

Dear Parents and Carers

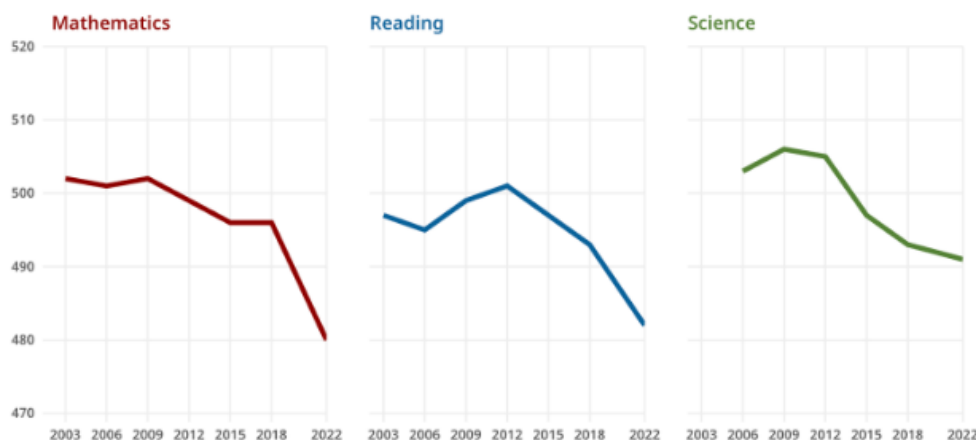
Welcome back to Term 2. I hope the break brought rest and joy for your family and I look forward to partnering with you as we step into another busy term of learning and growth together.

Over the holidays I spent time reading *The Anxious Generation*, a book that has been shaping conversations in schools and homes across the world. Haidt's research highlights the rapid shift from a play-based childhood to a phone-based one, the rise in anxiety and loneliness among young people, and the importance of restoring real-world connection, independence, and healthy rhythms. His insights are practical, clear, and deeply relevant for parents navigating how best to raise children in a digital age.

Since the rise of smart phones around 2010, the world has seen some very concerning trends in children's learning and mental health. Firstly, a dramatic decline in learning internationally, combined with a significant increase in depression, anxiety, self-harm, loneliness and behavioural problems. For example, these trends from the international student assessment of learning:

Trends in mathematics, reading and science performance

PISA test scores, OECD average



Source: OECD (2023), [PISA 2022 Results](#): The State of Learning and Equity in Education.

Haidt summarises these trends and systematically investigates possible explanations, landing at two major societal changes that explain the trends – a shift away from a mainly outside 'play-based' childhood and a further shift to a phone-based childhood.

Haidt offers several practical recommendations for schools seeking to develop healthier, more resilient young people. He encourages schools to establish phone-free and smart-watch-free environments, protect break times as opportunities for real-world play and friendship, and create more space for independence, responsibility, and face-to-face connection. He also highlights the importance of teaching digital wisdom—helping students understand how online platforms shape behaviour—and partnering closely with parents so that home and school work together toward the same developmental goals.

I encourage parents to consider reading the book—or listening to it as an audiobook—as it offers easy to read, evidence-based guidance for families as well as for schools and broader

society that aligns closely with our shared desire to see children flourish and ready to launch as young adults with wisdom and resilience.

Please take the time to review the information below as I share a number of important updates for the College as we enter Term 2!

Ms Rebecca Foster (Year 4 Teacher)

We are saddened to share that Ms Foster is currently quite unwell and will be taking leave for the whole of Term 2. We invite our parent community to be praying for her during this time. Families of 4F will receive further information shortly regarding class arrangements for the term ahead.

Winter Uniform

As the cooler weather has started to return, it is a reminder that winter uniform is about to kick off for Term 2. There is a transition time where students may wear either the winter or the summer uniform, but they may not mix and match. For Secondary school students, the transition time is **one week only**, and Primary school students may transition to full winter uniform during the **first two weeks**. All students should be in full winter uniform for the start of Week 3.

Details of our winter uniform rules are on our website [here](#). To increase warmth on very cold days, students are encouraged to wear appropriate layers under their uniform e.g., singlets or thermal underwear. Under layers should be plain coloured white or flesh-toned with no slogans or images. Students may wear beanies, scarves or gloves (plain coloured navy blue) on especially cold days when outside. Students may not wear jumpers as an underlayer or non-uniform jumpers, hoodies, or jackets.

ANZAC Commemoration and Public Holiday

The College will hold its ANZAC Remembrance Service this coming Friday as we pause together to honour the courage and sacrifice of Australian and New Zealand service men and women. We also acknowledge the staff and students who have been invited to participate in the ANZAC March in Wagga on Saturday as representatives of our community.

Families are reminded that an additional public holiday has been declared for Monday 27 April, and the College will be closed on that day.

Developing our Next Strategic Plan

The College is commencing the development of a new Strategic Plan that will guide our priorities and initiatives over the next three to five years. Feedback gathered from students, staff, parents and families in recent years will form an important foundation for this work, and we warmly invite students, staff, parents, alumni and Company Members to contribute their perspectives as we make key decisions about the future direction of the College. Parents will have the opportunity to hear more at our upcoming Parent Forum, and a Parent survey will be coming out in the first weeks of term.

Parent Forum – A discussion with the Principal

Parents are warmly invited to join the Principal for a Parent Forum to discuss several recent and upcoming developments at the College, as well as an opportunity to contribute to developing our next Strategic Plan. The session will include a discussion on the College's ban on smart watches, the uniform review currently underway, and other areas of change and planning. There will also be an open opportunity for questions and feedback as we continue shaping the future direction of the College together.

The parent forum will be held in the TLA, on Tuesday 5 May in two sessions, firstly at 2:15pm and secondly at 5:00pm.

College Reports – New Format

We have been reviewing our academic reports over the past few months and are pleased to share that Semester 1 reports will be released in a new format. The new format will include:

- A general comment for each student
- A statement of content taught this semester for each subject
- Feedback on student learning progress linked to important learning goals for each subject
- Overall academic achievement for each subject
- Feedback on student habits aligned to College values
- Secondary School only: formal assessment task marks, distribution of overall achievement

We look forward to hearing your feedback on the new design after Semester One reports are released at the end of Term.

Principal's Reading Challenge – Now Live!

The Principal's Reading Challenge is now live, and we are excited to invite all students to take part. Reading is one of God's good gifts to us—it grows our minds, shapes our hearts, and helps us see the world through His eyes. Through reading widely, especially stories, students develop empathy, wisdom, imagination and discernment, becoming better equipped to understand the Bible, engage thoughtfully with God's world, and love their neighbours well.

We encourage every student to read for at least 15 minutes each day. Daily reading is like exercise for the brain: it strengthens learning, supports wellbeing, and builds lifelong habits of curiosity and growth. Details of the challenge can be found in the linked sheet [here](#), and we look forward to seeing our students discover the joy of reading deeply and thinking richly.

Carpark Safety

Our car park is a very busy place and frequently includes very young children and moving vehicles. We therefore remind all families to take extra care to be safe drivers and keep their children safe in the car park. We ask that:

- All drivers follow the 10 km/h speed limit while in our car park
- Parents/carers hold the hands of children 8 years old and younger while walking through the car park
- Use the pedestrian crossings
- Only drop off/pick up from the 'kiss and drop' zone (not the loading bay or other parts of the car park)

The College provides supervision for children until 4pm, peak traffic in the car park is between 3:00 and 3:15pm, for parents who are able to, picking up your child(ren) just 5-10 minutes later makes a big difference.

Athletics Carnival Permissions

Several families experienced issues with permissions for the Secondary athletics carnival at the end of Term 1. The issue arose because we are required to have parent permission to transport a child as well as parent permission for a child to participate in an event off-site. Most of our permission forms put both parts together into a single permission. However, as most students attend the athletics carnival directly and are not transported by College

arranged buses, we separated the consent to allow for accurate booking of buses. Unfortunately, the Compass software that we use for managing event permissions, does not allow us to set up an option for multiple consents like this for a single event and therefore families needed to complete two separate permissions (one for the event attendance, one for transport to the event if using College arranged buses). A number of families missed the transport consent, and this meant many students could not be transported to the carnival.

We acknowledge the confusion this created as almost all other event permissions (except carnivals) have been a single permission step. We have reviewed this internally and in future will return to combining the permission so that families only have one step to give permission and continue to work with Compass to request them to improve this feature to allow for accurate event-specific details to be gathered in the permission process.

Compassion Update

Over Term 1 students have participated in our first Compassion workshops and are beginning to write their first letters to our sponsor children.

Thank you to all the families who have contributed to our Compassion fundraising. The funds raised from the 2025 Colour Fun Run, College Mufti Day gold-coin donations and other student fundraising has been sufficient to fund the operation of a Mums and Babies survival project in the town of Oesapa, Indonesia for all of 2026. This project was flagged as a 'critical needs' project in Indonesia, where UNICEF research in 2023 revealed that 5 million children in Indonesia under five years of age, had stunted growth and were not reaching minimum development milestones due to a lack of food. This project will support the new mums and their babies through education, medical care, nutrition, development checks, social support and advocacy. We are incredibly thankful for our students and families and their efforts in raising funds for Compassion. This project is in the region of the children that the College fundraising is sponsoring and continues our child-child service impact. Students will receive updates over the year from this project to hear real stories of how their fundraising has impacted these families. You can read more about this project [here](#).

There are a small number of children linked to our Compassion centre that the College is not currently supporting – if any families would be interested to sponsor one of these children directly please contact me by emailing principal@wwcc.nsw.edu.au and I can share their portfolios with you to consider.

We are looking forward to a great term ahead.

Kind regards



Dr Rahmi Jackson
Principal

20 April 2026