

Reshaping the  
future of education

# 2023

## ANNUAL REPORT



# 2023 Annual Report

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Hester Hornbrook Academy Community would like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri and Bunurong Peoples as the rightful owners of the land on which our five campuses reside on. We are visitors on these lands and recognise and honour the sacrifices made by Country and the First Nations peoples of the land that we are all benefiting from today.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture is the longest living culture in the world and the Hester Hornbrook community are grateful to the First Nations community for being the first teachers. We honour and thank First Nations peoples, culture and community for the teaching and learnings they have provided for students, staff, and the broader Hester Hornbrook community.

We pay our respects to the Ancestors, Elders, and Community of the Wurundjeri and Bunurong Peoples, and any other Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people within the Hester Hornbrook community. **This always was, and always will be Wurundjeri and Bunurong land and their sovereignty was never ceded.**



# HOPE

A message  
from our Principal

# FOR EDUCATION

## Reshaping the future of education

At Hester Hornbrook Academy, our approach of “Wellbeing for Learning and Learning for Wellbeing” is underpinned by our Healing Oriented Program of Education (HOPE). We focus on supporting our student’s wellbeing to ensure meaningful engagement in their education.

We recognize that education is one of the most powerful ways to give people hope: hope for a better quality of life and hope for success. We aim to provide a learning environment that teaches students life skills that will support them in their future outside our environment and within their personal lives.

### Wellbeing for learning, learning for wellbeing.

Our HOPE approach focuses on understanding how young people who have experienced significant barriers to education integrate wellbeing and learning which leads to positive pathways.

We have built and embedded a unique trauma aware teaching and learning structure which focuses on four distinct phases of learning – engage, equip, empower, and extend. These phases illustrate the classroom conditions that must be present to support the social, emotional, and intellectual needs of students.

Together the phases of learning demonstrate an intentional, explicit approach to teaching and learning and a recognition of the reciprocal relationship between wellbeing and learning.

At Hester Hornbrook Academy we are a school, only different. Our education setting offers HOPE a Healing Oriented Program of Education. Through HOPE we have re-imagined education, so that it is deeply human centred, highly inclusive, technology enriched, people, place, and planet conscious and intentionally purposeful.

HOPE offers a way of being in our educational environment for staff and students; it guides our educational and wellbeing approaches and highlights the importance of connection and relationships.

Our work at Hester Hornbrook reflects an evidence informed approach to supporting young people to re-engage in education. The intentional design of multi-disciplinary teams, learning spaces and curriculum, signal to young people that they have value, and they can embrace the future with optimism.

My wonderful staff all work collaboratively to address the barriers to accessing education within a supportive and therapeutic framework. Our classrooms have a team of three professionals’ including a teacher, educational intervention support staff member and a youth worker.

Our students experience hands-on learning both inside and outside of the classroom and we are proud to offer the high quality delivery of the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) and Victorian Certificate of Education – Vocational Major (VCE VM).

Our applied learning model positively impacts student outcomes across all domains. This in turn can change the life trajectories of the young people engaged at Hester Hornbrook, their families, and the broader community.

I am very proud of our work and am privileged to be the Principal of Hester Hornbrook Academy. I am passionate about our flexible and individualised approach to both wellbeing and education. Most importantly I am amazed at the resilience of the young people we work with every day and will continue to advocate for their positive pathway of choice. Hester Hornbrook and our HOPE is ultimately, about changing lives.

**Sally Lasslett**  
Principal



## Introducing the Board

Hester Hornbrook Academy is on the cusp of an exciting leap forward. The opportunities provided by consistent government funding are allowing us to open our doors wider and hone in our work with young people across Melbourne.

**“This amazing school can now bring its unique education model to more and more of those not engaged with the standard school system. We are creating new communities of learners, and they are achieving”**

— A QUOTE FROM ONE OF OUR LEADERS



CHAIR

**David Rennick**

*B Econ, LLB*

David brings over 30 years' experience in the professional services and property industries to his role as a Chair of Hester Hornbrook Academy, which he joined in 2016, being appointed to Chair in 2023. He is a Director on the Melbourne City Mission Board. David is also Director of Melbourne Football Club, a board advisor to Proximity and Carr Design and a senior advisor to Inspired Companies. Previously he was a Director of an ASX 200 company, board member of international law firm Pinsent Masons and CEO of Maddocks. David's legal expertise includes property development, corporate real estate and retail property.



DEPUTY CHAIR

**Louisa Ellum**

*BA (Hons), DipEd, GradDipEdit&Publ, M Comm*

Louisa is a vocal advocate for educational access and equity in Australia and currently works at Swinburne University of Technology in an executive role in Vocational Education and Training. Louisa has worked in the education profit-for-purpose and previously held the positions of Board Chair/Deputy Chair roles across a range of organisations in Victoria and nationally. Louisa is finishing a PhD in Education at the University of Tasmania in 2024 under Associate Professor Kitty te Riele in flexible learning and partnerships. Louisa joined the Hester Hornbrook Academy Board in June 2017.



**Dr Ros Otzen**

*BA (Hons), B Ed, PhD, ASDA*

Ros is a passionate supporter of education for all and chaired the Hester Hornbrook Academy Board from 2016 - 2023. Ros was Principal of Korowa Anglican Girls' School from 1991-2003 and was instrumental in establishing the Alliance of Girls' Schools of Australia, which has now become a major member of the International Coalition of Girls' Schools. Ros was the inaugural President of the Alumni Council of the University of Melbourne and is the former Deputy Chair of the Melbourne City Mission Board. Ros is also an author and historian and is currently writing a biography of Hester Hornbrook, the remarkable founder of the nine 'ragged schools' in Melbourne between 1859 and 1862.



**Dr Greg Trainor**

*DBA, MBA, Bachelor of Business Studies, Grad.Dip. Business Studies*

Greg has over 35 years' experience in the private and public sector having held leadership roles in the areas of strategy, logistics, software development and consulting. He has worked in several public utilities before joining organisations like GE, Accenture, Sensis and Engie. Greg has been involved as an Advisory Board Member on several start-ups and small to medium enterprises and has also been on Faculty in MBA programs at Melbourne Business School, RMIT and Latrobe Business School.



**Nate Keily**

*CPA, CGMA, GAICD, B Int Bus, B Int Std*

Nate is a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA), Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA) and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD) with over 15 years Senior Finance and Commercial Leadership experience at General Electric (GE) spanning many industries including Software, Energy, Healthcare and Financial Services. Nate has held commercial leadership responsibilities across 19 countries within the Asia Pacific Region. He is an integral member of the APAC Senior Executive Team. He motivates and manages commercially oriented teams to meet organisational goals with a focus on growth and value creation for customers and shareholders alike. Nate is a company director for GE's Australian software business unit.



**Di McDonald**

*B AppSc (Speech Pathology), GradDipEd, GradDipRehab, GradDipBusMgt, M Mgt (Organisational Systems), MAICD*

Di has an extensive background in healthcare, disability, management and occupational health and safety, and has held a wide range of senior leadership roles including at a CEO level. Di is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has broad experience in executive and non-executive board positions across privately-owned and not-for-profit organisations. Di is Chair of MCM Housing, Non-Executive Director of Hester Hornbrook Academy, Chair of the Law and Advocacy Centre for Women (LACW), a member of the Cabrini Foundation Board, Non-Executive Director of Aged Care Justice, Advisory member of Psychology Melbourne and past Chair of the Melbourne City Mission Board.



**Sarah Rogers**

*BA, BAppSc-OT, MPH*

Sarah is a passionate public health professional with a strong focus on children and young people's health, wellbeing and development, particularly the intersection of evidence, theory and practice. Sarah is an Occupational Therapist with a Master of Public Health, and has held multiple roles across the education, health, government, and not-for-profit sectors. Sarah is currently employed as Evidence and Implementation Lead at Orange Compass. Sarah joined the Board of Hester Hornbrook Academy in 2020.



**Elida Brereton**

*BA, DipEd, FACE, FACELL*

Elida has extensive experience as a teacher, principal and educational leader. Elida was a principal in government schools for over 17 years and was National President of the Australian College of Education. In addition to her role on The Hester Hornbrook Academy Board from August 2016, Elida is a member of the MLC Kew Foundation, and is an executive member of various state bodies including the Victorian Secondary Past Principals Association (President) and the National Council of Women of Victoria (President).



**Garry Wilkes**

*MBBS, FACEM, AFRACMA, GIACD, GCertHlthProfEd, PRiMed CMC*

Garry is an experienced Medical Administrator, Emergency Medicine Specialist and Clinical Associate Professor with more than 30 years' experience at a specialist level in public and private hospitals across Australia. Garry is a keen educator in a variety of areas including the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS). Garry's interests include leadership development, clinical governance and redesign, clinical communication skills, conflict management and coaching.

## Our People

Hester Hornbrook Academy attracts, develops, and retains a skilled and diverse workforce who work in multidisciplinary teams in the areas of education, wellbeing, allied health, and administration.

The Classroom Team model includes a Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) teacher, education support officer, and a youth worker in every classroom. This multidisciplinary team provides wrap-around support that enables wellbeing for learning and learning for wellbeing.

Our staffing profile reflects the school's vision, mission, and values, and is informed by current research about the interrelationship between wellbeing and learning. This ensures that all Hester Hornbrook Academy students experience high-quality wellbeing and learning in every classroom.



### Cameron Rowe

#### *Assistant Principal, Operations*

Cameron has been an educator and leader in several different educational settings and context both in Australia and the UK. He is the Assistant Principal: School Operations at Hester Hornbrook Academy and brings a wealth of experience in Teaching and Wellbeing, combined with passion and drive towards building culture and a positive learning environment with both students and staff. Cameron entered education as a physical education teacher but quickly found a joy and a strength in working with students who had struggled to find success or enjoyment in the traditional education settings. This led him into vocational teaching and helping students succeed in finding positive pathways that may not come from receiving an ATAR. Cameron strongly believes that a strong foundation of student wellbeing is what meaningful learning can be built on.



### Amanda Amato

#### *Assistant Principal, Wellbeing & Inclusion*

Amanda brings youth services experience with a strong belief that an inclusive educational setting that focuses on relationship building and repair is essential. Amanda believes that young people are more likely to reach their individualised wellbeing and learning goals within a safe and supportive environment, where "Wellbeing for Learning" and "Learning for Wellbeing" is the focus.



### Michael Freedman

#### *Assistant Principal, Teaching & Learning*

Michael is an experienced educational leader who is passionate about working with young people and school communities. Michael believes a school's culture should enable students to be authentic, build a growth mindset, have a strong sense of belonging and experience success in learning. Michael looks at every interaction as an opportunity to build trust and make all community members feel safe, valued, and included at Hester Hornbrook Academy.



### Sally Lasslett

#### *Principal*

Sally has been an educational leader in a variety of school settings for over 25 years. She has led school turnaround initiatives and significant educational outcome improvements, often advocating to government for improvement opportunities for re-engagement and wellbeing resources for schools. An active home economics professional with a passion for developing real-life skills, Sally is on the board for Home Economics Victoria and is an accomplished secondary textbook author. She is an advocate for successful pathways and transitions for disengaged young people and is truly passionate about the flexible school setting which incorporates essential wellbeing supports.



### Elise Leadbetter

#### *Head of Engagement*

Elise brings a wealth of knowledge in youth services and the wellbeing of disengaged youth. She believes engagement increases when we create a safe and respectable space for young people to be productive.

"Consistency and unconditional positive regard always bring out the best in young people, allowing them to become active participants in their own journeys."



### Patrick Nicholls

#### *Head of Campus, Sunshine*

Paddy is a passionate leader who has valuable experience in mainstream and special assistance education. He believes that all people should have the opportunity to develop a lifelong love of learning. "It is a privilege to be part of a young person's journey as they take ownership of their learning and develop a sense of self that they are proud of."



### Linus Lane

#### *Head of Campus, City*

Linus comes with over a decade of experience as a VCAL educator. "Seeing students reclaim agency in their lives and go on to contribute positively to their communities is deeply rewarding. If I can help students feel connected to and valued by their communities, I feel like I have made an important contribution."



### Alyssa McNeilly

#### *Head of Research and Innovation*

Alyssa has worked in Education since 2008, with roles including classroom teacher, Equity Leader, Lookout Learning Advisor, and Project Officer for the Disability Inclusion Reform. She has completed a Masters of Inclusive (Specialist) Education and is passionate about ensuring all young people have equal access to education. She is grateful to be working towards sharing the transformative power of HOPE (Healing Oriented Program of Education).



### Jo Lehmann

#### *Head of Campus Prahran*

Having worked at the school since its inception, Jo brings a diverse breadth of knowledge and experience in trauma informed education and wellbeing. Jo has a strong passion for working to overcome student adversity and barriers to meet their education and wellbeing goals. Jo has worked at both the classroom level and leadership level, ensuring a strong understanding of student needs and how to best meet them. Jo believes it is an honour and privilege to work alongside our students and staff and it is through connection to community that the best outcomes are made.



### Adriana Bonifacio

#### *Business Manager*

Adriana has over 20 years of experience in the education sector. She commenced her early career as a secondary school teacher. Adriana has completed an MBA and worked in faculty and school management in the university and independent school sectors.



### Sacha Sammut

#### *Head of Campus, South Melbourne*

Sacha comes with over a decade's worth of experience and knowledge working in the flexible education system and supporting young people who have been disengaged from education and training. Sacha's career started in the homelessness and justice division of community services where she recognised the hope and strength that education can provide for young people. Sacha has experience working with young Aboriginal women from remote communities as a Head of Wellbeing which adds to the wealth of knowledge she brings to our school. Sacha believes in the fundamental human right that all children deserve access to an education, but we need to do the work to make it an equitable, inclusive, and within a healing orientated environment. Sacha is incredibly proud of the growth at Hester Hornbrook Academy and looks forward to being a part of its future.

## Professional Learning for our Staff

Staff at Hester Hornbrook Academy are dedicated to lifelong learning. They are supported and encouraged to continually expand their expertise and share their insights and experiences. Our professional development program offers both external opportunities and the expertise within our staff cohort to ensure our students are receiving the best wellbeing for learning and learning for wellbeing.

At Hester Hornbrook, personalised professional learning opportunities are highlighted in our strategic plan and integrated into staff's Annual Implementation Goals. These goals are reviewed regularly during one-to-one meetings with leadership and mirror a student's Individual Education Plan. Each semester staff reassess their annual goals, typically coinciding with report writing periods.

Throughout the year, we welcome external and internal experts to share their knowledge.

We place significant emphasis on embedding our HOPE framework into the school. We continue to focus on developing an understanding of the Life Domains across the four areas of Personal & Social capability with a focus on Self-Awareness and Self-Management elements.

Our staff participate in external courses and study tours, continually seeking strategies for improvement. This year's study tours were particularly beneficial, providing valuable networking opportunities for educators, wellbeing professionals, administrators, and leaders from similar schools. These experiences allowed staff to explore innovative approaches to curriculum and technology implementation, fostering ongoing professional growth and enhancing our educational practices.

### In 2023, staff attended the following courses and tours:

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STUDY TOURS TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA, NEW SOUTH WALES, AND QUEENSLAND

---

COGNITIVE COACHING (GRIFT EDUCATION), EMPOWERING OTHER EDUCATORS TO ACHIEVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

---

SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORMS - VCE

---

CROSS LEADERSHIP SHADOWING FOR SUCCESSION PLANNING

---

ISV EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

---

FUTURE SCHOOLS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND SCHOOL VISIT PROGRAMS

---

LITERACY AND NUMERACY INTERVENTION TRAINING

---

USING BKS B TO DEVELOP LITERACY AND NUMERACY SKILLS

---

UNDERSTANDING SELF HARM - FRONTLINE STAFF / FIRST AID

---

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

---

THE SCIENCE OF LANGUAGE AND READING

---

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION CONFERENCE

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**“Because we are a multidisciplinary team, we are learning from a range of professionals in the educator, youth work and education support space. Therefore, I have learnt so much about other roles and professions, just from being exposed to different Professional Learning topics from a range of people.”**

— A QUOTE FROM ONE OF OUR YOUTH WORKERS

# HOPE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

At Hester Hornbrook Academy we believe that education is a critical tool for young people to create their own future. We believe that education should not just focus on an academic outcome, but be holistic and meet the wider needs of a young person.

### Our Vision

An inclusive and just community where all young people have equal access to education and the opportunity to create their own future.

### Our Mission

To provide an innovative, inclusive, and engaging educational experience that will:

**ENGAGE** young people by welcoming them into a community where they are safe, valued and heard.

**EQUIP** young people with the skills, knowledge, resilience, and values they need to build their vision of a positive future.

**EMPOWER** young people to lead a purposeful life and be a positive contributor to the community in which they belong.

**EXTEND** young people to reach further, broaden their educational opportunities and effectively use wellbeing strategies to achieve positive future pathways and transitions.

## Educational Philosophy

We believe that education is a critical tool for giving young people a passport out of disadvantage. Education should not just focus on an academic outcome but be holistic in meeting the wider needs of a young person. Therefore, measurement of success should be unique to the individual and not universal. The school is driven by five principles, underpinned by our mission to transform the lives of young people facing disadvantage.

### These principles are:

**Access to education is a basic human right:** Hester Hornbrook Academy will offer any young person the opportunity to engage in education and opportunity to succeed in life regardless of background, place, or circumstances. Critical to any educational experience is the ability to address barriers that prevent access.

**Every young person and their journey is unique:** Hester Hornbrook Academy's curriculum will be flexible and centred around a young person's unique talents and passions. Progress and outcomes should recognise every young person's starting point. The focus of any learning plan will support the young person in fulfilling their unique potential.

**Young people thrive in a community where they are safe, valued and heard:** Hester Hornbrook Academy will offer young people the opportunity to participate and contribute fully to the lives of their immediate and wider community.

**Meeting a young person's wellbeing needs is fundamental to their success:** Education at Hester Hornbrook Academy will be holistic in its delivery, ensuring there is appropriate support given to the physical, social, and mental wellbeing of the young person.

**Resilience and character development is fundamental to ensuring lifelong personal growth:** Hester Hornbrook Academy will support young people in developing resilience and character to successfully navigate the challenges they may encounter throughout their life.

# Our Students

*Wellbeing for Learning and Learning for Wellbeing* depicts the principles of why Hester Hornbrook Academy was established. It allows us to respond to the various needs of the students and walk alongside them in creating a positive pathway for their future endeavours.

The students who choose to walk through our campus doors have often found that the traditional education systems and settings did not fit their needs and wants. At Hester Hornbrook, they find themselves in a respectful, safe and productive environment where they are the primary focus of all we do.

We walk alongside young people that have a variety of lived experiences and complex barriers which have made it difficult for them to engage in traditional education settings. The ability for us to have a wellbeing focus in our ethos, is a critical component allowing students to achieve a positive pathway throughout their journey with us.

Students enrolling with Hester Hornbrook are likely to have been exposed to adverse childhood experiences such as abuse, neglect, family/domestic violence, parental mental illness or problematic substance abuse/misuse. This often also means that the students have significant gaps of up to five years in their education.

We welcome enrolments throughout the year via our online expression of interest to ensure we can engage young people with meaningful learning opportunities when they are ready.

The students at Hester Hornbrook complete a VCE Vocational Major 3/4 certificate as part of their educational program that is individually developed. They can also complete a Victorian Pathway Certificate (VPC) which can then pathway into Vocational Major or another pathway chosen by the student. All our students participate in a VETi, and some engage in work experience, Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) and School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBAT).

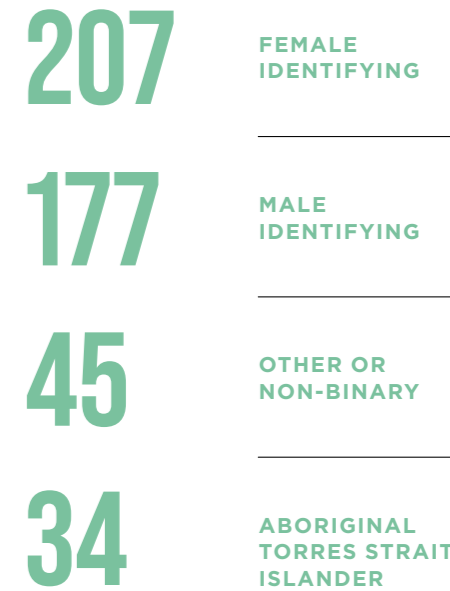
Using the Wellbeing for Learning and Learning for Wellbeing ethos, we engage young people back into education through a relationship lens. Using an individualised curriculum, we equip our students with the skills and experiences that empower them and develop their autonomy and personal agency that can continue to foster improvement in personal development. Many of our students continue their learning at Hester Hornbrook for several years as they pursue their learning aspirations.

“This school has really changed everything for me.” (And)” I’m just really excited that other people from different areas of Melbourne get to have the same experience I have.”

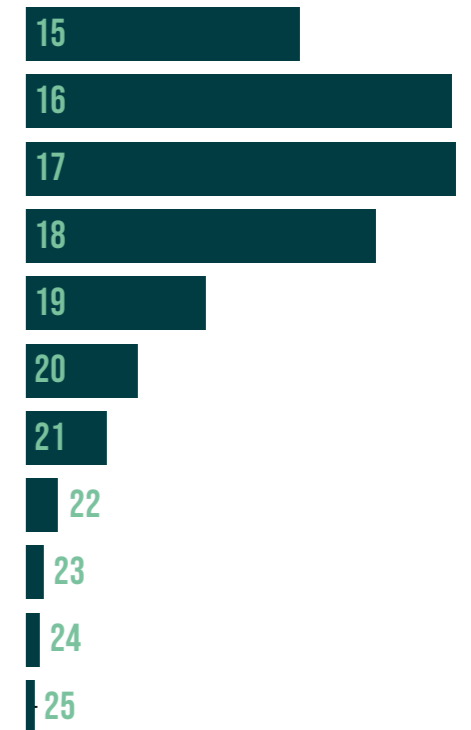
A QUOTE FROM ONE OF OUR STUDENTS, ALICIA



How our students identify:



Age of our students:





# Our year at a glance

No. of enrolments

# 429

No. of certificate graduates

# 24

No. of classes

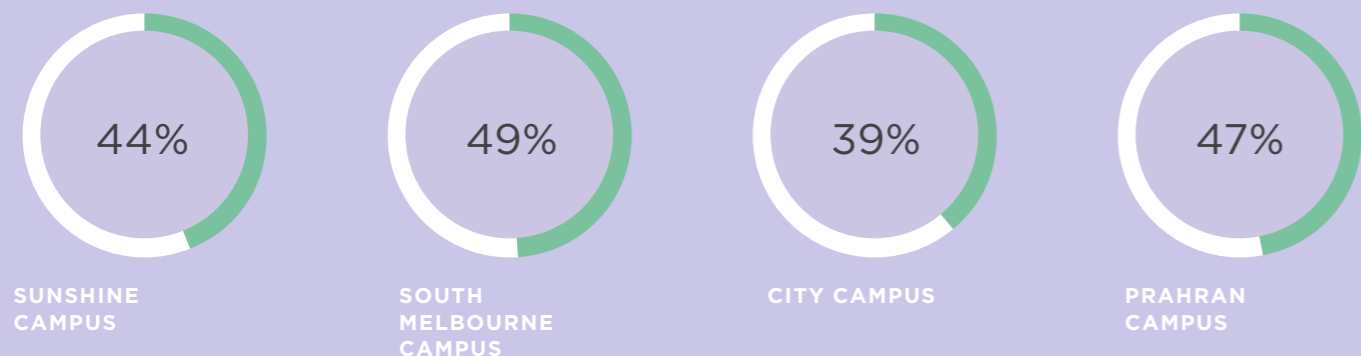
# 47

Total No. of staff

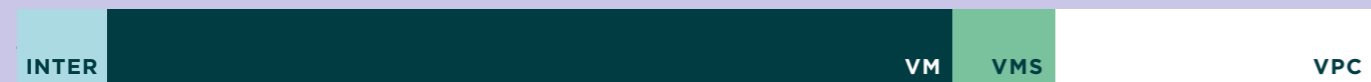
# 120



Rate of Attendance on Campus



Year level split



No. of campuses

# 4

Staff retention rate

# 78%

# Benito's Journey

A STORY FROM ONE OF OUR STUDENTS

Benito's journey at Hester Hornbrook Academy began in May 2022, right after he had been working in construction as a labourer. His co-workers had been encouraging him to get back into school because they could see how much he loved learning. Benito spent some time looking for an education provider that suited his learning style before finding Hester Hornbrook.

**Hester Hornbrook Academy not only helped him figure out what he wanted to do in the future but also made it possible for him to get back into the swing of learning.**

As soon as he stepped through the doors, Benito expressed feeling supported and felt like he belonged. He described the school as being a place where he could learn at his own pace. Hester Hornbrook Academy not only helped him figure out what he wanted to do in the future but also made it possible for him to get back into the swing of learning, especially with the support of his classroom team and the careers team.

the doors, Benito expressed feeling supported and felt like he belonged. He described the school as being a place where he could learn at his own pace. Hester Hornbrook Academy not only

According to Benito, one of the things that makes Hester Hornbrook Academy different to other schools is how they understand that everyone learns in their own way. The classes are smaller, and they focus on helping each individual student. This was a substantial change from his earlier school experiences where he often felt overwhelmed due to the workload and experienced anxiety at the thought of having to go to school. Benito said he would often be "excited to go home" when he was at previous schools, both primary and secondary but at Hester Hornbrook he felt "excited to go to school." Benito describes enjoying "all aspects of school here."

Fast forward to now, after spending two and a half years at Hester Hornbrook, Benito is qualified to continue his studies at Melbourne Polytechnic to finish his Vocational Major, units 3 and 4. As Benito prepares to say goodbye to Hester Hornbrook, he states that "if it wasn't for me aging out, I'd be staying at Hester Hornbrook forever". Benito spent some time reflecting on the last two years, not only on the impact the school has made on him but the impact he has made on the Hester Hornbrook community.

Benito prides himself on being a role model for other young people on campus and ensuring that others feel as safe and welcomed as he felt when he first arrived. Benito has made some priceless connections and loves to make others smile and quotes "life's too short to be miserable, if I can make their day with a smile, then I'll do it."



**Benito**  
SUNSHINE CAMPUS

## Diversity and Inclusion

At Hester Hornbrook Academy we are intentional about understanding the diversity present within our school to ensure we establish an inclusive community where all members feel safe, heard, and valued.

In 2023 a Diversity and Inclusion Workforce Action Plan was developed which incorporated input and feedback from several staff, all holding distinct roles and bringing different lived experience. This plan supports the strategic objective within the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan; 'Hester Hornbrook's workforce is valued and empowered to do their best work'. This action plan provides meaningful direction on key focus areas including professional learning, staff recruitment, retention, and staff expectations. It is acknowledged that the diversity that makes up our community will continue to change and that intentional work around inclusion is ongoing and will remain in future strategic plans - 2026 and beyond.

We have several roles that provide specialised support to our young people with diverse identities and learning needs. These roles include Leader of Diverse Learning, Leader of Individualised Learning, First Nations Coordinator, LGBTIQ+ Coordinator, CALD Coordinator, and OOHC Coordinator. These roles help enhance the experience & outcomes for the young people we support.

## Supporting our First Nation Students

Hester Hornbrook Academy is committed to standing alongside the First Nation's community, valuing their culture, storytelling, and their caring of Country, as they have done for thousands of years before our time.

We are committed to continuing to support First Nation's students by embedding the truth telling of the history of Australia in our educational practice. To our non-First Nations students we acknowledge the impact that colonisation has had on First Nation's peoples and how they can be allies to the First Nations community. Hester Hornbrook Academy does this through an ongoing commitment to recognise and honour key days of significance.

At Hester Hornbrook Academy, we commit to continually reflect and consider how we can build an environment that is safe and inclusive for First Nations peoples. We prioritise First Nation's young people having access to their culture, through excursions and visits from community members and strong visual representations of artefacts including flags, student-led artwork and map of Country. We have a dedicated position of responsibility: First Nations Co-Ordinator, who is supported with dedicated time in classes to explore themes, issues and events such as Reconciliation Week, The Voice Referendum, Sorry Day and NAIDOC Week.

HOPE  
FOR WELLBEING

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAMPUS STAFF 41

# SUNSHINE CAMPUS



2023 was a productive year for our Sunshine cohort. Students engaged in a range of campus and Hub based activities. Highlights included our campus picnic at the You Yangs and the end of year trip to Funfields.

Our three Hubs also enjoyed trips to the aquarium, laser tag and Bounce.

Students worked diligently on their coursework and continued through the transition from VCAL to the new VM and VPC curriculum with amazing commitment. I would like to thank all members of our school community for their efforts in creating a safe and inclusive learning environment.



2023 was an exciting and productive year for the South Melbourne Campus as it was our inaugural year, which kicked off with the smoking ceremony on 5 April to celebrate the official campus opening. Overall, there were high attendance rates and very positive experiences for students and staff.

South Melbourne events and excursions included Christmas in July, Alexander McQueen exhibition at the NGV. We hosted our first student placement from RMIT, NAIDOC week, City hub event, R U OK Day classroom activities, campus Halloween event, and the city hub Luna Park end-of-year celebration.

For many of our students, this has been the first time they have been welcomed into a community where they can make strong peer connections, engage with trauma informed staff, and connect with educators from the CAPE team (Careers, Alumni, Pathways and Employment) who can support their future planning.

We are proud of the students who transitioned between classrooms throughout the change of VCAL to the new VM and VPC curriculum. A big shout out to all Hester Hornbrook Academy staff who helped create a safe community for our students to learn in.

## SPACE TO LEARN, GROW AND IMPROVE

Our students created a welcoming space and strong culture within the walls of South Melbourne. Students are encouraged to improve their ability to engage in wellbeing supports, external agencies, leadership on site or travelling staff. Staff across all campuses saw an overall increase in students creating strong rapport with peers and staff across all rooms. We saw powerful advocates and student agency that contributed to student voice at the South Melbourne campus.

Staff walked alongside students and were impressed by their ability to be present at school, resilient, responsible and engage in their academic outcomes. Students reported feeling safe and welcomed at school, unlike their previous experiences at other schools. Students felt safe seeking support from their classroom teams where required throughout the year. We are excited to see what 2024 brings for our South Melbourne community and we wish all our past graduates the best of luck for their prospects.

# SOUTH MELBOURNE CAMPUS



TOTAL NUMBER OF CAMPUS STAFF 20



# CITY CAMPUS

There have been huge developments at the City campus this past year including the establishment of the VM 3 and 4 curriculum, community events, and incredible passion projects from our students. Our most celebrated highlight of the year was twelve students graduating from VCAL and VM, with all students being supported into positive pathways.

This year our senior students participated in Hester Hornbrook Academy's first ever pen pal program with Avington Living retirement village in Point Cook. Student profiles including hobbies, interests and future pathway plans were sent to the team at Avington, so that the students could be matched with a pen pal who shared similar interests or career paths. The class visited their pen pals at Avington by engaging in a joint art therapy class and morning tea. The students and residents had a wonderful day meeting each other, chatting in person and making two pieces of art together.

The City campus has been involved in several community building and student led events including cultural days, IDAHOBIT and Christmas celebrations. The City hub also came together with the other City-based hub campuses for events such as Reconciliation week and R U OK day. These events continue to build a respectful community environment that Hester Hornbrook is known for.

The City campus is a thriving community of learning for wellbeing and wellbeing for learning and we look forward to another year.



It has been an honour to lead both the staff and students who call Prahran home this year. We have had a wonderful year where we welcomed many new faces and created many lasting memories.

During the year, we enjoyed some fabulous adventures including our Frankston Street art tour, Escape Room fun-times, community BBQ days and making the most of the amazing offerings we have here on Chapel Street.

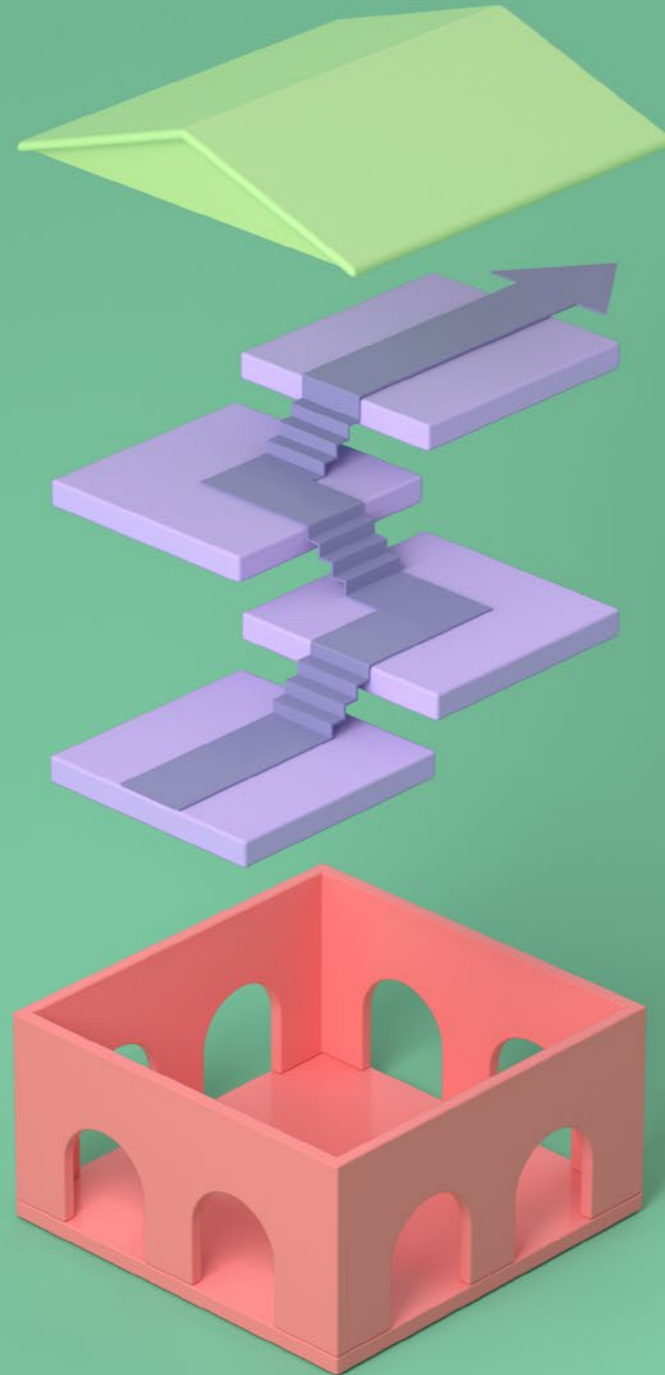
Highlights for 2023 were the pop-up salon at our school, PCYC workouts and best of all, Mexican Fiesta cook up day!

Our three classroom spaces have produced some outstanding work and we are so proud of our students who graduated mid-year - we wish them all the best for a bright future! We have focused much of this year on building a vibrant inclusive community and are incredibly proud of the students' achievements. The staff cannot wait to see what 2024 brings!

We will leave you with a quote from our graduating student - as our students say it best! "You gave me love, support and a family" - Camila.



# PRAHRAN CAMPUS



## Healing Oriented Program of Education

Hester Hornbrook Academy has developed a “Healing Oriented Program of Education”, known as “HOPE” which is an approach to education that is built upon the principles of safety, trust, agency, and supportive relationships. HOPE has been a feature of Hester Hornbrook since 2020.

With the expansion of campuses, we look forward to implementing the HOPE approach so that there

is consistency embedded across all areas of our school. Extensive work has been done to understand what HOPE is, and how we articulate it.

A picture of a house helps us describe HOPE. To be strong, safe, and endure the extremes of weather, a house requires strong foundations. These structures must stand firm and provide ample support before any young people can enter. For the benefits of the HOPE model to be fully realised, it is imperative that we have strong foundations.

## Our HOPE model is reshaping the future of education

### THE FOUR FOUNDATIONS OF HOPE INCLUDE:

- 1 **Built Environment**
- 2 **Workforce**
- 3 **Student Experience**
- 4 **Governance**

A house requires walls (or pillars) be cut to the exact size. If there are discrepancies with the measurements, resulting in poor alignment, the house will collapse. Equal care, consideration and time must be given to all the pillars, so they are connected with care.

### FOR HOPE, THE FOUR PILLARS OF PRACTICE, INCLUDE:

- 1 **Safe Environment**
- 2 **Positive Relationships**
- 3 **Engagement & Enjoyment**
- 4 **Student Agency**

The HOPE model is reshaping the future of education. The HOPE approach encourages a whole-of-school approach to delivering ‘learning for wellbeing and wellbeing for learning.’ This means that the key components that shape the model work together and support one another.

HOPE takes a holistic view of a young person’s needs and development, recognising the interconnectedness of all parts of the person’s life and hence the need for a multi-disciplinary and coordinated approach to education. This is where wellbeing for learning and learning for wellbeing intersect and work collaboratively for impact.

A HOPE model of education aims to guide young people back on the path of education, where previously, access to education may have been difficult for several reasons. A HOPE approach is not just about re-connecting back into education, it is about having the supports in place for young people to be able to genuinely thrive, heal, and excel in their choice of positive pathway.



“Previously, I couldn’t get my child to go to school. Now, since attending school at Hester Hornbrook, they love going to school, and want to go to school every day.”

### PARENT FEEDBACK

## Individualised Learning

We have continued to develop a literacy and numeracy individualised intervention program to support our students once they feel comfortable in the Hester Hornbrook environment, to ensure they feel safe, valued, and heard — they are engaged.

The EQUIP program is led by the teaching and learning team who develop procedures and structures to enable our education support officers (ESOs) to deliver screeners, literacy and numeracy intervention sessions. HOPE provides the framework for a trauma informed lens. We identified that the term ‘interventions’ has negative connotations aligned to it, we purposefully renamed them Equip Literacy and Equip Numeracy.

The screeners, along with BKSB (See below) data, provide targeted information regarding students’ strengths and areas for growth. The classroom team and leadership can use this information to identify students who will benefit from tier 3 EQUIP sessions.

Basic Key Skill Builder (BKSB) is an online assessment, teaching and learning tool used at Hester Hornbrook Academy. The program provides adaptive assessment to give students a working level for literacy and numeracy and builds an individualised learning program. The school uses this program as it is also used by many TAFE providers to gain entry to apprenticeships and courses. We aim to have all students at exit level three for literacy and numeracy by the time they graduate. We have seen significant gains in literacy and numeracy across the school from 2022 to 2023. The Equip program and the new study design for VCE VM and VPC curriculum will also continue to support students to move up BKSB levels.

“A Hester education is unique. It’s genuinely student focused. I feel every child deserves to experience their education the Hester Hornbrook way. The school encourages & values the students input into their own education meaning the student is empowered to have ownership of their education goals. This inclusive & holistic approach just makes sense on every level. The positive student outcomes speak for themselves.”

**A QUOTE FROM ONE OF OUR STUDENT’S PARENTS**

The Equip program uses evidence-based teaching and learning sequences developed by external companies, using data from primary school-aged educationally engaged students. There is limited research on effective intervention practices within the educational research field with young people aged 15 to 24. With increased school disengagement, the decline in educational success, and an uncertain future, successful targeted intervention programs for young people within this demographic are becoming increasingly important, and our long-term goal is to grow the capacity of EQUIP sessions to reach more students at Hester Hornbrook Academy. With an ESO assigned to every classroom, we can engage more students in individualised EQUIP sessions.

We provide professional learning to our ESOs, enabling them to deliver these programs and tailor them to the needs of our students. The programs we are currently using are Math-u-see, Mult-Lit and Orton Gillingham Synthetic Phonics Instruction.

Over the course of 2023, we saw an increase in literacy and numeracy skills and confidence from the students who participated regularly in these tier 3 EQUIP sessions. This flowed into more productivity in classrooms and increased completion of class-based curriculum tasks.

## Key Achievements

Exiting Student Pathway Data

No. of Students

APPRENTICESHIP  
OR TRAINEESHIP

7

EMPLOYMENT

45

FURTHER EDUCATION

30

GRADUATES

24

In 2023, our school witnessed remarkable success and celebrated the positive pathways our students have forged through, as evidenced by the pathway data collected.

“The school is definitely a school for everyone. You’ll definitely be included. Whether you want to be a sparkie (electrician), or you want to do art, or you want to do tech, they’ve got everything for you.”

**A QUOTE FROM ONE OF OUR STUDENTS, NICK**

The collection of positive student pathways is an indicator of the success of our Healing Oriented Program of Education (HOPE). Designed to Engage, Equip, Empower, and Extend our students, HOPE has been transformative in shaping a positive and supportive learning environment.

The program’s holistic approach addresses not only academic needs but also our students’ emotional and social well-being. HOPE has significantly improved student attendance and performance by fostering strong connections and providing personalised support. Attendance rates have soared as students feel more connected and motivated to attend school regularly.

The HOPE model has empowered students to take ownership of their learning journey, resulting in higher engagement and achievement. Through HOPE, we are committed to nurturing the potential of every student, paving the way for their success.



# HOPE FOR LEARNING

Our students in 2023 continued to improve their ability to engage in wellbeing support alongside committing to their studies.

Staff across all campuses saw an increase in students utilising wellbeing supports with the goal of increasing their ability to engage in their education. Students also showed an understanding of the power of education to contribute to their current and future wellbeing.

All campuses were impressed by the student's ability to be resilient when presented with challenges and to seek support when needed. Our students continue to develop their ability to take ownership of their learning and be productive members of our school community.

## Izaak's journey

### A STORY FROM ONE OF OUR STUDENTS

Izaak has one of our highest attendance rates of all students at our City campus. He has demonstrated enormous growth and academic achievement throughout his journey with us. Izaak came to us from a mainstream school who did not have the tools to support his level of disengagement, anxiety, or ASD. His journey at Hester Hornbrook Academy commenced in 2022 where Izaak started in foundation VCAL. He is now in our Senior class completing units 3 and 4 in Vocational Major certificate.

Izaak needed more tailored wellbeing and educational supports when it came to social settings, literacy and personal development skills. One of the greatest highlights is Izaak harnessing his exceptional creativity in designing an insightful board game on animals, the environment, and sustainability. This passion project saw Izaak engage our entire school community in learning and fun, as it was required that all students play this board game at our campus.

Izaak has since completed all 180 VETiS hours and now works at a bird shop on our VETiS day, which is a wonderful achievement. It has been a privilege to observe Izaak's accomplishments, growth and personality flourish and we look forward to seeing what the future holds for him.

Izaak

CITY CAMPUS

## Investing in Futures The Power of Hester Hornbrook Academy's Alumni Program

At Hester Hornbrook Academy, we empower young people to chart their own course. Many of our students face significant challenges, and education becomes more than just academics — it's a springboard to a brighter future. Our innovative approach goes beyond the classroom.

Through the dedicated Careers, Alumni, Pathways and Employment (CAPE) team, we provide ongoing support after graduation. This is where the Alumni Program shines.

*"It's really empowering to be part of changing the way that we do things in education and it's also meeting what young people need, today."*

**A QUOTE FROM ONE OF  
OUR EMPLOYEES, AMY**

### Why the Alumni Program Matters

The Alumni Program at Hester Hornbrook stands out from mainstream school Alumni initiatives by prioritising consistent support for our exited students, especially during their critical first year after leaving. While other Alumni programs often focus on what graduates can contribute back to the school, our main goal is to help students transition smoothly from our supportive environment to further education or the workforce.

Leaving school can be daunting, especially for young people navigating complex circumstances. The Alumni Program bridges that gap. It offers graduates essential guidance and support from qualified youth workers, ensuring a smooth transition into their chosen pathway.

Every young person that exits from Hester Hornbrook is welcome to be a part of the Alumni program.

### Measurable Success

The results speak for themselves. In 2023, 75% of the young people that exited Hester Hornbrook secured positive pathways, including apprenticeships, full-time employment, and TAFE programs.

But the true reward lies in witnessing our students' transformed lives — their newfound confidence and hope for a brighter future.



## A day in the life of the Alumni Youth Worker

CLARE'S DAY  
JUNE 2023



Today I am at the Sunshine campus and begin with joining the Hester Hornbrook Academy all staff meeting, to get across what is happening across the school this week. I check my emails and messages and catch up with Sarah (Alumni and Pathways Coordinator) about my plan for the day.

I walk around the Sunshine campus to say hello to all the friendly staff and pop my head in to see Graham (Sunshine Campus Careers Coordinator) to confirm our meeting with a current student for later this morning. A text message from an Alumni participant informs me that they will be attending Extend club later today. I text another Alumni participant to confirm our planned meet up for the following day, they respond asking to reschedule.

*"Absolutely, these things happen! I'll call you later this week."*

A meeting with Graham and a current student takes place, to speak about how they are going to finance their course at RMIT, and to help them navigate the student portal. We determine what support they would like from the Alumni program after exiting Hester Hornbrook mid-year.

I receive a phone call from an Alumni participant who is seeking support with housing. We have a conversation, and the Alumni participant can vent their frustrations with the system. We identify that the Alumni participant may need to find employment to find stable housing.

*"Let's meet up to update your resume! Thank you for your consent for me to link up with your NDIS worker to create a care team meeting and see how we can all best support you!"*

Then I'm debriefing with Sarah about the limited housing support for young people. I call another Alumni participant who reached out asking for mental health support.

They have counselling lined up through Headspace in July but need wellbeing support until then. Their suicidal thoughts are starting to weigh heavily, and they don't want to become too much of a burden on their social supports.

*"How would you like to meet up on a weekly basis, go for a walk, and provide you the opportunity to talk about your mental health, to keep you safe until counselling commences?"*

Outreach is scheduled for next Tuesday.

A quick lunch and we are ready for Extend club! Only one Alumni participant today. They have identified their love of driving and are interested in applying for their racing license.

*"Costs over \$400? Sounds like you might need to find some employment to help pay for that, so let's update your resume."*

You would like us to give you a call later in the week to check on your progress for applying for jobs?"

*"Sure thing will do!"*

Join the Flexi Schools Network meeting, keeping up to date with services and resources to add to my toolbox, and a great way to round off a very productive and meaningful day!



# Nyx's journey

A STORY FROM ONE OF OUR 2023 GRADUATES



Attending Hester Hornbrook Academy was a transformative experience for me, coming at a time when I felt lost and without hope for my future. After enduring the isolation and uncertainty of the COVID lockdowns, returning to education seemed daunting, especially after being out of school for a while. Yet, from the moment I walked through the doors, I was welcomed with open arms. The warmth and support from staff was incredible. They created an environment where I felt valued and understood, which was pivotal during such a challenging time in my life.

Being part of the student leadership team was an incredible experience. I loved organising events like the formal and Mother's Day lunches, and participating in various activities that enriched my journey and filled me with a sense of purpose and belonging I hadn't felt in years. Every experience, every interaction, felt like another step towards claiming my future. The youth workers and teachers at Hester Hornbrook played a crucial role in my journey. Jess who supported me from day one, along with Sam, Tash, Laura, and many others, provided unwavering support and guidance. They believed in me when I couldn't believe in myself, offering not just educational assistance but also emotional support that helped rebuild my confidence and sense of purpose.

Now, as I navigate university, studying to become a youth worker, I am filled with gratitude for the transformation Hester Hornbrook facilitated in my life. I am thriving, with a fulfilling relationship and the joyous anticipation of welcoming a baby into our lives in the new year. It's a life I never dared dream of during

my darkest days, and I owe it all to the love, support, and guidance I received at Hester Hornbrook. My goal is to give back and support young people facing their own challenges, just as I was supported during my time. The impact of the community there continues to inspire me every day, reminding me of the incredible difference that compassion and support can make in a young person's life. Hester Hornbrook didn't just provide me with an education; it gave me hope and direction when I needed it most. For that, I am forever grateful.

As an Alumni, I am thrilled to see the upcoming opportunities for us to stay connected and engage with the community. The annual reunion in September at STREAT in Collingwood is a fantastic initiative. It's not just about catching up with old friends and staff; it's a chance to strengthen our network and share our journeys since leaving school. I'm particularly excited about the invitation from Alumni to get involved in organising the event. Being part of the planning process allows us to shape the experience, ensuring it reflects what we, as past students, value and cherish about our time at Hester Hornbrook. It's an excellent way to contribute and give back to the community that supported us through our educational journey.

Moreover, the ongoing Alumni services are incredibly beneficial. The Extend Club, held once a month at Sunshine and South Melbourne campuses, provides a supportive environment for us to work on

assignments, and develop our resumes and cover letters. The well-being check-ins are a thoughtful addition, ensuring we have access to the necessary support and guidance. It's reassuring to know we can still turn to Hester Hornbrook Academy

**Hester Hornbrook didn't just provide me with an education; it gave me hope and direction when I needed it most. For that, I am forever grateful.**

for help with appointments, referrals to relevant services, and pathway planning support. Having Sarah, a qualified careers counsellor, available for

one-on-one meetings is a tremendous resource. Their guidance can be pivotal in navigating our career paths, making informed decisions, and setting realistic goals. The school's commitment to our continued growth and success, even after we've graduated, is truly commendable.

With the help of the CAPE team, I was able to find courses that suited me perfectly. Cathy and Sarah guided me through the entire process of preparing for university. They assisted me in applying for my course and showed me how to apply for a scholarship, which I received. This significantly alleviated my financial worries. Their prompt and cheerful assistance made a world of difference.

Overall, these initiatives reinforce the strong sense of community and support that Hester Hornbrook Academy is known for. I'm looking forward to reconnecting with my peers and contributing to the upcoming events and services.

# Alumni Services

Students Exited

144

Alumni Serviced

185

Total Engagement

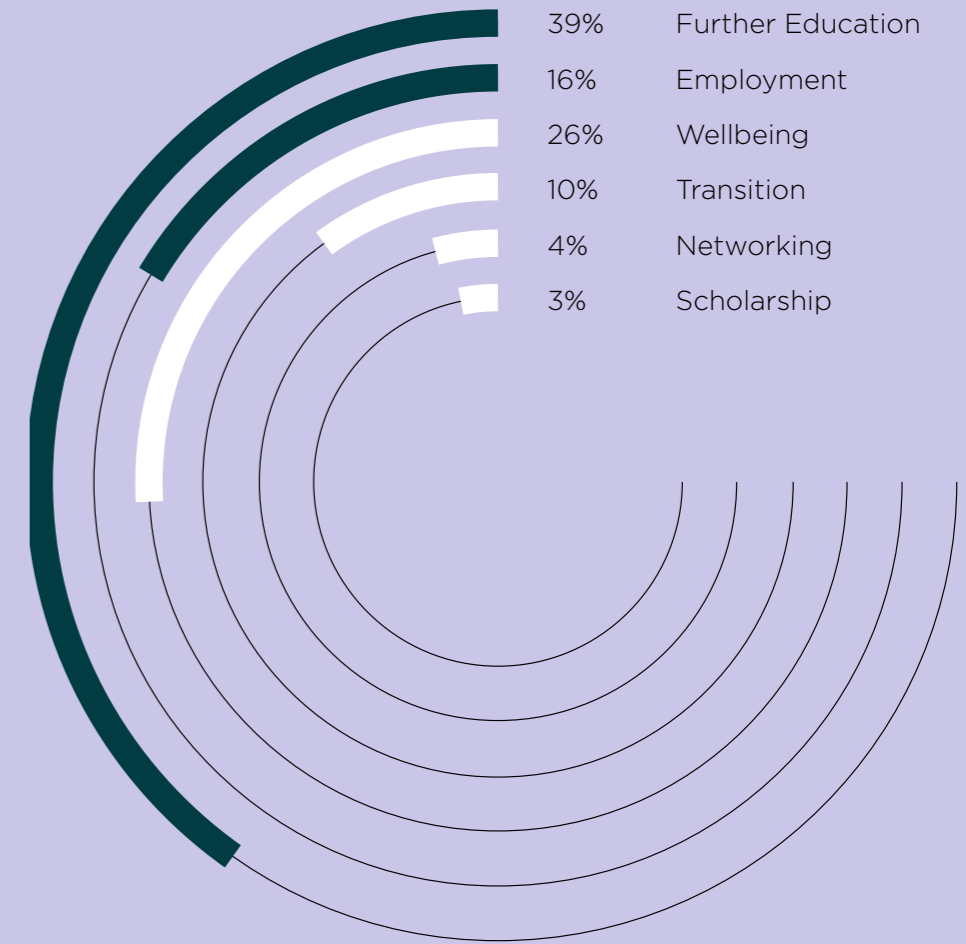
2,459

% of Positive Pathways

63

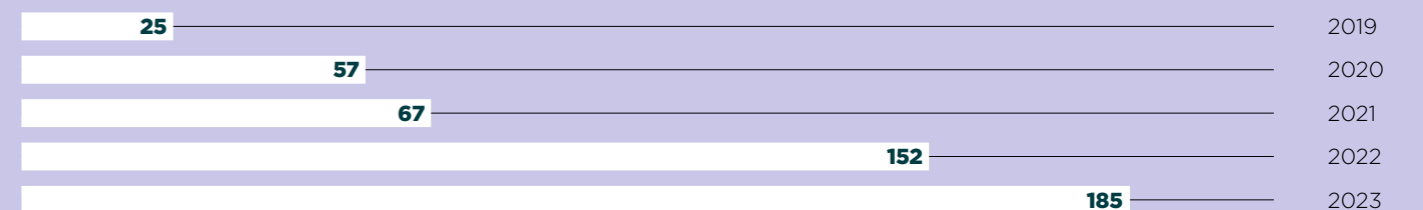


Assistance Types delivered by the Alumni Team



● PATHWAYS  
● WELLBEING

Alumni Member Growth



## Applied Teaching and Learning

2023 was the official launch of the VCE Vocational Major (VCE VM) and Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC). As part of the transition, VCAL Intermediate was incorporated as a “teach out” enabling students to complete this certificate before it was phased out.

Students studying at a Unit 3&4 level of the VCE VM also utilised units of the VCAL Senior curriculum to satisfy the needs of the new certificate as part of the teach out. The changes to curriculum came about from the Firth Review in 2019, and Hester Hornbrook has embraced the changes to the certificates and are being recognised as leaders in the industry.

We introduced the delivery of VPC, which replaced Foundation VCAL, so that is focused on our younger cohort of students and students who have significant gaps of learning in their educational journey. This certificate allows students to improve their literacy and numeracy skills and develop project and work skills preparing them for entry-level employment or pre-apprenticeship levelled further study. Students can graduate with a VPC certificate or transition to the VCE VM if it aligns to their pathway planning.

The VCE VM replaces Intermediate and Senior VCAL and allows students to achieve a VCE certificate. Hester Hornbrook advocated heavily for their students to not be disadvantaged by the changes of the certificates and have been able to credit students previous learning to fast-track existing students. Classrooms were designed to deliver Unit 1 & 2 (Year 11) and Unit 3 & 4 (Year 12) to allow students to

work at their negotiated pace and adjust to the curriculum changes. We celebrated sixteen students graduating with an Intermediate VCAL certificate and eight students with a completed VCE Vocational Major certificate that had captured their prior learning of VCAL to meet the new certificate rules.

Individualised learning is an important aspect of our student’s journeys with education. Our staff work with the students individually to ascertain a certificate plan that aligns with their capabilities, career pathways and ensuring they gain a well-rounded education utilising the VCE VM & VPC certificates. The benefit of our supported classroom model means that students can have access to applied, personalised & reasonably adjusted curriculum that is interest based.

“I really enjoy coming here, mainly because, one, the people and how accepting the school is. Being able to be comfortable and actually enjoy school for once and not feel like it’s a chore that you have to do, has been amazing.”

**A QUOTE FROM ONE OF OUR STUDENTS, EMILY**

### Activities and Class Offerings

In 2023, there were many classroom offerings across our school based on the roll out of the new certificates and the needs of our enrolled students.

Sunshine Campus Classrooms	No.
VPC	2
VCE VM UNIT 1 & 2	4
ART & DESIGN FOCUSED	
HOSPITALITY FOCUSED	
SPORT & RECREATION FOCUSED	
VCE VM UNIT 3 & 4	1
INTERMEDIATE VCAL	
SENIOR VCAL TEACH OUT	
YOUNG PARENT CLASSROOM	1
ENGAGE YOUTH CLASSROOM	1

South Melbourne Campus Classrooms	No.
VPC	2
VCE VM UNIT 1 & 2	2
ART & DESIGN FOCUSED	
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES FOCUSED	
ENGAGE YOUTH CLASSROOM	1

City Campus Classrooms	No.
VCE VM UNIT 1 & 2	2
VCE VM UNIT 3 & 4	1
INTERMEDIATE VCAL	
SENIOR VCAL TEACH OUT	
ENGAGE YOUTH CLASSROOM	1

Prahran Campus Classrooms	No.
VPC	1
VCE VM UNIT 1 & 2	1
YOUNG PARENT CLASSROOM	1

### Our specialist classrooms

All classrooms are unique and special at Hester Hornbrook; we offer a variety of specialty spaces that cater for students’ diverse needs.

**Engage Youth** (formally Connect Youth) is designed to support students who have had significant gaps in their learning and are not yet ready to engage in face-to-face learning full time. Students engage on campus two days a week and the remaining days are supported with Outreach sessions with the classroom team to work on their barriers to accessing school full time. Students in these classes have a majority focus on improving literacy and numeracy skills, with some project-based learning incorporated.

**Our Young Parent Friendly classrooms** ensure that students who are pregnant or have a child can attend school and access education. These spaces are set up to support students to bring their children to school (8 weeks to 18 months) and complete their learning amongst their peers.

### HOPE in the classroom

At Hester Hornbrook Academy, classroom practice reflects the school’s vision, mission, and values. It is also informed by current research about learning, wellbeing, curriculum, and assessment. Our overarching purpose is to ensure that all Hester Hornbrook students experience high-quality teaching and learning in every classroom. Our consistency in expectations, quality learning experiences, and a guaranteed and viable curriculum are central to our aspirations for young people. We know that students learn and thrive in classrooms that are safe, supportive, predictable, and respectful. Their relationships with their peers and classroom teams develop their personal and social capability and build a classroom culture where students can take risks with their learning, make mistakes, and receive constructive feedback.

Our curriculum is informed by our pillars of allied learning: Motivation to engage in learning, applied learning practices, student agency, student centered flexible approach and assessment practices which promote success.

We intentionally and explicitly focus our pedagogical approach to ensure all students can engage in authentic and motivating learning experiences. This is where theoretical information comes to life in a real-world context that relates directly to students’ lives. It aligns with HOPE ensuring safe, respectful and productive learning environments where students experience success.



## VETis at Hester Hornbrook Academy

Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETis) equips students with industry-specific skills and knowledge. At Hester Hornbrook Academy, students participate in VETis one day a week, either with Academy trainers or preferred external providers.

VETis aims to expand opportunities and pathways for senior secondary students, supporting the Victorian Government's goal to increase Year 12 completion rates. It also meets the skills and employment needs of Victorian industries.

VETis offers vocational programs that lead to a senior secondary certificate. These programs, completed over one or two years, contribute to the Victorian Certificate of Education (Vocational Major) (VCE VM).

## HOPE in the VET classroom

At Hester Hornbrook Academy we are well placed to offer our young people a wide range of varying VETis certificate options, delivered on campus with a few external visits for our trade ready learners to support the requirements of their program. Below is a list of the programs we have in offer at Hester Hornbrook Academy.

EARLY CHILDHOOD - CERT II COMMUNITY SERVICES WITH A FOCUS ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES

BUSINESS - CERT II WORKPLACE SKILLS

GRAPHIC DESIGN - CERT II CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

TRADE READY

CAFE READY

HOSPITALITY - CERT II HOSPITALITY

VISUAL ARTS - CERT II VISUAL ARTS

MUSIC INDUSTRY - CERT II MUSIC INDUSTRY

SPORT & RECREATION - CERT II SPORT COACHING

PROJECT READY - CERT II ACTIVE VOLUNTEERING

COMM SERVICES - CERT II COMMUNITY SERVICES

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES - CERT II APPLIED DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

## HOPE in the VET classroom

By combining holistic support, opportunities for engagement, pathways to success, and a commitment to educational excellence, the HOPE model ensures that students are not only ready to take on their VET course but are also positioned to excel in them. This integration helps students:

- Gain confidence and self-efficacy, knowing they have a dedicated support system behind them.
- Develop a clear understanding of how their VET subjects fit into their overall career and educational goals.
- Acquire practical skills and real-world experience through structured workplace learning and partnerships with industry, enhancing their employability upon graduation.
- The HOPE model at Hester Hornbrook Academy provides a comprehensive framework that equips students with the necessary tools, support, and opportunities to successfully engage in and complete VETis programs, paving the way for their future educational and career success.

## Opportunities for Students

Following a successful Melbourne Travel Training Experience and working together on fundraising activities, last year ten students and five staff embarked on our inaugural International Study Tour, to Singapore!

For many, it was the first time they had been on a plane, left their families and ventured to a new country! As we touched down in Singapore, we were greeted by Gene our tour guide.

### DAY ONE

We began with a walking tour through the Kampong Glam area visiting a huge Mosque and learning how to pour a traditional tea drink before heading to the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve where we could see neighbouring Malaysia and a crocodile!



### DAY TWO

We were immersed into the Avatar experience at Gardens by the Bay as we wandered around the forest before heading to the Singapore Zoo and Night Safari.

### DAY THREE

Day three was all about Sentosa Island, entering via cable car and heading to Universal studios. This was certainly a highlight of the trip with the rollercoasters! We finished the day attending the Wings of Time sound and lightshow at Sentosa Beach which had everyone captivated.

### DAY FOUR

We started with a visit to Crest Secondary School. After a presentation, we experienced a tour of their facilities and played games with the student leadership team. Then we set off on a bike tour to explore Marina Bay & China town. At our halfway point, we were treated to a traditional tea appreciation ceremony at one of the China towns famous tea houses.

### DAY FIVE

On our last day we set off for the Singapore Flyer giant wheel. To get there we had to venture through the Grand Prix track!

A definite highlight of the trip was eating at a number of the traditional Hawker Centres. Impressively, everyone was so adventurous with trying new culinary delights. For our final lunch, we went to Dignity Kitchen, a social enterprise kitchen supporting people with disabilities to gain employment. The food was awesome and the service was even better!

Finally, before heading to the airport, we visited Northlight school. Following a school tour, students got to play and interact together in their games room while sharing afternoon tea.

With tears all round, we said goodbye at the airport to Gene, our amazing guide. Gene had been so inspirational and generous to all of us, sharing his personal stories which has imprinted on all our hearts.

This trip was transformational for all who travelled, and we will have everlasting memories. In Gene's words, "Everyday is a new day with new possibilities. You are brave, you are confident, you are powerful, you are beautiful and you are loved. But most importantly, you are you - love yourself a little more everyday. Be unstoppable."

We all agreed, this experience of a lifetime should be one that all Hester Hornbrook students have the opportunity to strive for.

## Extra-Curricular Activities



We are delighted to highlight the achievements of our Outdoor Adventure Club for 2023. Held every Friday afternoon, the club has become a cornerstone of experiential learning and community engagement at our school.

One of the club's key initiatives involved establishing a collaborative partnership with a local community garden. Bi-weekly visits to tend our vegetable patches not only taught students sustainable gardening practices but also fostered a sense of environmental stewardship and community responsibility.

In addition to these activities, students eagerly participated in a wide array of outdoor excursions every other week. From the adrenaline rush of indoor rock climbing to the serene exploration of Mt Macedon's hiking trails, guided tours of botanical gardens, and immersive visits to our local creek, each outing offered unique opportunities for discovery and personal growth.

The program's holistic approach was meticulously designed to complement students' academic curriculum, providing them with enjoyable avenues to develop crucial personal and social skills. Furthermore, engaging in physical activities amidst natural settings contributed significantly to enhancing their overall health and wellbeing.

We celebrate the impact of the Outdoor Adventure Club in enriching our students' educational journey and look forward to continuing to inspire a love for the outdoors and lifelong learning in the years to come.



# Gilbert's Story

A WORD FROM ONE OF OUR EMPLOYEES

Entering Hester Hornbrook Academy as an employee created a rich unprecedented experience in my professional life as an educator. Most impressive was the experience of being acknowledged, daily, by every member of staff. Even while completing my student placement before being onboarded, the encounter of daily greetings set Hester Hornbrook apart in contrast to past employment spaces, which often rendered one invisible.

I soon realised that the Healing Oriented Program of Education (HOPE) is not just a well-crafted mission statement, hope and healing permeate the community. The program and its application are directed not only to the students, but also applied to staff. Working with students who struggle with trauma can be trauma inducing.

The number of times staff members have pulled me aside, asked me about my wellbeing, and listened to my concerns has been humbling and empowering. I know I am surrounded by people who care about me, as we provide care for our students.

Hester Hornbrook is most powerfully effective when we act collaboratively in service to our students. I witnessed collaboration at its best with one student who refused engagement in material other than his own special interest. Eight of us met in April, including the Head of Campus, to pick apart the educational knots that could liberate this student's potential, and spark his emotional and intellectual growth.

We created a new schedule and a series of skill building interventions conducted in a set apart space. In one month, the student's maths, literacy, and penmanship had improved dramatically, with vast improvements seen in his social skills. At times, the process felt akin to water on stone, but watching this student blossom is worth every drop of painstaking labour.



**Gilbert**

EDUCATION SUPPORT OFFICER

# 2023 Financial Report



Expenditure Breakdown	%
STAFF	52
INFRASTRUCTURE	23
ADMINISTRATION	12
STUDENT WELLBEING AND CURRICULUM	12
OTHER	0

Expenditure from Operating Activities	\$
STAFF	10,061,724
INFRASTRUCTURE	4,461,289
ADMINISTRATION	2,343,938
STUDENT WELLBEING AND CURRICULUM	2,283,661
OTHER	84,141



Income Breakdown	%
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS	79
STATE GOVERNMENT GRANTS	21

Income Breakdown	\$
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS	20,738,009
STATE GOVERNMENT GRANTS	5,540,825
OTHER INCOME	1,004,592

<b>TOTAL OPERATING PROFIT</b>	<b>\$8,048,672</b>
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# HOPE FOR OUR FUTURE

Thank you for your  
ongoing support

Hester Hornbrook Academy's masterplan for growth to ensure access to education for all young people continues. The Werribee campus development is due to be completed October 2024 and ready for the 2025 school year.

Furthermore, the new City campus located at 333 Exhibition Street, Melbourne will be ready for occupancy in 2025 which allows for a standard 220 student capacity campus plus a new Hybrid campus. Opportunities for further growth are under investigation in Dandenong, Melton and Frankston.

Our work at Hester Hornbrook would not have been possible without the generosity and support of several individuals and organisations. Our work in campus growth and impact for young people would not be possible without:

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