredible journey, Belonging Day displayed how we have grown and will continue to grow by God's grace. We all come from vast backgrounds and have all been influenced and guided through our many cultures and ethnicities. Though this is the case, we still uphold similar, and at most times, the same values. We are also a Christ-centred school which upholds Biblical values and principles.

# Easter Devotionals

In the lead-up to Easter, our Primary students at the Werribee campus discovered how the Easter story unfolded one day at a time through a campus-wide scavenger hunt. Each morning, a new part of the story was revealed on a panel in a different area, and students reflected on it during their devotionals.

The Easter story is central to the Christian faith, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ—an event Christians believe demonstrates God's power over sin and death. According to the Bible, Jesus died on the cross to save humanity from sin and rose again three days later, offering the promise of eternal life to all who believe in Him. Easter symbolises new life, hope and redemption, reminding us of God's faithfulness, mercy and ultimate victory of good over evil.

By the last day of Term 1, all twelve parts of the Easter story were displayed together, allowing students to see the full picture in one powerful moment.







## First Day of Year 12

The much-anticipated commencement of Melton Campus's first ever Year 12 class took place last November through the 'Early Start' program, where Year 11 students began their studies in their chosen Year 12 subjects for 2025.

After completing their exams, these pioneering students stepped into this new phase of their schooling. On the Monday 11th November, both Years 10 and 11 students participated in a step-up day, during which they were introduced to the requirements and structures of the VCE. This internal program, designed and delivered by Melton campus staff, also supported parents, many of whom were navigating VCE for the first time alongside their children; after all, the whole family does VCE, not just the students!

The school community was encouraged to uphold these families in prayer during that time and for the year ahead. The College expressed gratitude for the contributions this inaugural Year 12 cohort had already made to the school and looked forward to seeing the ways they would continue to shape and strengthen the community. By the same time this year, they would have completed their schooling, proudly marking Melton's first ever graduating class.





## Award-winning Christian education

**Heathdale Christian College was honoured as the 2024 Independent School Winner for Melbourne's west in The Age's prestigious 'Schools that Excel' awards.**

Each year, this award recognises Victorian schools that have made remarkable improvements in their VCE performance over the past decade. Only ten schools across the state—one government and one independent school from each of five regions—receive this recognition.

The Age highlighted that our College's median VCE study score reached a 10-year high of 31 last year, climbing from 28 in 2014. In addition, the percentage of students achieving a study score of 40 or above rose to 8.4 percent, compared with 4.4 percent in 2014.

This achievement is a testament to the dedication of every staff member at Heathdale Christian College, who work faithfully each day to bring glory and honour to God. We give all glory to Him for guiding our journey and express our deepest thanks to the Heathdale community for their steadfast support and commitment to excellence in Christian education. Together, we are building a future that honours Him!





# Leading the education of tomorrow



**We seek to provide learning environments where every student feels valued, connected and engaged in their own learning journey, enabling them to experience learning success.**

- Developing broad-based educational programs that enable students to become life-long learners.
- Providing comprehensive avenues of learning support for students to pursue their unique learning journey.
- Empowering students to develop their God-given potential through enquiry-based learning programs.
- Integrating a high-performing digital ecosystem in the students' everyday learning.
- Nurturing deep and rich learning through informed and researched educational practices.



## Alumni spotlight

# Olympian Thomas Hodges

**T**homas Hodges, a proud alumnus from the Class of 2012, made it to the grand stage of the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, competing in Beach Volleyball!

Thomas' journey began right here at Heathdale, where he first picked up a volleyball during PE classes and honed his skills through the afterschool volleyball program led by Mrs Janet Steane. Supported by passionate teachers like Mr Johnny Williams and Mr Jim Graham, Thomas' potential blossomed, eventually taking him from school courts to international arenas. His story is a remarkable example of how our College empowers students to reach their God-given potential, both on and off the court.

Throughout his career, Thomas has competed at the highest levels in both indoor and beach volleyball, representing Australia in World Championships and now at the Olympics. His journey hasn't been easy – from overcoming injuries to captaining the Australian Men's Volleyball team, Thomas has shown resilience and a commitment to excellence. As a student, he not only excelled in sports but also earned an Engineering degree while on a volleyball scholarship in the USA.

In the words of Executive Principal Ross Grace, "We were thrilled to be cheering on one of our former students, Thomas, who not only represented his country but also his family, friends and his former school.

Thomas' coaches from Heathdale fondly remember his time at school. Mr Williams recalled, "I was the coach of Thomas' first volleyball team back in Year 7. He was always a natural blocker, and from the beginning, he had a gift for the game. Watching him grow into the player he is today has been amazing."

Mrs Steane added, "Thomas was always dedicated and motivated in his sporting pursuits. He found his passion in volleyball and excelled through every challenge. His success today is a testament to his perseverance and talent."

As a College, we are immensely proud of Thomas' achievements and the role we played in nurturing his talents. From receiving MVP awards to having an award named after him, Thomas has left an indelible mark on Heathdale Christian College and continues to inspire our students, particularly our aspiring athletes.







## Imago Dei Prize



**A**s part of our year-long celebration of 10 years of thriving in God's grace in the Melton area, we held a portrait exhibition and awards ceremony for the inaugural Imago Dei Prize in our own gallery space. The night saw local dignitaries, families, College leadership and staff all coming together to celebrate our students and their considerable portrait artworks.

Inspired by the prestigious Archibald Prize, our Year 11 VCE Art Making and Exhibiting students painted portraits of their teachers, reflecting not only their likeness but also their personality. Guided by Secondary Art Teacher, Mrs Hannah Cutter, our emerging artists developed their own artistic styles using a mix of acrylic paint, coloured pencil, ink and mixed media.

"When they were working, our gallery space was set up like a studio," explained Mrs Cutter. "Students had a sense that their peers were on each other's team and were going to support one another throughout the process. It felt like having professional support, as students were helping critique each other's work in meaningful ways. There was a lot of constructive discussion about proportion, colour theory and technique as the students worked through their projects."

The Imago Dei Prize was presented by Cr. Sophie Ramsay, Councillor for Coburn Ward, to Lily Attard for her portrait of our Melton Campus Principal, Mr Iain Belot. Lily captured her subject's essence with outstanding technical skill, imagination

and understanding. 'Imago Dei' comes from the Latin translation of Genesis 1:27 and means 'Image of God'. We chose this name for our highest prize because at Heathdale, we believe that every person is made in God's image, as taught to us in the Bible.

The artwork is titled 'A Love for Reading' and was created using pencil, ink, and collage on paper.

"When creating my artwork, I loved trying to include all the things that Mr Belot told me he loved and adding deeper meaning through the details," explained Lily. "I was nervous and surprised when I found out I had won the Imago Dei Prize because, while I enjoy drawing people, this was a much larger piece, which was a challenge."

The Atelier Award, voted for by the Year 11 Art class, was presented to Davina Vo by Kaylee Smith, Electorate Officer from the Office of Steve McGhie MP.

Additionally, the People's Choice Award, which celebrated the favourite portrait as voted by our wider College community in the lead-up to the Imago Dei Award Ceremony, was presented to Natasha Lakra by our Executive Principal, Ross Grace.

The exhibition was a testament to the talent and dedication of our Year 11 Art students, who would go on to be part of our Melton campus' inaugural class of Year 12s in 2025.

# Student Outcomes

## 30.04

Average Study Score

Two of our students achieved a perfect study score of 50 in General Mathematics. In an outstanding achievement, students attained study scores of 40 or more across 12 different VCE subjects, ranging from English and Chemistry to Business Management, Visual Communication Design and more. This reflects our commitment to nurturing each child's God-given potential and supporting them in their diverse academic pursuits.

2x Perfect

## 50

Study Scores earned in  
General Mathematics

## 26%

of VCE students earned  
a study score over 40.

## 72.13

Average ATAR

Our 2024 ATAR exceeded the state average of 69.52. With a 23% growth in our Year 12 cohort, 97 of whom completed the VCE, we are thrilled to have walked alongside so many students throughout their school journey and to witness such a large group achieving results consistently above expectations.

## 29

Study Scores Over 40

General Mathematics 17

Chemistry 1

English 3

Biology 1

French 1

Literature 1

Geography 1

Legal Studies 1

History Revolutions 1

Business Management 2

Visual Communication

Design 1

Health and Human

Development 1

ATARs above

## 90

9.47% of our VCE students gained an ATAR of over 90. Of these students, 2 of them achieved an ATAR of 95 or above. This is a testament to their hard work and our teaching staff's dedication to helping our students reflect their potential.



**1 Top Design Nomination  
Short-Listed**



**1 Top Arts Nomination  
Short-Listed**



# Offers and Placements

In 2024, our Year 12 students received early entry offers to a range of Bachelor degree courses at universities including RMIT, Latrobe, Swinburne, ACU and Victoria University. Some students also qualified for Melbourne Uni Access and the Monash Guarantee. The courses offered spanned areas such as Science, Biomedicine, Design, Law, Arts, Criminology, Business, Psychology, Architecture, Engineering, Information Technology and Commerce. While students are not required to accept these offers, they provide a guaranteed pathway based on their previous academic achievements.

## Students offered Early Entry:

60

(42% of 2024 VCE students)

## Students who accepted their Early Entry Offer:

10

students accepted the offer and have commenced that course in 2024

50

students accepted an offer higher than the Early Entry course they were initially offered

## Students who achieved their first or second round University/TAFE offer:

69

out of 95

70% received their first preference  
30% received their second preference

## Summary of All Year 12 Destinations

We are delighted to share that all nine VCE VM students chose a pathway into either jobs or courses they are interested in. Additionally, of our 97 VCE students, 92 took an offer at a university. Two students received direct entry to high schools in the USA, and another student is travelling overseas hoping to also study in the USA.

### Total Tertiary Placements 92 VCE | 8 VCE VM

4	Australian Catholic University
14	Deakin University
7	LaTrobe University
25	Monash University
22	RMIT University/TAFE
7	Swinburne University
5	University of Melbourne
7	Victoria University
1	Independent College - AIE
2	Whitehouse Institute
1	Kangan TAFE
1	MIT

### Total Alternative Pathways 5 VCE | 1 VCE VM

1	Overseas
1	Employed/Apprenticeships
2	Unknown

# Dux of 2024



Darcey Gifford

**99.4** ATAR

99

It's been such a gift and blessing from God, and it's really important not to forget him in all of this or the people who supported me.

**D**arcey Gifford's achievement as the highest Dux ever at Heathdale reflects her love for studying and the supportive environment she found at the school. Initially, Darcey was unsure about being named Dux and needed time to grasp the significance of her high score. "When I saw the score, I don't think I realised how high it was," she reflected.

For Darcey, this accomplishment was more than just a number; it was an unexpected blessing. "I feel like I've spent a lot of time just kind of going, why me? This is such an abundant blessing from God, beyond anything I'd even imagined," she shared.

Starting at Heathdale in Year 11, Darcey quickly experienced its welcoming and supportive atmosphere, which helped her thrive. This support extended to her teachers, who were always available to assist with questions and personal challenges. "A big shout-out to Mr Sega, my Biology teacher. He had a group of us keen on Biology and ran extra lunchtime sessions," she added.

This year, Darcey is pursuing a Bachelor of Science at the University of Melbourne. Although still deciding on her career path, she finds the journey exciting. "It's terrifying but exciting at the same time. I try and lean into that."

Balancing study and rest in school was key to Darcey's success. She set study limits, observed a weekly Sabbath—avoiding both her phone and studying on Sundays—and made sure to enjoy family time. "We still read books out loud, even though we're older now," she shared, mentioning their journey through the Chronicles of Narnia last year.

Darcey advises future students to use their teachers' expertise. "They are there to help you out in any way they can. I sent them a lot of questions, practice pieces and asked them to explain concepts when they didn't quite make sense."

She also encourages making studying enjoyable. "One thing my friends can tell you is that in Year 12, I became obsessed with drinking tea. I'd drink tea while studying and tried all kinds of flavours." Darcey highlights the importance of finding study strategies that suit your individual style. "Some people found study timetables helpful, but they didn't work for me. Instead, I used timers to tackle tasks, especially the ones I didn't want to do. Others tried timers and found them unhelpful, so it's really about discovering what works best for you."

When Darcey learnt she was Dux, it was a surreal moment. "It's been such a gift and blessing from God, and it's really important not to forget Him in all of this or the people who supported me. Receiving this honour doesn't reflect all the people who made that number possible. I want to thank my Biology study group for their support, my parents for encouraging me and helping me take breaks, and my friends. There are many people from Heathdale I think I'll stay in touch with, who truly cared for me."

Darcey's experience serves as a reminder of what can be achieved when dedication meets encouragement, inspiring both students and educators to strive for their best.



# College Musical

**Hayley Kirkpatrick**, Musical Director  
**Kristie Baker**, Musical Producer

**O**ur 2024 Musical Production of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* was a wonderful showcase of our talented students, with 54 students making up the cast and another 57 students involved in the orchestra, backstage crew, hair and makeup team, costume crew and front of house team. Not to mention several additional students who volunteered their time to help design and create props and paint sets.

Our musicals are a magnificent example of collaboration from both our students, staff and the broader school community. We would like to congratulate and thank everyone who was involved in making the show such a success! Thank you also to all who came to watch. We had sold-out shows, reaching a total of almost 2,000 audience members!

The whole process created many wonderful memories, though I would have to say that a favourite moment of mine was hearing the audience's reactions the first time the Oompa Loompas came on stage in each show! The genuine explosion of surprise, laughter, and delight always made me beam from up in the bio-box!

And, as always, working with so many dedicated, encouraging and talented students and colleagues makes the big task of putting on a musical a joy-filled (though sometimes hectic) ride. Bring on the next one!





# Unifying the College

**T**he Heathdale Cup, initiated by Mr Gavin Abrahams and Mr Heinrich Fourie, was born from a desire to create more sporting opportunities for Heathdale Christian College students and foster community across the Werribee and Melton campuses. Inspired by previous competitions against Tyndale Christian College, the idea of inter-campus games was presented, and the first Cup was held in Term 4 of 2023.

Since then, its scope has grown to include a wider range of sports and year levels. Events have included basketball, soccer, badminton and volleyball. While Werribee's larger student body initially gave them an advantage, Melton students have embraced the challenge. The 2024 Year 9 boys' basketball final, where Melton closed the gap from a heavy loss the previous year to just two points, captured this determination.

The Cup has built cross-campus friendships, strengthened staff collaboration, and created a culture of unity. Teacher vs student games and regular termly events ensure these bonds continue to grow. The sight of Werribee students clapping Melton onto the bus after a match reflects the event's spirit—showcasing God-given talents and the strength of one College community across two campuses. It has become a testament to the power of sport in building a cohesive, spirited community across both campuses.

99 The Heathdale Cup allows both campuses to engage with each other through sport and breaks the barrier of the physical distance between campuses.

**Jerone**, Secondary Sports Captain – Melton







# Student Talents Take the Stage

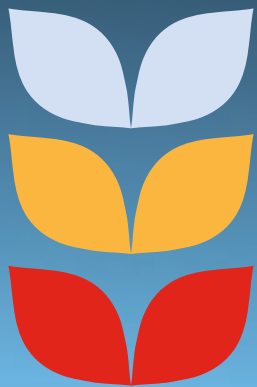
## Battle of the Bands

Our Years 10-12 students at Werribee had a fantastic time at the 2024 annual House Band competition, themed 'Motown.' Motown, a genre and record label known for blending soul, R&B and pop, originated in 1960s Detroit and launched the careers of iconic artists like The Supremes and Stevie Wonder, breaking racial barriers in the music industry. Student performances included classics such as "Wait a Minute, Mr. Postman," "I Want You Back" and "Signed, Sealed, Delivered." Carey claimed first place, followed by Judson, Stanway and Taylor. A big well done to our Year 12 comperes, Luke and Alex, who brought a touch of class to the event. Many thanks to our esteemed judges, alumni Jack Foy and Chris Loftis, for making the tough final decision!

## Talent Show

At the end of Term 3, our Melton Secondary students enjoyed their first Talent Show, a lively event that provided a platform for students to showcase their talents and perform for each other. Highlights included the award for 'Best Overall Performance', which went to Janya (7A), Kiara K (7B), Kiara T (7B), Maori (7A), Isabel (7B) and Miss Hanna for their act "Can We Build a Timeline", while Martha (10A) won Best Music Performance for singing Adele's "Skyfall". Michael (9A) earned 'Best Skit, Speech or Dance' for his speech, and Aaron (9A) was awarded 'Most Entertaining' for his card tricks. Honourable Mentions went to Callum (10A) for "Monkey Wrench" by Foo Fighters and Naomi (7B) for her dance to "After Hours" by Kehlani.







# Developing vibrant and purposeful spaces

**The development of vibrant and purposeful spaces that aim to inspire, facilitate, complement and nurture deep and rich learning. As we continue to grow, we are committed the provision of well-equipped, agile and flexible learning spaces which will meet our growing student and staff population.**

- Designing campus facilities that incorporate a variety of teaching practices which nurture deep and rich learning.
- A masterplan for both campuses that embraces a wholistic approach to education and wellbeing in the design of our buildings, gardens, playgrounds and natural play spaces.
- Incorporation of dedicated project-based learning facilities to promote innovation, problem solving and enquiry-based learning for our students.





## Capital Works

**Andrew Ballesty**, Director of Business Services



In 2024, we continued the development of both our campuses in line with the College's strategic directions of creating vibrant and purposeful spaces for all our students and staff so they can deepen their learning in all areas and explore God's world around them with increasing curiosity. We thank God for the continued investment by our families into the Heathdale community, and look forward to how these facilities will be used to serve generations now and into the future.





## Werribee Looks Outwards

On our Werribee campus, after delivering two significant new builds in 2022 and 2023 with the establishment of the Year 7–8 precinct, The Village, and the Year 1–2 Building with its surrounding play areas, the focus of the next stage in our Werribee masterplan turned to the campus's outdoor spaces.

The removal of the J Block demountable structure at the front of the College opened up more green space for our upper Primary students. Combined with the introduction of additional Gaga pits (a popular playground ball sport) and the installation of new adventure playground equipment, the Year 3–6 play area was redesigned to better suit our older students, since the Year 1–2 students had moved to the Kinder–2 precinct.

To enhance the drop-off and pick-up experience for families, the first stage of car park works commenced towards the end of 2024, expanding the footprint of the Creative Arts car park and connecting it with the ELC car park. This update significantly enhanced traffic flow by linking both entrances and exits onto Derrimut Road, increasing the number of available parking spaces and introducing a dedicated Kiss 'n' Drop zone.

To continue catering for the growth of our student body, internal refurbishment works also created an additional Year 6 classroom in F Block, as well as an expansion of our Secondary administration area.

## Gradual Preparation for VCE Graduation

As we continued to expand our VCE offering at the Melton campus and anticipated our first graduating class in 2025, works were underway on the redevelopment of three buildings into purposeful VCE and Secondary School learning spaces set for completion and use in 2025: a VCE Learning Hub, Study Centre and Science Centre.

The Learning Hub was designed with seven classroom learning zones and a breakout area. Hosting our Year 11 and 12 students and staff, the VCE Study Centre was developed to help our most senior students get the most out of their studies, while also providing a welcoming space for them to relax and bond as a cohort and focus on their wellbeing.

The Science Centre was also scheduled for complete renovation, with labs for Chemistry, Biology and Physics, alongside a complementary maker space to extend our existing Science facilities. All three facilities were planned with designs to inspire students and enhance learning through flexible theoretical and practical zones.

## Melton Gets Creative with Its Spaces

At our Melton campus, after the delivery of the Secondary B Block precinct in 2023, two key projects completed in 2024 were the refurbishments of the Drama Hall and Gym learning space.

The Drama Hall refurbishment widened the stage wings to centre it to the building and make room for our student performers, repainting the building and stage floor, new furnishings and installing a high-quality audio-visual system with multiple modes that can deliver simple presentations to full stage performances. It has seen significant use by our students through assemblies and events like the inaugural Talent Show.

The refurbishment of the gym learning space included a leading physical training gym, classroom environment and staff offices. This upgrade will continue to support our Secondary curriculum and co-curricular Physical Education and sporting programs for years to come.



## Partnership with Goodstart ELC

**Our Melton campus embraced the spirit of ‘Thriving in God’s Grace’ by launching a new community partnership with Goodstart Early Learning Centre (ELC) in Melton in 2024.**

Commencing in Semester 2, our Year 6 students enjoyed an initial visit to Goodstart ELC, connecting with their 3 and 4-year-old Kindergarten students and carers. This marked the start of a monthly program in which Heathdale visits Goodstart ELC, and their Kinders come to the ‘big school’ to play with our Year 6 students on our campus.

Some of the Goodstart Kinders were set to begin Prep in 2025, making this initiative a wonderful orientation for them. The partnership also allows our Year 6 students to demonstrate leadership by buddying with the Kinders and leading fun activities, including arts and crafts, songs, games and story time.

As our Melton campus celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2024, this growing community partnership beautifully reflected the following scripture: “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” (1 Peter 4:10)

Our Year 6 students shared their thoughts on their visits with the Kinder children:

“My favourite part was helping the kids glue their shopping list onto card by cutting up supermarket catalogues and pasting. Another part I liked was helping the Kinders to play on the Prep playground – I think they had an amazing time.” Yovo

“The Kinder kids were very cute and I liked how they took part in every activity. They were also super sensible on the trampolines and the parachute game. I hope that they come again and enjoy what we have for them next time.” Lovepreet

“Having the Kinder kids come to the Melton campus was a privilege. It was amazing to play and spend time with them – their laughter, giggles and smiles will always be remembered in my heart.” Lulu

“I enjoyed helping the kids and playing little games to make them smile, it made me feel like I was 4 again.” Yisha







# Thriving communities

As we celebrate our 40th year of providing Christian Education to families of the West in 2022, it is integral that we continue to engage families in our community. Building the fabric of our community through caring, strong, respectful and honouring relationships.

- Finding opportunities to serve our local, national and global communities.
- Facilitating opportunities for families to develop relationships, engage and volunteer.
- Developing a strong alumni network to help students in their future endeavours.









# FAMILY FESTIVAL



**Ross Grace**, Executive Principal

**W**e were delighted to celebrate 10 Years in Melton at our Family Festival on Friday 25th October! It was a wonderful occasion to reflect on all that God has done in and through our Melton campus over the past decade.

The event featured fun activities, food trucks, free amusements, a scavenger hunt, a special Q&A with key former members of our Melton community—including longstanding families and past Campus Principals Lyn Moffett and Yvonne Harvey—along with student performances for everyone to enjoy.

As I was driving home from our Family Festival, my head was buzzing with excitement. It was one of those reflective moments where you realise you have been part of something truly special and unique. Seeing so many families from our community gather to celebrate 10 years on the Melton Campus was remarkable.

Having the chance to chat with people from both the Werribee and Melton campuses really brought home the idea that we are one College with two thriving communities. Speaking with former Mowbray families was also significant; they remarked that the vibrant atmosphere that night reminded them of Mowbray College in its prime!

Towards the end of the evening, Iain Belot made an insightful comment: “This is not only a celebration of the past 10 years but a celebration of our future!” He is absolutely right, as we saw the evening as a celebration of something growing by God’s grace, and the story hasn’t finished yet.

Celebrating  Melton







"I loved seeing so many people come together for a good cause and the insane amount of food that was donated. Looking out for those in need around us built a sense of community and served as a reminder that we're all human and should help each other as much as we can. Since our campus is based in Melton, it was about looking out for each other as members of this community."

**Riley (Year 9), Community Captain**

## Silly Socks, Big Hearts

**Nick Kopitschinski, Deputy Principal – Melton**

For some years now, the Year 1 students at Melton have participated in 'Silly Sock Day.' This fun event allows our students to show off their creativity and sense of humour by wearing the silliest, wackiest and most colourful socks they can find. Students wear polka dots, stripes, flowers, animals or even food patterns... the choice is theirs!

In 2024, the invitation to wear silly socks was extended to the entire Melton campus. It was a great day where students, both young and old, were showing off their creative selves and finding connections with one another that may have never been noticed before.

As part of the day, we asked that students bring a non-perishable item such as a can of soup, jar of honey, bag of rice or powdered milk that could be donated to Combined Churches Caring Melton (CCCM.) This local food bank, which has been operating since 1995, is a not-for-profit organisation that seeks to help residents in the City of Melton access food support.

This was a huge success! CCCM and our student leaders were amazed by the generosity of the school community who donated an entire trailer load of food to the Melton community. Thank you so much for supporting us to help local churches care for Melton.





# Staff Satisfaction

## Staff Reflections

Our devoted Teaching and General Staff work collaboratively, driven by a shared passion to positively impact the lives of our students. The culture they foster is one of initiative, constant learning and growth—a testament to their dedication in fulfilling God's call through their careers.

Our staff's commitment and dedication have shone brightly, leading to a greater satisfaction and positive response. A testament to their dedication, 93% of our staff expressed deep contentment in their roles at Heathdale.

At Heathdale, we embrace a culture of continuous learning, and the lessons we learned in 2024 have ignited our passion for growth. Our staff continue to strive for excellence in their roles, paving the way for a brighter future.

Together, as a united community of parents, staff, and students, we envision a future filled with boundless opportunities for learning to help all people grow in their God-given potential.

"Working at Heathdale Christian College is a blessing. The staff, in general, are incredibly welcoming and genuinely care about the welfare of the students they teach."

"A vital outcome of this College is to send children out into the world that is increasingly focussing on individualism, yet our students go out knowing that they can rely on relationships with other people and God to give them foundation in life when journeys get inevitably tough. I wish my children had gone to this school."

"As a member of the general staff I have been employed here for many years and love being here."

# 93%

of our staff expressed deep contentment in their roles at Heathdale.



# Parent Satisfaction

## 94%

parents expressing  
contentment in choosing Heathdale  
for their child's education

“Absolutely love the school and the teachers. Thank God we found you.”

“I have been really impressed by the support and learning enhancement opportunities my child receives.”

“Every school has its challenges, but every time something has arisen at Heathdale, the way it's been handled is outstanding. With compassion and discretion for those in the wrong and caring for those wronged. The care teachers and leadership show for students in both academic and personal development makes me grateful every day that we found Heathdale.”

“We would like to commend the teachers for doing such a wonderful job, we are really are happy with the school overall and it isn't said enough. Thank you.”



## Parent Reflections

We value the input of the families in our Heathdale community, which is why we seek their feedback every year. Our community's reflections help affirm our direction, highlight what matters most to parents and their children, and shape how we continue to grow as a College.

We are thrilled to share that parent satisfaction with our College remains significantly high, with an incredible 94% of parents expressing contentment in choosing Heathdale for their child's education and eagerly endorsing our institution to others.

We are deeply grateful for the trust that our Heathdale families in us, as reflected in the invaluable findings of our 2024 Parent Satisfaction survey. As we continue to prioritise growth and progress, guided by our core values, we remain dedicated to providing an environment where every student can flourish in their God-given potential.







# Student Numbers

**2334**

All Students

Total students enrolled from K-12

Werribee

**1849**

**51%**

Female

**49%**

Male

Melton

**485**

**49%**

Female

**51%**

Male

**92.86%**

Average attendance rate  
(Year 1-10)

“We stand here today because our founding families invested in our College, and we aim to invest in Christian education for generations to come”

Matthew Wilson - Board



# Growing for our future

Our measured growth strategy at both campuses has led to a welcome increase in numbers of students, family partnerships, and subsequent staff and resources required. We will continue to practise effective and sound business management, both operationally and financially, to ensure the provision of excellent Christian Education for generations of students to come.

- Development of a multi-faceted business plan for the next 10 years, which will position the College as a leading provider of Christian Education in the Western suburbs.
- Staff retention and recruitment plans, which will enable our College to retain, develop and attract high-quality staff as an Employer of Choice.
- A comprehensive marketing plan to effectively tell our story and promote our College's excellent Christian Education learning opportunities.

# Governance & Corporate Structure

Our College is governed by a group of dedicated volunteers who use their skills, knowledge and wisdom to establish our strategic direction. We are continually blessed through their deep commitment to Christian education, their forward strategic thinking and their love of our College. The following persons were directors of the College during the whole of the financial year and up to the date of this report 31 December 2024, unless otherwise stated:

## College Board

### Chairperson



**Matthew Wilson** – B.A., Postgrad B.Ed. (P-12), M.B.A.  
Director Community Wellbeing, City of Ballarat

### Deputy Chairperson & Acting Secretary (resigned May 2024)



**Patrick Pathinathan** – M.B.A., B.Sc. (Com.Sc.)  
Global Client Director, ServiceNow

### Treasurer



**Kalli Green** – B.Bus. (Accounting), B.Mus.  
Accountant, Werribee Baptist Church

### Executive Member & Deputy Chair (role commenced June 2024)



**Darren Gardiner** – M.B.A., B.Sc. (App.Sc.), Dip. Dairy Tech  
Principal Research Consultant, Agriculture & Food, CSIRO

### Executive Members (role commenced June 2024)



**Amanda Newton** – M.Acc., Cert IV Property Services  
Global Sales & Marketing Leader, Intuit QuickBooks

### Board Members



**Stan Richey** – M.Ministry, Grad Dip. (Global Leadership), B.A (Pastoral Studies)  
Pastor, Werribee Baptist Church



**Penny Telfer** – B.Law, B.Legal St., Grad Dip Legal Prac.  
Special Counsel, HWL Ebsworth Lawyers



**Ashley Battle** – B.A. (Communication), AdvDip. Multimedia, Dip. IT  
Pastor, Enjoy Church Melton



**Victoria Gatt** – B.A. Law (Honours) and B.A. Criminology and Criminal Justice  
Lawyer, Victoria Legal Aid (appointed October 2023)



Our Senior Leadership Team provides our Academic and Professional staff with leadership and expertise in both Christian education and business services. This team provides staff with vision, direction and purpose and allows the opportunity for ongoing career growth and development.

## Senior Leadership

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**Ross Grace** – *Dip.T. (Prim.), Grad.Dip. (Learning Disabilities), M.Ed. (Educational Leadership)*  
Executive Principal



**Deborah Letcher** – *B.A., B. Teach. (Hons.), M. Instructional Leadership*  
Principal of Secondary - Werribee



**Yvonne Harvey** – *BSc(Hons), QTS(Ex), PGDipSW (Melb), MEd (Melb)*  
Principal of Primary - Werribee



**Iain Belot** – *B.A. Arts (Hons.), Dip.Ed., M. School Leadership.*  
Principal of Melton (commenced Jan 2024)



**Graeme Hallett** – *B.A. (Humanities), Dip.Ed.*  
Director of Learning & Teaching



**Kristine McClelland** – *B.Ed., M.Ed. (Special Education)*  
Director of Student Wellbeing & Educational Services (retired December 2024)



**Andrew Ballesty** – *B.Ec. FCPA MBA*  
Director of Business Services

# New Starter Reflections

We asked two of our new staff members who joined us in 2024 about their experiences of starting their journey with the College. Cameron Crombie joined our team as a Secondary Teacher, and Laura Hein as Student Welfare Officer.



## Cameron Crombie

Teaching Staff - Melton



### What motivated you to pursue a career in teaching?

I've always loved seeing students grow in their understanding. When I worked in university labs, I found great joy in watching students connect the dots and see how everything interlinked. Teaching feels natural to me. Having grown up with a mum who was a teacher and a dad who was a flight instructor, guiding others in their learning journey has always been part of my life.

### What influenced your decision to join Heathdale as a staff member in 2024?

I initially hesitated to complete my application, as I'd been working in a public school where faith conversations weren't welcome. A phone call from the HR Manager reassured me that Heathdale genuinely values open, respectful discussions about Christian views. Meeting Nick, Iain and Ross confirmed that the leadership here is strong, faith-filled and welcoming, which made me excited to join the team.

### What were some of your favourite memories at Heathdale in 2024?

One of my first memories is stepping into a classroom as a Casual Relief Teacher and asking students to complete their set work. Every student opened their tablet and got straight to it—no pushback, just a willingness to learn. It gave me an early glimpse of the wonderful culture here.

### How did the support and mentorship from College leadership and colleagues contribute to your growth as an educator and coordinator in your first year at Heathdale?

The support at Heathdale has been amazing. Everyone is genuinely willing to help, even if you've never worked with them before. There are no silos, people collaborate freely, and shared approaches flow across subjects. That openness has made my growth as an educator so much richer.

### Describe how Heathdale's culture aligns with your values as an educator and how Heathdale's Christian work environment influenced your 2024 experience.

Heathdale's openness to talk about faith and support students spiritually is a huge blessing. We can help them see that God loves them, has a plan for their lives and that His truth brings hope. In my previous public school, mental health challenges were widespread but we couldn't discuss faith. Here, being able to share God's love gives students comfort and strength that goes far beyond academics.





Heathdale has been the most supportive community I have been a part of in my working life.

## Laura Hein

General Staff - Melton



### **What motivated you to pursue a career in student welfare?**

Ultimately it was God's calling that led me to work in the student welfare space. I've always loved being around people and wanted to pursue a career focused on caring for others, particularly in the mental health space, so I decided to complete a double Bachelor of Social work and Psychology. Mental health struggles among young people are so common and too many young people feel that they are alone in their struggle. God has really placed a soft spot in my heart for this age group, which has led me to work with young people to support them through their mental health difficulties and to be a safe adult in their life who listens to them, believes in them and supports them in becoming the person God has planned for them to be.

### **What influenced your decision to join Heathdale as a staff member in 2024?**

Before working at Heathdale, I actually did not know much about the school. One day I felt prompted to just open the Heathdale website and see if they happened to have a job on offer for student wellbeing, and they did! Once I applied, the further I went along in the interview process, the more staff I met and the more I learnt about the culture and values of the school, it came clear to me what a beautiful, supportive and Christ-centred community Heathdale is—and I wanted to be a part of it!

### **What were some of your favourite memories at Heathdale in 2024?**

I have loved getting to know the students and have been so amazed at how open and welcoming they have been. I was impressed by the way the student leadership team organised Belonging Day last year and I really enjoyed being apart of that. I have also had the opportunity to go on a few camps with Secondary, which has been so much fun and a great way to get to know staff and students better.

### **How did the support and mentorship from College leadership and colleagues contribute to your growth in Student Welfare in your first year at Heathdale?**

Heathdale has been the most supportive community I have been a part of in my working life. As a fairly new social worker, I have felt so supported and cared for by the leadership team as they have answered my many (many...) questions and worked with me to build my confidence and capacity. I really value connection and have so appreciated the way the leadership team has worked with me to problem-solve, soundboard ideas and work out ways to support students better. The Staff PD weeks at the start of the year and mid-year have left me feeling much better equipped to do my role well. I feel that because of the support of the leadership team, I have been able to grow as a person both professionally and personally.

### **Describe how Heathdale's culture aligns with your values as a Student Welfare Officer and how Heathdale's Christian work environment influenced your 2024 experience.**

Heathdale values the whole person, not just what they do. I want students to know that they are loved and valued despite their successes or downfalls, and Heathdale has that same mentality. Heathdale's priority of both staff and student wellbeing so beautifully reflects Christ's love and creates an environment of belonging and safety, which strongly aligns with my own values as a Student Welfare Officer. Working in a Christian environment has made my first year working here such a joy, and I feel so grateful to get to be part of such a genuine, compassionate and welcoming community.

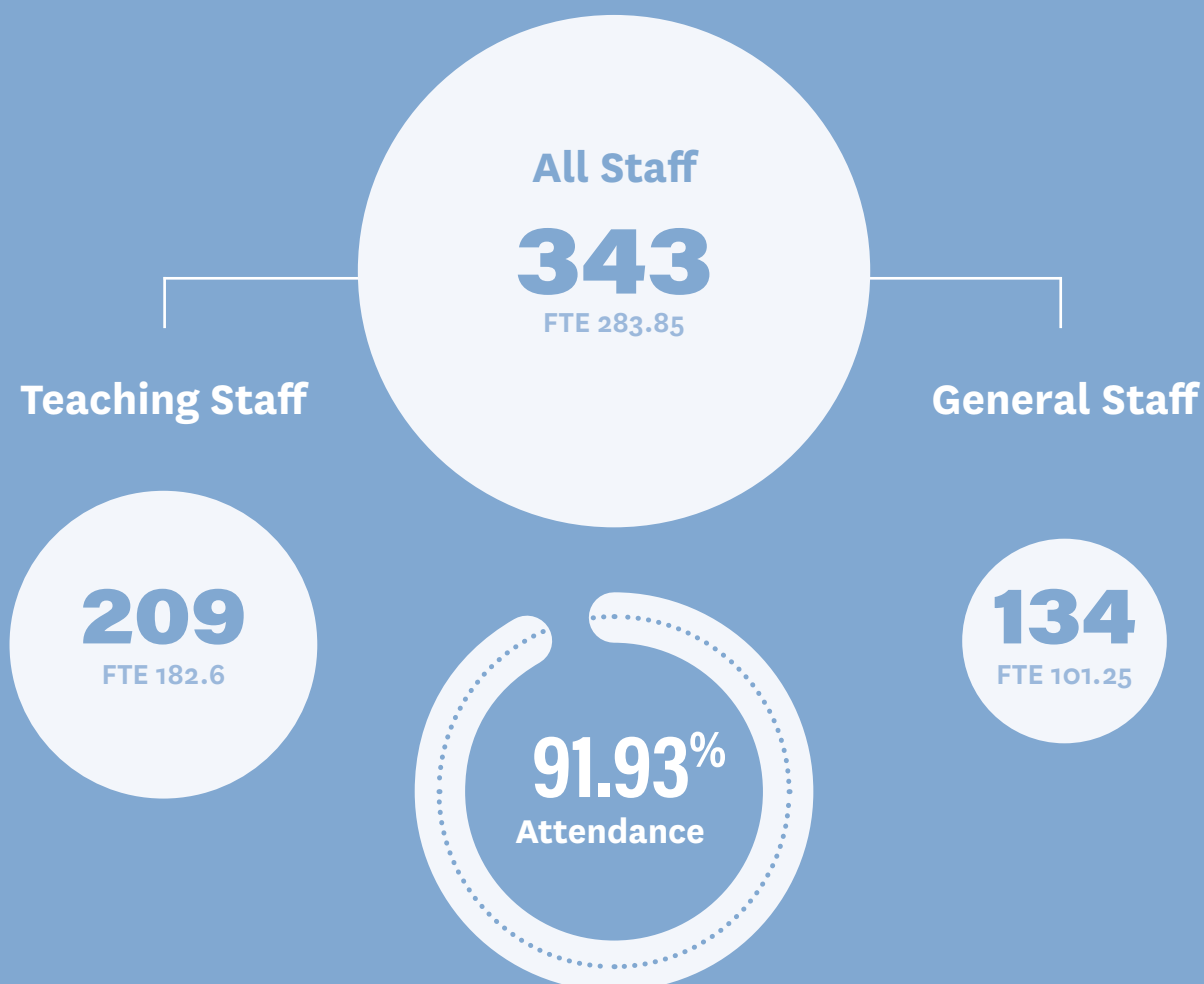
# About Our Staff



**To stay true to our College's purpose and vision, all staff members are active in their Christian faith and receive support to ensure they devotedly express this faith in every aspect of their work, thereby fulfilling our College's mission. We highly value the efforts of our staff and appreciate each individual employee.**

Our academic staff comprises qualified teachers who are passionate about helping each child discover their God-given gifts and talents by fostering curiosity and promoting deep learning. As students progress from Kindergarten through Year 12, our staff encourage them to grow in wisdom and discernment across all aspects of their education. This nurturing approach cultivates an attitude of excellence, motivating our students to strive for their best. Our professional staff are dedicated to creating an atmosphere of excellence at our College, enabling our teachers to focus on our unique Christian education and nurture our students' academic, spiritual, physical and emotional growth.





For all staff, based on actual as a percentage of possible total.

## Teaching Staff Qualifications

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**37**  
Certificate

**51**  
Diploma

**202**  
Bachelor

**15**  
Graduate Certificate

**36**  
Graduate Diploma

**60**  
Masters

**2**  
Doctorate

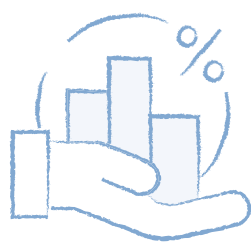
## Professional Development

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**\$252,185.76**

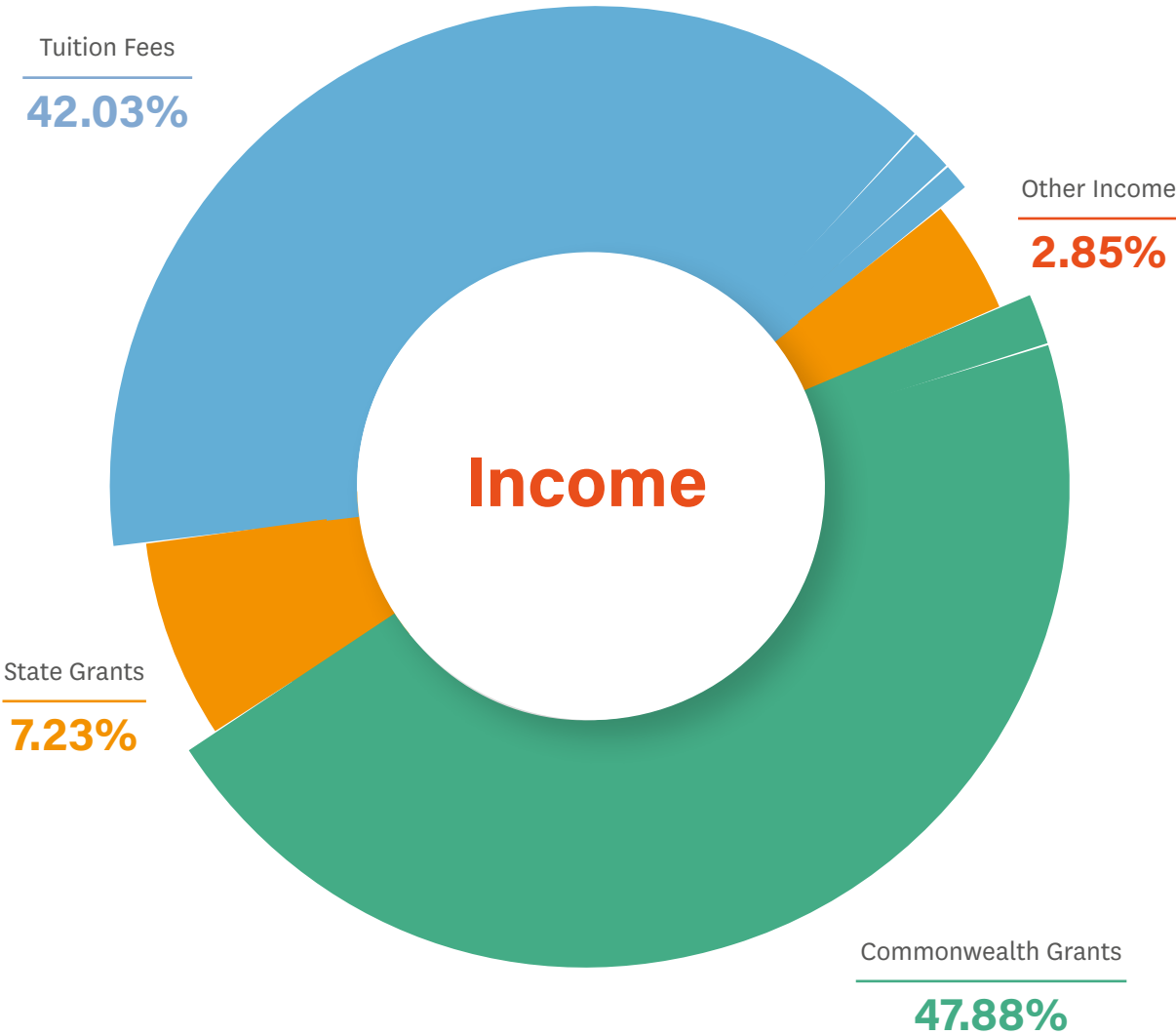
worth of internal and external PD completed in 2024

# Financial Activities



In line with our Foundational Quality Statements, we pursue best practice management systems and excellence in all areas. Our College Board takes a fiscally responsible approach to all financial activities. The following charts demonstrate the financial activities of the College with regard to revenue and capital expenditure in 2024.

## Heathdale Christian College Income

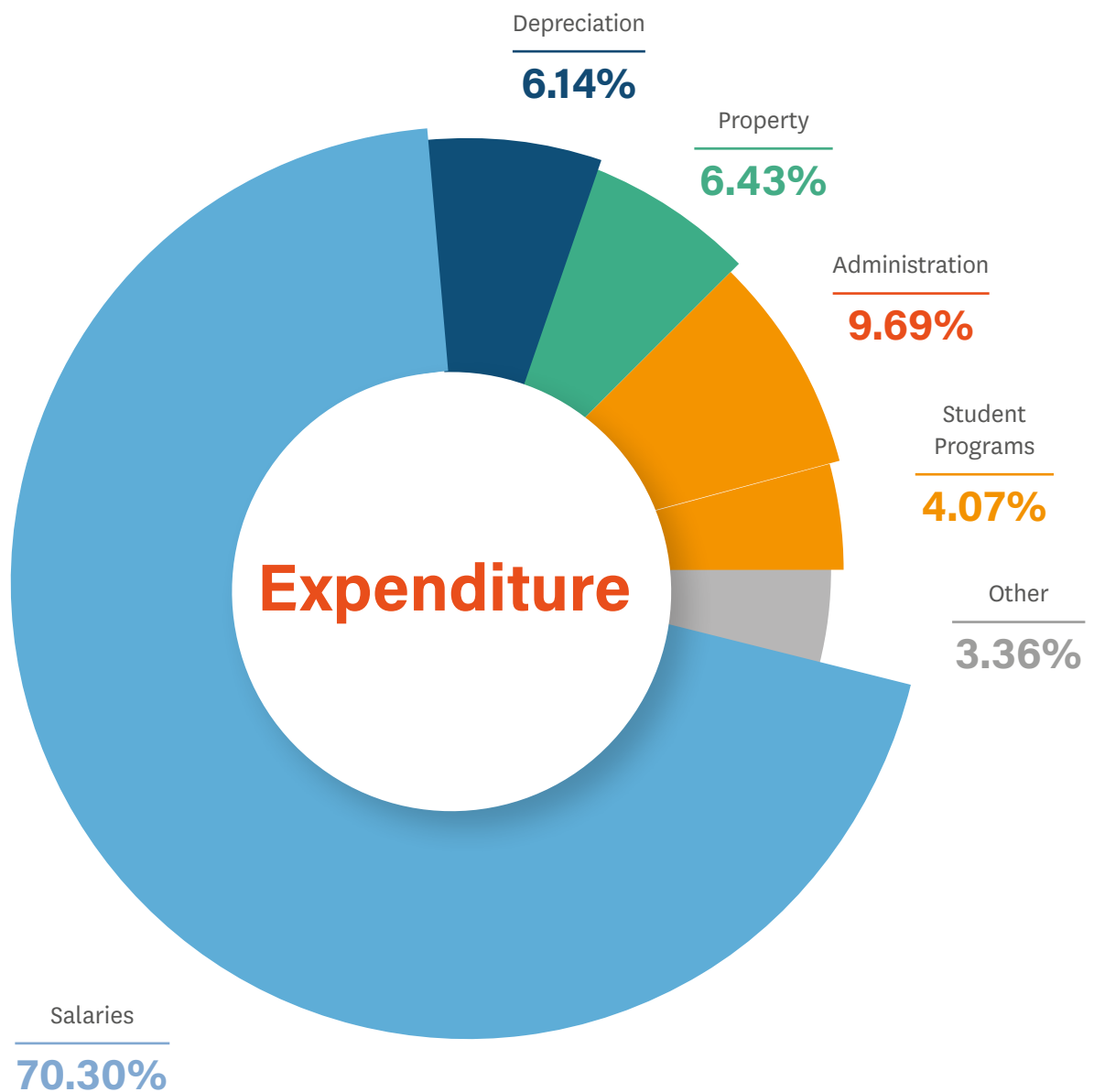






## Heathdale Christian College Expenditure

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PO Box 1042  
Werribee Plaza, 3030  
[enquiries@heathdale.vic.edu.au](mailto:enquiries@heathdale.vic.edu.au)

**Melton** 102-110 Centenary Ave - (03) 8746 3100  
**Werribee** 175 Derrimut Road - (03) 9749 1522

HeathdaleChristianCollege  

**ABN:** 40 005 962 792  
**School No.:** 1846  
**CRICOS No.:** 00578B