

ISSUE 13 - Semester 2, 2023

ourplace

WYCLIFFE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

**CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION
IN SIX MINUTES**

**LEARNING
ABOUT FAMILY**

**AUSTRALIAN
POETRY
BY YEAR 8 STUDENTS**



Sharing the stories of our school community

2024 Term Dates

TERM 1, 2024

Monday 29th January
First Day of Preschool

Tuesday 30th January
First Day of Term 1, Years 1-12

Wednesday 31st January
First Day of Term 1, Kindergarten

Friday 12th April
Last Day of Term 1

TERM 2, 2024

Tuesday 30th April
First Day of Term 2

Friday 5th July
Last Day of Term 2

TERM 3, 2024

Monday 29th July
First Day of Term 3

Friday 27th September
Last Day of Term 3

TERM 4, 2024

Tuesday 15th October
First Day of Term 4

Thursday 12th December
Last Day of Term 4

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Hope
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Cover art: Daisy from Preschool
This page: Hannah and Anna, Year 9



This edition of Our Place includes QR codes like this, which you can scan with your phone to watch related videos.



Dave Johnston
Principal

“Now” and “not yet”

Dear Wycliffe Learning Community,

I truly love the privilege of writing the introduction for Our Place. This is because it always creates a pause in my calendar where I get to reflect on our shared journey. Each time, I get to see, with renewed clarity and focus, the goodness of our heavenly Father interwoven through stories about rich learning experiences and the celebration of our students’ work. I am incredibly conscious that our shared spaces of storytelling not only shape our “now” but also orientate our futures. What we see as possible futures, therefore, is indelibly linked to hope, confidence and life.

As we approach the coming Christmas season we have cyclical encouragement to marvel at Jesus taking on human form and dwelling among us. During the last three months, I have been reading a book by Chris Watkins which has enlightened not only the wonder of Christmas, but also how the resurrection gives deep meaning for our futures. The reality of Jesus having flesh immediately affirms the particular dignity of humanity. Then the visibility of the crucifixion remaining in his resurrected body lets us know that the challenges and the delights of this life are not simply erased in eternity. Rather, as Watkins writes, they are wrapped up into wonder: “even the most transient good is worth achieving in the here and now for its own sake

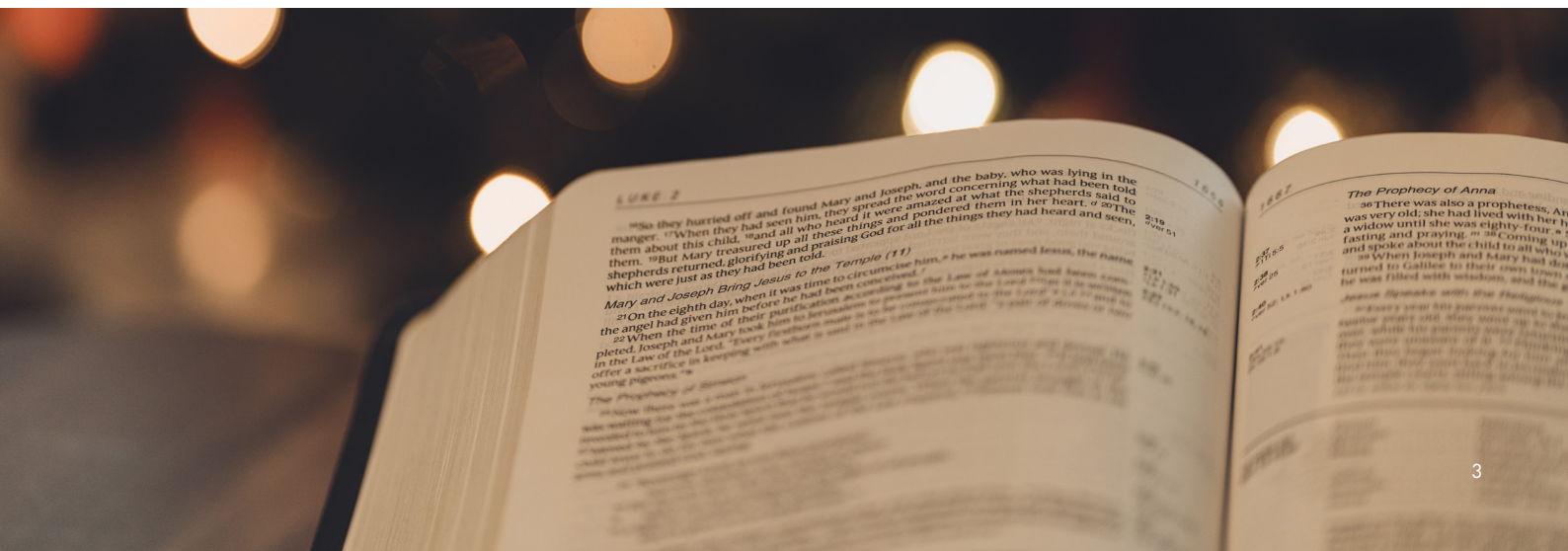
because nothing done in creation will be lost or forgotten”*. In this we have a powerful truth that captures both the “now” and “not yet” with purpose and meaning.


In the following pages, we’ve pulled together a multitude of stories from around our learning community that celebrate the “now” and “not yet” of our lives with Jesus. We visit Preschool, where children learn from visiting parents; we catch up with Hope School, where students design their own games. From vivid Australian poetry by Year 8 students, to creative Book Week costumes in the Junior School; from the foundations of Christian schooling, to our graduating class of 2023; from camps and excursions to celebrations like Grandparents Day – the breadth of learning across our community gives us much to be thankful for.

So, it is my hope that as you sit down with a hot drink over this edition of Our Place, that you will encounter the wonder of Jesus in our midst, and join me in celebrating the beautiful work of our students.

Yours in Christ,
Dave Johnston

* Quote from Chris Watkins, Biblical Critical Theory: How The Bible’s Unfolding Story Makes Sense of Modern Life and Culture, page 556.





Today, I dared
To call Him Father
And walk into
His arms held wide for me

And the universe hushed
And the angels sang
As one of His children
Dared to look
Into His face.

Today I dared
To look into His face
And saw the gentle smile
He turned on me

And the universe hushed
And the angels sang
As one of His children
Dared to give
Her fears and hurts to Him.

Today I dared
To give my fears and hurts to Him
And heard His voice
Speak words of freedom

And the universe hushed
And the angels sang
As one of His children
Found freedom
And rested in His arms.

Today I dared
To rest in the arms of my Father
And the eyes of my heart were enlightened
And I knew His incomparably great power.

By Vicki Williams
Assistant Principal



Five minutes with Paul Dowse

Paul has recently joined our team as the new Property Manager. We caught up with him to learn a little more about him and his connection to Wycliffe.

Can you tell us a bit about yourself and your family?

I have a wonderful wife, Kate, and five children: Ava (9), James (8), Imogen (6), Lucy (5) and Benjamin (1). Three of our kids are at Wycliffe in Primary school and I dearly love that I get to be around them and see them grow. We have lived locally in the mountains for quite a while now and we love the community.

What do you enjoy doing for fun?

I love sports - I mostly enjoy golf and watersports. As a family we often head out on adventures and explore different places, we love riding bikes and taking walks to the park.

How long have you been part of the Wycliffe Community?

Five years now. The kids have loved being here and have a thriving spiritual connection and a great community of friends, and now I get to share in more of their day to day life being here for work - although the kids keep raiding my lunchbox so there are some downsides to working at their school!

What drew you to this role in the school?

This was a real blessing of the Lord and something I am grateful for. I had been going through a season where I was seeking God's direction but wasn't seeing any opportunities open up,

which was frustrating. I then began working onsite at Wycliffe doing some contracting work, which I was enjoying, and when the role came up, I was inspired to become a more permanent member of the Wycliffe community. It's been a great transition into the school with the support of David and the whole Wycliffe community. The reception I've had has been very warm and I'm already getting positive feedback on the work that we are completing, which is great. I'm really enjoying it.

What's your favourite part of working at Wycliffe?

Being closer to home is wonderful, as in my previous roles I've had to do lots of traveling. Working for international companies, I have spent much of my career travelling interstate and overseas so being closer to family has been amazing. However, there isn't just one favourite thing. I love devotions in the morning, the lovely outlook of the staff that I work with, seeing the students - not just mine, but all of them - thriving in the community, and seeing that I can make a difference.

What is your favourite Bible verse?

2 Corinthians 4:16-18: "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."

Meet our new school captains

LILLIAN ROBINSON

Could you talk about your journey of faith?

I've grown up in a Christian family, so my faith has always been such an important part of my life.

It's hard to pinpoint exactly when my faith became **my** faith. At some point, many years ago now, I realised just how important God is in my life and everything simply... clicked.

I've been trying to improve my faith ever since, and, to say it in an unnecessarily fancy way, it has been like a little flame always growing and providing a warm encouragement for me to live my life in a Godly way.

How would you like to impact other students and the wider community?

When I was younger, I loved all the different events and special days the school had to offer. They've been some of my favourite memories to look back on. Those all came from our wonderful teachers, and the Leadership Team, which is part of what encouraged me to join it. I would love to be able to provide that same joy to our community, providing lasting memories that people can always relate to Wycliffe and the tight knit relationships they were able to build here.

What are your personal goals for the coming year?

This coming year I would like to successfully finish Year 12 and help the Leadership Team bring happiness and fun to our community through the many events we have come up with!

Oh, and definitely finish as many books as possible.

What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

The best piece of advice I've ever received has come from my parents. When I was much younger, they always told me to ask for help when I needed it. At the time, I hadn't fully appreciated how true this is. If I don't understand something or can't do it alone, why suffer in silence when I could simply ask someone who has the experience behind them to give me a hand?

What do you like to do in your free time?

I have a few different things I like to do. My favourite two are most well known among my peers and family: volleyball, and reading. Other than that, I love to play board and video games, particularly if I can do it with a group!

JESSE NOBLE

Could you talk about your journey of faith?

My entire life I've always been close to and around church and Christianity, growing up in a Christian family, being dragged to events and meetings I never wanted to go to. As I got older, I had my first encounter with God at a summer camp that changed my life. Since then, I get the opportunity to play the drums at my youth and church, as well as preach and run a discipleship group. I continue to grow closer to God everyday, stepping in faith into the path he has laid for me.

How would you like to impact other students and the wider community?

I would love to see our school community grow together as a whole, Junior and Senior, being able to nurture each other as we move through school, being able to help each other find



fellowship and have friendships not just within year groups but all throughout the school. I believe that growing closer to others can help you grow closer to God.

What are your personal goals for the coming year?

My personal goals for the coming year are to step into what God has set out for me and have the confidence and faith in that to take me places I couldn't have ever believed or thought I could go. Whether that is university, a gap year on the other side of the world or staying right where I am as God works in me, my personal goal is to keep following what God has for me.

What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

The best advice I've ever received from many people including family, friends and pastors, has been to trust God with anything and everything, to not lean on my own understanding but do all things with faith in God. That advice helps me with everything that I go on doing.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I enjoy drumming, hanging out with friends and family, football, my church and youth group and just having a great time.



STUDENT LEADERS

PREVIOUS PAGE: The newly instated School Captains and Vice Captains for 2023-2024. From left to right: Annabelle, Nathan, Jesse, Lillian, Zoe.

THIS PAGE, ABOVE: In Term 4, the new Student Leadership team, made up of students from Years 10 to 12, had their first training day at Glenbrook, which included team building activities, hearing from a guest speaker, and planning for the coming year.

THIS PAGE, RIGHT: At the Year 11 Celebration Assembly, student leaders entering Year 12 received their badges.



Learning Snapshot
Celebrating Year 11



Julie Taylor
Preschool Teacher/Director

It takes a village

I am sure everyone has heard the African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child.” In our context the Preschool and school community is our “village” and together we contribute to, and work towards, these little children becoming creative and confident and successful lifelong learners.

We know that parents and families are the children’s first and most influential educators. Within our “village” is an interesting and diverse range of parents, all with different interests, skills, and gifts.

In a spirit of partnership, and with an awareness of what a great blessing and privilege it is, parents may share those interests, skills, and gifts as they participate in and contribute to the educational program offered at Preschool.

Over the years many willing, enthusiastic, and brave parents have brought in different pets to show the children, including ducklings, puppies, guinea pigs, budgerigars, and a central bearded dragon. Parents have played music for the children on the guitar or saxophone. They have shared Aboriginal perspectives, cooked Indian food wearing a sari, and made water rockets during Science Week. One mother was the author of two children’s books and read these to the children.

In 2023 our Preschool program has again been enriched

by learning opportunities enthusiastically shared with the children by families. These experiences have included:

- the bathing of Hamish’s baby brother, five-month-old Archie;
- learning more about chickens when Levi’s three five-week-old chicks came to visit with his mum (their names were Sonny, Boss Baby and Robot Catcher);
- harvesting honey with a past Preschool family (the Wrights);
- Lucy T’s dad performing an interesting and engaging musical experience as he relived his show days as Remy’s Music Machine;
- Senior Constable Wilson bringing in a police car and other police apparatus to show the children (Lillian was so excited her dad came to Preschool dressed in his uniform);
- Laurel and her mum bringing in Lara, their lovely ten-week-old groodle.

We thank the families of our preschoolers, and the families within our school community, for their valuable contribution, in many ways, to our rich, play based educational program.

Only with you are we truly a “village,” truly a community, all part of God’s family, working together to develop a growth mindset and learning dispositions in these littlest of learners.

Julie Taylor





Learning journeys in Hope

As we reflect on the accomplishments of this semester in Hope School, we are delighted to share the exciting journey of discovery and growth that our students have undertaken. This semester, we've seen our students embracing the attitude of curiosity and developing the skills to learn independently and collaboratively.

One of the highlights has been the project work students across all grades engaged in throughout Semester 2. This approach allowed them to delve deeper into key learning areas. It allowed them to continue developing social skills as they worked together to apply their knowledge in real-life contexts.

With a focus on play, students fostered creativity and autonomy. The Amethyst and Topaz students created wooden games. By combining practical timber skills with positive peer interactions, they learned new skills and demonstrated the power of innovative strategies when working independently and cooperatively. This allowed for positive peer interactions and empowered a sense of resourcefulness and resilience as they faced challenges and changes within their game creations.

Throughout the semester, the Sapphire students have also spent time in a creative game creation process, using their

critical thinking skills and showing autonomy in their learning journey. They practiced active listening with their peers, fostering an environment where different viewpoints were acknowledged and integrated into collaborative problem-solving.

The explorations continued in the Emerald and Ruby classes, where students investigated habitats in geography, delved into the lifecycles of living things in science, and observed the local bird and insect populations around the school. The result was a series of student-initiated, student-designed, and collaborative projects showcasing their understanding and the creativity with which they applied their knowledge to create "bug hotels, lizard hotels, bee homes and bird feeders".

As we celebrate these achievements, we extend our deepest gratitude to the partnership with families and the unwavering commitment of our dedicated staff. Together, we have created an environment where curiosity thrives, independence is fostered, and learning is a lifelong adventure.

Here's to a semester filled with growth, discovery, and the joy of learning!

Sally Arthur
Hope Emerald Teacher







SENSORIAL

Hope Ruby visited the Cultural Centre at Katoomba to see the art exhibition Sensorial. The students loved the interactive nature of the exhibition that stimulated all their senses. We participated in a workshop and followed up with a picnic at Wentworth Falls to see a place we have studied in Geography. The bus trip was also a highlight!

Tamara Nicholls and Sharon Fryer
Hope Ruby Teachers





The Creation Oasis

As we look towards 2024 and beyond, we are continuing to develop our school grounds. As part of this, a project was undertaken this year to completely renovate our K-2 playground. Our talented property team, along with contractors, teachers, and volunteers, spent a lot of time planning and constructing a new, experience-based play area, emphasising natural materials and organic shapes. The aim was to create a space where children could explore their abilities, use their imagination, and play in different ways amidst a tactile, natural setting. Sandpits, pretend kitchens,

stepping stones, and a miniature river were all incorporated into an elegant, flowing design.

The result, dubbed “the Creation Oasis”, was unveiled in Term 3. God’s providence was evident throughout the construction process in the way that so many complex threads came together quickly to make this happen. It has been a joy to witness how our children have engaged with this new space, and how its creative design has fostered exploratory, self-directed play.



Christian education in six minutes

Chris Parker shares some insights about the core values of a Christian school.

When first challenged to write this article, my first inclination was to begin with what Christian education isn't. I imagined suggesting things like it not being principally about: protecting children from "the world" and its evil ideas; weighting learning towards Bible history, biblical doctrine, and Christian character; high quality "normal" education with Christian faith wrapped around it; an opportunity for

evangelism; or... my mind was racing.

However, if I only have six minutes of your time, then let me focus on what is the vision of Christian education—the vision of the founding parents of our schools. Such an exploration should start with the sometimes-under-emphasised reality of the non-neutrality of life and learning.

NOTHING IS NEUTRAL

There are no subjects in the timetable, practices in the classroom, events in the calendar, habits of the teacher, resources chosen, policies written, or curricula embraced that are completely neutral. Everything in this world has a vision or ideology at its core that sets a direction that those exploring it may be pulled toward. This may include notions of (or pulls toward) a definition of success in life, or the purpose of life and living, or where ultimate truth can be found, or what is good character, or the origins of the universe, or personal and cultural “salvation”, etc.

There is no denying that these pulls are often subtle—consider the ideologies hidden in the teaching of times tables in maths. Sometimes they are far more overt—consider a graduation ceremony and how the event is structured, and the language used in the speeches. However, they are always there in some form, and will be having a formational impact. Deep assumptions are always driving the choices made and the motivations for what is hoped to be achieved.

That nothing is neutral is deserving of special attention when we are considering the early formation of children’s core beliefs, motivations, and visions for life. These are formed through their learning about the world. If nothing is neutral, then the question of what narrative we want shaping the content and practices of the learning context for our children—and the shaping of the educational community they are embraced in—becomes crucial.

A NARRATIVE OF LIFE AND PURPOSE

The founding parents of Christian schools acknowledged that there are many narratives shaping us and our children, and the more secular a society becomes the more “pulls” away from God and His revealed purpose, wisdom, and truth are woven into these narratives. Hence, an education that deliberately seeks to have the full revelation of the Bible provide the grounding assumptions, tendencies, and understandings behind all that is done, thought, and felt, is a beautiful and deeply true education—a Christian education.

The biblical narrative pulls us toward a learning that is wrapped in the stunning, counter-cultural truth that this world is not random and without purpose, but has been designed, loved, and made by God. Humans are, likewise, not random and without purpose, but have been made with a likeness to the Creator and with a unique role as stewards of the creation and its cultural potential.

Woven into this hopeful vision for life and purpose is a profound explanation for why there is so much wrong, or at least not quite right, in the world and in our lives. Original human rebellion, with the resultant cracks in the order of things, has tainted all human life and flowed into every nook and cranny of the cultural creation. This fundamental truth provides an

intense clarity about life and world that is significantly lacking in other narratives. These alternative gospels may appear to offer hope. However, their grounding is often fleeting, shallow, and self-serving.

The depth of the Christian narrative is found in the profound hope it provides—its comprehensive solution to all that is wrong in the world (and in the human heart). It speaks of the Creator’s plan to redeem, restore, and reconcile all things through His entering creation as the man, Jesus. His death and resurrection bring redemption to the world, to people, and to all that is just not quite right. When an educational community intentionally places this counter-cultural truth at the centre of all that is thought, felt, and done, it offers a Christian education—an education that is often referred to with the shorthand phrase, “Christ-centred”.

DISCERNMENT AND TRANSFORMATION

Christian education recognises that nothing is neutral and that all things have assumptions, and visions, and pulls, and pushes either away from, or towards, God and His glory. It therefore seeks to not only preach and teach the good news of the biblical narrative, but it will also seek to shape all practices, policies, and pedagogy such that students will form a vision for a life and world shaped by the Bible and the centrality of the cross. It won’t achieve this by protecting students from the alternative narratives; how can our children resist being taken captive by hollow and deceptive philosophies if they are not made aware of them?

It will also lean, with all its creativity, into informing students of the beautiful big-picture vision of life and world centred around Jesus

Christian education will therefore lean into teaching its students discernment. To discern when they are being pulled away from the truth of life. To discern when they are being pushed toward shallow visions of “salvation” and purpose (self-autonomy, material success, technological utopia, etc.). It will also lean, with all its creativity, into informing students of the beautiful big-picture vision of life and world centred around Jesus. It will invite them into a life of hope-filled discernment. It will seek to inspire them to see not only their learning, but also their life, shaped by this vision—and all for God’s glory.

I suspect my time is up.

Chris Parker is one of our valued staff and serves as our Construction teacher in the Senior School. Chris is an author (*The Frog and the Fish*) and regularly speaks to parent, teacher and student groups addressing technology and its shaping influence.

This article originally appeared in the September 2023 edition of **Nurture** magazine.



100 DAYS OF KINDY

ABOVE AND RIGHT: To mark this milestone in their Big School journey, Kindy students dressed up as 100-year-olds and participated in "100"-themed literacy, STEM, craft and sports activities, and had a picnic on the oval.



KINDY TRANSITION

LEFT AND BELOW: In Term 4, we held a series of Transition Days, where future Kindy students could make connections with their teachers and classmates for next year, and participate in some fun activities together.





K-2 ATHLETICS CARNIVAL

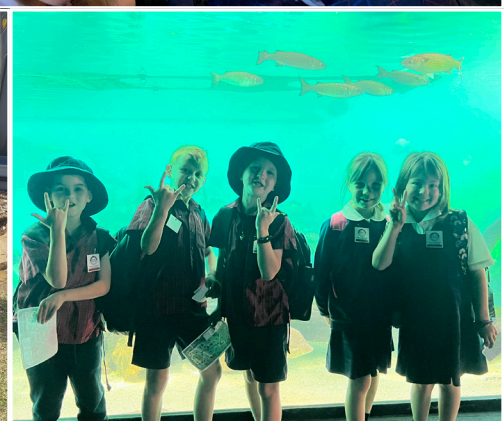
On a beautiful sunny day in Term 3, we held our K-2 Athletics Carnival. Students competed in a variety of fun activities, including obstacle courses, sack races, Oz Tag, Turbo Jav, and more. We were joined by many parents and friends, our Preschool kids, and even our Year 9 students, who stopped by to run some activities.





SYDNEY ZOO

Year 1 and 2 students loved their trip to Sydney Zoo, where they learned about many different kinds of animals and their habitats.





STAGE 2 ON CAMP

In Term 3, students from Years 3 and 4 visited Blue Gum Lodge for their Stage 2 camp. Activities included archery, low ropes, bush cooking, building catapults, rock climbing, and daily devotions. It was a great chance for students to make new connections, challenge themselves, and learn more about God and the Bible.





Learning in motion

This year, in our fortnightly email newsletter, School Talk, we began a new video series called Learning Snapshots. In each video, we cover an example of learning from somewhere around Wycliffe and Hope School. Over the past year, we've seen elective Drama students sculpting and painting their own theatre masks; a talented young team designing Lego robots; Year 7 students sharing the languages and stories of their family; Kindergarten making art from found materials in the Bush Classroom; and much, much more.

At the core of this series is a vision, shared between the staff here, to capture rich, engaged learning that goes beyond fulfilling the syllabus to growing our students as people. Each time we visit a new classroom, camera in hand, to capture some footage for our next video, we're struck by the depth of engagement from Wycliffe students, and the creativity of our teachers in devising new and interesting ways to explain the world to them. In many cases, students are applying their learning in service of our community; recently, we saw Mr Cooney's Project Based Learning class creating wooden

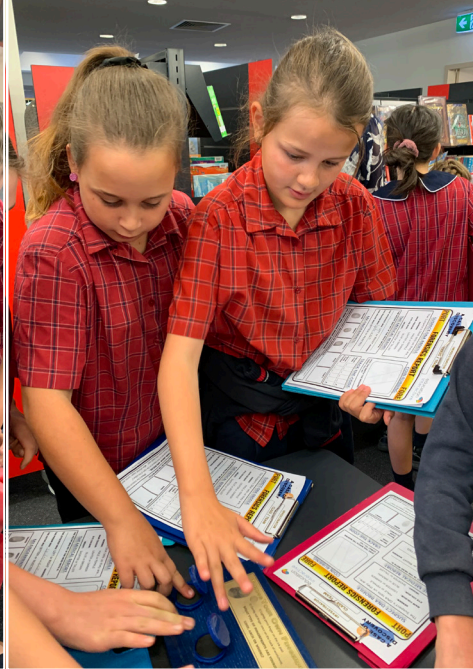
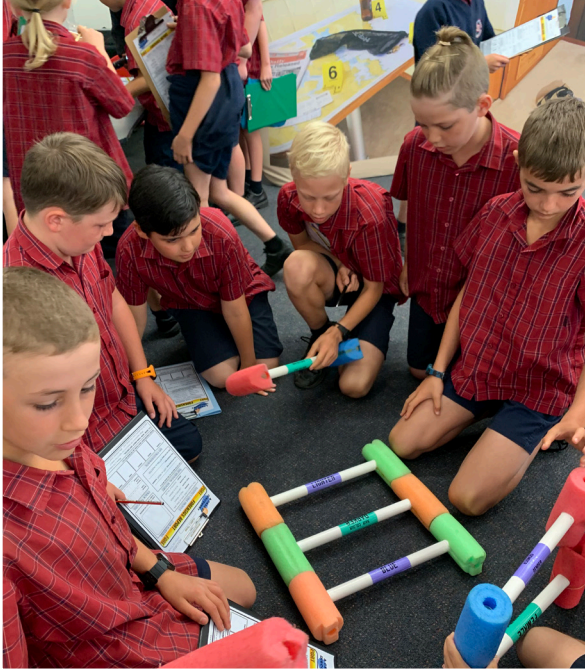
toys for Operation Christmas Child, and Food Tech students designing ornate cakes to share with staff. We always walk away with smiles on our faces.

We truly hope you've enjoyed this new series, and that it's helped you to get a glimpse of areas around the school that may otherwise feel far away. We hope that, by sharing in each others' successes, we may grow closer together as a community, and appreciate all the beautiful moments that occur in a child's journey through school.

Stewart Bishop and Mikaela Fowler
Communications Team

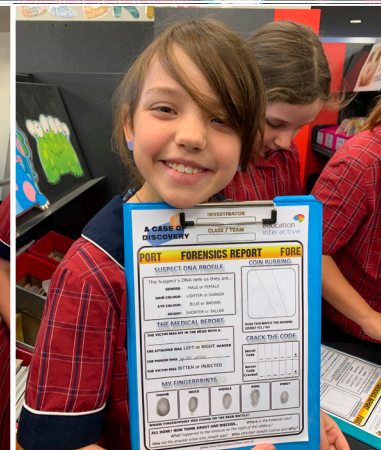
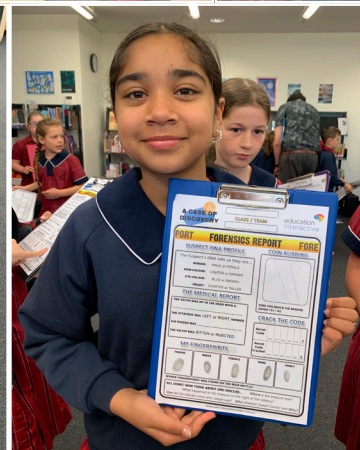
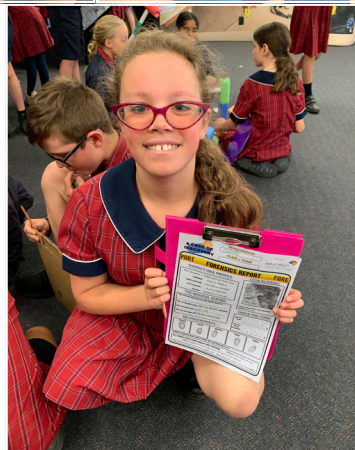


**Scan here to watch the
entire Learning Snapshot
series**



FORENSIC SCIENCE DAY

RIGHT AND ABOVE: Years 3 to 6 students learned about forensic techniques including fingerprinting, coin rubbing, and DNA profiling. They were tasked with cracking codes and gathering evidence to identify their target and solve a mystery.



FUNDRAISING FOCUS

LEFT AND BELOW: Our Sports Colours Day raised over \$500 for Destiny Rescue. At Jump Rope for Heart, Junior School classes showed off their skipping performances to an audience of parents and peers to raise awareness for heart health.



Go Thunder!

Stage 2 and 3 students from Wycliffe were given an exciting opportunity to attend a Cricket Clinic hosted by the Sydney Thunder Women's Big Bash League cricket team on Thursday 26th October. Following the clinic, students watched the first half of the WBBL game between Sydney Thunder and the Melbourne Renegades.

Students were involved in poster-making, a quiz, and classic catches, throwing accuracy, throwing speed, batting and fielding skills. Year 5 student Loren was fortunate enough to be chosen by former Australian Captain Alex Blackwell to

do the bat-toss for the game, which featured a run-out and catch courtesy of Sydney Thunder's Phoebe Litchfield. Sydney Thunder later on came out winners over the Melbourne Renegades by 8 wickets. The school was also presented with a Sydney Thunder cap signed by all members of the WBBL team.

Overall, an exciting day and amazing experience.

Jeff Brown
Primary Teacher



Read, Grow, Inspire

Every year, primary schools across Australia celebrate Book Week. This year's theme was "Read, Grow, Inspire", and students were invited to reflect on the power of stories to shape ourselves and how we view the world, and to inspire their own creative work.

On the day, Junior School students arrived in a variety of colourful costumes, which they showed off for parents in the costume parades. There were wizards, superheroes, kings and queens, unicorns, Pokémon trainers, Jedi, and dinosaurs.

Many of our teachers also got in on the action - Kindy teachers dressed up as key scenes from "We're Going On a Bear Hunt", and we had a whole field of sunflowers. We also held colouring and short story competitions, and saw a drama performance from Meerkat Productions.

Mr Cooney shared with students about God's own story - the Bible. He talked about how, through the Bible, we can discover our place in God's world, and grow and thrive to share that story with others.



COLOURING COMPETITION

LEFT: Junior School students took part in a colouring competition based on "Read, Grow, Inspire". Pictured are winner Harper (Year 5), and Lydia (Year 2).



Growing in love together

A new initiative in 2023 saw Junior School students developing relationship skills, reflecting on their gifts and values, and stepping up to lead their peers.

Part of the role of school in a child's life is helping them to grow not only in what they know, but in who they are. Beyond explaining maths, spelling, and geography, teachers face the challenge of instilling values of teamwork, resilience, and responsibility. At Wycliffe, even beyond this already formidable task, we also seek to grow our students in their understanding of God, and for them to find their place in a community centred around Christ.

In the latter half of 2023, a new program was announced to families, called Peer Support. Over six months of fortnightly sessions, Junior School students have participated in a series of activities focused on fostering leadership skills, building positive relationships, encouraging participation, and developing their God-given gifts.

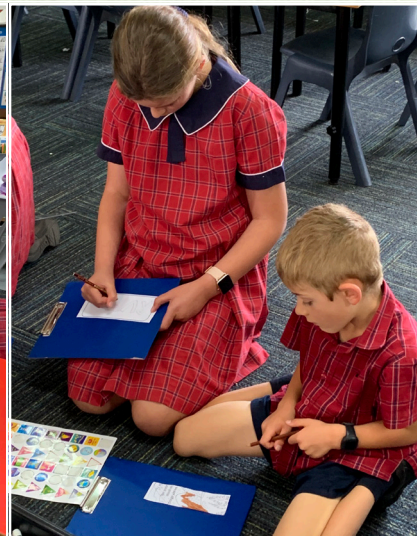
In Term 3, the sessions followed the curriculum developed by Peer Support Australia. Led by Year 5 and 6, students gathered in small groups and discussed strategies for resilience under the "Moving Forward" model of Peer Support. Upon forming their groups, they introduced themselves and developed a group agreement. In the second session, they were invited to discuss their strengths and how these

contribute to their achievements. As the program progressed, students considered stressful or difficult situations and made strategies for how they could respond with resilience. In Term 4, we shifted focus toward larger group activities, craft, and sports games. Students read picture books to each other, played outdoor ball games, and made their own Christmas decorations.

Throughout the Peer Support program, Year 5 and 6 leaders rose to the occasion of leadership, developing supportive relationships and displaying empathy and perspective on many occasions. Through the task of leading younger students, they were able to reflect on their own strengths and values, and consider how they could pass on the insights they have gained on their own journeys. Kindergarten to Year 4 students also benefited from making connections with older children. It is our hope that, as they grow up and move through the school, these connections will stay with them, and help them to feel a sense of belonging in the wider school community.

In the first letter to parents, Pippa Huxley drew on the vision encapsulated in Colossians 3:14 and summarised the goal of Peer Support: "If we are to be a community of love we must all put on love; we must build others this way for love is the perfect bond of unity... It is our prayer that God will use these sessions to build understanding, build love for one another and build others - build a community of belonging through relationships."







ACTIVITY PAGE

WORD PUZZLES

READ

Arrest
You're



Think

lun ch

million¹

BLOOD
WATER

CHRISTMAS WORD UNSCRAMBLE

NGELA _____

SEDSBLE _____

SUJES _____

LHEHTEEMB _____

YRMA _____

REMGNA _____

TSRA _____

HEJOPS _____

PEEKNNRIE _____

SINAMEW _____

SPOT THE 7 DIFFERENCES





SPORTS BEYOND SCHOOL

Wycliffe students have gone from strength to strength in the world of sports this year. In Terms 3 and 4, we have sent huge teams to zone and state carnivals, and some of our students have gone on to compete at the national level. Go team!





Reflections on country

Mrs Dawkins' Year 8 English students were tasked with writing their own poetry in response to "My Country" by Dorothea Mackellar. They drew on other responses about migrant and Indigenous voices, and their own feelings and perspectives about Australia.

Bush

The trees are watching,
muttering to themselves
the unknown secrets of the bush
their ancient trunks stretching
to the sky, begging for mercy
their leaves rustling,
whilst the wind races through them
tugging at the branches playfully
their roots reaching out across the ground
demanding to be noticed; watching, waiting.
Flowers dance to the breeze
waltzing to the music,
of the hidden bugs falling into a rhythmic beat
birds fly overhead in the calming blue sky
showing off their colours and
singing their beautiful songs
the grass waves at the fluffy delicate clouds
as shadows wander peacefully through the trees
confused at where they are; never standing still.
Fragrances waft up my nose
singing of joyful memories and lost friends
the breeze twirls around me
as shivers vibrate through my bones
the Aussie bush a whole other universe
as it lay peacefully still
getting the deep sleep it deserved.

By Madeline

Australia

The land that we stand,
The voices that keep me up,
Stuck inside a cage.

The land that we stand,
Of red, yellow and orange
These are our days now.

An early noon breeze,
Gently tickling my feet,
There I stood asleep.

The red cockle crowed,
But as the morning light rose,
That cockle didn't crow.

A day and a half,
In which I lived, looked and laughed,
With a grin looked face.

By Harrison

Your Country

Soaked clots of dirt
Yellow beating sun
Backyard games of cricket
- hardly ever fun

Snow in the summer
Cold rain through the day
Dry, feverish nights
Weather malleable like clay

Soft grainy beaches
A tourist's delight
Tall towering buildings
Speckled with lights

Though my body has always belonged to Australia
My mind cannot cease to fuel this failure

Through damp foggy mornings
And thick pebbled shores
I dream of a place
Where my mind knows no laws

And though I long for a strawberry tart
Australia does pull at the strings of my heart
And though I think of a cold rainy country
These red cracking borders, taunt me with their sundry

By Dara

Flood and Drought

Heat, rain, floods, drought
Rarely does she see a day, free from shock and doubt
The calming breeze would blow away her sorrow
And clear her mind of what happens past tomorrow
The trees should dance, and sway, and sing
Instead, they rupture from the rain and wind
On Monday the bush is withered and burnt
On Friday the shrubs drowned from the torrents
Forever you will hear her say
How she longs for the perfect day

By Eloise

Ode to Rain

The house is dark, the lights are out,
The silence broken by the eerie clock,
Absence of sound brings a drought,
Suddenly, I hear you knock.

You tap gently on the door,
Sleeplessness draws me forward,
Shivering down to my core,
Drops of blood fall on the sword.

Stepping into cold, frigid air,
water slips through my fingers,
Drizzling downpour down my hair.
A sad place where no sadness lingers.

The dark street echoes a shadow,
Feel the light wind begin to blow,
The street lights through the mist glow,
Know you are completely alone.

By Gabrielle



Learning about family

**“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”
- Psalm 139:13-14**

Being a parent is a wonderful privilege and a big responsibility. God tells us in the Bible that children are a precious gift from him to mums and dads, indeed to everybody. This semester, Mrs Goldsmith’s Child Studies Elective class have had a wonderful time together, exploring God’s gift of children and families, focusing on pregnancy, caring for newborn and older babies.

One of the blessings of Wycliffe being a Preschool to Year 12 school is that our students, both young and older, can spend time together. These “pracs” have been a highlight of the course, along with other highlights such as cuddles from babies who have visited our classes!

Enjoy some reflections from our Year 9/10 students.

What have you been learning about in Child Studies this semester?

“We’ve learned about pregnancy and earlier toddler years. We’ve discussed how babies develop and grow. I’ve learned about the amazing journey that women and babies go through during pregnancy.” - **Emily**

“I’ve learned about how to raise and look after children, infants and toddlers. Also, I learned about pregnancy.” - **Felix**



"We have learned how to read to younger children with expression and actions. We have learned about how to feed babies and look after them." - **Yu-Jen**

"We learned about different ways that babies eat, including baby-led weaning and traditional weaning which uses spoon feeding."

"We have had many visitors who are pregnant or who have babies. Our main visitor has been Tilly's neice, who we first met when she was a newborn. Now she is crawling and can eat solids!" - **Phoebe**

"We have learned about pregnancy, early childhood, child development and child safety." - **Olivia**

What are some of the "in-school practical experiences" you have had this semester?

"In Week 2, Tom, Harry, Ethan and I went to Preschool for our prac. It was very different seeing how they teach little kids and how they can get them to follow instructions. We built a jail with them and played tip." - **Riley**

"I was in Kindy Green reading to children. They also practiced sounding out words and spelling them."

"I worked with Hope Sapphire, which was a delight. We ran around and I read to some of the girls. I helped out in the drawing exercises. We built wire faces, I watched Bluey and miniature cooking videos. We discovered the different continents and learnt more about the Bible." - **Lily**

"My prac experiences were mainly with Kindy Green. Their class is full of laughter and children who are keen to learn. I mostly helped out with reading books with children. It was exciting listening to the kids reading and telling me their thoughts." - **Phoebe**

"Preschool, Kindy, the school café. We helped Mrs Emmanuel and Elise prepare and make Junior School lunches. We made fruit salads and bagged all the students' lunches." - **Harry**

"I have gone to Kindy Blue where I helped the children to read, do their work and play, and I helped them make things." - **Olivia**

"I have helped in 1 Red helping the students learn spelling and reading. I would sit with them and help them in Literacy lessons." - **Tom**

"Kindy Green was so enjoyable as I got to connect with all the children in their own ways." - **Abigail**

How has the Child Studies Elective broadened your understanding and appreciation of God's gift of children?

"This class has shown me about God's gift of children." - **Felix**

"This class has made me appreciate how unique God has made each and every child. It has also broadened my understanding of pregnancy and a child's development in the womb." - **Hannah**

"I know that children are a true blessing from God." - **Emily**

"I'm less scared of little kids." - **Yu-Jen**

"I learned about how God gives us food to fuel our bodies."

"Our class has really made me appreciate God's gift of children. I have always wanted to be a mum since I was little. After joining this class, I've learnt how to raise a child and this has made me want to have children of my own in the future..." - **Phoebe**

"I've learnt that having a child isn't all cupcakes and rainbows and the majority of parents find the first few weeks, as a new parent, very challenging." - **Abigail**

"This class has made me appreciate each and every small characteristic and stage of a child's life. I've learned that every stage holds a massive impact on a child's development."

Who were some of your class guest visitors this semester?

"Some of our guest visitors have been Georgia and Eleiah Emmanuel, Mr Smith and his daughter Grace, and Sheridan (a Wycliffe mum) with her daughters Katie and Chloe. These visits allowed us to observe each child's relationship with their

parents and helped us get more of an idea of what it's like to parent or care for children." - **Hannah**

"I enjoyed it when the twins came in. The lady was Mrs Goldsmith's friend and she told us about feeding and the twins' night routines." - **Yu-Jen**

"I learned that it is really hard to get ready and go out and how much time it takes to be a parent. I got more of an idea about raising kids."

"... I enjoyed holding the babies. Our visitors helped me see the joys and the struggles with parenting."

"The visitors have helped me understand what it is like to be a parent with children that are newborns to toddlers." - **Ethan**

"Having guest visitors in our class was what I enjoyed most. Asking questions about struggles and happy moments, to holding adorable babies. This class has been so much fun and I'm definitely looking forward to doing it again next year." - **Phoebe**





SCULPTURE ELECTIVE

RIGHT AND ABOVE: Led by Mr Mitchell, the talented Year 9 and 10 Sculpture students have worked on an increasingly ambitious series of projects. Early in Term 3, we displayed their wall sculptures at reception. Since then, they've been working on collaborative major projects, including a mythical creature based on a design by a Year 5/6 student.



FOOD TECH

LEFT AND BELOW: In Term 4, Mrs Plane's Year 9 and 10 Food Tech class designed their own desserts inspired by Bible stories, with stunning (and delicious) results.



Learning Snapshot
Bible Inspired Desserts



ANNUAL YOUTH THEATRE FESTIVAL

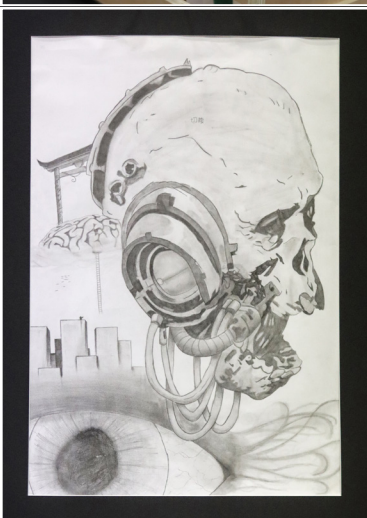
Each year, local high schools join together to present the Annual Youth Theatre Festival at the Q Theatre in Penrith. This year's theme was "Welcome Home", and Wycliffe students from Years 9, 10 and 11 Drama performed a piece called "The Clock on the Hearth" to packed matinee and evening audiences. It was a great opportunity for these young actors to devise, rehearse, and perform an original dramatic piece.





HSC VISUAL ARTS

For their final HSC projects, our Visual Art students worked in a variety of mediums and produced a stunning collection of artworks. These were showcased to our community at the Year 12 TAS/CAPA night.



Learning Snapshot
Year 12 Visual Arts



Farewelling our class of 2023

I've been a part of the Wycliffe community for the past 14 years, from Preschool to Year 12. I have been honoured to see my peers grow in faith and knowledge.

Wycliffe has provided many opportunities that my peers and I are deeply thankful for. From camps to the snow to somewhere in the middle of nowhere near Dubbo. Camps like these were where we grew closer together.

Looking back you can see the dedication that our teachers have put into our learning. I am very thankful to all the teachers that have helped not just me, but my peers around me, get to where we all are today. Without the teachers, we

wouldn't be the individuals we are today.

Even though there were many severely stressful moments in my schooling, like trying to finish an assignment on diseases for Biology, or trying to figure out what the wording of an assignment meant for English, I still loved my schooling life.

To the people who have just started their own schooling lives, finishing school may look like it will take forever, but the time will fly by. So make sure you enjoy the ride.

Duncan Hare
Class of 2023



GRADUATION CEREMONIES

PREVIOUS PAGE AND ABOVE: Celebration activities in the final week of Year 12 concluded with our Graduation Assembly and Evening, where we heard reflections from students and teachers, and enjoyed musical items by Year 12.

THIS PAGE, BELOW: The final celebration for our class of 2023 was the Year 12 Formal, held at Twin Creeks Golf Course.





FATHER'S DAY

Our annual Father's Day breakfast saw a record turnout of over 400 community members generously served by our team of volunteer staff and students. It was a great opportunity to enjoy time together, and to celebrate the father figures of our community.





GRANDPARENTS DAY

In Term 4, we welcomed many very special guests to our school to celebrate Grandparents Day. It was lovely to spend some time appreciating everything grandparents do for us and enjoying a picnic together. A particular highlight was the drama performance by 5/6 Black, which was all about the wisdom of grandparents.



Find your place, find your purpose

Wycliffe Christian School and Wycliffe Hope School

