

Life in the Wilderness

Term 3 Issue #5 | Wednesday 6 August, 2025



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

From the Principal

Belinda Arnfield

As we commence Term 3, there is much to acknowledge and celebrate at Wilderness, including the opening of state-of-the-art facilities, the appointment of new staff who bring valuable expertise and renewed energy to our community, significant advancements in strategically aligned curriculum development, and the continued accomplishments of our students.

Coach House Opening

This term we have welcomed our Lower Junior School into the newly completed Coach House. Set in the heart of our campus, the Coach House is purpose-built to nurture connection, growth and courageous learning, providing a gentle transition from our Early Learning Centre to Junior School.

On the first morning of Term 3, our Reception to Year 2 girls were accompanied by Year 11 students as they made their way through the grounds to their new learning environment. From the very first moments in the light-filled classrooms and the dedicated Maker's Space for technology, art and design, it has been wonderful to see both students and teachers making these spaces their own.

Welcoming New Staff

We are delighted to welcome Ms Emma Searle to the role of Deputy Principal - Student Experience. With over 25 years of experience in education, Emma brings a deep

commitment to student wellbeing, leadership development and meaningful engagement in school life. Her work across academic and pastoral domains reflects a strong understanding of the complexity and richness of educating girls.

Sharing Our Vision Internationally: ICGS Global Forum, Philadelphia

At the recent International Coalition of Girls' Schools Global Forum in Philadelphia, Wilderness School proudly presented the development of our Artemis program, a capabilities-based curriculum that rigorously develops and assesses the skills essential for girls to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Grounded in our mission to enable each girl to be the best she can be throughout her life and our vision to be a world leader in girls' education, Artemis builds transferable competencies across 20 dimensions, including creativity, collaboration, global awareness and ethical action. This learning comes to fruition in Margaret Brown House, where students engage in interdisciplinary, real-world experiences that cultivate intellectual adventure, resilience and purpose.

Through Artemis, every girl is equipped to succeed not only academically, but in life beyond school as a confident, compassionate, and future-ready young woman.

Celebrating Student Success

We are incredibly proud to congratulate our Year 12 SRC president Niya Singhal, who has been awarded a Tuckwell Scholarship for 2026, one of the most prestigious undergraduate scholarships in Australia.

Each year, the Australian National University selects just 25 students nationwide for the Tuckwell program, recognising excellence in intellect, character, leadership and commitment to community. The program offers financial support as well as personal development and enrichment opportunities.

Next year, Niya will join a remarkable community of scholars at the Australian National University.

Congratulations are also due to our talented Wilderness musicians for their recent achievements at the Adelaide Choral Eisteddfod:

- **Junior Concert Choir – 2nd Place**
- **Senior Choir – 2nd Place**
- **Old Scholars Choir – 1st Place**

These results build on the outstanding performances earlier this year at Generations in Jazz and are a testament to the dedication and passion of our music students and staff.

Term 3 Reminders: Sun Safety and Road Awareness

As we approach spring, I would like to remind you of our sun protection commitment and of the vital role parents and teachers play:

- Please ensure your daughter has access to SPF 50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen before leaving for School . SPF 50+ sunscreen is also provided in Junior School classrooms and in key areas across the school grounds.
- Sunscreen, sun protective clothing and hats are requested for all camps, sports, and excursions.

UV Radiation is dangerous for skin when it reaches a UV Index level of three or above, and Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. There is a new screen in the Gym foyer alerting girls to the current UV rating.

Finally, I ask everyone to remain vigilant about **road safety** around campus, particularly during drop-off and pick-up times, to help ensure the wellbeing of all members of our school community.

Belinda Arnfield

Principal



EARLY LEARNING

Belonging, Being and Becoming

Rebecca Williamson

At Wilderness, we often speak of learning as a journey. This term, I have found myself returning to three simple, profound words from the Early Years Learning Framework: Belonging, Being and Becoming. They have taken on new meaning as I have watched our girls re-enter their learning community, navigate new friendships, and step gently into the next chapter of their school life.

Returning from holidays is not always easy. Many of our girls have come from the warmth and comfort of home, or the joy of family holidays, and must now reorient themselves within their home away from home, a place filled with many personalities and many possibilities for play. But slowly, joy returns. New friendships begin. Familiar rhythms settle in. Our buddy program with the Year 6 girls has reawakened, and it is a delight to see the care that grows between them.

This term has also marked a physical shift. With the opening of the Coach House, our girls can now make the walk through the school to visit the Learning Commons, glimpsing the playgrounds and classrooms they will one day join. Along the way, sisters find each other and it is beautiful to witness.

As educators, we have become more connected too. Our shared spaces are more than buildings. They shape how we teach, how we relate, and how we grow. I never truly understood the idea of the environment as the “third teacher” until now. From the original Mamie House to our modern Annexe, each space has held warmth, laughter and learning. We have simply brought that spirit forward, evolving with intention and care.

The girls may not realise it yet, but these experiences of finding their place, forming connections, and growing with confidence are shaping who they are becoming. We see it

every day in small choices and quiet acts of kindness.

Wilderness is always growing. At the heart of that growth is a community that holds care, safety and wellbeing as its foundation, while dreaming boldly for the future.

Rebecca Williamson
Director of Early Years







JUNIOR SCHOOL

Coach House Opening, Deep Learning and Celebrating Student Success

[Liz McCarthy](#)

We are well underway with learning, events and celebrations in the Junior School in what has been our usual wintry start to Term 3. You would each have received your daughter's Curriculum Term 3 Overviews, outlining the planned learning experiences for her class for the coming 10 weeks. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your daughter's teacher should you have any questions or points of clarification. You certainly don't need to wait for a Parent Teacher Interview offering and are most welcome to make a time should you wish to.

Coach House

In what has been a long awaited and highly anticipated move, we were delighted to open our new Coach House on the first day of this term. Completing the Lower Junior School precinct which comprises our Early Learning Centre, Reception to Year 2 building and complemented by our Wilderness OSHC, we are immensely proud of the types of learning and playing we are already seeing our youngest girls engage in in their new space.

The Coach House opening has also opened up new opportunities in space at the Upper Junior School. Michelle Edmonds, our Learning Support teacher, has moved into a new classroom space. This will ensure she has the space available to effectively run and expand our Learning Support programs in the Junior School, with Kate Brennan as Acting Assistant Head of Junior School: Pastoral Care, also working out of this space in relation to learning in the area of Well Being.

With five out of our seven Junior School year levels moving learning spaces in the break,

I must thank both the teachers, co-educators and maintenance team who tirelessly facilitated this to occur. The classrooms were ready and looking beautiful on Day 1 of Term 3 only because of the work and commitment of these people to work throughout the holidays to ensure readiness for our girls return. Seeing the girls inhabit their many new spaces is certainly worth it and fulfils what has been a labour of both love and care.

IPSHA Poetry

I was delighted to take, with Celine Zammit, three girls to represent Wilderness at the IPSHA Poetry Competition at the end of last term. Held at Walford Anglican School for Girls, students Lu Lu Jilaihawi (Year 4), Elodie Spernat (Year 5) and Charlotte McLeod (Year 6) rehearsed two poems each to perform at the recital in front of students, parents and staff from other participating schools. The girls did exceptionally well, representing their school and families with exemplary manners, respect and confidence. I am very proud to announce that Lu Lu placed 1st overall in the Year 4 division for the day.

We were delighted to host children's author, Deb Abela, in Year 5 at Wilderness this week. Deb has written the novel *The Kindness Project*, a writing piece the Year 5 girls have as a focus in literature at present. The girls prepared outstanding questions and thoroughly enjoyed hearing the insights of the author of this much-loved novelist as she discussed her craft, in general and in relation to writing *The Kindness Project*. Thanks to Junior School Librarian, Katie Silva, for organising the visit.

As the weeks ahead are filled with events such as Science Week, Book Week and our Year 5 camp, we look forward to continuing our work together.

Warm regards,

Liz McCarthy

Head of Junior School

You're Invited: Annual Showcase of Music 2025

Join us for an unforgettable evening at our Annual Showcase of Music - ***From West End to Broadway.***

When: Thursday 28 August 6.30pm

Where: Adelaide Town Hall

Showcasing the outstanding musical talent of Wilderness School and featuring special guest, Australian Musical Theatre Star Amy Lehpamer. This special event promises a night of show-stopping performances and unforgettable moments in the Adelaide Town Hall.

All are welcome – don't miss this spectacular celebration of song and stage! [Book Now](#)

Anna Lenartowicz

Head of Music





MIDDLE SCHOOL

From Diplomacy to Decathlons: A Celebration of Talent and Teamwork

Rhiannon Giles

Youth EVATT Competition

"A group of 11 Year 9 and 10 Wilderness students were recently excited to attend the 2025 preliminary round of the EVATT Model United Nations Security Council at the Flinders University City Campus. We were tasked with working together in pairs against other school competitors to create two resolutions. The first topic was prepared prior to the competition and involved exploring the circumstances and ethics around the conscription of defence personnel. The second topic was assigned on the competition day, along with a short period of preparation time. This topic challenged us to consider how the member countries of the UN should approach the issue of overfishing. In our pairs, we were required to contribute to discussion in the negotiation and debating chambers following the conventions of the UN Security Council. It was a fast-paced, intense, but enjoyable day with many learning opportunities." - **Lucy Davis, Year 9.**

Congratulations to Sirui Tang, Mengmeng Deng, Emma Clutterham-Smith, Alice Richardson and Saanvi Khanna who made it to the semi-finals of this competition.

Hamann School Mathematics Competition

Congratulations to the following students who accepted prizes at the HSMC presentation Night held at Pembroke late last term: Rila Li (Intermediate Paper), Ada Qian (Intermediate Paper), Emily Nguyen (Senior Paper) and Yiyao Shi (Senior Paper).

Da Vinci Decathlon

At the end of last term, the Wilderness Year 9 DaVinci Decathlon Team: Meng-Meng

Deng, Evangeline Lee, Chenuthi Navaratne, Nidhi Sinhal, Surui Tang, Amber Trappel, Sharon Zhai and Miaomiao Zhu, competed at the National Final held at Knox Grammar School, Sydney.

The theme of the competition was Turning Points. The girls placed in five of the 10 disciplines, including first in Creative Producers and Engineering, second in Art & Poetry and Ideation, and third in Legacy. Miss Short and Dr Giles were so proud their accomplishments at the Final and the way that they represented the school.

Maths – The only subject that counts

Thank you to Mrs Davies and the Maths Department for the various activities throughout Maths Week held in Week 2 including treasure hunts, escape rooms, puzzles and lunchtime games. Congratulations to the SRC Executive who won the Letters and Numbers competition at the Maths Week Assembly.

Middle School Social – Sparkle

Last week the Middle School SRC hosted the annual Middle School Social. Boys from Price Alfred College and Saint Peter's were invited to join the girls in the Gym. All proceeds of the event will go to Round Square initiatives including the construction of birthing kits. Thank you to all the Wilderness Staff who volunteered to help with supervision of the event and the Year 12 SRC who helped throughout the night.

Rhiannon Giles

Head of Middle School

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Anna Lenartowicz

Head of Music





SENIOR SCHOOL

Leadership and Legacy: Voice, Agency and Responsibility

[Kate Hanson](#)

What does meaningful student leadership look like in schools today? At its heart, it's about cultivating a culture where young people are trusted, heard and empowered to contribute. As educational leader Peter Hutton notes, 'Schools need to be places where students have voice, agency and real responsibility'. This belief underpins much of our leadership work with students at this stage of the year.

The recent Year 11 Retreat was centered around leadership, teamwork and the culture we hope to shape for the Class of 2026. As students begin to step into positions of leadership, both formal and informal, they are encouraged to reflect on the legacy they wish to leave and to understand that leadership, at its core, is about service.

The retreat focused on building leadership capacity, strengthening relationships and fostering a spirit of collaboration. These experiences are designed to support the girls as they take up the challenge of leading with purpose and integrity in their final year.

In this same spirit of connection, our Year 12 students recently hosted a Quiz Night with students from Seymour College. The event brought together both school communities for an evening of laughter, teamwork and friendly competition. Students worked in mixed-school teams across a series of trivia rounds, with questions spanning pop culture, history and general knowledge. The night provided a valuable opportunity to build friendships, practise hospitality and enjoy the sense of camaraderie that comes from working together.

Looking ahead, our focus on student leadership continues with the SRC nominations process for 2026. This is an exciting opportunity for the girls to consider how they might contribute to the life of the school in meaningful and lasting ways. Whether through

formal roles or informal influence, each girl is encouraged to think about how her voice, actions and values can help shape the year ahead.

Kate Hanson

Head of Senior School

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Where: Adelaide Town Hall

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Anna Lenartowicz

Head of Music

Senior Wilderness Football Team Tour

Our Senior Wilderness Football Team travelled to Melbourne last week as part of their inaugural Football Tour, an exciting milestone for the program. The tour kicked off with a high-performance skills and education session at RSEA Park, home of the St Kilda Football Club, where the girls gained valuable insight into elite athlete preparation. They then faced strong Victorian opposition in an exhibition match against Melbourne Girls' Grammar School, securing an impressive victory with a final score of 5.7. 37 to 3.3. 21. Year 11 student, Tilly Barrett, was awarded MVP for her outstanding performance. The tour concluded with a visit to the iconic MCG to watch the Collingwood vs Brisbane Lions game, capping off a memorable trip.

We now wish the girls the very best in their upcoming semi-final against Seymour, as they strive for back-to-back IGSSA shields, and in their Statewide Knockout Competition match against Sacred Heart College.

Andrew Mittiga

Student Wellbeing Coordinator (Years 7-12)





BOARDING

A Vibrant Start to Term 3 in the Boarding House

Carolyn Matthews

Term 3 has got off to a busy start with Year 12 girls returning early to sit their trial examinations. They approached these with focus and determination and are now working hard on what is their final full term with us. As always after a break, it was wonderful to see everyone back in house, to hear of their holidays and to have the house filled with squeals of joy at seeing friends for the first time in three weeks!

The girls returned to the boarding house excited for our newly refurbished gym to be open for use. This project has been almost twelve months in the making, with the girls being surveyed last year about the gym and what they would like to see available for them to use. Based on this, we have freshly painted the space, included some plant life and have three Pilates reformers, new weights/dumbbells/kettleballs, hip and leg thrust machines and also a stair master. The girls are certainly making use of the new equipment to keep fit both physically and mentally.

Preparations are well underway for the Boarders Fashion parade on Friday 15th August. We have been overwhelmed with donations from our boarding family but also the wider South Australian community. Everything is in place for a fantastic night to support the Bhadaure School in Nepal and the girls have some amazing local brands to showcase. We will be joined on the night with a group of boys from St Peter's College to assist with the modelling. Ticket sales will close this Friday, so make sure, if you are intending to come, that you grab your ticket at: trybooking.com/DCMRS

We have welcomed new staff in the boarding house this term, Ms Jo Winter has joined us as a boarding supervisor, Ms Bhaavya Arora as a Mathematics/Science tutor and we welcomed back from a term away, Ms Emma Lane. We had a productive day of staff

training prior to the girls return, with staff completing a Fire Safety course. This training covered essentials around managing fire emergencies and also the correct use of fire extinguishers. Great training but one we hope we never have to use!

Last week I attended the Isolated Children's Parents Association of Australia (ICPA), National Conference, which was held here in Adelaide. The mission of this organisation is to advocate for equitable access to education for all geographically isolated children across Australia. This group do an amazing job in advocating to our lawmakers, boarding representative groups but also in providing an invaluable support network to each other in the challenges they face in educating their children from remote distances.

Carolyn Matthews

Head of Boarding



