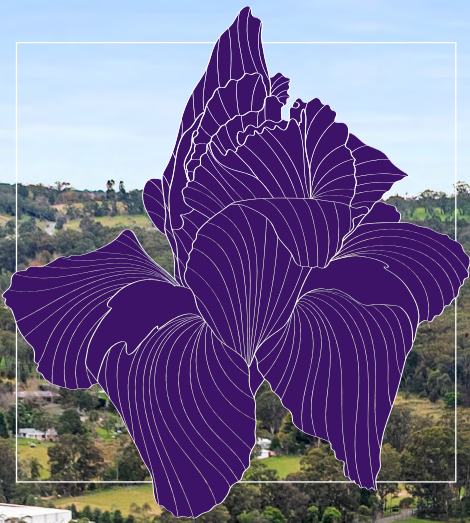


THE IRIS

A FRENESHAM SCHOOLS MAGAZINE

EDITION #12

TERM 3 NO 1 – AUGUST 2025



Beyond the ATAR

From the Head

The Importance of Belonging

Ben Chadwick & Sarah Tynan

Staff Profile

Jessica Bollard

HSC 2025

Music Showcase
Visual Arts and Design &
Technology Exhibition



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“As educators, our role is to guide students through this changing landscape with clarity and confidence. ... our goal is to ensure that every Frensham student leaves school equipped to thrive in the next chapter of their journey.”

– Geoff Marsh –



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Beyond the ATAR

– Expanding Horizons in Post-School Pathways –



The landscape of post-secondary education in Australia is evolving rapidly. While the ATAR has long been the central metric for university admission, we are now witnessing a shift toward more flexible and inclusive pathways. Universities

across the country are increasingly offering early entry programs that assess students on a broader range of criteria—academic engagement, leadership, and community involvement—rather than relying solely on final exam results. At Frensham, we welcome this evolution, recognising that it allows students to be seen as whole individuals. However, we also continue to value the ATAR as a meaningful academic benchmark. Our commitment to academic excellence remains strong, and we support every student to achieve their personal best, aiming for a competitive ATAR and/or exploring alternative entry options.

Another significant change is the loosening of subject prerequisites. The University of Sydney's recent decision to remove advanced mathematics as a requirement for several degrees is emblematic of a broader trend. Universities are prioritising accessibility and adaptability, acknowledging that students can acquire necessary skills during their tertiary studies.

In parallel, media outlets continue to publish rankings of schools based on the percentage of Band 6 results in the HSC. While these rankings offer one measure of academic performance, they do not reflect the full

picture. They overlook the depth of character development, leadership, and personal growth that are central to a Frensham education. They also fail to account for the variation in subject difficulty and the differing pathways students choose—some of which may not align with Band 6 outcomes but are nonetheless rigorous and meaningful.

Frensham's careers program plays a vital role in supporting students as they navigate this changing landscape. Through personalised guidance, workshops, and exposure to a wide range of industries and tertiary options, students are empowered to make informed decisions about their futures. The program encourages exploration, self-awareness, and goal-setting, ensuring that each student's transition to life beyond school is thoughtful and well-supported.

Equally important is the strength of the Frensham Old Girls network. This vibrant and generous community of alumni provides mentorship, inspiration, and real-world connections that help current students and recent graduates pursue their aspirations with confidence. Frensham graduates are known for their integrity, independence, and passion for serving others—qualities that are deeply valued in the wider community and recognised by universities and employers alike.

Frensham's unique residential environment further enhances this preparation. Living and learning in a close-knit, supportive community fosters independence, resilience, and a strong sense of responsibility, qualities that are essential for success at university and beyond. Many universities note that students from boarding environments transition more smoothly into college life, both academically and socially.

Beyond the ATAR – Expanding Horizons in Post-School Pathways

Frensham graduates are known for their integrity, independence, and passion for serving others—qualities that are deeply valued in the wider community and recognised by universities and employers alike.

As educators, our role is to guide students through this changing landscape with clarity and confidence. Whether they pursue a traditional ATAR-based pathway, take advantage of early entry opportunities or pursue pathways yet to be imagined, our goal is to ensure that every Frensham student leaves school equipped to thrive in the next chapter of their journey.

Geoff Marsh

Head of Frensham
Head of Frensham Schools



The Benefits and Value of Exchanges and Overseas Experiences

As part of Frensham's strategic plan, we have embedded international exchanges and overseas trips into our annual offering of student experiences. This initiative reflects our commitment to developing globally minded, outward-looking students prepared to thrive in a connected world.



The inclusion of international experiences in our strategic priorities is no coincidence. These opportunities offer a wide range of benefits—enhancing cultural awareness, broadening worldviews, and even boosting academic performance. Students gain invaluable life skills such as independence, confidence, and problem-solving abilities. They also experience cultures and educational systems that, while different, often share similarities with our own, enriching their understanding of the world.

These shared experiences strengthen relationships, between students and teachers, and between students from other schools, while creating lasting memories. For many of us, the most vivid memories of our school years come from camps, excursions, boarding school life, or travel experiences. These moments shape who we become and forge the friendships we all hold dear.

International Trips and Exchanges

In 2024, Frensham students embarked on a Study Tour to France and the Gold Duke of Edinburgh trip to New Zealand. Looking ahead to 2025, we are excited about the continuation and expansion of the Gold Duke of Edinburgh trip to New Zealand, while exploring other opportunities, which deliver multiple benefits:

1. Academic Enrichment

Study tours provide students with deeper subject understanding by allowing them to apply classroom learning in real-world contexts. This makes learning more meaningful and memorable. Students also gain exposure to

The Benefits and Value of Exchanges and Overseas Experiences

new perspectives, diverse teaching styles, and different academic expectations, especially when they attend school overseas as part of an exchange.

2. Personal and Social Development

As with all travel, whether it's international or national, students experience significant personal growth. These experiences challenge students to step outside their comfort zones, boosting confidence and independence. They develop stronger interpersonal and communication skills by travelling, living, and learning with new peers, adapting to unfamiliar environments, and navigating new challenges.

3. Cultural Awareness and Global Perspective

Immersion in other cultures deepens students' appreciation for different ways of life and helps them understand their place in a global society. These experiences directly support our School's vision of nurturing globally aware, engaged students.

4. Lifelong Impact

Students create cherished memories, discover new interests, and often return with a deeper understanding of themselves. There are also long-term benefits, exposure to international work cultures and business practices can inspire future career paths and provide advantages in for Gap Year, College and Scholarship applications.

Frensham's Current Programs and Future Plans

Frensham currently offers a **National Exchange Program** for select Year 9 students to attend either St Mary's Anglican School in Perth, Western Australia or The Glennie School in Toowoomba, Queensland. Now in its second year, the program has been extremely successful, offering students a unique opportunity to experience life in another girls' boarding school, forge friendships, and build confidence through new challenges.

We also support student participation in the **Oxbridge Summer Programs** held during the June–July holidays, as well as **year-long**

exchanges to France or Italy through external travel providers. These opportunities help students develop independence and self-confidence—ideal preparation for a future gap year or post-school adventures. Additionally, they strengthen University and College applications by demonstrating a student's ability to adapt, thrive abroad, and challenge themselves beyond their comfort zone in a structured and supportive environment.

Frensham is now working to expand these initiatives into a formal **International Exchange Program**. Planning began in May 2025 when Mr Marsh travelled to the UK to establish connections with leading girls' boarding schools. We are hopeful that the first UK exchange opportunities will be available to students in 2026.

In addition, I will travel to Canada in 2026 to attend the **International Coalition of Girls' Schools Global Conference**. During this visit, I will explore potential exchange partnerships with schools in Vancouver and Toronto.

We look forward to sharing more information about our expanding international exchange program as plans are finalised. These are truly exciting developments for our students and our school community.

Sarah Tynan

Deputy Head of Frensham
Deputy Head of Frensham Schools



Exchange students from St Mary's and The Glennie School in 2024



The Importance of Belonging

At Frensham, our data consistently shows that students experience a stronger sense of belonging than in many other schools—a testament to the strength of our culture and community. A sense of belonging is a powerful factor in a student’s overall school experience, closely tied to both academic achievement and the quality of relationships formed during their time at school.

At the *International Coalition of Girls’ Schools Symposium* held in April 2025, a compelling presentation titled “**Empowering Girls: Achieving Academic Success and Fostering Belonging**” was delivered by Dr Jennifer Buckingham OAM and Molly McFaden. Their findings offered valuable insights into the importance of belonging for girls in school settings.

One significant data point from their study showed that while both boys and girls report a strong sense of belonging in primary school, there is a sharp decline for girls as they transition into high school. The percentage of girls who report a positive sense of belonging drops from 88% in Year 6 to just 55% by Year 8. This drop makes the middle years, particularly Year 8 and Year 9, a crucial time for intervention and support.

What Influences a Sense of Belonging?

Their research identified four key factors that significantly impact a student’s sense of belonging:

1. Teacher Support

The most influential factor. This includes not only academic support but also simple, everyday gestures, such as, greeting students by name, showing kindness, building respectful relationships, and fostering collaboration.

2. Valuing Student Voice

Students are more likely to feel they belong when they feel safe and supported enough to share their concerns with a trusted adult. Creating spaces where students are truly heard is essential.

3. Clarity and Alignment of School Values

When school values are clearly articulated and deeply embedded into the culture, students feel connected to something bigger than themselves. They are more likely to live by and identify with those values when they understand and see them in action.

4. Celebrating Success and Collaboration

Belonging is fostered when success is shared collaboratively, between students, and between students and staff. Recognising achievements and sharing insights helps to build a strong, supportive community where everyone feels seen and valued.

Frensham’s Approach

In partnership with the Challenge Success team at Stanford University, Frensham recently conducted a student wellbeing and

Values in education, their importance for learning and success

engagement survey. The results showed that while our students report a higher-than-average sense of belonging, there is still work to be done to ensure every student feels they truly belong and can articulate their place within our community.

We see belonging in action in many ways—whether it's a Girdle or Iris given in recognition of a peer, a celebration of student success at Prayers, or the camaraderie during Year Weekends and Closed Weekends. We witness it when students are acknowledged for achievements in academics, community service, the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, or simply for being supportive members of our school community.

How Are We Fostering Belonging at Frensham?

Frensham fosters a strong sense of belonging through structures and traditions that connect students across year groups and contexts:

- **Form Groups** that provide a consistent point of connection and support.

- **Year Weekends** and **Closed Weekends** that create shared experiences and build community spirit.
- **Boarding Houses** where students live, grow, and support one another like family.
- **Classroom Environments** that are inclusive, respectful, and focused on shared success.

At Frensham, belonging is not just a goal—it is a lived experience. It is woven into the fabric of our community, visible in the everyday moments that show our students they are known, valued, and supported.

Ben Chadwick

Director of Students & Strategy

Sarah Tynan

Deputy Head of Frensham Schools



The Impact of Extracurricular Activities on Student Success

“Opportunities are like sunrises, if you wait too long, you miss them.” William Arthur Ward

This quote captures the value of engaging in extracurricular activities at school and at Frensham there are many on offer.

Research from diverse educational and cultural contexts consistently demonstrates that co-curricular experiences have a profound impact on student learning and achievement. Students who get involved in extracurricular activities typically achieve better academic results, including higher grades and improved performance on standardised tests. Activities such as these foster essential skills such as

discipline, time management, and a sense of responsibility, all of which contribute to academic success. Moreover, participation is associated with a greater likelihood of graduating and pursuing further education.

Extracurricular programs strengthen students' connection to their school, nurturing a sense of belonging. This increased connectedness leads to higher motivation and greater participation in learning and through student engagement.

In our rapidly changing world, strong relational and leadership skills are vital for life after school. Evidence shows that participating in extracurricular activities offers opportunities to practice teamwork, cooperation, and

The Impact of Extracurricular Activities on Student Success

leadership in settings that are less formal than the classroom. These experiences allow students to develop authentic social and leadership abilities in safe yet unpredictable environments. Involvement in such activities also helps build confidence, a positive self-image, and the resilience needed to recover from setbacks.

Students engaged in extracurricular activities are less prone to negative risk-taking behaviours, such as experimenting with alcohol or drugs. Their involvement keeps them occupied and provides positive reinforcement from their activities and social groups.

Extracurricular activities help students form and deepen relationships with peers and teachers. Shared interests and collaborative efforts lead to meaningful connections, both inside and outside the classroom.

Whether playing team sports, writing creatively, exploring artistic talents at Sturt, participating in the Duke of Edinburgh program, supporting philanthropic causes, or enjoying other opportunities at Frensham, students who embrace extracurricular activities are more likely to thrive during and beyond their school years. As Maya Angelou wisely noted, "Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it." By exploring different activities, students have the opportunity to discover what they enjoy, who they are, and how they can succeed and ultimately their sense of purpose.

Dr Ruth Phillips
Academic-in-Residence



HSC 2025 MUSIC SHOWCASE

PUBLIC PERFORMANCE
Friday 22 August 2025
7.15pm Clubbe Hall



SOPHIE BALDWIN | LARA BENTLEY | SOPHIE CHEN | JOCIE CORBETT | HANNAH DAY | GEORGIE LEWIS
LILLA STANFORD | CHLOE WHITE | ARABELLA WHITEHEAD | TABITHA WILD



Broadening Horizons: Learning That Leaps Beyond the Classroom

At Frensham Junior School, we believe that amazing learning can also occur beyond the classroom walls. When children step into new places, meet new people, and try new things, something magical happens — their eyes light up, their curiosity grows, and their confidence soars.

From the thrill of a high ropes course to the quiet awe of a gallery visit, our off-campus experiences are designed to spark joy, build resilience, and bring learning to life. Research shows that learning in different environments boosts motivation, strengthens memory, and encourages the habits of lifelong learners.

Our students dive into a wide mix of adventures: curriculum-linked excursions, cultural visits, inter-school sporting carnivals, service projects, and creative workshops. They might be sketching at Ngununggula Gallery, chatting with residents at a local aged care facility, paddling a canoe across still waters, or tackling an orienteering challenge in the bush. Each moment is carefully planned to build not just knowledge, but character. These activities foster leadership, teamwork, compassion, and creativity.

One of the highlights of the School year is camp. Whether it is a day camp full of action or an overnight adventure, children are given

the chance to stretch themselves, try new challenges, and celebrate achievements, both big and small. Activities like abseiling, stand-up paddle boarding, and high ropes not only build physical skills but also grow self-belief and trust in others. These shared challenges often create the stories students remember, and retell, for years to come.

Back at School, the benefits are clear. Students return buzzing with stories, brimming with new ideas, and carrying a deeper sense of belonging to their friends, their school, and their wider community. Sporting carnivals strengthen perseverance and fair play. Service projects spark empathy and gratitude. Gallery visits open minds to new perspectives. Swimming lessons and our Year 5 overnight boarding experience encourage independence and adaptability.

Every off-campus experience is an opportunity for children to discover more about the world and about themselves. By stepping beyond the familiar, they gain skills for school and for life: courage, kindness, curiosity, and the belief that they can take on any challenge that comes their way.

Lucy Gregory

Head of Frensham Junior School



Jessica Bollard – Finding Her Place at Frensham Schools

Three years ago, Visual Art Teacher Jessica Bollard relocated from Sydney's Sutherland Shire to the Southern Highlands so her son, Thomas, could attend Tangara, a special needs school. Tom, now eight, loves the outdoors, swimming, climbing, and, as he recently discovered, the theatre. When he attended a Saturday rehearsal for Frensham's Junior Production of *Peter Pan in 30 Minutes*, it was the first time he had ever been inside a theatre. "He lit up," Jess recalls. "He was clapping along in the audience. It was magic."

After relocating from the Sutherland Shire, Jess started at Frensham on a part-time basis but this soon became a full-time, permanent role, and Jess now teaches Visual Arts across both Frensham and Frensham Junior School, Jess also contributes her Dance and Drama expertise to productions but also shares her knowledge and experience in the disability space as one of the Diverse Learning teachers supporting students in their subjects at Frensham.

With more than a decade's experience at different schools in Sydney, Jess's last position was at Newtown Performing Arts High School. As well as eight years teaching HSC Dance at the elite contemporary dance school Ev & Bow, Jess brings a wealth of creative experience. She has been dancing since the age of three and credits her high school dance teacher as a formative mentor Lisa Bowmer. "She encouraged me to study a Bachelor of Dance Education at UNSW rather than go straight into full-time dance. That mentoring changed the course of my career."

Jess teaches students from Kindergarten through to Year 10 and plays a key role in Frensham productions, from choreography to costume and prop design. She has also introduced new opportunities for creative exploration, including the purchase of a print press for Frensham Junior School to use for



professional etching and lino cutting, often considered beyond the scope of younger students. "I don't believe in age limits when it comes to art, I believe in ability" Jess says. "If students start early, by the time they reach Year 12, they can be truly accomplished artists."

One highlight of her time at Frensham Junior School so far has been guiding Junior School students through the creation of artworks for the FOGG Winter Dinner. Each year group explored the meaning behind their work: Kindergarten's butterflies represented playfulness and growth, while Year 6's intricate eggshell designs symbolised students 'hatching' into the next chapter of their education. "They collaborated, reflected, and articulated the ideas behind their art," Jess says. "One Year 6 student told me, 'We grow through school and we become who we are. Thank you for seeing me.' Moments like that are why I teach."



Beyond the classroom, Jess is a member of the Cattle Team, mentoring students in agricultural skills. Her family breeds Galloway cattle on their farm near Orange, a venture begun during COVID as a way of preparing for Tom’s future. “He loves the cattle and the rhythm of the farm. Two of our steers, Vader and Vance, will soon join the Frensham herd.”

For Jess, Frensham is far more than a workplace. “Tom is non- verbal, so I haven’t had the typical parenting journey. Here, the girls interact with him, accept him and we feel like we’ve found our place. It’s filled a part of me, and now it’s overflowing.”

Whether in the art room, the theatre, or the cattle yards, Jess’s goal remains the same: to equip students with the skills, confidence and courage to create, and to know their individuality will always be celebrated.

Sophie Rankine
Marketing and Engagement
Manager



Pictured: Jessica next to an artwork by Year 1 (p10) and other Years’ artwork (below) at the FOGG Winter Dinner; Jessica with her steer, winning ribbons at the Royal Bathurst Show (above).





Year 5 Steps into the High School Experience

Year 5 recently spent a day at Frensham, sampling the Senior School experience and they loved every moment. From science experiments to laser cutting, the day was filled with hands-on learning, curiosity and a taste of independence.

When asked to choose their favourite part, the students struggled because there was simply too much to enjoy.

Science with Mr Marsh was a highlight, with students combining mixtures, making predictions and discovering that experiments do not always go to plan, which made it all the more exciting. They also made sherbet and explored atoms, returning the following week to complete the experiment.

In Mathematics, a hands-on problem-solving challenge had them working in teams, thinking strategically and enjoying the thrill of tackling it like a game.

Lunch in the Dining Room was another memorable moment. With its grand atmosphere reminiscent of Hogwarts, they relished the chance to be more independent, serving themselves and enjoying a meal together.

In History with Mr Bessant, the story of King Tut and his mummification process captivated them. It was gory, but they loved it.

Over in Technology, students were fascinated by the laser cutter, each making their own wooden box with their name engraved. Many have since filled them with special school keepsakes.

By the end of the day, the verdict was unanimous. The experience was not only fun but inspiring. The students left saying they cannot wait to start high school.

Amelia Grace
Year 5 Class Teacher





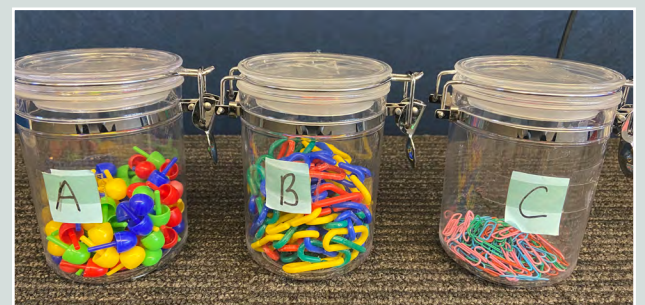
100 Days of Kindergarten

Recently, our Kindergarten students marked a joyful milestone: 100 Days of Learning, and the excitement was truly contagious. The day was a vibrant celebration of all things 100, filled with laughter, energy and discovery. From grasping what the number 100 actually looks like to tackling tricky tasks such as building a tower with 100 plastic cups, the learning was hands-on and full of wonder.

The highlight of the day was the '100 School Challenge', where students worked together in groups to complete ten tasks, each based around the number ten. With their supportive Year 6 Buddies guiding and cheering them on, the children read 10 words, did 10 hops on one leg, wrote 10 numbers, gave 10 high fives, said 10 sounds (though we know so many more), picked up 10 pieces of rubbish, smiled at 10 different friends, drew 10 shapes, named 10 classmates and completed 10 acts of kindness. Altogether, that made 100 joyful, purposeful actions.

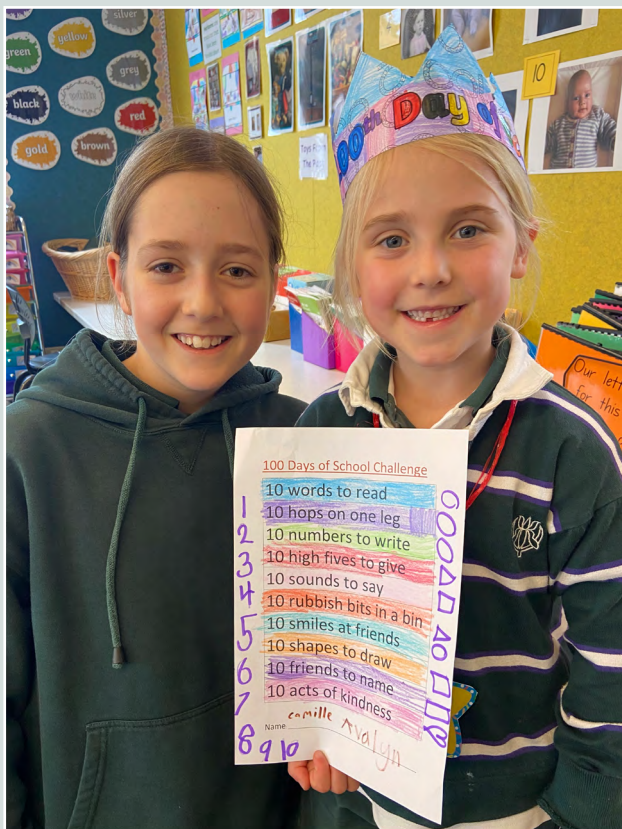


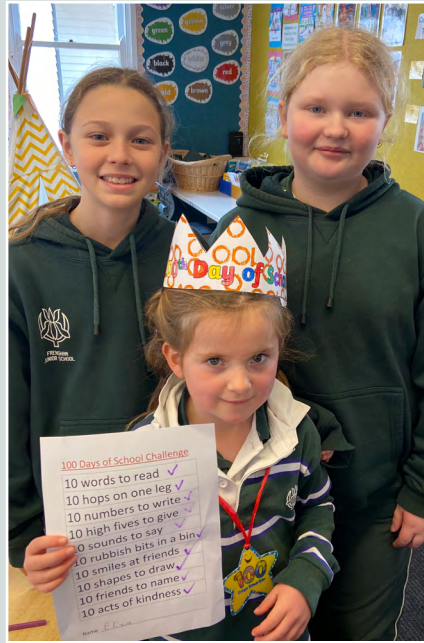
The Guessing Jar Challenge was also a hit. Students eagerly gathered around the mysterious jars, each wondering, does this have 100? To add to the challenge, every jar did hold exactly 100 items, but the twist was that the contents were all different. Whether it was 100 paper clips, 100 plastic pegs or 100 link chains, students quickly discovered that 100 can look surprisingly big or incredibly small, depending on what is inside.



It was a day filled with joy, teamwork and discovery. Kindergarten students left with smiles on their faces and the proud feeling that comes with achieving 100 days of learning.

Nicci Brigstocke
Kindergarten Teacher





Global Forum – Year 9 Stepping Forward as Global Citizens



Global Forum is a three-day residential program for our Year 9 students, designed to deepen their awareness of their potential to contribute and lead as citizens in both their local and global communities. This year's program was filled with inspiring presentations, hands-on service, and student-led curriculum planning, all underpinned by a strong sense of collaboration and purpose.

The program began with keynote sessions from leaders such as Annabelle Chauncy, CEO of School for Life, and Julia Symons, Chief Impact Officer at Athletes for Hope, accompanied by Olympic athlete Dominique du Toit.



reflective process carried throughout the program, helping them turn their experiences into tangible action.



Through Athletes for Hope, students completed a strengths-based assessment to identify how they could best serve their communities, creating their own Athlete Impact Plans. This

Service learning was at the heart of the experience. Through an immersion in OzHarvest's Headquarters in Alexandria, Year 9 deepened their understanding of food sustainability and insecurity, and were lucky to meet the founder and CEO of OzHarvest, Ronni Kahn, whose message that *your actions define what Australia looks like in the future* resonated strongly. This was followed by hands-on cooking at Our Big Kitchen, where students prepared over 150 meals for people experiencing homelessness, along with additional meals for a women's domestic violence shelter that had to relocate urgently to protect its residents.

Global Forum – Year 9 Stepping Forward as Global Citizens



A highlight was the curriculum planning session, where students were asked to imagine the future of learning. They worked in teams to create 12 actionable curriculum projects that could be embedded from 2026. Proposals included a boarding wellbeing program, expanded service learning opportunities, cross-curricular units supporting community projects, and alumni-led leadership mentoring. These ideas were presented to Geoff Marsh and Sarah Tynan on the final night, demonstrating both vision and practicality.

External facilitators remarked on the energy, teamwork, and commitment the students displayed, with one saying, “If these students are the future, then we are in good hands.”

By the end of the three days, students had exceeded even their own expectations of what they could achieve, showing that with initiative, collaboration, and reflection, their potential to lead and contribute is limitless.

Lucy Dalleywater
Director of Activities



Jamieson Activities at Frensham Junior School

Community Service at Anthem Retirement Village

Students at Frensham Junior School have been enjoying their visits to Anthem Retirement Village, offering **Service** to our elderly community. Twice each term, a different class visits to share the joy of their learning. Students recite poetry, share pieces of writing, sing songs, or play instruments. These visits are a delightful experience for both our students and the residents. Through this program, students develop a sense of connection and contribution to our community, learning timeless values of friendship, positivity, and kindness towards people of different ages. They grow as citizens by approaching

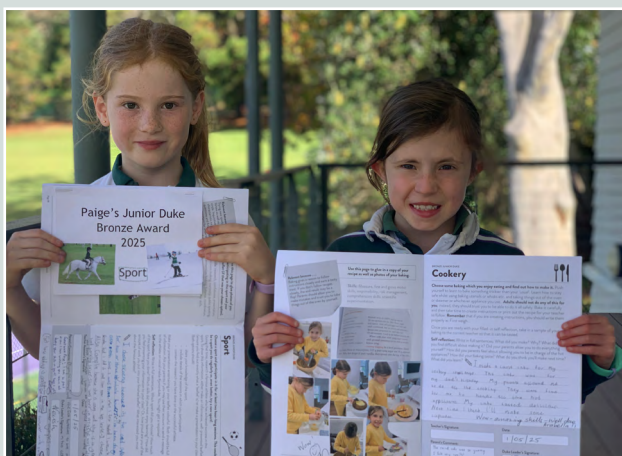
others with humility, embracing diversity, and responding generously with their time. We are deeply grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the wellbeing of our broader community.



Jamieson Activities at Frensham Junior School

Inspirational Junior Duke Activity

The Junior Duke Activity has ignited tremendous energy among students and parents, who have embraced the various challenges with enthusiasm and positivity. Through their determined pursuit of excellence, students have learned new skills and overcome obstacles. Together with their families, they have completed long-distance hikes, striving for high standards of physical endurance. Other activities have included trying new sports, learning to cook meals for their families, or reading stories to Preschool children. Students have become **'solution architects'**, demonstrating creativity, problem-solving, perseverance, and adaptability in overcoming challenges. By sharing their achievements with classmates, they have inspired passion and sparked new interest in the program among their peers.



Connection with the Outdoors

"Of all the paths you take in life, make sure a few of them are dirt." – John Muir

A wealth of evidence highlights the benefits of outdoor learning experiences, including improved wellbeing and the development of 21st-century skills such as perseverance, self-efficacy, resilience, social skills, leadership, and communication. Our programs provide opportunities for students to build these essential skills while connecting with nature.

Outdoor Immersion: Citizenship & Connection to Culture

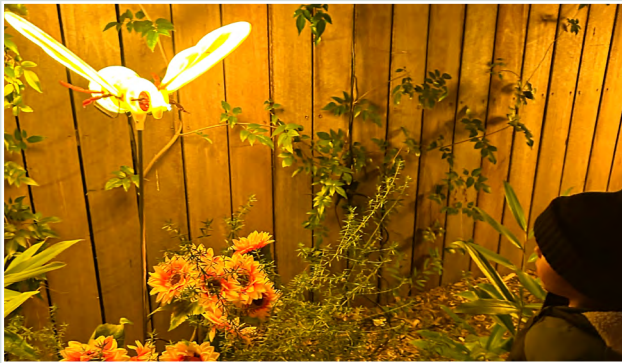
At the end of Term Two, all classes participated in NAIDOC Week activities, learning about, celebrating, and recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This valuable experience helped students learn to be respectful and active citizens. Students explored our bushland and Indigenous Yarning Circle, supporting their understanding of Indigenous history and culture, while also building connections with both the environment and their peers.



Outdoor Immersion: Preschool Twilight Walk

The second twilight tour took place in Week 7 of Term 2, organised by Preschool Staff. Students were very involved in the planning of the event through making signs and working out what lights and decorations they wanted to incorporate. All lights were solar charged, and the array of colourful lights created an enchanted garden for students to explore. Over 130 people attended this wonderful family event for all.

Jamieson Activities at Frensham Junior School



Outdoor Immersion: Scratch & Sprout

Our new ‘Scratch & Sprout’ lunchtime activity invites students to deepen their knowledge of sustainable food production. Each Friday, Sophie Miller and parent volunteers guide Year 1 & 2 students, along with Year 6 helpers, through preparing garden beds, planting seedlings, and maintaining them using organic methods. The program connects to our chickens, as students recycle scraps from the veggie beds to feed the chickens and use compost from the chicken coop in the garden. This teaches students about recycling, reusing waste, and the natural cycle of food production. Students have already enjoyed preparing the beds for planting vegetables in the coming weeks. Through Scratch & Sprout, students experience a sense of belonging and wellness,



and learn to be respectful, active citizens by exploring innovative ways to solve real-world problems. We greatly appreciate our parent helpers for their time and enthusiasm.

Outdoor Immersion: Bike Riding

Throughout Term 2, Kindy students honed their bike-riding skills, having a lot of fun navigating obstacle courses on the tennis courts and persisting through challenges. The lunchtime ‘Bikes’ activity remains popular across year levels, led by Mrs Amanda Graham. We are excited to introduce a new ‘Bush Bikes’ activity, beginning Thursday 14 August, offering Years 3–6 students the chance to ride with peers on more challenging bushland trails. This initiative supports our school values of Belonging and Wellness and Broad Experience, helping students grow in confidence and resilience.



Outdoor Immersion: Chicken Care

Our students show great enthusiasm as willing contributors, helping feed and care for our six chickens. Tasks include filling food and water troughs, delivering recycled scraps from the Frensham kitchen to the chicken coop, cleaning and adding fresh straw, and collecting, stamping, and delivering eggs for sale to our parent community. This hands-on program offers rich opportunities for students to demonstrate the Frensham Character, building key competencies in connection, collaboration, critical thinking, citizenship, communication, and creativity.

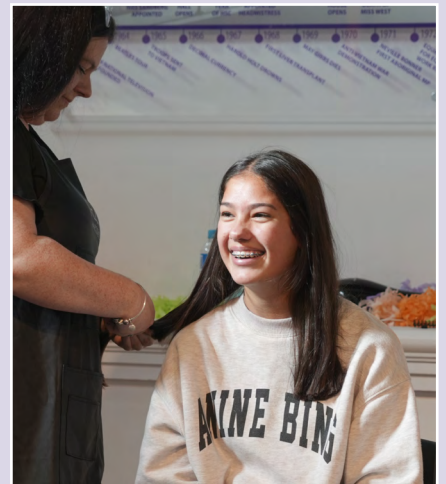
Lynn Venish

Jamieson Activities Coordinator P-6



Frensham's World's Greatest Shave

Frensham's World's Greatest Shave event on Saturday 21 June saw more than 65 students shave, cut, or colour their hair, raising \$30,523 for the Leukaemia Foundation. Hair donations will be used for wigs or environmental initiatives, and a bake sale run by the Community Service Group added to the fundraising effort.



Notable Staff Musicians

One of the Frensham singing tutors, **Michelle Ryan**, recently returned to Germany to sing in a project with the South West Radio Choir (SWR Vokalensemble) in Stuttgart, with whom she worked as a full-time soprano from 2022-2023. The project included *Drei Psalmen* by Felix Mendelssohn, Psalms by Estonian composer Cyrillus Kreek, a new work titled *Sakata* by Zad Moultaqa as well as a new work titled “Peace, peace, where there is no peace” by Saed Haddad. The first week involved a conductors’ forum, where the chief conductor assisted younger conductors as they worked on the Mendelssohn pieces. The following weeks involved rehearsals, recordings of all pieces and concerts in Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, Koblenz, Emmendingen and Freiburg, including a Livestream and a Live Concert on radio. The final part of the project involved a film production of the Mendelssohn pieces. This was in the stunning medieval Maulbronn Monastery, which is included on the UNESCO World Heritage list.



Pictured above: Michelle Ryan singing with the SWR Choir, the second chorister from the left. Below: Sako Dermenjian performing in Clubbe Hall at Morning Prayers in Term 2.

Our Frensham guitar tutor, **Sako Dermenjian**, performed and recorded in Dubai and Armenia in the past holidays. In Armenia he performed the *Concerto de Aranjuez* by Rodrigo with the Armenian Orchestra at the Arno Babajanyan Concert Hall.



The Frensham Coordinator of Music Tuition and the Gifted & Talented Music program, **Sabine Madden**, who is also an AMEB Piano Grade and Diploma State examiner, was invited to be the adjudicator for the United Music Teachers’ Association of NSW (UMTA) Junior Awards Finals and the Roger Woodward Awards Finals held in Killara.

Sabine Madden
Coordinator of Music Tuition and
Gifted & Talented Music Program



Year 9 National Exchange Program 2025

St Mary's Anglican Girls' School, Perth

Earlier this term, we had the incredible opportunity to take part in a two-week exchange to St Mary's Anglican Girls' School in Perth. St Mary's is a stunning boarding and day school located just a 10 minute walk from the beach which was something we definitely took advantage of for morning runs and walks! From the moment we arrived, we felt so welcomed by the staff and students.

Something different about St Mary's compared to Frensham is the boarding. They have around 180 boarders, Years 7-12, all living together in one big boarding house. The boarding house is three levels, and the girls are split into different coloured wings with girls from all year levels. It was so much fun exploring the different wings and seeing how each wing decorated their spaces in different colours!



Although we didn't get to swim during our stay, we loved being close to the beach. The sunsets and sunrises were absolutely breathtaking, and we took some amazing photos. One weekend, we visited Cottesloe Beach where we walked along the shore, soaked up the coastal views, and then got some delicious ice cream! It was a perfect afternoon and one of our favourite moments from the trip.

We made so many new friends, not just in the boarding house but also in class. The St Mary's girls were very similar to the Frensham girls in that they are kind, welcoming, and always



happy to include others in their routines and traditions. This exchange was such a rewarding experience, it gave us new friendships, a sense of independence from travelling across the country by ourselves, and so many great memories. We'd definitely encourage any younger girls to take up this opportunity when they reach Year 9. It's an amazing way to try something new, experience life in a different school, and grow in confidence. We're so grateful we got to be a part of it!

Sophie Chin & Maybelle Carr



Year 9 National Exchange Program 2025

The Glennie School, Toowoomba

Going on a national exchange to The Glennie School in Toowoomba, Queensland, was one of the most exciting and memorable parts of our school year. Coming from a boarding school ourselves, we thought we knew what boarding life was like, but seeing and experiencing it at another school gave us a whole new perspective of boarding. The boarding community was so friendly and welcoming, and we quickly felt at home and have still kept in touch with some girls there. Their routines were different to ours, which helped us appreciate how every school has its own unique way of doing things. We got involved in heaps of fun activities like trips to the trampoline park, bowling nights, and lots of special boarding events that helped us bond with the Glennie girls and try new things outside the classroom.



Glennie taught us to learn and grow, as we get older and become new people. We had to learn to manage our time and make new friendships, which really helped us grow as individuals. It was about stepping out of our comfort zones and learning more about who we are which we both really benefited from. The exchange gave us new perspectives, not only on education and boarding life but also on ourselves and what we're capable of. We encourage any student who is interested in travelling and broadening their perspective to apply for exchange when they are in Year 9. It was truly a once in a lifetime experience.

Olivia Llewelyn & Sophie Knight



From Head Girl to Head of the Board: Meet Clem Allan (2001)



From building hessian cubbies at Frensham Junior School in Year 6 to leading the Frensham Schools Board of Governors, Clementine “Clem” Allan’s story is proof that school spirit can carry you far. A proud Frensham alumna and former Head Girl, Clem has gone from singing in the Madrigals and freezing on the hockey pitch to serving as the new Chair of the Board of Governors. Since joining the Board in 2021 Clem has brought her trademark blend of intelligence, warmth, and strategic thinking to the Schools she still calls “home.” By day, she’s General Counsel for Oceania at a multinational organisation; by night (and in between), she’s a champion of clear governance, strong values, and making sure Frensham and Frensham Junior School students have the best possible opportunities. In this Q&A, Clem shares her favourite school memories, and what drives her in her professional and personal life.

What are your favourite memories from your time at Frensham?

My favourite memories from my time at Gib Gate (as it then was) was creating a time capsule with important memories, and burying it under the path covered by wisteria – I believe it is still there to this day! Building hessian cubbies in the year 6 area was another highlight...it was such a privilege to attend such a special place for primary school.

My core Frensham memories really relate to singing, mock trial, debating... and food (are you surprised?!). Getting to school early for Madrigal practice, and staying late for Choir rehearsal. Playing hockey on the freezing cold pitch at 8am on a Saturday, but being rewarded with a bacon and egg roll. And of course, the daily dash to morning tea, hoping for the good biscuits.

In your role as a corporate lawyer, what are you most passionate about in your work?

I love the variety of my role... but mostly I really enjoy the challenge of turning complex issues into plain English. My main aim is to set guardrails that protect the various internal teams while keeping projects moving and profitable. I also enjoy the scale of a global business—cross-border contracts, multi-time-zone teams, complex supply chains and varied regulatory settings—where clear rules and good governance keep everyone aligned. Bonus joy: when my meetings end early because the advice was clear and pragmatic!

Are there particular values or experiences that have shaped your approach to leadership?

Frensham taught me to use my voice, back myself and pull my own weight. Choir taught confidence and timing; sport taught teamwork and grit; and although I was mostly a Day Boarder, boarding taught self-reliance, tolerance and kindness. My university studies sharpened my sense that words and context matter, and trained me to test assumptions and be precise.

From Head Girl to Head of the Board: Meet Clem Allan (2001)

My leadership style is simple: listen hard, set clear goals, back your team, and keep drama low.

What inspired you to join the Board of Governors, and now take on the role of Chair?

Gratitude and duty. Frensham gave me confidence, friends for life and teachers who expected my best. Serving on the Board was a practical way to give back. It is an honour to lead this Board, which is comprised of highly intelligent, passionate and strategic thinkers. Stepping up as Chair is about protecting what makes the schools distinctive, while making sure today's students at FJS and Frensham have even broader horizons.

What do you hope to bring to Frensham Schools in this role, and what excites you about the school's future?

Clear strategy and strong governance—sensible decisions and risk settings, and continuing to provide a steady sounding board for Geoff and the Executive Team. Most of all, I'm excited to support the two schools' commitment to character education—the fact

that these schools put this front and centre is hugely positive for not only the schools' future, but for the students who are lucky enough to live these values in their formative years.

The best part is coming back to school for board meetings and functions, and noticing the confidence of our Frensham girls—seeing them succeed and take on big ideas, sing beautifully and boldly at Prayers, and lead with humour and kindness.

If you see me on campus, I'm likely to be walking briskly towards morning tea... just in case the good biscuits are out!

What advice what you share with current Frensham students?

Put your hand up for the stretch role—even if you don't feel ready. That's when real growth happens.

Sophie Rankine

Marketing and Engagement Manager

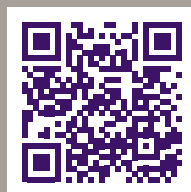


 **Frensham**
CHRONICLE 2024

Chronicle 2024

The Frensham Chronicle 2024 has been completed and printed and will be delivered to your mailbox very soon.

On the cover is a painting by Phoebe Gilder, Head Girl 2024, for her HSC Visual Arts Major Work which was selected for Artexpress.



TO FELLOWSHIP MEMBERS – HAVE YOU MOVED?

Please scan the QR code to update your address.

We look forward to staying in touch.

Bunting Pavilion Rededication

The Pavilion at the games field was originally built by the Bunting family in memory of Beverley Bunting, a Frensham student from 1953–1958. Beverley was a passionate sportswoman who died shortly after leaving school.

The rededication event held on Friday 25 July 2025, formally recognised the Pavilion’s original dedication in 1961 with the unveiling of a new brass plaque.



The event was attended by members of the Bunting family, extended relatives, Beverley’s former classmates, and close family friends. Thank you to Cath Brennan, Emily Poole and Harriet Stodart who joined on behalf of the Fellowship Committee.

It was a very special occasion, both as a tribute to Beverley and an opportunity for her loved ones to reconnect and reflect on their shared memories. The Pavilion was beautifully presented, and both the photo montage and new plaque served as fitting tributes.

We were fortunate to have fine weather on the day. Geoff Marsh began proceedings by welcoming the guests and highlighting the significance of the Bunting Pavilion over the years, including current school life, and as a central location for IGSA school sport.

Pictured right: Peter Bunting, Gina Macarthur-Onslow (Prevost, 1958), and Bettyann Hughes (Bunting, 1964), with the plaque.

Cathy Mathews’ speech welcomed the Bunting family and Beverley’s former classmates and reflected on the significance of the Pavilion as a tribute to Beverley Bunting’s enduring legacy at Frensham. It honoured Beverley’s love of sport, teamwork, and character, and celebrated the original 1961 dedication made possible by the Bunting family. Cathy emphasised that the rededication serves as a reminder to future generations of the values Beverley embodied and spirit she brought to the games field.

Gina Macarthur-Onslow, cousin and close school friend of Beverley Bunting, was invited to speak on behalf of the family. Gina shared insights into the Bunting family’s history and the special role Frensham played as a home away from home, offering stability, given much of the family’s life was in Papua New Guinea. The Papua New Guinea connection began with their grandfather in the late 1800s.

Gina shared that the Bunting Pavilion was gifted by Beverley’s parents, Robert (Bob) and Gwen Bunting, with the hope that it would offer comfort and serve a meaningful purpose for generations to come, as a lasting tribute to the school’s guiding principle: “In Love Serve One Another.” Peter Bunting, Beverley’s brother, was then invited to unveil the plaque.



Charlotte Ostor
Fellowship and Development
Coordinator



A Winifred West Legacy Connection and a Brilliant Performance



At this year's Foundation Winifred West Legacy lunch, Susan Upton (pictured below: first left), one of our Frensham Old Girls, who had been Head of Choir in 1955, found herself at the same table as current student Georgie Lewis. They weren't seated side by side, so conversation was brief, but after the Madrigals performed at the lunch, she took a moment to compliment Georgie on the group's superb singing and shared that she had once held the same role.

A week later, Susan received an unexpected email from Georgie's father, Justin, inviting her to attend the Sydney Eisteddfod's Australasian Open Choral Championships. The Madrigals had been offered a last-minute place after another choir withdrew, and he had purchased an extra ticket in the hope that she might like to attend. He offered to organise transport to and from the concert.

The program began with a vibrant and varied set of performances by school



choirs and concluded with the Open Choral Championships, featuring five of the country's top senior ensembles.

The Madrigals were third to perform and, in her words, "sang superbly, they were really excellent." As the judges deliberated, a group from the Conservatorium of Music entertained the audience. When the results were announced, Frensham's Madrigals were awarded second place nationally in the senior choral category which was a remarkable result.

Afterwards, Susan received a note from Georgie's mother, Sarah, sharing that, before the performance, Georgie had told the choir that the Head of Choir from 1955 was in the audience, and that they should sing well for her.

"It was the most exciting evening," Susan wrote. "I used to attend many concerts, but rarely do so now, so it was special on many levels. The Madrigals sang beautifully, and when they were announced as the runners-up, it was just fantastic."

A memorable evening with new connections made, and it all began with a simple conversation across a lunch table. It was also a powerful reminder of the enduring strength of the Winifred West Legacy, where shared values and a love of music continue to connect generations.

Above: Frensham Madrigals performing at the Championships



Frensham Presents
Junior Production of

Peter Pan

Director: Sally Hannah

Assistant Director:

Jessica Bollard

IN THIRTY MINUTES

BY JENNIFER REIF

Saturday 30 August, 3.30pm

Clubbe Hall, Frensham, Mittagong

Tickets: \$10pp (Free for Frensham Schools students & staff)

www.trybooking.com/DDKKD



OPENING TIMES

Fri 29 August, 6-8pm
(Opening: Cooper Hall)

Sat 30 August, 10am-4pm

Sun 31 August, 11.30am-3pm

 Frensham

HSC 2025 VISUAL ARTS and DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY EXHIBITION

VENUES: Cooper Hall (Visual Arts) and Esther Tuckey Library (Design & Technology)

TEMPE ARNOTT | JO AYERS | SOPHIE BALDWIN | MADELEINE BENDROR | LARA BENTLEY | AMELIA BOAG | CHARLIZE BOYES | LUCY BOWMAN
ABBY BROWN | PENELOPE CAY | SOPHIE CHEN | RACHAEL CONNOR | JOCIE CORBETT | ANNA FAGAN | ALICE FERGUSSON | SOPHIE GOODISSON
SOPHIE HANRAHAN | ALICE HANSEN | TESS HARRIS | AMELIA HARTNELL | CLAUDIA HENDERSON | WILLOW HINDMARSH | SCARLETT KANALEY
ELIZABETH LAVERTY | GEORGIE MCBRIDE | CLAIRE MITCHELL | ALICE MULLIGAN | ILSA NEWBY | CLEO OSBORNE | DIANA PAICU | MILLY POULOS
CAMILLA RANKEN | GEORGIA RAPP | ELLA SCOTT | TIA THOMAS | MATILDA THOMPSON | ANNA TURNER | MILLY van EGMOND
ISABELLE VICKERY | MADISON WALTERS | CHLOE WHITE | ARABELLA WHITEHEAD | TABITHA WILD | SOPHIA WINDSOR | ARABELLA WOOD