

# Courier

Spring 2024



*Find Your Remarkable*



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Cover photo: *Bring It On: The Musical*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	From the Principal
6	First Nations Perspectives
8	Choosing our Early Learning Centre
10	ELC Sports Day
12	Celebration of our New Junior School
14	Art in the Junior School
16	Students Ready to Roar!
18	The Lion King Jr
20	Junior School Sports Day
22	Book Week: Reading is Magic
24	Middle School Art Exhibition
26	Remarkable Results for Year 7 Debating Team
28	Tribute to Showcase
30	Showcase
32	College Musical: <i>Bring It On</i>
34	Swimming Carnival
36	Time to Retreat
40	Old Scholar News
44	5 Year Reunion
46	Parents and Friends



We acknowledge the Kurna people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we gather, honouring their deep, enduring connection to Country.

We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, whose wisdom guides us in caring for this land. Committed to walking gently, we pledge to listen, learn, and grow together, fostering respect for the spiritual significance of this place.

# FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Shannon Warren

## WOODCROFT COLLEGE: A FIVE-STAR EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

Woodcroft College has been honoured as a 2024 5-Star Employer of Choice by The Educator Magazine. We are the only school in South Australia to have received this award.

Chris Sweeney, Managing Editor for Special Reports at The Educator, shared his insights on the selection process, stating, “From the standard of nominees it’s clear that schools across Australia value and prioritise their staff. Woodcroft College deserves recognition for going above and beyond by implementing innovative and progressive policies, enabling their people to thrive.”

This prestigious recognition is a testament to our unwavering commitment to excellence, the supportive environment we cultivate, and the dedication each of our staff brings to our school daily.

Our collective efforts in fostering a positive workplace, prioritising professional learning, and nurturing a culture of collaboration and respect have made this achievement possible. I am incredibly proud of the hard work, passion and resilience that everyone at Woodcroft College consistently demonstrates.

This accolade reflects the outstanding contributions of our entire staff, and I want to express my deepest gratitude to each of them. Their dedication to our students and our purpose makes Woodcroft College a truly special place to work and learn.

When staff were surveyed about their experience of working at Woodcroft College, they highlighted the following areas.



### A Strong Sense of Community

At the heart of Woodcroft’s success is its robust sense of community. Staff members consistently praise the caring nature and family-like atmosphere that permeates the College. This environment fosters deep connections among staff, students and parents, creating a workplace where everyone feels valued, respected and part of a supportive network.

## Collaborative and Respectful Work Culture

The College prides itself on cultivating a work culture characterised by collaboration, respect and appreciation for diverse beliefs, values and opinions. This open and inclusive atmosphere encourages staff to share their thoughts freely, promoting innovation and continuous improvement in teaching practices.

## Focus on Professional Growth

Woodcroft strongly emphasises staff professional learning. Opportunities for learning, keeping up with current pedagogy, and pursuing excellence are abundant, contributing to a dynamic and evolving educational environment.

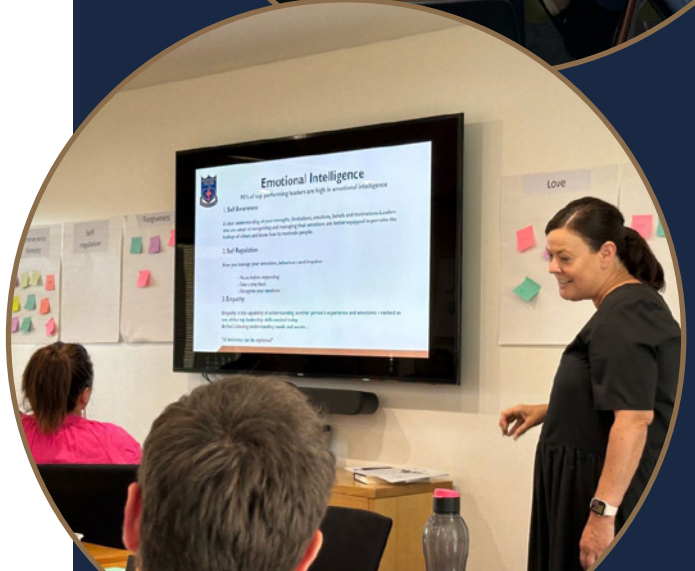
## Supportive Leadership and Work-Life Balance

The leadership team at the College was commended for their passion, drive for positive change and authentic support of staff members. Notably, the College demonstrates a deep understanding of the importance of work-life balance, offering flexibility regarding personal circumstances and family life. This approach has resulted in favourable working conditions that prioritise staff wellbeing.

## Wellbeing Initiatives

Woodcroft College has implemented a range of initiatives to support staff wellbeing:

1. Regular wellbeing professional learning sessions
2. Access to counselling services
3. Leave allowances above the national employment standards
4. Social events and team-building activities
5. Recognition programs to acknowledge staff efforts and achievements



## Challenges and Areas for Improvement

While Woodcroft College excels in many aspects of staff wellbeing, we remain committed to continuous improvement. Some areas identified for further enhancement include:

1. Managing workload and time pressures
2. Improving communication across different departments
3. Providing additional support for new staff members
4. Enhancing resources and facilities in specific areas

## Staff Testimonials

The overwhelmingly positive feedback from staff members underscores Woodcroft's success in creating a supportive work environment:

*"Working at Woodcroft feels like being part of a big, supportive family. The sense of community here is unlike anything I've experienced elsewhere."*

*"The professional development opportunities at Woodcroft have been instrumental in my growth as an educator. I feel valued and supported in my career journey."*

## Looking to the Future

By prioritising staff wellbeing, our aim is to not only enhance the work lives of our employees but also to create a positive ripple effect that benefits students, parents and the broader community.

An article by Health and Wellbeing Consultant, Adrienne Hornby shares reasons why staff wellbeing should be a priority for all schools.

Adrienne highlights that evidence suggests if school staff feel well and supported, it will improve student wellbeing and academic success. This is because teacher and student wellbeing, relationships amongst staff, and educational outcomes are closely connected.

Staff wellbeing is now seen as key to the success of a whole school community, the success of the leadership team, the quality of teaching, and the health and wellbeing of students.\*

As the College moves forward, it stands as a shining example of how prioritising our staff can lead to educational excellence and a thriving school community.

*\*Source: <https://adriennehornby.com.au/reasons-to-put-staff-wellbeing-at-the-top-of-your-schools-priority-list/>*



# FIRST NATIONS PERSPECTIVES

Rebecca Cullen, Reconciliation Coordinator

**In recent years our College recognised a need to enhance the acknowledgment and integration of First Nations perspectives within our school culture and curriculum. This commitment is reflected in the development and implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).**

A group of dedicated staff members worked with Michele Richter, a consultant with experience in implementing Aboriginal cultural awareness initiatives. Together they designed a plan that would help us bring First Nations perspectives into our curriculum. This RAP is a living and evolving document that helps inform our educational practises and community engagement.

To bring the RAP to life, the College has introduced a range of initiatives that celebrate and promote First Nations cultures. Our Reconciliation Week activities are a highlight, providing structured events that encourage both staff and students to engage deeply with First Nations content. These activities have been instrumental in fostering a school-wide appreciation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and histories.

We have strengthened our ties with the local Aboriginal community, incorporating smoking ceremonies and Welcome to Country into our school activities, and working closely with Uncle John, our Elder in Residence. By engaging local Elders, we ensure that these cultural practices are respected and celebrated, enriching the experience of our entire school community.

We provide ongoing opportunities for our staff to deepen their understanding of First Nations perspectives, so that they can be incorporated into their teaching practises.

Each faculty is being supported in integrating these perspectives into the curriculum, helping to create a more inclusive and responsive educational environment.

In addition to these activities, the College has commissioned First Nations peoples to create artworks that now enhance our campus. This includes a specially created Woodcroft College artwork by Old Scholar, Mya Damon (2020) that featured prominently this year in our publications, staff polos and netball uniform.

We are also proud to feature a stunning Kurna shield, designed and created by Kurna and Ngarrindjeri man Paul Herzich, displayed at the entrance of the Junior School. This artwork embodies a Kurna Acknowledgment along with a sky map of the area. Nearby, the poles with Aboriginal artwork were created in collaboration with Barkindji artist, Caitlyn Davies-Plummer and our students. They add vibrant cultural expressions to our campus.

In the Butterfly Garden, a Kurna shield carved by Ngarrindjeri and Kokatha/Wirangu man with strong Kurna and Narungga bloodlines, Harley Hall stands as a testament to traditional craftsmanship. Harley demonstrated to students how these techniques, which left a scarred tree unharmed, reflect the deep respect and care that First Nations peoples have for nature. These visual elements serve as daily reminders of our commitment to reconciliation and cultural inclusivity.

Our College is proud of the progress we have made and remains committed to continuing this important journey towards reconciliation, creating a deeper respect and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures within our school community.



# CHOOSING OUR EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Since our ELC opened in 2020, we have established a positive reputation within the community linked to our staff and our programs.

Our ELC Director, Natasha Olrich has been instrumental in building a strong team of qualified teachers and educators.

Our programs incorporate the IB Primary Years Program into the Early Years Learning Framework. As we prepare our students for school, our 3-Year-Old Program includes four 15-minute lessons each day and our 4-Year-Old Program students participate in six 25-minute lessons across the day. This daily structure is important as it supports students to build skills needed for school at a suitable pace for their age group.

Our ELC students who will move into Reception at the College, can attend our Reception Ready Program. This program runs over two and a half terms to support students to feel comfortable and ready for the Junior School – from visits to the Library, playground and other facilities, to meeting specialist teachers and engaging with their class teachers.

We are very fortunate to have a qualified teacher in each of our four rooms who are supported by experienced educators. We recently asked two of our Early Childhood teachers Danielle Hede and Trent Wright, to tell us why they chose to work at the College and why they love it here.

## Danielle Hede

I am excited to say that I was the first teacher hired when the ELC opened. I had heard that the College was a great community and supportive workplace, and having worked with Natasha in the past, my respect for her as a leader and mentor made my decision to join Woodcroft very easy.

I have been teaching for 13 years and I chose Early Childhood Education because it values children's interests and diverse learning needs.

My favourite part of my job is being creative and flexible in our daily learning.

When I think about other places I have worked, the College has a great community feel. I see our teachers go above and beyond. We are supported by great leadership, and I feel a true sense of belonging.







## Trent Wright

I have been in Early Childhood Education for 11 years. I started my career as an educator before gaining my teaching qualifications and I have been teaching for seven years now.

It was my sister who suggested that more males are needed in early childhood and this led to my working in this area of teaching. I gave it a go and I have not looked back since!

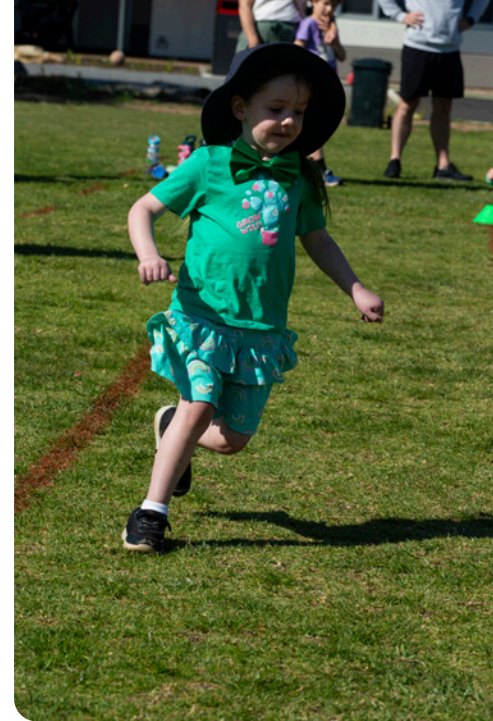
I love the energy the children bring every day. It is something you have to match and it's such a positive vibe.

When the teaching role at the College ELC was advertised, I told my cousins who both went to Woodcroft that I was applying. They told me that they had enjoyed their time here and I knew it was a great school experience as they are both teachers now.

Having worked at other early childhood sites, I appreciate that our ELC is quite structured in comparison. This creates a really calm environment where children settle in a lot easier, and importantly, we see less anxiety at drop off which is good for our students and our parents.

*The ELC is lucky to have such passionate and dedicated teachers. If you have attended an ELC Graduation, you will know that Danielle and Trent love their role and build special bonds with the students who come into their classes.*

**With high demand for places, if you are considering our ELC or know someone who is, please ensure that we receive a Registration of Interest as early as possible – even from birth!**



# ELC SPORTS DAY





# CELEBRATION OF OUR NEW JUNIOR SCHOOL

**We were delighted to have the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, Minister for Social Services and Member for Kingston officially open our beautiful new Junior School in June. The Minister was representing the Federal Minister for Education, the Hon Jason Clare MP.**

The ceremony started outside the building with a heartfelt and inspiring Welcome to Country by Uncle John who carried out a smoking ceremony to cleanse and protect the wellbeing of all who enter the Junior School.

After Uncle John's welcome, our 60 guests headed indoors to the Magain Performing Arts Studio with Year 5 student, Bryce Nettelbeck playing the piano as guests were seated. Our College Pastor, Marty Fox opened proceedings with a prayer of blessing.

Our Principal, Shannon Warren shared how the new building was developed and built for today's students and future generations to come. Shannon spoke about the collaborative and consultative process with students and staff contributing to the final design. The event was also an opportunity to acknowledge the individuals and organisations that contributed to make the new Junior School a reality.

Two Junior School Leaders, Year 6 students, Hunter Walsh and Zoey Wong thanked staff, architects and builders for their beautiful new building. They commented on the positive impact of having specialist areas, connected learning spaces and natural light throughout their new learning environment.

The Junior School Wind Ensemble performed for guests before the Hon Amanda Rishworth presented her speech reflecting on her involvement with the College and congratulating all involved in the growth and development of both community and buildings. The Minister had the honour of cutting the ribbon and unveiling the plaque which recognised the contribution of the Australian Government through their Capital Grants Program.

Head of Junior School, Nick Smith closed the ceremony by inviting five students to present gifts to Shannon representing our Guiding Principles – Growth, Community, Agency, Creativity and Future Focused. This was a touching and heartwarming way to end a very special ceremony for an amazing new facility at the College.

All Junior School students and staff were able to watch the ceremony as it was live streamed into classrooms while enjoying a commemorative biscuit to mark the occasion.







## ART IN THE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Michelle Sutherland is one of the specialist teachers in the Junior School and has been teaching Art for over 16 years. This year in our new building, it has been wonderful to provide a permanent and fit-for-purpose space for the creating and displaying of Art within the Junior School.

Early in Term 3, Michelle and our Year 1 students had the opportunity to share their creations at the Year 1 Art Exhibition. From hand-painted t-shirts, bubble wrap fish and seahorses, to handmade bracelets, dioramas and jetty jumping pictures, to native plant designs inspired by Caitlyn Davies-Plummer, totem animals, plants, clay pots and fish to basket weaving; there was so much creativity on display.

We asked Michelle about the importance of Art in the curriculum and why we hold Exhibitions.

### How important is Art as part of the curriculum for our Junior School students?

Children naturally communicate through art. Creating art isn't just about fun, it stimulates creativity and problem-solving skills, promotes self-esteem and self-expression. Art contributes to fine motor skill development, develops visual spatial processing, builds memory and self-control, provides rest, relaxation and reward, increases academic performance and connects children to people and the world.

Studying Art provides an opportunity to develop a better understanding of the cultural significance of art as a form of identity and expression.

### Why do we have a Year 1 Art Exhibition?

The Year 1 Art Exhibition is an opportunity for students to express themselves and share their art experiences with the school community. Students engage with a variety of learning opportunities culminating in the showcasing of their learning throughout this period.

Junior School students are also invited to share work in the Middle School Exhibition.

## How do the students react to seeing their artwork on display?

The Exhibition is the culmination of an enormous immersive learning experience, and the students are often quite overwhelmed with pride and excitement. There are different points of reference and ways to interact with their art, which naturally leads into questioning, discussions and sharing with family and friends. This is both enriching and rewarding for the students.

## What are the highlights of this year's Art Exhibition?

The energy in and around the exhibition was quite electric and I think this confirms the value of this annual event for students and families. Beside the amazing masterpieces created by students, the inclusion of a chalk pastel painting created by Artist in Residence Deb Farrimond, was a major highlight. Watching Deb at work not only inspired students but gave them the opportunity to ask questions in real time and observe her artistic skills and processes.

## How did the new space in the Junior School support the creation of the artworks and the Exhibition?

It was quite a joy to plan this year's Exhibition because of the possibilities the new building offered. From the large windows providing gorgeous natural light, the friendly surface colours of walls and floors to display cabinets, multi levels, open plan spaces and acoustics to modern and clean furniture. The biggest advantage of all had to be the immediate proximity for assembling the Exhibition and availability to students, staff and parents. This would be the most viewed Exhibition to date due to the location.



## STUDENTS READY TO ROAR!

Musical Production team members: Clare Abbott, Julie Foley, Adam Goodburn, Kristi Ellis and Lindsay McIvor

**While being in a school musical is a big commitment, participation in this enjoyable and creative process offers students many invaluable lessons that extend far beyond the stage.**

Our audition process includes both online and live auditions. As a musical team, we were looking for enthusiasm and commitment in both auditions, as well as teamwork during our live audition workshops.

Weekly rehearsals involved singing practice, remembering choreography, learning lines and song lyrics - sometimes in a different language! Students learnt to overcome challenges and refine skills – all of which fostered a strong work ethic, dedication, persistence and resilience.

For this year's musical, we certainly found that *The Lion King Jr* was a big step up from our last musical, *The Jungle Book Kids*. Both the music and the storyline were more complex, there were more chorus numbers to be choreographed, and the mask-making was a massive undertaking! These factors made the rehearsal process challenging. However, as always, it came together when it needed to; the students rose to the challenge with enthusiasm and determination.

The result of the students' dedication and the various staff members' time and efforts with costume, masks and props is always so impressive, and a reminder of the supportive community we have here at Woodcroft College.

The final performances were an opportunity to take a deep breath as we waited in anticipation for the audience's reaction. It always feels like such a remarkable achievement and something that we all take great pride in.

Our key Junior School musical values include enthusiasm, commitment, teamwork and fun! The 2024 cast of Year 5 and Year 6 students all demonstrated these traits and thoroughly enjoyed making new friendships and working together for a common goal.

We hope that by participating in the musical, our students have developed their communication skills, built further confidence, improved organisational skills and feel a sense of accomplishment that has positively impacted their lives.

One of the most heartwarming parts of the musical journey was seeing the students shine and grow as both performers and as individuals. We certainly hope that this beneficial experience is something they will always remember.



*“The Lion King Jr was a brilliant opportunity for me and it helped me overcome my fears of performing in front of people. I got to see some amazing talent throughout our Year 5 and Year 6 students and I’m so thankful for that. I got to work with lovely people who brought the best self out of me. I appreciate them very much. Thank you for this opportunity to participate in such a beautiful production.” - Quinn Cook, Year 6*



Looking back on his time in the Junior School Musical is Tyson Stott, who played Bagheera and Jungle Thistle in *The Jungle Book Kids* in 2022. Tyson is now in Year 8 and had been in the past two College Musicals (for Middle and Senior School students). He played his first role in *Chicago* in 2023 and played one of the Jackson Boys in *Bring it On* for this year’s Musical.

“I was inspired to audition for *The Jungle Book Kids* after being involved in Pelican Productions’, *School of Rock* the year before. Another thing that motivated me to audition for *The Jungle Book Kids* was the amount of support received from teachers and staff in 2020’s *Pirates Vs Mermaids*.”

Tyson’s advice to current Junior School students thinking about auditioning for the next Junior School Musical is to just simply give it a go. If you aren’t enjoying the experience, Tyson said the Junior School staff are very supportive and won’t force you to continue.

Students who do audition for roles in the Junior School Musical, will certainly learn from the experience and have the confidence to audition for the College Musical when they move to the Middle and Senior School. This was the case for Tyson who said “My enjoyment in *The Jungle Book Kids* was the biggest thing leading me to part of College Musicals.”

The audition process for both Musicals was quite similar according to Tyson.

“In Junior School, it was more ensemble singing and if you wished to audition for a main role, then you’d have to sing a small clip of a song so they can hear your voice.” The College Musical auditions were very similar to Junior School. “Everyone automatically gets in as an ensemble member, but you have to sing in small groups ranging from three to five so they can hear your voice individually. If you wished to go for a role then you must learn a small section of a song and sing it just in front of staff, no students.”

Tyson’s audition tip is to move with actions, which will show your stage presence and give you a better chance!

The College Musical requires a lot more commitment, with regular Tuesday night rehearsals ranging from vocals and choreography each week. This increases as you get closer to the performances.

Tyson hopes to continue his musical theatre journey by auditioning in 2025.





# THE LION KING JR

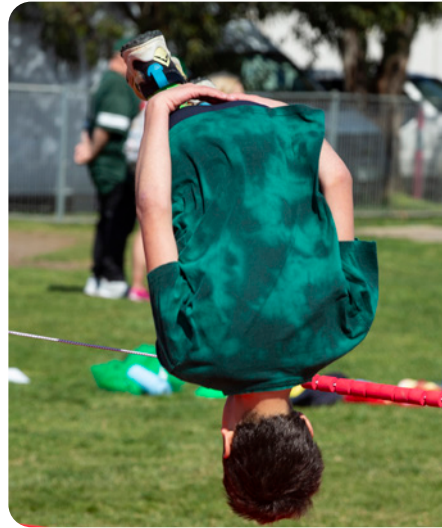






# JUNIOR SCHOOL SPORTS DAY







# BOOK WEEK

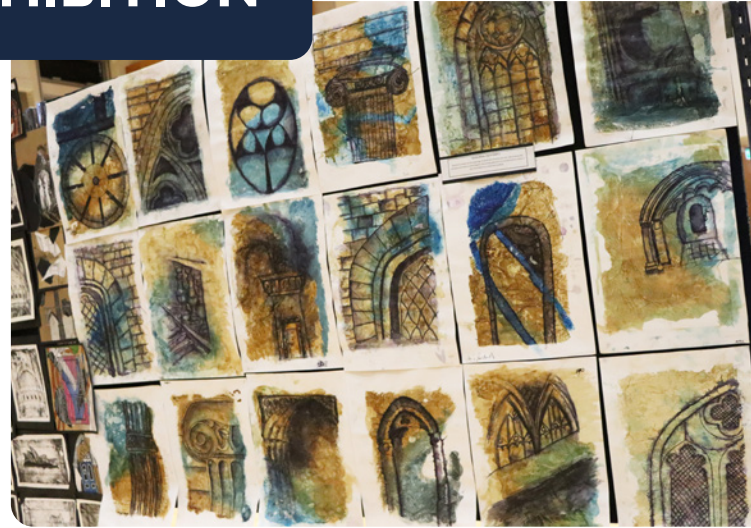
Reading is Magic







# MIDDLE SCHOOL ART EXHIBITION







## REMARKABLE RESULTS FOR YEAR 7 DEBATING TEAM

We are so proud of our Year 7 Debating Team for their remarkable results in the South Australian Debating Association (SADA) Schools' Competition. Marianne Aujard, Dionne Hnoudis, Maya Joshi, Eliana White, James West and Alana McEvoy have demonstrated Agency, Creativity and Growth over their first competitive season as a team.

Our students have been competing in the Junior A competition and at the time of this article, they had just won a spot in the Grand Final! The competition includes 40 teams, so this is a truly fantastic result. The Junior A competition gives students the opportunity to speak for four minutes each with topics appropriate to beginner debaters.

The topics are set by SADA and listed in the Program at the start of the season. The aim is to set topics that are evenly balanced and expose students to a range of important and relevant issues and ideas, supporting their academic development.

Debating is a great skill to have as it is about setting personal beliefs aside to construct objective and logical arguments. It is about improving the ability to understand, discuss and present issues and ideas. Importantly, debating encourages students to empathise with opinions that may be different to their own.

Two of our Year 7 Debating Team students have shared their experience.





**DIONNE HNOUDIS**

**Why did you choose to join the Debating Team?**

I decided to join the Debating Team, because I love public speaking, writing speeches and creating rebuttals.

**What have you enjoyed most about being in the Debating Team?**

Because of my experience in debating, I have loved helping some of the new debaters put together their speeches and I really like teaching the skills needed to be a successful debater.

**Has there been a topic that you have found really challenging? If so, what strategies did you use to present your case?**

I have had many topics that were challenging but I just try and be creative with these topics and know that my team will help me with ideas, and I can help them as well.

**Do you prefer arguing for or against?**

I don't mind whether I'm for or against the topic because it really depends on what the topic is. No matter if we are for or against it is still really fun.

**Why do you think you've had some great success in your debates so far?**

I have been doing debating for three years, so I have a lot of experience and I know how to prepare and speak confidently.



**ALANA MCEVOY**

**Why did you choose to join the Debating Team?**

I chose debating because it's something I have always been interested in and I have always wanted to try.

**What have you enjoyed most about being in the Debating Team?**

I have enjoyed writing the speeches and going to the meetings with my teammates.

**Has there been a topic that you have found really challenging? If so, what strategies did you use to present your case?**

I found the topic of 'Barbie is bad for women' very challenging because Mattel has done a lot to improve how Barbie reflects on women.

**Do you prefer arguing for or against?**

It depends on the topic because they are all so different and some would be easier to do as for and others as against.

**Why do you think you've had some great success in your debates so far?**

We have great success in our debates because we work hard and we work as a team.

# TRIBUTE TO SHOWCASE

Guest Writer, Meera Thomas | Year 12 Student

I have been a part of Showcase since 2017, and this was my 8th consecutive and final year participating and celebrating the success and skill of students at Woodcroft College.

Showcase has transformed significantly since I was first in the event as part of the Junior School Band in Year 5, and every year it has become more special. As a concert it is captivating and engaging, showcasing the hard work of our Music teachers and students.

This year, for the first time, it was held at Futures Church South in Old Reynella, instead of the familiar Hopgood Theatre, which is being renovated. Despite the new location, Showcase was as special as ever, which just goes to show that this event is not about the venue.

Showcase represents the commitment and hard work of everyone involved. From the variety of music, to the sense of belonging, to good fun in the form of costumes and a chance for the whole community to join us in our singalong.

What is never seen at Showcase is the massive efforts thrown behind the event every year. Behind the scenes is extensive planning, morning rehearsals, study rehearsals, afternoon rehearsals and countless hours of practice at home. On the night itself, several Old Scholars come back to help make the night a success. Many take time off from their university studies and jobs to relive Showcase from the other side of the curtain.



Music is difficult. It requires dedicated, determined practice every night. Of course, this isn't always easy and often involves playing the same complicated bar repeatedly just to get it right. As Miss Mac says, you might be able to cram for a maths test, but you can't cram for a music solo.

Music requires knowledge from a number of subjects, including Maths, History, Art, and if you're a wind instrument player, singer, or a flautist like me, Physical Education. Moreover, it takes a lot of confidence and courage to perform in front of a live audience. However, the unique feeling of 'creating music,' or in my opinion, 'magic,' within a band is unparalleled. It is what makes Music students choose the subject, year after year. Even those who can't continue Music as a subject can participate in Concert Band for the opportunity to be a part of this magic.

No matter how many Showcases you've participated in, it never feels like enough and it goes incredibly quickly. I've asked the Music students from the Class of 2024, who were performing for the final time, to share their favourite part of Showcase.



"Finale and the sense of community - everyone is there and is able to play together." -  
*Jazlyn Redl*

Watching everyone's hard work pay off, and how Showcase gives everyone an opportunity to shine.  
- *Jack Stevens*





"I like how every Year level has the opportunity to perform, and you can see them grow as they get older." - *Natalie Beech*

"Knowing that we put a lot of hard work and poured our hearts into every performance made Showcase an incredible and rewarding experience, especially doing it with friends".

- *Gabriel Cheah*



"The inclusivity to make it an enjoyable experience for all ages. There is a lot of careful consideration that goes into Showcase and the professionalism makes it very special to be a part of in all grades."

- *Josephine Hoare*

"Getting to play an instrument with people who also like playing instruments."

- *Oliver Crowhurst*



"Performing to a large crowd." - *Oliver Hayter*

"Piano is my passion, and getting to spend time with people who have the same passion as me is super special." - *Ella Bernard*



"The diversity of all capabilities and inclusivity, such an enjoyable experience for all, loved every bit of it!" - *Erika Graham*



"Only Showcase can give me the exciting memories of performing amazing songs with friends." - *Kai Griffiths*



"The friends you make along the way who share the same passion as you!" - *Jayda Klenk*



"The fun we have and the unforgettable memories that I have made with my friends." - *Leila Jensen*



"Nothing compares to the rush of being on stage. Sharing our passion for music with everyone is something that I will remember forever."

- *Noah Griggs*



Getting to spend time doing things I love most surrounded by the music community. - *Gabrielle Horsburgh*



"Performing at Showcase isn't just about the subject, it's Miss Mac's passion and love for us to strive and do our best, coming together to create the highlight of the year." - *Jessica Davis*



"Showcase is my favourite night of the year besides Christmas! There is nothing more special than sharing the talents of our incredible students with the community and seeing them bring the hard work in class and rehearsals behind the scenes to the stage." - *Renee McCarthy*

"Finale." - *Bailey Hogg*



"I love how it's so different every year and how exciting it is to never expect what's to come. The goosebumps I get when I hear the band and the harmonies of the singers come together to make a masterpiece. It is also crazy to think how talented so many people are at a young age, already performing like professionals."

- *Ayanna Burgan-Minniecon*



"How we used to look up to the Year 12s, and now we get to be mentors for the younger kids."

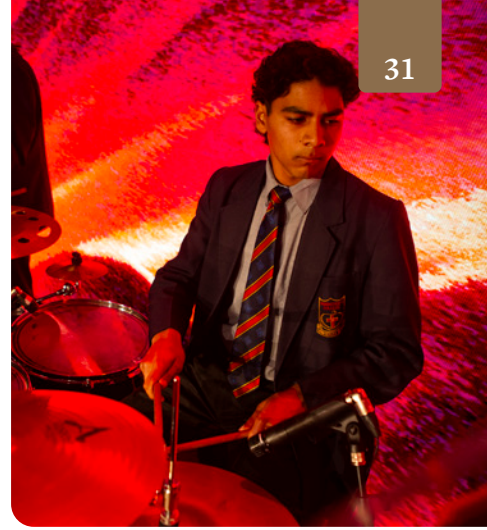
- *Ariya Coomber*





# SHOWCASE



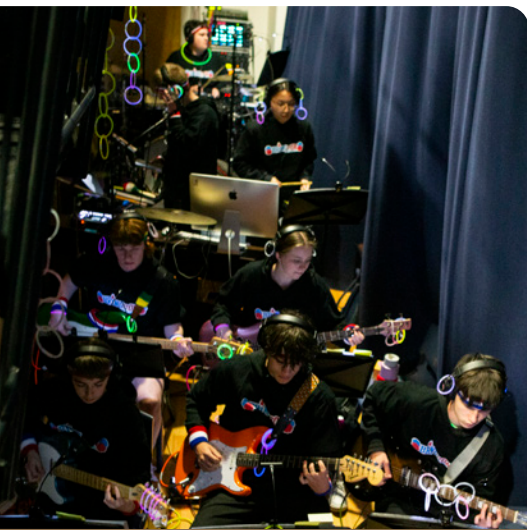




# COLLEGE MUSICAL: BRING IT ON









# SWIMMING CARNIVAL





# 2024 SWIMMING CARNIVAL RESULTS

Middle School Trophy			Senior School Trophy			Overall House Shield		Spirit Cup	
1st	McLaren	493	1st	McLaren	490	1st	McLaren	983	McLaren
2nd	Hardy	400	2nd	Hardy	421	2nd	Hardy	821	
3rd	Reynell	393	3rd	Morphett	399	3rd	Morphett	762	
4th	Morphett	363	4th	Reynell	343	4th	Reynell	736	

## TIME TO RETREAT

Our Year 11 and Year 12 students are offered time away from the College on two specially designed Retreat experiences.

Our Year 11 students spend three days away in the final week of Term 2. The focus is on building resilience and inspiring confidence, strengthening community and connections with peers and teachers, cultivating courage and developing character.



**Helen Romano, Year 11**  
(commenced at the College in 2024)

Leading into Retreat I was somewhat nervous as it was my first Year level camp at Woodcroft College. I knew that I was going to be pushed outside of my comfort zone even if I didn't want to be. But, as we got settled at the Retreat, I realised that I was put into a really amazing group with people who I knew I could trust.

One of the most daunting moments for me was going on the Giant Swing. Even though peers in my group knew that I was worried about this, I had a massive amount of encouragement from them which made me feel like I could push myself to do it. Luckily, earlier that morning we had a talk from Nathan Stempel who explained that we should see the Giant Swing as an opportunity to trust others in our group and let go. I chose to listen to this advice and it was the best thing I could have done.

To finish off the Retreat my group did the Challenge Course, this included us all getting extremely wet and muddy. Even though we were all tired and the weather was wet, we had built such a strong community within our group that we all came together and did it. Finishing the course was the most rewarding part of the camp and I don't regret doing it at all.

Reflecting on Retreat, I have realised how much closer this has brought me to the people around me through being vulnerable and open to connection. Year 11 Retreat was an amazing experience that I will not forget.

## Tyler Atkinson, Year 11

*(commenced at the College in Year 10)*

On Year 11 Retreat, there were plenty of engaging activities that required members of groups to adapt to each other's strengths and weaknesses. I found the team building activities quite helpful in accepting the situation and working together to create solutions to a series of problems. Not only did these activities help to build important team communication skills, but they were also fun and enjoyable.

Like many of my peers, the thing I enjoyed most about Retreat was the Challenge Course. Even though it was cold, wet and muddy, it was so much fun once you really got into it and committed yourself. As my group competed through the course, we forgot about the cold and the mud and gave it everything we had! It made the experience so much more enjoyable despite not being able to feel our limbs after we won the race. A warm shower has never felt so good!

Personally, I am quite open to challenging myself and trying new things, and I looked forward to each of the activities over the course of the camp. I use these kinds of activities and opportunities to put myself out there and model the participation and engagement that I know will result in the most enjoyable and memorable experience. Despite this, I know that there were many who would have found some of the activities challenging for various reasons, but they still had the courage to give them a go. I admire that and I encourage the year levels that follow to do the same.

The only other camp I have been on at Woodcroft College was in Year 10, which I rather enjoyed. It was quite the outdoor camp. Setting up tents each night, completing navigation activities and cooking our own food was all part of the fun. Compared to Year 11 Retreat, Year 10 Camp required a bit more physical persistence and commitment which is why it was nice to have a bed that stayed in the same spot each day. It was also nice that we got to spend some time hanging out with our friends on Retreat as we were there as a whole Year level and not split into separate groups. Overall though, I always enjoy school camps and the memories that they leave behind. Now I look forward to next year's last retreat/camp of my school life.



For our Year 12 students, the Retreat is held over two days at the start of Term 3 and is a welcome pause in their final year at school. A chance to reflect on where they have come from, and an opportunity to connect with their peers and teachers away from the College.

## Ollie Goss, Year 12

*(commenced in Reception at the College)*

### What did you enjoy most about the Retreat, and find the most rewarding?

I enjoyed Challenge Hill; it was rewarding when crossing the finish line as some of the obstacles required a lot of physical strength and also mental strength to swing over water fully clothed.

### Were there any activities on Retreat that you found daunting or were nervous to try? If so, why and how did you overcome this?

The bouldering. With no harness there is always an element of fear about falling. I overcame this by watching what path some other people took before me, so I had the confidence to follow it.

### How did the Retreat prepare you for the last part of your schooling journey?

I think the Retreat made our Year 12 cohort closer as a whole. It gave us options for people outside our friend groups to talk to if we ever need to. It also allowed us to see our teachers be vulnerable which gave everyone else the confidence to do the same.

Our students engage in activities with a focus on community, courage, connection and character. We want to inspire students to be their best and to have the growth mindset necessary for success as they look towards their future.



**Sienna Everett, Year 12**  
*(commenced in Year 6 at the College)*

**What did you enjoy most about the Retreat, and find the most rewarding?**

I really enjoyed the greater sense of community that was created during, not only the outdoor physical activities, but also the group activities completed indoors with Mr Fox and Mrs Voyzey. It was rewarding to build stronger relationships with people I don't often get the chance to connect with.

**Were there any activities on Retreat that you found daunting or were nervous to try? If so, why and how did you overcome this?**

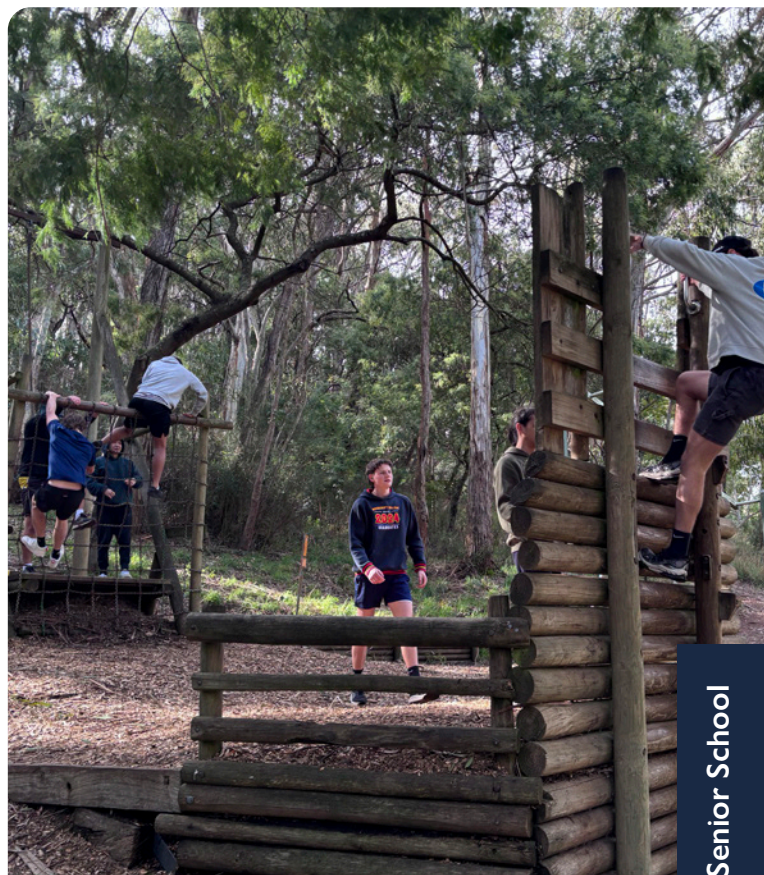
The Tarzan Swing was very intimidating at first and I didn't think that I would attempt it. However, after watching many of my classmates give it a go, I gained the confidence to try it. When I made it to the platform, I immediately felt nervous and considered backing out. But with everyone cheering me on and offering advice, I managed to start and came close to reaching the end—twice.

**How did the Retreat prepare you for the last part of your schooling journey?**

Retreat helped me gain a better perspective of where I am in life, what I have achieved and how much I have ahead of me. This made me feel grateful for the support I have around me that will help me through the last part of my schooling journey.

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We thank Helen, Tyler, Ollie and Sienna for sharing their experiences from Year 11 and Year 12 Retreats.



## OLD SCHOLAR NEWS

### Lachlan Nash, Class of 2023

*Currently a student at the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA)*

It's certainly been a journey since I left the College! I moved at the start of February with a quick turnaround before the course started. However, I have been so lucky that everything seemed to click into place for me. I'm glad that I can honestly say that I have loved moving away and living independently.

Sydney is certainly busier than Adelaide but at times I think I prefer the quick pace and bustling streets, although I do miss the quiet at times! Naturally, there are times when I miss family and friends at home, but the people I've met this year at NIDA have become my new family away from home, and made this adventure so worthwhile and special.

NIDA has been fantastic, I don't think I can even put into words how it feels to be studying at such a prestigious institution that I looked up to for so long. Dreaming that I would study there one day and to now say I am there, it's quite a surreal feeling. My course is certainly intense, with classes running 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and often Friday being a day for practice and self-guided rehearsals. Regardless of how hectic the schedule has been, I think it has only helped me further develop skills like stamina, patience and perseverance that are needed in the performing arts industry.

Each day at NIDA in the Musical Theatre course is different but always involves some form of singing, acting and movement. I think that is the appeal of the course, no two days are the same and you never know what you're going to get!

This year I have thrown myself into every class and done all that I can to absorb as much knowledge as possible!

We're so lucky to work with many industry professionals who have years of experience and knowledge that ultimately, help guide the way we tell stories as performers. The Musical Theatre course is in high demand for performances at NIDA too, with my cohort performing at multiple events this year as well as some of us putting on our own Circus-themed Cabaret (I had the honour of being the Clown!). Our Cabaret was such a valuable experience as it was an inter-disciplinary project between multiple different courses including Musical Theatre, Make-up and Live Production/Technical Services.

*Lachlan with Woodcroft College Drama Teachers Paul Vaughan and Rachel McCall.*





I am also very excited as we are now working towards our end-of-year showcase in October. This is an open-invitation event for industry professionals, casting directors and agents to come and see the talent that is emerging from this year's graduating students. Overall, NIDA has been a life-changing and eye-opening experience for me. I have learnt so much about myself and the performing arts that has reinforced my passion and love for the industry, encouraging me to keep pursuing it further in life!

I think the biggest highlight for me has been being part of this group of 19 people who all share a similar love for the performing arts, and being able to create and connect with this new family. The special thing about NIDA is their willingness to invite amazing industry professionals to hold workshops and classes for us. This year, I have had the privilege of working with some fantastic actors, choreographers and performers who have years of experience in the industry. They have been able to provide guidance on what the future may look like and how to approach it as young up-and-coming performers.



## Harry Jones, Class of 2018



Straight after school I started scaffolding, before flying to the UK to travel.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 lockdowns put a hold on that, so I returned to Adelaide, where I started working at RoofClimb Adelaide Oval. I ended up taking on a management role there, before relocating to Queenstown, New Zealand, where I worked for AJ Hackett Bungy, and did plenty of travel. I became a Nevis Bungy Jump Master and had an absolutely incredible experience. Recently I have returned to Adelaide, I'm working at RoofClimb again and now also Golding Wines in Lobethal.

Over the last few months, I have been setting up Woodcroft College's first ever Old Scholars Sports Club, named "Woodcroft Wanderers Football Club". We will be entering two teams into the Collegiate Soccer League Division 3A and 3B in 2025.

Sport was a huge part of my time at Woodcroft, particularly when it came to Knockout Soccer. I never missed an opportunity to play, whether it was Open Knockout, Year Level Knockout, five-a-side, or even giving new sports a go, like Ultimate Frisbee. I loved being given the responsibility from the Sports Faculty to select the teams who would compete, and even be player/coach on occasion. We always had loads of fun and had a tight knit community, which often culminated in a passionate Staff versus Students game at the end of the year. I loved coming into school and putting on the Woodcroft soccer kit, rather than the usual uniform for a day, and getting to represent the school in the sport I loved.

I saw an opportunity to grow the Woodcroft Sports Program by starting a soccer club for Old Scholars. The Sports Program did so much for me whilst I was a student and I felt it was a great opportunity to give something back. I had recently joined one of my friend's collegiate soccer clubs and enjoyed the community atmosphere. I wanted to set up an Old Scholars Soccer Club for Woodcroft, so that Old Scholars could continue to play the sport they love together, in a fun, relaxed, community environment. It is an opportunity for us to enjoy the beautiful game again and play because we love it. Community is so important to mental health, and being part of a sports club like Woodcroft Wanderers will help provide that sense of belonging.

To have an Old Scholars team playing at Woodcroft College will mean students graduating from Woodcroft can continue to play soccer with their mates in the local community, and feel free to invite anyone along. We have goals of becoming very community oriented, whilst also striving for success in the league and cup competitions. Being based at Woodcroft College means we can add plenty of social events to our calendar for all our players, members, family, friends and volunteers that will help to support our local business and organisations.

We are always on the lookout for more players and volunteers! If you are interested in playing for Woodcroft Wanderers, please reach out to me via text or over the phone. There are no skills or experience necessary for players and you don't have to be a Woodcroft Old Scholar, so feel free to invite your friends. We currently have a great mix of Old Scholars from all year levels and ex-club players ready to go.

We are also seeking expressions of interest for a B Grade Coach and committee member positions. Please reach out to me for more information if this would be of interest.

Being a not-for-profit community sports club, we will rely on the generous donations of our sponsors. We currently have a 2025 Sponsorship Presentation package available which we can share with you for more information. Please contact me on the details below if you are interested. As mentioned above we are looking to support our local community as much as we can and have some great ideas as to how we can do this.



## BE PART OF THE FIRST EVER OLD SCHOLARS SOCCER TEAM!

Woodcroft Wanderers will play in the Collegiate Soccer League Division 3A and 3B in the 2025 season.

Currently seeking players – no age limit, Old Scholars and their friends and family are welcome.

- Training sessions: Thursday night at Woodcroft College
- Games: Saturday afternoon
- Casual pre-season 'kickabouts' starting at 6.30pm on Thursday November 28

Also seeking B Grade Coach, committee members and matchday volunteers.

Building a strong community and great social calendar.

**Interested and want to learn more?**

**Contact Harry Jones**

**M: 0423 132 521**

**E: [harrywjones1004@gmail.com](mailto:harrywjones1004@gmail.com)**



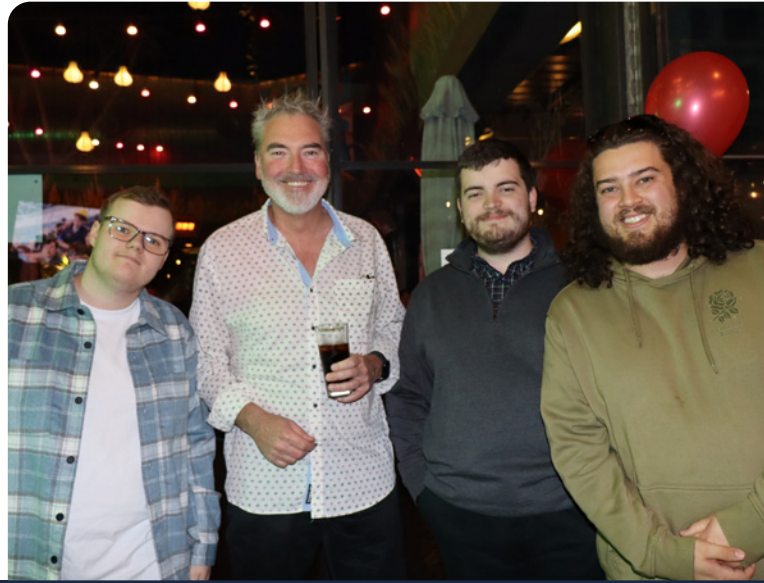
## 5 YEAR REUNION

At Woodcroft College we value Real Connection and our Old Scholar Reunions provide the opportunity to celebrate this.

In June we hosted our Class of 2019 Old Scholar Reunion at the Warradale Hotel. We had such a great turn out, with some traveling from interstate to be there. It was wonderful to see so many of our international students there too.

Thank you to everyone who came, including teachers past and present - it was a wonderful evening and we hope everyone had a great time. We look forward to the next one, and we know that you will all keep growing and doing remarkable things.





## 2025 OLD SCHOLAR REUNIONS

Dates for our 2025 Old Scholar Reunions will be available on our website later this year.

Please ensure you visit [woodcroft.sa.edu.au/our-community/old-scholars/](https://woodcroft.sa.edu.au/our-community/old-scholars/) to see dates for the following reunions:

- 5 Year Reunion: Class of 2000
- 10 Year Reunion: Class of 2015
- 20 Year Reunion: Class of 2005
- 30 Year Reunion: Class of 1995

## UPDATE DETAILS

It is important to keep your details up-to-date with the College to ensure you continue to receive The Courier and also Reunion invitations. If you would like to receive a digital copy of the Courier morning forward, provide your best email address at [oldscholars@woodcroft.sa.edu.au](mailto:oldscholars@woodcroft.sa.edu.au).

You are also welcome to share any news or updates with the College by emailing us at [oldscholars@woodcroft.sa.edu.au](mailto:oldscholars@woodcroft.sa.edu.au).



## PARENTS AND FRIENDS

**Our Parents and Friends committee has been busy over the past two terms, and we are very grateful for the support from our College community.**

We continued our Mother's Day and Father's Day activities including stalls for the students to choose a gift for a parent, grandparent or special friend. While mums enjoyed a coffee and a fun photo with their family before school, for dads it was a coffee and brekky roll. Both events are a lovely way to start the day with time together at school and the chance to chat with other parents.

Our first ever event in 2020 was the Quiz Night which ran for three years. We took a break in 2023, so it was great to bring the event back this year – bigger and better than ever. Thank you to everyone who attended for helping us to achieve a sold-out event in record time and for supporting our fundraising on the night. We also love that everyone embraced the colour table theme, coming dressed to match.

We are grateful to every individual and business who donated to support our fundraising at the event and prizes – you can see the full list on the Parents and Friends page on our website.

Special thank you to our event sponsor, Pete Fallon, Principal at Ray White Woodcroft and current parent for continuing to be such a generous supporter of our College.

Of course, we could not run the event without our fabulous Quiz Masters James and Leanne Marchington (also current parents). Setting a great pace and range of questions, we thank James and Leanne for running a truly professional event which we know was enjoyed by all the guests.

This year, the committee is pleased to have funded the introduction of Assistive Technology in the classroom as part of our Inclusive Education program and contributed to the purchase of a baritone saxophone for the Music Faculty. We will be seeking further applications from Faculties across the College in Term 4 to support projects and programs that will benefit our students.

If you would like to learn more about Parents and Friends at Woodcroft College, please contact Cathy Stewart, Director of Marketing and Advancement at [stewart\\_ca@woodcroft.sa.edu.au](mailto:stewart_ca@woodcroft.sa.edu.au).

The committee meets two times a term with additional meetings as required for more major events such as the Quiz Night. We are also happy to hear from volunteers who may not want to be on the committee but are happy to help when needed.



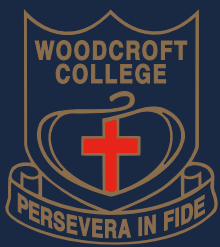
## Seeking new College Council and Committee members

Do you want to make a real difference in your College community? Woodcroft College Council is seeking passionate individuals to join our Council and its sub-committees.

Working alongside the College Principal, the Council plays a vital role in shaping the College's future. Our members contribute to key strategies, ensure the College thrives financially, and ultimately, help us achieve our purpose.

Previous experience in corporate governance, education, or business development is desirable, but your dedication and eagerness to learn are most important. If you are interested in contributing, please contact the College Council to find out more.

E: [wcc.chair@woodcroft.sa.edu.au](mailto:wcc.chair@woodcroft.sa.edu.au)



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