



THE BEACON

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Striving for Excellence





Enjoy reading about another action-packed few weeks at our school.

Thank you to all the parents, staff, and students for their contribution to our school. The sense of community is obvious.

We would like to respectfully acknowledge the Southern Yamatji Peoples who are the Traditional Owners and First People of the land on which we stand. The Nhanhagardi, Wilunyu, Amangu. I would like to pay my respect to the Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of the Southern Yamatji Peoples.

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GERALDTON
GRAMMAR SCHOOL



Valedictory



I would like to congratulate the graduating class of 2024. The Valedictory Day, held on Friday October 18, was a wonderful occasion, with several celebratory and formal occasions throughout the day.

Year 12 students arrived at school to enjoy a breakfast prepared and cooked by the Geraldton Grammar School staff. This was followed by a family and friends morning tea before the Valedictory School Assembly.

At the end of the Valedictory School Assembly, Year 12 students were marked with a guard of honour by the whole school, allowing fellow students to pass on their well wishes to the graduating class.

The culminating event of the day is a special service, a time when the Geraldton Grammar School community gathers to give thanks and final acknowledgement of the students' successes throughout their schooling.

I would also like to acknowledge the Geraldton Grammar School teaching staff, administration, grounds, cleaning staff, parents, friends, and family members of the Year 12 cohort for their support in the lead-up to and on the day.

Finally, to the class of 2024, I wish you every success as you look to find employment or complete further study.

The Academic Endeavour Award

It is presented to one General student and one ATAR student who has been recognised for demonstrating motivation to learn, pursuing their personal best, perseverance with tasks, and consistent work to the best of their ability.

Winner - General Academic Endeavour: **Lachlan Norris**

Winner - ATAR Academic Endeavour: **Allysa Pipon**



The John Royce Dux of School Award

John Royce is one of the most respected educators in the Mid-West. He has over 40 years of experience as a Biology and Human Biology teacher. John is a Foundation staff member of Geraldton Grammar School, commencing in 1996. He was Deputy Principal for many years and completed his last year of service as Principal in 2014. John has also been a well-respected member of the School Board.

The John Royce Dux of School Award is given to the Year 12 student whose academic results place them at the top of the cohort. It is calculated using a student's 5 best ATAR courses, the number for each course is an average of the final course mark and the second-semester exam mark.

Winner – **Shanaya Gronow**

House Badge Presentation

Geraldton Grammar Schools House Program encourages students to accrue individual points in recognition of their participation in a wide range of house events throughout the year. The following students were successful in achieving the desired individual House point total.



Chapman House -	Greenough House -	Irwin House -	Murchison House -
Christi Bestry Joe George-Kennedy Sandy Hann	Asher Milnes Ella Batten Dusty Morgan	Bella Teakle Hanah Chapman Georgie Boys	Paige Gould Ryan Jermyn Milly Kalajzich Ben Walsh

Defence Force Long Tan Leadership Award

These awards have been created to acknowledge the achievements of young people, who have demonstrated outstanding qualities of leadership and teamwork either within our school or the wider community. They recognise those who display strong values, such as determination to do their best, mateship, tenacity, compassion and leading by example.

Winner – **Dusty Morgan**



Long Tan Future Innovators Award

The Australian Defence Force Future Innovators Award has been designed to recognise recipients' science and mathematics abilities. The award recognises a student who has demonstrated motivation and innovation in the areas of STEM within their school, and who display strong personal ethical values, such as doing one's best.

Winner – **Joe George-Kennedy**

Instrumental Music Program Award

This award is given to a student who has demonstrated outstanding musical achievement in the skill development on their instrument, commitment to the program and school representation.

Winner – **Joe George-Kennedy**

The Geraldton Grammar School Concert Band Life Member Award

Acknowledges dedication, contribution, and representation across several years.

Winners – **Christi Bestry, Ashleigh Blignaut, Joe George-Kennedy and Harrison Millns Sizer**



Sportsperson Award

This award goes to a student who has represented the school with pride and purpose and achieves results of a high standard in school-based sports.

Winner – **Asher Milnes**

Winner – **Christi Bestry**



Courtesy and Cooperation Award

The Courtesy and Cooperation Award is given to a student who consistently shows consideration to others, good manners, and exemplary behaviour towards their peers and the school community.

Winner – **Jenna Butson**



King Constantine Round Square Award for Service

Recognises a student who has demonstrated an exceptional act of service to others, immediate or long term, either within or without the school community.

Winner – **Ashleigh Blignaut**



AMPOL All Rounder

This award is given to a student who exhibits excellence in a wide range of areas, including academics, sports, service, and leadership.

Winner – **Joe George-Kennedy**

2025 Year 12 Leadership Group

Congratulations to our 2025 Year 12 Leadership Group who were inducted into their new roles at the Year 12 valedictory service. Students have already been very active around the school and we look forward to students developing their leadership skills and leading the school in 2025.



School Captains – Freya Bergen and Gideon Kentish



Arts Captain
Jessica Marsland



Academic Captain
Lily Scrimgeour



Service Captain
Millie Graziadelli



Sports Captain
Nicole Chamberlain



Murchison Captain
Tom Sorgiovanni



Greenough Captain
Amara Starling



Irwin Captain
Phoebe Teakle



Chapman Captain
Owen Scatena

Year 6 Graduation Service



The Year 6 Graduation Service, held on Thursday 21 November, was heartfelt and memorable. It gave our graduating students a chance to reflect on their primary school journey, celebrate their achievements, and express gratitude for the many blessings they experienced.

As the graduates bid farewell to their Year 6 chapter, there was a sense of anticipation in the air, knowing that they will be moving on with their learning journey in secondary school next year.

Following the service, the students returned to school later in the afternoon, eagerly preparing for their next celebration. They ventured out to the Lavender Farm, where they enjoyed a delightful Graduation dinner, creating cherished memories to mark this special milestone in their lives.



Outward Bound

On October 7, all Year 9 and 11 students at Geraldton Grammar School began their journey to Walpole to participate in the annual Outward Bound program. Outward Bound is an important part of the school curriculum aimed at building resilience and capacity in young people by taking them on an expedition that involves challenges (including ropes courses, a giant ladder and problem-solving activities), navigating and hiking from one location to the next, a solo (24 hours in Year 11) and rafting. Students rely on one another and need to work as a group to get the most out of the program. Walpole and the surrounding area, including the Broke and Nornalup inlets, are stunning, and the students have a real chance to get back to nature.

The program itself is run worldwide, and research suggests it has a sizeable impact on students' self-belief, resilience, perseverance, self-esteem, goal-setting, and critical thinking abilities.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated staff and the wonderful members of our school community who generously volunteered their time and efforts for the 10-day Outward Bound program. Your support is invaluable and greatly appreciated. I would like to specifically acknowledge the adults who attended this year: Cass Norton, Wade Kalajzich, Chris Atkinson, Lara Watson, Odette Luk, and Mark Wilkinson. Your contributions have made a significant difference to our students' experience.



Round Square - Colombia

Two Year 11 students had a transformative experience attending the Round Square International Conference in Bogotá, Colombia, joining over 900 delegates worldwide. Immersed in community service, they helped construct chicken sheds, planted native trees, and collaborated with local suppliers while engaging in cultural activities such as baking, cooking, and crafting traditional Colombian items. The conference, guided by Round Square's pillars of service, adventure, democracy, internationalism, and environmentalism, broadened their global perspectives and fostered lifelong friendships. A pre-conference tour in the Bahamas added to the richness of their journey. While the experience was deeply enriching, the students noted the financial barriers that limit accessibility for some families, highlighting the importance of inclusivity in global education opportunities.



A Journey of Growth: Round Square Conference 2025

Our Round Square adventure began with excitement as Remi, her mum, Mrs Flint, and I embarked on a 40-hour journey to our pre-conference destination: the Bahamas. Every moment was unforgettable, from snorkelling with turtles and exploring downtown Nassau to participating in mangrove restoration and dancing at a farewell dinner.

The main conference in Colombia welcomed over 800 participants worldwide, split across five host schools. We stayed with host families, bonded through Baraza groups, and engaged in enriching activities like building chicken sheds, tree planting, cheese making, and Andean dancing. Each day concluded with keynote speakers who inspired us with stories of resilience and empowerment.

The theme, Blooming From the Past, resonated deeply as we witnessed the warmth and optimism of the Colombian people despite their country's turbulent history. This trip was a transformative experience, teaching us respect, perseverance, and gratitude. To anyone considering attending a Round Square conference, seize the opportunity—you'll gain lifelong friendships, invaluable insights, and memories that will stay with you forever.

By Lorena Sansone

China Culture Tour



An Unforgettable Journey: China Culture Tour 2024

In September, a group of enthusiastic students from Years 8 to 12 embarked on an extraordinary educational adventure to China. This journey of discovery led them through the vibrant cities of Beijing, Xi'an, and Shanghai, where they immersed themselves in various cultural activities, engaged with local people, practised their Mandarin, and broadened their horizons with new perspectives. The trip was a cultural experience and a valuable learning opportunity.

The adventure began in Beijing, the capital city that serves as a living museum of China's imperial past. The students' first stop was the serene Summer Palace, a sprawling garden estate once a retreat for the Qing Dynasty emperors. Here, they marvelled at the intricate design of the Long Corridor, took in the view of the seventeen-arch bridge, and enjoyed a peaceful boat ride on Kunming Lake.

Next, they visited the majestic Forbidden City, an architectural marvel that once served as the imperial palace for over 500 years. A trek along part of the awe-inspiring Great Wall of China followed this.



From Beijing, the group travelled to Xi'an, a city that was the starting point of the Silk Road and the capital of several of China's most important dynasties. The students explored the awe-inspiring Terracotta Warriors and the Wild Goose Pagoda, attended a Tang Dynasty Show, and walked parts of the city, including the Muslim Quarter and the city wall.

The final leg of the journey took the students to Shanghai. Here, they ascended the Shanghai Tower, the second tallest building in the world, where they were treated to stunning views of the city's expansive skyline. They also walked along the Bund and enjoyed the sights of Nanjing Road.

The trip ended on a high note with a full day at Shanghai Disneyland, providing the students with a fun and memorable experience to cherish.



WISE Women in STEM Expo

In Week 5, nine Year 9 girls travelled to Perth to attend the Regional WISE Women in STEM Expo at Murdoch University. The girls joined other attendees from regional schools to participate in activities such as an amazing race around the campus, a Forensic Science locked box challenge, and a psychology of perception workshop. They participated in a Q&A session with women working and researching in various STEM fields, who advocated for young people to follow their passions and interests, and doors will open to them. The keynote speaker was a world-renowned forensic entomologist whose ground-breaking research (literally) has helped solve many cases nationally and internationally. This was a great opportunity for our students to broaden their horizons and start thinking about their future pathways.



Band Spectacular



The Senior Concert Band returned to the Queen's Park Theatre in October for the annual Band Spectacular extravaganza. To coincide with the spooky season, the Band prepared a set of mysterious and frightening tunes: Henry Mancini's iconic Pink Panther Theme, Chris Brubeck's terrifying Ghost Walk, and Danny Elfman's supernatural score to The Nightmare Before Christmas. Their performance was accompanied by the talented Gus Chadborne roaming the stage as the Pink Panther.

As is tradition, the second half of the evening featured the wonderful Massed Band, comprised of musicians from all the school ensembles and the Geraldton City Band. This year's theme was "Through the Decades", with each piece taking the audience on a temporal adventure from the 1960s to the present day. The Geraldton Grammar School Senior Concert Band performed excellently throughout the night and should be proud of their efforts.



Geraldton Grammar School proudly showcased its budding musical talent at the Band Spectacular with a fantastic debut performance by our new Windstars Band. Playing on lightweight beginner instruments from NUVO, this enthusiastic group of Year 4 students delivered an impressive rendition of C Jam Blues (in D), originally by jazz legend Duke Ellington.



With the expert accompaniment of Mr Stevens on guitar and under the inspiring leadership of Ms McGrath, who formed the band in Term 2, these young musicians achieved a remarkable milestone in just a few short months. Their dedication and energy shone through, making their first public performance truly memorable. Bravo, Windstars—this is only the beginning of your musical journey!



Talented Young Writers



The Talented Writers had the privilege of a final workshop with acclaimed British author Justin Somper, best known for his *Vampirates* series—a masterful blend of fantasy and horror that has enthralled young adult audiences worldwide. Through the thrilling journey of twins Grace and Connor Tempest in a world of vampire pirates, Somper’s novels exemplify rich storytelling and dynamic character creation. Somper shared his expertise in crafting vivid characters and compelling plots in this inspiring session, guiding students as they collaborated to create their unique protagonists. Thanks to Ms Martin for driving the bus and Mrs Buckley and Mrs Hope for organising the Young Writers Program. The Young Writers program is highly beneficial and recommended for students in Year 6 - Year 12 in 2025 who are passionate about reading and writing.



Orientation Day

The whole school was energised as students stepped into their 2025 year levels during Orientation Day. It was a day of big and small transitions, where new faces, challenges, and opportunities awaited. Among the highlights was welcoming new students, including a family from as far away as Meekatharra. Transitioning from life on a cattle station and schooling through the School of the Air, they demonstrated resilience and adaptability, quickly becoming part of our school community and making a lasting impression.

For most students, the day offered a chance to experience a new perspective of their school, stepping up to the next chapter of their educational journey. Teachers provided various engaging and dynamic activities, with students rotating through sessions designed to inspire, challenge, and excite.

From interactive workshops to team-building games, the day allowed students to connect with peers, get to know their new teachers and gain confidence for the year ahead. Orientation Day set the stage for 2025 and reaffirmed our school community's strength and inclusiveness.



Chemistry Competitions



The school holds two annual competitions as part of the ATAR Year 11 and 12 Chemistry courses. In Year 11, the students, driven by their passion for Chemistry, put all of their learning from the year to the test by identifying three unknown white powders independently in the space of one hour. This year, the deserving winner was Lily-Anne Bailey, who worked with unwavering dedication, efficiency, and safety to correctly identify the unknowns.

In Year 12, the students worked in pairs to determine the acid concentration in white wine using titration methods learned earlier in the year. This requires care, precision, and complex calculations. This year, Ben Walsh and Banjo McBeath were the proud victors. The winners' names have been added to the perpetual trophies alongside previous talented young Chemists.



Secondary Mandarin

Our recent China trip left lasting memories—and cravings. Inspired by their travels, the students couldn't stop talking about the delicious Kung Pao Chicken they enjoyed. Special thanks to Ryan for suggesting we bring a taste of China back home by recreating this iconic dish in class.



Geography Excursions

For their Geography unit this term, the Year 2 students spent a morning exploring significant local features in Geraldton. They investigated how these places got their names, current uses, and meanings for the local community. The walk began at the Sydney Memorial, where students learned about the HMAS Sydney from local guide Bill Alford and the reasons behind the memorial's establishment to honour the men lost in this tragedy. Next, they visited Birdwood House and the Train Station. The excursion concluded at the Bill Sewell Building in the Geraldton Heritage Precinct, Ngurra Barlunguu. Here, students discovered how the land has been utilised throughout history, including its use as an Aboriginal campsite, prison, and hospital. It was a wonderful experience, and we are grateful to the parents who were able to join us on this excursion.



On Thursday 7 November, the Pre-Primary and Year 1 students spent a morning learning about Geraldton's natural, managed, and constructed features. We walked down to the foreshore and split into three groups. The students rotated around three activities, and each station focused on learning about the local area's natural, managed, and constructed features. After we had finished the rotations, we walked back to school and had a treat. Thank you so much to the parents who attended and helped on the excursion.



Design & Technology

Our Design & Technology students have taken on an inspiring sustainability challenge this term, addressing a critical environmental need. Decades of land clearing have left many native bird species—ranging from tiny parrots and boobook owls to the endangered Carnaby's Cockatoos—struggling to find suitable nesting hollows.

In partnership with BirdLife Midwest, the students have crafted custom-designed nesting boxes in various sizes to support these incredible birds. They've built sturdy, eco-friendly boxes equipped with internal ladders and durable hardwood entrances using recycled materials. Each box is carefully finished to blend seamlessly into the natural surroundings, ensuring they are functional and long-lasting.

The students enthusiastically participated throughout the project, mastering valuable skills such as reading working drawings, precise measuring and marking, safe use of power tools, and assembly techniques. Their efforts in this trial production run have been remarkable, paving the way for the project to expand next year with even more nesting boxes to support BirdLife Midwest's conservation efforts.

Congratulations to our Design & Technology classes for their innovative creativity, dedication, and significant contribution to a healthier ecosystem! Your unique ideas and hard work make us all proud. Keep up the fantastic work.



Mental Health Week

Move for Your Mood

On Thursday 24 October students and staff in the Primary School acknowledged Mental Health Week with a special day of wellbeing and mental health awareness raising activities.

Mental Health Week is held in October each year to raise community awareness about mental health issues.

The aim of Mental Health Week is to promote social and emotional wellbeing across the wider community and to encourage people to maximise their health potential. Similarly, our school celebrations aim to promote the social and emotional wellbeing of our students and to raise awareness within the school community. Our Mental Health Week theme for this year was Move for Your Mood. The day began with an assembly hosted by 3/4KL and 3/4TL, highlighting the important role physical activity and movement play in maintaining our mental health and wellbeing. The audience, dressed in their best activewear, were entertained by short skits and dances emphasising how to enhance your mood with movement. Students, staff and parents also had the opportunity to join in with a Wiggle to Calm Yoga, dancing, singing, meditation and the Big Ball Game, which was greatly enjoyed by all. In the afternoon, children and teachers gathered in House groups for a variety of Move for Your Mood rotations. It was a fun-filled afternoon, and the message of mental health awareness was effectively communicated in an enjoyable way.

Thank you to our wonderful House leaders for coordinating the activities and to all staff and students for your participation and support.

We also extend our gratitude to the INSPIRE Student Leadership Team for their efforts in organizing and facilitating the follow-up Move for Your Mood fun lunchtime activities. Your contribution was invaluable.



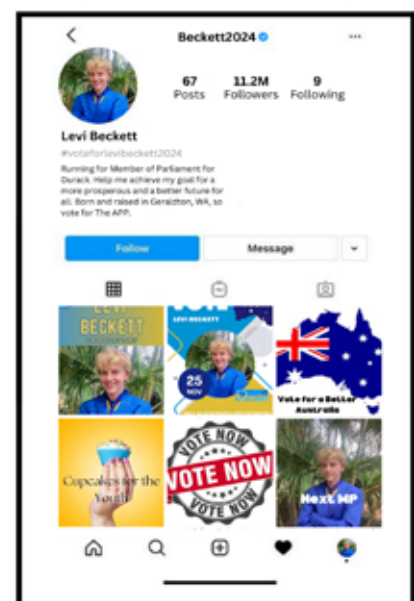
Mock Elections



This term our Year 9 students have been studying Civics and Citizenship in Humanities and Social Science. They created political parties and took part in an in-school election, to become the next junior member for Durack.

Students created a social, environmental and economic policy and took on the role of different ministers, including leader and deputy. They created political posters, press releases, campaigns and even attack advertisements! The three winning "House of Representatives" then took a swing at the "Senate" with the Environmentalist Party coming out on top, winning the majority of Year 9 votes.

Congratulations to Hayden, Quincy, Nate and Austin for their victory- the future is in your hands.



Grandparents' Day

Grandparents' Day was a heartwarming occasion, bringing together generations to celebrate family, learning, and community.

The day began with students proudly guiding their grandparents on a learning tour around the school, showcasing their classrooms, projects, and favourite spaces. Seeing the pride on students' faces as they shared their school experiences was a joy.

Morning tea provided a chance for everyone to relax and enjoy delicious treats, fostering lively conversations and connections between our guests, students, and staff. The atmosphere was warm and buzzing with stories, laughter, and a deep sense of gratitude.

The highlight of the day was the assembly, where students entertained with heartfelt performances, including songs, dances, and prayers that paid tribute to the invaluable role grandparents play in their lives. The smiles and applause from our special guests were a testament to the bonds celebrated on this beautiful day.



District High School Country Week

Hi everyone, this is Levi and Sophie and we were the District High School Country Week captains for 2024. This year, we sent down one mixed hockey team, three girls' netball teams, one mixed badminton team, and four boys' basketball teams. In the opening ceremony, after we returned the 2023 hockey shield, three of Grammar's Country Week participants received the Active Achiever awards and were presented with vouchers and a present. Well done to Zavier Hobbs, Levi Beckett and Scarlett Shortall.

Geraldton Grammar School had success in several different sports, including a win in the grand final against Narembeen for Netball 1 and a win in the grand final for Hockey against Boyup Brook in a close game.

Basketball 2 was awarded the Sportsmanship Award for its last game against Bridgetown. Basketball 1 and 3 achieved Runner-Up in their divisions with close games against the top teams. Basketball 4 also placed third in its division with a great last game against Northampton.

Badminton also won the final against Pemberton in the B division and received the sportsmanship award for that division. Netball 2 and 3 had great games and placed 4th in their divisions.

Throughout our four days of playing games, we enjoyed many highlights, such as ten-pin bowling, watching Despicable Me 4, a coaching session with the Tasmanian Jack Jumpers and a shopping night. After we finished up for the week and people presented their coaches with gifts, we returned to Geraldton on the bus, thoroughly satisfied but exhausted from a great week for Years 8 and 9.

Thank you to all the teachers, coaches, and parents who came to Perth for District High School Country Week. A special thanks to Mrs Bassett-Scarfe for doing a huge load of work behind the scenes and putting everything together for an amazing experience that we will never forget.

by Levi Beckett and Sophie Chapman



Student News

Christi Bstry - Achieves GOLD in the Duke of Edinburgh Award



Christi has joined sisters Demi and Amber as a GOLD Duke of Edinburgh Award recipients—a truly outstanding accomplishment.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award, initiated by the late Prince Philip in 1956, has grown into a globally recognised program in over 140 countries. It inspires young people aged 14–25 to build resilience, initiative, and responsibility through skill-building, physical activity, volunteering, and adventurous journeys. This prestigious achievement reflects personal growth and enhances future opportunities, with universities and employers worldwide recognising its value.

Christi's journey began in Year 5 with Ms Martin. She completed Compass Award Level 1, then Levels 2, 3, and 4 through Years 6–8. At 14, she embarked on her Duke of Edinburgh Award, achieving BRONZE in Year 9, SILVER in Year 10, and GOLD over Years 11 and 12.

The GOLD Award requires dedication to weekly activities across three categories—Physical Recreation, Skills, and Voluntary Service—and includes an Adventurous Journey and a Residential Project. Christi tailored her activities to reflect her passions:

- Physical Recreation: Track athletics, cross-country running, hockey (winter), and basketball (summer).
- Skills: Learning the flute and performing with the Senior Concert Band.
- Volunteering: Making library bags for the Centacare 'Back to School Library Bag Project,' assisting Primary PE teachers, and serving as a School Sports Captain.
- Adventurous Journeys: Galena Mine Murchison River Camp, Coral Bay Outdoor Ed Camp, and a 10-day voyage aboard the tall ship STS Leeuwin II.
- GOLD Residential Project: A 10-day volunteer experience as a Bosun's Mate aboard the Leeuwin II, sailing from Fremantle to Busselton.

Christi was formally recognised for her achievement on September 19 at the Government House Ballroom in Perth, where she received her GOLD badge from His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson AC APM, Governor of Western Australia. In his speech, the Governor remarked, "With young adults such as these, our future is in safe hands."

Congratulations, Christi, on this incredible achievement! You've shown remarkable commitment and passion and set a shining example for others to follow.

Leilani Witt - Equestrian Achievements Shine Bright

Leilani's dedication to horse riding has led to an impressive array of accomplishments this year, showcasing her passion and commitment to the sport. Balancing her school responsibilities with her equestrian pursuits, she has achieved milestones that deserve recognition and celebration.

In 2024, Leilani was selected for the State's Junior Equestrian Development Squad, which has training sessions at the State Equestrian Centre (SEC) in Perth. This prestigious program will further develop her skills and prepare her for high-level competitions.

Adding to her achievements, the Midwest Academy of Sports sponsored Leilani in 2024, a testament to her potential and hard work. Earlier this year, Leilani also travelled to Germany to participate in the Reitabzeichen Course, which tested her abilities in jumping, dressage, and equestrian theory—all conducted in German. Her dedication paid off as she completed the course and was awarded two medals.

In addition, Leilani qualified for the 2024 State Dressage Championships, where she competed with her horse at the SEC. Throughout the season, she has participated in high-profile coaching sessions with esteemed interstate and state-level coaches, gaining valuable insights and honing her techniques.



Her commitment extends far beyond competition. Leilani works and trains her horse six days a week after school, managing tasks such as feeding, cleaning stables, and ensuring her horse gets time in the paddock. On weekends, her routine starts early in the morning, reflecting her unwavering dedication to her equestrian journey.

Leilani's achievements this year exemplify hard work, resilience, and passion. We are excited to see her continue to excel in 2025 and beyond!



Celebrating Sporting Excellence: Christi Bestry & Ella Batten

Year 12 students Christi Bestry and Ella Batten have left an unforgettable legacy in our school's sports programs. Through their unwavering dedication, exceptional talent, and hard work, they have set an incredible combined total of 28 school records.

Their achievements stand as a testament to their commitment and will undoubtedly inspire future generations of athletes to strive for greatness.

We congratulate Christi and Ella on their remarkable accomplishments and thank them for their invaluable contributions to our school's proud sporting history.

