



## Important Dates

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MSS - Student  
Leadership Camp  
(Week 2)

Monday 5 February 2024

R-12 - Beginning of  
Year Liturgy (Week  
2)

Friday 9 February 2024

MSS - Ash  
Wednesday  
Assembly (Week 3)

Wednesday 14 February  
2024

Year 12 -  
Commissioning  
Ceremony (Week 3)

Wednesday 14 February  
2024

Year 9 - TRJ  
Departure  
Ceremony (Week 5)

Thursday 29 February 2024

Open Day (Week 7)

Thursday 14 March 2024

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## Principal's Update



*Top Row: Eugenia Stopyra (Director of Spirituality (6-12), Shane Dowling (Head of Middle School), Ceri Stanley (Head of Junior School), Craig Bonnett (Director of Wellbeing R-12), Deirdre Walters (Head of Senior School), Jack Griguol (Head of Curriculum and Learning), Steven Brombal (Business Manager).*

*Front Row: Jane Bailey (Director of Spirituality (R-5), Daniel Ganama (Deputy Principal), Darren Pitt (Principal), Oliver Harms (Director of Student Life), Lorna Starrs (Director of Teacher Development)*

Welcome to the new school year at St Columba College.

Our theme for 2024 is the year of *Striving for Excellence*, in the spirit of 2 Chronicles 15:7 which says, “*But as for you, be strong and do not give up for your work will be rewarded.*”

And what a strong start we have had. Our students have returned with good energy, and our staff are energised, purposeful and already giving them excellent and worthwhile learning opportunities.

In some ways too, 2024 is a year of renewal. I write to you as the new Principal, and I am excited to build on the excellent work of Ms Leanne Carr and find new ways to help the College excel. We have new people in key roles – Mr Daniel Ganama as Deputy Principal, Mr Jack Griguol as Head of Curriculum and Learning and Ms Ceri Stanley as Head of Junior School – and this week at our first assemblies I was delighted to introduce our new teachers and ESO staff. While they bring diverse talents, skills, and experiences, what they have in common is a fierce drive to help the students at this school strive for excellence. We have a new Middle School building, fresh programs underway, and a strategic planning process has begun. These are exciting times.

In fact, whilst the students only returned to the campus this week, bringing all the personality and noise and energy that makes schools so much fun, the staff have been hard at work for some time to make sure we were ready for their arrival. The meeting rooms were abuzz with energy last week, as the staff returned and got classroom and programs ready for your children. Of course, we are indebted as ever the excellent work of our grounds team, Mr Kerrin Thom, Mr Shane Connolly, Mr Shaun Leathley, Mr John Steele and, newly appointed to the team, Mr Alex Ngann, who have pulled off some miracles over the break to ensure that the buildings and grounds were ready for occupancy.

The phrase *Striving for Excellence* is such an important one. Excellence is a personal standard. We are not striving to fill the school with students who get nothing less than grade As, but rather we are seeking to harness and instil in every person a desire to work hard to achieve their best. We have high standards, because we believe in the ability of the students to meet them and be excellent.

Each of our students is excellent in different ways, reflective of their unique gifts and talents. Some excel in the classroom, some on the sporting field or on the stage, some in leadership or the service of others. Our commitment as a school is to find and harness the strengths in every person, so that they can fulfil their potential and thrive as members of this community and then into adulthood.

I would like to finish with an invitation to all parents and caregivers. Next Friday 9 February (Week 2), we will have our Beginning of the Year Liturgy in the College Gymnasium. This is a wonderful and celebratory way to start the year. It is particularly special for our Year 12

and Reception students who are at the opposite ends of their St Columba journeys, and they will process into the Liturgy together. If you would like to attend, we would love to have you here.

**Mr Darren Pitt**

Principal



Open Day - Thursday 14 March



Families are invited to our 2024 Open Day event on Thursday, 14 March.

We encourage our St Columba College community to share the event information with family and friends who are interested in attending. More information and the registration form can be found on our website:

**[Register Online](#)**

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