

THE IRIS

EDITION #01 FEBRUARY 2024



A FRENHAM SCHOOLS
MAGAZINE



Challenge and Strive
Message from the Head

Staff Profile

Merryn Wigger
School Psychologist

Studies

Assessment Changes
2024

Master Plan

Refurbished classrooms
in the North Wing
New playground at
Frensham Junior School

Welcome Iris

School Therapy Dog



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A Frensham Schools Magazine
Edition #01 – Term 1
16 February 2024

“I would like to challenge you to get involved and remind you that Frensham is a place of creativity and opportunity to find and utilise your kindness, honesty, energy, dreams and of course your spirit.”

– Phoebe Gilder –
Frensham Head Girl 2024





Challenge and Strive

In her address to Frensham on the first Friday of the year, Head Girl, Phoebe Gilder, urged our students to embrace all the school has to offer, "I would like to challenge you to get involved and remind you that Frensham is a place of creativity and opportunity to find and utilise your kindness, honesty, energy, dreams and of course your spirit."

In my opening address to staff, at the Professional Learning days before the start of the year, we also set a challenge. We asked them to consider the importance of 'striving' in an educational context, noting that human beings feel most alive when they are courageously striving to overcome challenge and struggle and that both staff and students get their sense of self-esteem and self-worth from being in the trenches, being forced to exhibit courage and evolving so that we can overcome struggle.

Linking the two challenges - you cannot strive for something unless you are involved - one of our goals this year is to make sure our students and staff are involved in the life of the school as much as possible and that this involvement is appropriate for each person.

We also know that highly functioning schools have highly invested communities - this is one of the strengths of Frensham and Frensham Junior School. So, I would also like to challenge our parents to be involved as much as possible. Take the opportunity to be on campus when you can, connect with your fellow parents, get to know your children's friends and their families and connect with your children's teachers. Experience has taught us that productive

collaborations between family and school require parents and teachers to recognise the critical importance of each other's participation in the life of the child through the School.

I trust that everyone has had an exciting start to the year. We look forward to working with you throughout 2024.

Mr Geoff Marsh

Head of Frensham

Head of Frensham Schools



Maggie Ryan (left) and Phoebe Gilder (right), Frensham Vice Head Girl and Head Girl for 2024

North Wing Classrooms Renovation

During the Christmas holiday, while students were away on a well-earned break, Frensham was still a hive of activity. The painters were painting, the builders were building, and the grounds staff were busy rejuvenating our gardens and grounds. Many projects were taking place here at Frensham; it was a time of revitalisation. One exciting project during this time was the renovation of three of the North Wing classrooms. The Board of Governors has committed to seeing all the classrooms in the North and West wings renovated and upgraded over the next three years. The three classrooms on the middle floor of the North Wing are the first stage in this project.

As you will see from the photos, the classrooms have had a complete refresh and the results are impressive. A great deal of thought has gone into these renovations. They have been designed by Frensham's long standing architects, TKD Architects, who have been working with Frensham for over 20 years. All aspects of the rooms have been changed to allow for better teaching and learning. The rooms support interactive learning opportunities and there is no longer a front of the room because all wall surfaces are now covered with writable whiteboards and pin boards which allow for presentations and displays. The IT equipment has all been upgraded to the latest technology on offer with large interactive audio-visual displays for teacher/student presentations. The acoustics have been optimised through sound rated material on the ceiling and floors, and ventilation has been improved with new ceiling fans.

Environmental sustainability has also been considered with the use of sensor driven LED lighting, carpet which is carbon neutral and 100% recyclable and the use of fans and acoustic materials which have all been manufactured from recycled PET plastic.

From an aesthetic perspective, the walls have been changed from green to a muted white making the rooms lighter and brighter, and the beautiful, heritage windows have been highlighted through careful craftsmanship which created the arches and timberwork surrounds.

Finally, we have to talk about the flooring which is not normally something I would get excited about. The carpet is from Milliken Carpet's Water Yuludarla (Water Dreaming) commercial carpet collection. This carpet's design is the result of a collaboration of the Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance and the National Aboriginal Design agency and it is based on the artwork of Gumbaynggirr artist, Brentyn Lugnan. The carpet is sustainably produced, acoustically enhanced and offers health and wellness benefits. What more could you ask for from a floor covering!

Frensham's Head of Property, Malcolm Boyes said, "The project team worked tirelessly over the vacation break to deliver three beautiful rooms with meticulous detailing. It was a wonderful project to lead knowing the heritage and history of the spaces and the memories and stories they create for every Frensham girl."

Our Head, Geoff Marsh, is extremely happy with the new classrooms, stating: "We are very excited with the results of the Stage 1 renovations and we are looking forward to teaching in these rooms for a term or two, which will inform the future stages."

We urge you to take a look at classrooms 1 – 3 when you are next visiting Frensham - you won't be disappointed.

Tina Griffin-Hunt
Director of Marketing
and Communications





The rooms support interactive learning opportunities... all wall surfaces are now covered with writable whiteboard and pin boards which allow for presentations and displays.



Merryn Wigger - School Psychologist



I am passionate about empowering young women, walking through adolescence with them, and learning from them.

I started at Frensham in Term 4 2023 in the role of School Psychologist. I was a latecomer to the field of psychology, having previously worked as a zookeeper. I have always been interested in people, and ironically, the more I worked with animals the more I became curious about human behaviour. I wanted to understand and empower people, and so I made the decision to leave my zookeeping career and pursue a career in psychology. Prior to Frensham I was working in co-educational public schools and took a short 'break' on maternity leave in 2022. My daughter motivates me to be the psychologist I would want her to see if she were ever in need.

I am passionate about empowering young women, walking through adolescence with them, and learning from them. Working with students at the junior school never feels like work; they are a breath of fresh air and I love helping little people navigate big emotions. My practice is guided by research, the young person's goals and the advice of my mentors.

A quote I keep in my mind which helps guide my practice is by Brene Brown:

"In order to empathise with someone's experience you must be willing to believe them as they see it and not how you imagine their experience to be."

I absolutely love living in the Southern Highlands. Having grown up surrounded by bushland, the move here eight years ago was an easy choice. Seeing my first wild breeding pair of Gang Gang Cockatoos, as well as a koala in the wild, has been a highlight.

When I am not at work I enjoy running, podcasts, seeing my friends, and hanging out with my family.



Assessment Changes 2024

Assessment is a central part of the rhythm of a school term. To determine what has been achieved in the learning process, teachers utilise assessment to measure learning against the learning goals.

Often, students and parents place more emphasis on assessment than they should. The goal of most assessments that occur at Frensham is not to rank, sort or judge a student. Assessment forms the bridge between what is intended to be taught and how the student has processed this knowledge, skill or process. Thus, a strong assessment program will not only measure student learning, but support it.

Ensuring Frensham uses a strong assessment program is essential to our continued academic success. As we look at 2024 and beyond, we have decided to make some changes to our assessment program, with the goal of ensuring we have a challenging curriculum that gives room for our students to strive for their best. Further, we are aiming to increase the level of transparency with students and their families, about their progress and their next steps in learning.

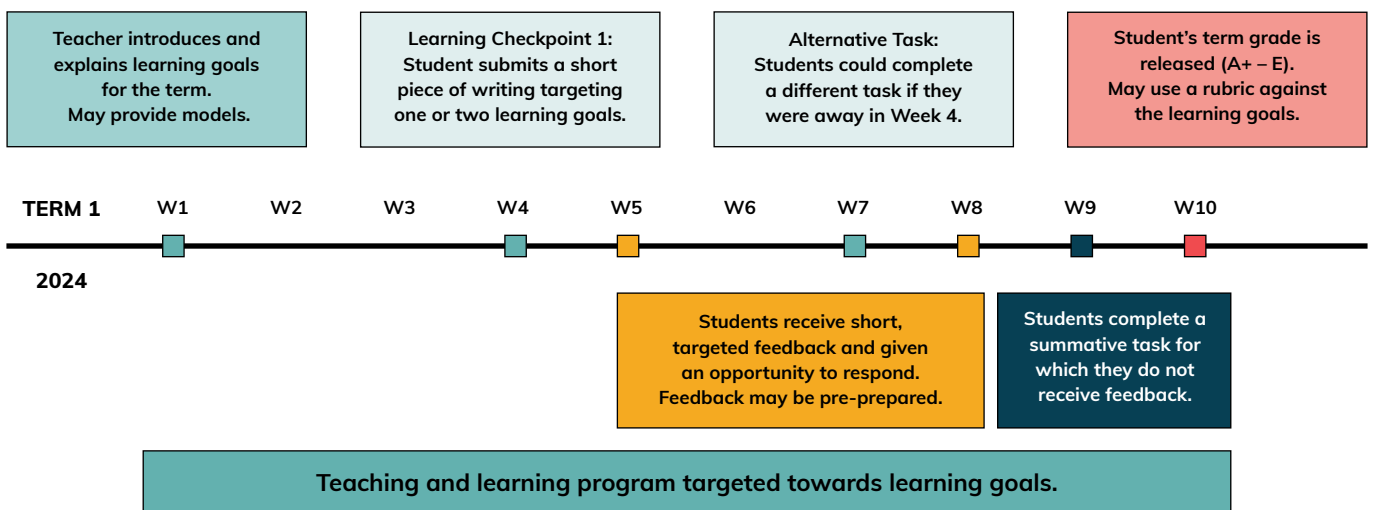
The Frensham program for assessment across a term is outlined below, and includes the changes for 2024.

Learning Checkpoints (7 – 10)

Learning checkpoints will replace ‘formative tasks’ as our key feedback point during the term. These are small, contained tasks designed to give a student, and their parents, an update on how they are tracking against their learning goals. These tasks will provide written feedback, often along with an annotated work sample, that points students towards the next steps in their learning. It is important that parents review these learning checkpoints, as they can form the basis of powerful learning conversations.

Learning checkpoints will be available for all students in Years 7 – 10 and their families on Schoolbox by the middle of each term. Learning checkpoints are not recorded on 2024 assessment calendars.

ASSESSMENT PROGRAM ACROSS A TERM



Assessment Changes 2024

Summative Assessment Tasks (7 – 12)

Summative assessment tasks, such as tests, essays, major works and research assignments will be given to all students in Years 7 – 12. These tasks are designed to benchmark students against statewide standards and offer an opportunity for students to display the extent of their learning through challenging tasks and to bring resolution to learning programs. Summative Assessment results for Years 7 – 10 will be a grade (note below), while Years 11 and 12 will be marks. Results will be posted to Schoolbox no later than two weeks following an assessment task. All years can see their 2024 assessment calendars, which contain the weeks and specific dates of their upcoming assessment tasks.

Expanded Grade System (7 – 10)

In 2024 the Frensham grading system will see some adjustment to allow for more granularity when assessing students against common standards. The inclusion of the '+' range of grades is to ensure students and families have a clear understanding of student achievement.

Students in Years 10 and 11 will receive a Record of School Achievement through NESAs. These RoSA grades will remain at the A – E level outlined by NESAs in the Common Grade Scale.

A breakdown of the grade, aligned with what they represent, can be found below.

Mr Nathan Bessant

Director of Studies

Grade	NSW Education Standards Authority	Explanation
A+	The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a very high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply these skills to new situations.	Student operating above their stage level.
A		Students operating at the upper band of their stage level.
B+	The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.	Student operating above expectations for their stage level.
B		Student often operating at their stage level, showing signs of deep understanding.
C+	The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.	Student operating at stage level, with sporadic moments of excellence.
C		Student often operating at stage level, though can be inconsistent.
D+	The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills.	Student reaches stage level at times, though is more often below stage expectations
D		Student is operating below Stage level.

Please contact us with any questions about our new assessment program and broader curriculum.





Students' Dedication Shines Through with 84 Award Completions in 2023

As we welcome students back for the new academic year, there is an air of celebration and achievement in the air. The Duke of Edinburgh's International Awards program has witnessed an extraordinary milestone, as students collectively completed an impressive 84 awards in the previous academic year, marking the highest number since 2018.

This outstanding accomplishment highlights the dedication, perseverance and commitment of the students who embraced the challenges and opportunities presented by the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. The prestigious awards, designed to promote personal development and community engagement, have become a cornerstone of character-building within the education system.

School administrators and educators are expressing immense pride in the students' achievements, emphasising the positive impact these awards have on personal growth and community involvement. The Duke of Edinburgh's program is known for its diverse set of challenges encompassing physical activities, skill development, volunteering, and adventurous expeditions, fostering a holistic approach to education.



The Duke of Edinburgh's International Awards continue to inspire and shape the next generation, fostering well-rounded individuals ready to face the challenges of the future.

EXTRA SUBJECTS & CO-CURRICULAR



“I am delighted to witness such a remarkable achievement by our students. The Duke of Edinburgh’s Awards not only recognises their accomplishments but also instils values of resilience, teamwork, and a sense of responsibility,” says Shane Green, Coordinator of the Duke of Edinburgh’s International Awards program. “This accomplishment is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our students, supported by our committed staff members who guide and encourage them throughout their journey.”

The 84 completions in the past academic year reflect a significant increase from previous years, showcasing the growing enthusiasm and engagement of students in the Duke of Edinburgh’s program. The School has been

actively encouraging participation in extra-curricular activities, emphasising the long-term benefits of personal development and community service.

One of the key components of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Awards is the adventurous expedition, requiring participants to plan and undertake a journey in a wild or remote area. This not only develops their physical fitness but also enhances their navigation, teamwork, and problem-solving skills.

As the new academic year unfolds, we are eager to build upon this success and encourage even more students to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh’s program. The transformative impact on student’s lives, coupled with the sense of accomplishment and recognition, has solidified the program’s importance in the broader educational landscape. In celebrating the 84 Award completions in 2023, Frensham is not only recognising the achievements of individual students, it is also underscoring the value of holistic education that goes beyond the classroom. The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Awards continue to inspire and shape the next generation, fostering well-rounded individuals ready to face the challenges of the future.



Iris – Our School Therapy Dog

Last week our school therapy dog, Iris, commenced her onsite training program. Students and staff have been excited to see her on campus and we can't wait until she is a regular member of our everyday school life.

During visits with her handler, Mr Gregory, Iris is learning to become familiar with campus activities, the students, and the 'hum' of Frensham Junior School. Mr Gregory will undertake the PAT Dogs Australia training course and our Consultant Trainer from Cornerstone Companions will visit at regular intervals throughout the year to assist with the implementation of a School Therapy Dog.

Each class will complete Responsible Pet Ownership lessons to learn about the important responsibilities that come with having a dog working and playing alongside them in the classroom and playground. Welcome Iris!





Excitement filled the air on Day 1 of term, with students arriving to find Stage 1 of the playground development complete. Thanks to the generous support of our parent community and Winifred West Schools Foundation, the in-ground trampolines and dual tunnel slides of Stage 1 have been a big hit!

The Frensham Junior School playground development aims to encompass the physical, social and emotional needs of all students K-6 with a stimulating, accessible space to play, explore and grow. A range of elements are included in the project: flexibility, balance, variety, flow, sensory stimulation, creativity and challenge. All stages of the development will incorporate natural materials and plantings which complement the surrounding campus environment. We are looking forward to the commencement of the next stage of the project, for which is due for completion in 2025.



Sophie Simpson at the Shining Star Nursery and Daycare - Tanzania

Frensham's education is one of the best in the world. There are very few people who are privileged enough to receive this - and, over the holidays, I had the incredible opportunity to experience one of the furthest things from a Frensham education.

On the first of December, I flew 26 hours from Sydney to Arusha, in Tanzania - a large city close to the border of Kenya and a day's drive from Uganda. I was there for 3 weeks, arriving back home just before Christmas, volunteering with the Tanzania Host Experience in Childcare.

My placement was at the Shining Star Nursery and Daycare. They take babies from 3 months old to 5 years old kids - 50 kids daily, with 3 teachers total on staff and only 2 at the school each day - Teacher Esther, Teacher Annette and Teacher Rose - and for 3 weeks in December, Teacher Sophie.

I was working from 8am to 1pm, supervising the playground, helping make morning tea, making sure some of the fast crawlers didn't sprint for the gate, and helping the kids with basic English and Maths. Of course - for the older ones, there were a few end of year exams, although, as there weren't any textbooks, downloadable worksheets or printers available, one Monday night I had the task of hand-copying 30 test sheets.

The jarring thing about this environment, for me, was realising that only a few of these kids would make it to Year 7. Teacher Rose, the Headmistress, worked with a sponsorship organisation, which would provide partial or total school fees for these kids from primary school through to college. Just like Old Girl, Annabelle Chauncy OAM, in her recent presentation, the data shows that the most effective way to break the cycle and hopefully,



Through education,
a community can
cultivate leaders who
will push toward
a more just, equitable,
and sustainable
future.

one day, eradicate extreme poverty is through a thorough education, and these sponsorships would be the only way for any of these kids to be educated past a government junior school. These end of year tests, that I had hand-copied for these students, would likely determine which kids had the most potential to do the best in high school, in college, and those kids would receive the sponsorships, a way out of poverty. Teacher Rose would use these results to recommend students for the scheme.

Most of the kids eligible are 4 years old. Only Teacher Annette spoke English, and so it was through a long and confusing google translate conversation that Teacher Rose told me and the other volunteer she believed it was the hardest job in the world.

Personally, I would hate to be judged on how I was performing in school even two years ago, let alone when I was in Kindergarten. In fact, my Kindy report card states that, 'Sophie thoroughly enjoys saying no.'

In other words, picture your HSC English Exam is your Year 8 'Touching the Void' commentary.



A well-educated populace contributes to the growth and prosperity of a nation. It fosters a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, and social responsibility. Through education, a community can cultivate leaders who will push toward a more just, equitable and sustainable future.

Education should not be a privilege. It is a fundamental right that should be accessible to all. It is a powerful tool for breaking the chains of poverty, discrimination, and inequality. By providing equal educational opportunities, we create a society where everyone has the chance to fulfil their greatest potential, regardless of their background or circumstances.

As we reflect on the significance of education, let us be mindful of our collective responsibility to support and invest in the education of future generations, and the underprivileged of our own generation across the globe. The future of these children should be guaranteed, not conditional. It is the role of the privileged to highlight to the world that there is no one that deserves education - we all do. Let us all hope for an equal future led by a fully educated population.

Sophie Simpson
Year 12
Friday Prayers





Georgie Lewis' 'Pink' Golf Day

On the 26th January, Georgie Lewis (Year 11) organised a 'Pink' Golf Day at Moss Vale Golf Club in support of the Breast Cancer Network of Australia. It was perfect weather for golf and 123 golfers arrived dressed in their best pink outfits. After the golf, raffles and more games took place and the event exceeded its fundraising target of \$7,500 by raising more than \$10,000. The funds were raised for BCNA who supports sufferers of breast cancer and helps fund research.

This event was such a great success and we congratulate Georgie on doing such an incredible job. Jackie Dalton, our Director of Philanthropy, was at the event and she could not have been more impressed, "Georgie's management and execution of this event left a big impression on me. From the moment of our arrival at 8am for the pre-event briefing it was evident that Georgie had meticulously planned every detail of the day. Her poise and professionalism in addressing the attendees were commendable and set the tone for a successful day ahead. Georgie exemplifies the values and qualities we strive to instil in our students at Frensham. Her unwavering commitment to excellence, her proactive engagement in community initiatives, and her genuine desire to make a positive difference in the lives of others are a testament to her character", said Jackie.

Moss Vale Golf Club's Golf Pro, Davyd Reeves, took the opportunity during the pre-event briefing to publicly commend Georgie for her outstanding leadership qualities. His recognition of her skills, dignity, and grace in spearheading an event for such a significant cause as Breast Cancer, underscored the impact of Georgie's efforts on the community.





M meet our Year Coordinators – pictured from left: Emma Lake (Year 7), Andrew Cox (Year 8), Kim Walters (Year 9), Molly Macqueen (Year 10), Sally Fennell (Year 11) and Trudi Spencer (Year 12).


Useful Contact Details

This list is designed as an easy reference for key contacts at Frensham School. Please note that all General Enquiries should be directed to Reception on +61 2 4860 2000, Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm. In the event of an After Hours Emergency, please call the Health Centre Line.

YEAR COORDINATORS (for Wellbeing matters)		EMAIL
YEAR 7	Miss Emma Lake	elake@frensham.nsw.edu.au
YEAR 8	Mr Andrew Cox	acox@frensham.nsw.edu.au
YEAR 9	Ms Kim Walters	kwalters@frensham.nsw.edu.au
YEAR 10	Ms Molly Macqueen	mmacqueen@frensham.nsw.edu.au
YEAR 11	Ms Sally Fennell	sfennell@frensham.nsw.edu.au
YEAR 12	Mrs Trudi Spencer	tspencer@frensham.nsw.edu.au
Director of Wellbeing	Miss Margaret Nilon	mnilon@frensham.nsw.edu.au

HEADS OF HOUSE (for Boarding matters)		PHONE	EMAIL
Director of Student Life (Boarding) – including change of Boarding status	Ms Sally Edwards	P: 02 4860 2114 M: 0417 429 508	boarding@frensham.nsw.edu.au
		[9.30am-3.00pm] [AH: re-directed or to message]	
Bryant McCarthy	Miss Lucy Haydon	P: 02 4860 2160 M: 0422 176 683	boarding@frensham.nsw.edu.au
Linden Turner	Ms Sally Arnold	P: 02 4860 2190 M: 0413 223 786	boarding@frensham.nsw.edu.au
Kennedy	Mrs Kimberley Jones	P: 02 4860 2180 M: 0413 226 295	boarding@frensham.nsw.edu.au
Hartfield	Mrs Roxy Gray	P: 02 4860 2170 M: 0413 288 482	boarding@frensham.nsw.edu.au

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

ENQUIRY	STAFF CONTACT	EMAIL	PHONE
Activities – extra-curricular, including Tennis lessons	Director of Activities: Mrs Lucy Dalleywater	activities@frensham.nsw.edu.au	Reception
Administration – including Schoolbox	Ms Angela Hartnup	admin@frensham.nsw.edu.au	Reception
Attendance	Mrs Heidi Wilson	absence@frensham.nsw.edu.au	Reception
Absentees, late arrivals or early departures from school including medical or dental appointments			
Boarding – Exeats & Leave from the House	Go to Schoolbox and click on ORAH icon on your dashboard		
Fees / Accounts	Company Office	fees@frensham.nsw.edu.au	Reception
Health Centre	Head of Health Centre: Ms Darrya Foster	hc@frensham.nsw.edu.au	02 4860 2107
		(Emergency Number 24/7)	
Leave – Sport / Special / Family Leave	Deputy Head: Ms Sarah Tynan	stynan@frensham.nsw.edu.au	Reception
Music Tuition	Ms Sabine Madden	music@frensham.nsw.edu.au	Reception
Sport	Head of Sport: Ms Erin Gray	egray@frensham.nsw.edu.au	Reception
Studies	Director of Studies: Mr Nathan Bessant	nbessant@frensham.nsw.edu.au	Reception
Uniform Shop (Ranier)	Mrs Michelle Wynn Online order	frensham@ranier.com.au www.ranier.com.au	02 4860 2136
Clothing Pool – Mondays 12.00pm-5.00pm		clothingpool@frensham.nsw.edu.au	Reception

Valentine's Day Dress Up



Photographs: Ms S Madden



Frensham Fellowship Reunions & Events 2024

REUNION	DATE
5 Years On (2019)	Saturday 1 & Sunday 2 June
10 Years On (2014)	Saturday 18 & Sunday 19 May
20 Years On (2004)	Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 February
30 Years On (1994)	Saturday 7 & Sunday 8 September
40 Years On (1984)	Saturday 31 August & Sunday 1 September
50 Years On (1974)	Saturday 9 November (Orange, NSW)
60 Years On (1964)	Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 August
70 Years On (1954)	Saturday 1 & Sunday 2 June

EVENTS	DATE
Fellowship Annual General Meeting	Saturday 15 June
Year 12 Fellowship Breakfast Service, Class of 2024	Thursday 26 September

Please note, all reunions, events and dates were correct at time of publication. For the most current information and to view additional Fellowship social events, please refer to Fellowship's website <https://www.frensham.nsw.edu.au/community/alumni/reunion-events> or email fellowship@frensham.nsw.edu.au.



FRENSHAM OPEN DAY 2024

Saturday 24 February 12.30pm-4pm | Range Road Mittagong NSW

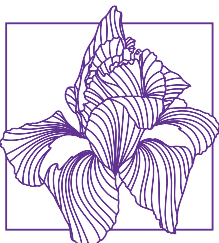


FRENSHAM JUNIOR SCHOOL

OPEN DAY 2024

Saturday 9 March from 11am to 1pm
Gib Gate Campus, Old Bowral Rd Mittagong

THE IRIS



Join us for Frensham Schools' Open Days
Frensham: Saturday 24 February
Frensham Junior School: Saturday 9 March
Click on LINK icon for details

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