

Life in the Wilderness

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

From the Principal

Belinda Arnfield

As we reach the end of another successful year at Wilderness, I want to thank our students, staff and families for the energy, commitment and positivity you bring to our community. It has been a year of wonderful growth and impressive achievement, and we look forward with great confidence to our Year 12 results.

Innovation has always been part of who we are at Wilderness, from the vision of the Brown sisters to the way we prepare our girls for the future today. As we farewell our Year 12 cohort, we do so with both sadness and immense pride, confident in the way they will step into the world. This confidence comes from knowing how intentionally our curriculum equips our students for whatever comes next.

Subjects such as People, Money and Power in Year 9 and Futures and Foresight in Year 10 give students a strong understanding of the systems shaping society and the capabilities needed to navigate a dynamic global landscape. Drawing on global research and emerging thinking, they inspire our girls to explore trends, anticipate change and think critically and creatively.

This future focus is also evident in our evolving Artemis program and broader Capabilities Curriculum. Our Round Square program continues to broaden global perspectives, and in January a group of students will travel once again to South Korea, to participate in a Model United Nations experience.

Across the School, learning remains rigorous, dynamic and deeply engaging. Our girls are challenged in ways that promote confidence, curiosity and personal growth. The refreshed Margaret Brown House now offers flexible, collaborative spaces that support individual learning and career pathways. In the Junior School, the new Coach House provides our youngest learners with an inspiring environment enriched by the Makers Space and Allied Health facilities.

I am also pleased to announce that our 2025 Speech Night speaker will be Daisy McGregor (Class of 2003). Daisy now leads UK Policy work at Anthropic and has held senior roles in the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, No.10 Downing Street and the Bank of England. She is an outstanding example of the values and capabilities we seek to cultivate in our girls.

Thank you once again for your support throughout the year. I am proud of all we have achieved together and look forward to 2026.



EARLY LEARNING

A joyful end to a wonderful year in the ELC

[Rebecca Williamson](#)

The past two weeks have been incredibly busy in the most wonderful way. They have been a true celebration of your little girls and all they have achieved this year. We have watched them transition confidently into their next groups, or step into their roles as the kind and caring leaders who support those moving classes. Their adaptability and compassion have been evident in every moment.

One of the highlights was our ELC Christmas Concert and Graduation. It is always an evening filled with warmth, joy and a true sense of community. The celebration is never about performance or perfection. Instead, it is a moment to pause and appreciate who our girls are, how far they have come and the love that surrounds them. Standing together in the gym, it is impossible not to feel how cherished our girls are and how special it is to share this moment in time as an ELC community.

Our girls brought their whole selves to the evening. They were joyful, brave and beautifully individual as they shared their songs and graduated. Moments like this are not always easy, especially for young children, yet we gently encourage them to try new experiences and to build confidence in front of others. These early steps, whether big or small, help them grow in ways that extend far beyond a stage.

Events like this are only possible because of the collective effort of so many people who give their time so willingly to ensure our girls can shine. As always, your support has made an enormous difference. Thank you for helping us with every event this term and for being such wonderful partners in your daughter's learning and wellbeing.

We are incredibly proud of all our girls, and we are grateful for the trust you place in us each day.





JUNIOR SCHOOL

Milestone moments and courageous adventures in the Junior School

[Liz McCarthy](#)

As the year's end draws ever closer, our Junior School has been alive with milestone moments, courageous adventures and rich opportunities enabling our girls to demonstrate leadership, curiosity and connection. Over recent weeks, our Year 3, Year 5 and Year 6 students have each undertaken memorable experiences that not only extend their learning but also deepen their sense of belonging to our Wilderness community.

Our adventurous spirit shone brightly in the younger years as our Year 3 students embarked on their Outdoor Education Camp to Blanchetown. Whether engaging in play along the riverbank, exploring local ecosystems or working together in team-building activities, the girls embraced each challenge with enthusiasm and courage. This camp marks an important step in the development of their independence and self-confidence and is always a treasured milestone in their Junior School journey.

Meanwhile, our Year 5 students undertook their highly anticipated Educational Tour to Ballarat and Sovereign Hill, stepping back in time to immerse themselves in the stories and environments of the gold rush era. Dressed in period costume, learning by lantern light and exploring the diggings, cottages and bustling main street, the girls gained a vivid sense of what life was like in the 1850s. This experience enriched their historical understanding while strengthening friendships, curiosity and a sense of wonder about Australia's past.

Our Year 6 cohort then took on the challenge of their Outdoor Education Camp, which included an unforgettable bike-riding journey through the Fleurieu Peninsula. With the coastline stretching beside them and the encouragement of friends close at hand, the

girls demonstrated remarkable perseverance, teamwork and joy. Outdoor Education at Wilderness is always more than an excursion; it is an opportunity for girls to stretch their comfort zones, discover their strengths and connect with the natural world. This year's experience was no exception.

We concluded this series of milestone experiences with our Year 6 Farewell Leadership Assembly, a beautiful celebration of the contribution our Semester 2 leadership group have made through service, initiative and kindness. As part of the assembly, we heard from each of our outgoing Semester 2 leaders, who shared thoughtful reflections on their learnings in their role, their moments of courage, the challenges they navigated and the pride they felt in contributing to their school. The assembly acknowledged their growth, quiet and bold, reflective and dynamic, and their commitment to living out our values of Respectful Relationships, Adventurous Learning, Responsible Citizenship and True & Courageous Self. It was a moment of pride, gratitude and great hope.

Together, these experiences reflect the heart of a Wilderness education; empowering girls to be curious learners, courageous thinkers and compassionate young citizens who lead with integrity and joy. We are immensely proud of each girl, from our budding Year 3 adventurers to our poised Year 6 leaders, and grateful to the dedicated staff who plan, guide and support these transformative opportunities.

As we celebrate these milestones, we honour not only where our girls have been, but the bright and purposeful paths that lie ahead. I look forward to spending the coming weeks preparing for the end of the school year, culminating in our cherished end-of-year events.







MIDDLE SCHOOL

Welcoming new students to Wilderness and transition

[Rhiannon Giles](#)

2026 Transition is now in full swing. Last week we held the Year 7 Parent Information Evening where families were able to meet with Heads of House and the 2025 Year 7 Form Teachers to discuss how best to support girls as they move into the Middle School.

Our 2026 Buddies had a seminar recently to prepare them for New Girls' Day. The House Captains and Buddy Coordinators worked with their Heads of House to discuss with Buddies the responsibilities of their role. They also wrote letters to the new students we will be welcoming next year.

Please enjoy this report from the Sparaxis House Captains Izzy and Lainie about a recent activity completed in all House groups:

"Our recent Cookie Decorating activity in House was a sweet success! The Year 6s joined us for the first time, bringing plenty of enthusiasm and creativity. Students from all year levels mixed together to decorate cookies with icing, sprinkles, and smiles. It was a wonderful chance for the Year 6s to get to know girls from other year groups and form new connections. It was the perfect blend of teamwork, fun, and sugary smiles!"

This week we have welcomed new students to Wilderness with two New Girls' Days, one for the Year 8 to 12 girls and then today the Year 7s for 2026. We hope they enjoyed their time with us and we look forward to seeing them again at Orientation Day next year.

Competition Success

Congratulations to Evangeline Lee for her first prize in the Tax, Super + You Competition. She has won a monetary prize for both herself and the school. The competition was open to students in Years 7 to 12 and looked for creative ways to educate people on the topics of tax and super. You can view her award-winning video [here](#).

Evangeline is also a finalist for the second year running in the National History Challenge in the Year 9 and Australia's Defining Moment categories. She has also been recognised in the recent Immerse Education essay awards. Congratulations for all your recent success, Evangeline!

State Final VEX Robotics

The state finals for the VEX Robotics competition were recently held at the University of Adelaide. Please enjoy the reflections from Chanulya Senaratne, a member of the Wilderness Brown Team.

"Our team members felt butterflies in their stomachs, since this was the first State Final Robotics Competition the school has entered. Our team captains, Sirui and Nidhi, gave us a pep talk to do our best and savour this experience. They assured us that we would do really well and our optimism worked. With excellent teamwork with other schools, we achieved high scores of 135 and 108, placing us 5th out of 24 teams. We found a few errors in the coding criteria, but that didn't stop us and we tried other codes. We performed well on the other criteria, including the interview. We enjoyed representing the school, learned more about the DTE career path, and learnt the importance of teamwork, problem-solving and resilience. This is one of the best and most unforgettable events I have ever had."

UN Youth SA Voice Competition - *pitching solutions to the world's big Issues*

The Voice Competition transforms traditional public speaking into a problem-solving competition for students in Years 7 to 10. This forum provides students with the platform to discuss issues that affect their community, country, and the world. A number of students have made it to the state finals and we await to hear their results from that competition.

The following five teams attended the competition:

Team 1: Sharanya Reddy, Radhe Ramson, Anahat Tiwari, Kaitlyn Tran

Team 2: Sophia Lehman, Angelina Georgiou

Team 3: Ella Wu, Annelise Chau, Menuki Fernando, Amelia Yip

Team 4: Yazhini Dhachina, Maryam Cedra Sawad, Fatima Muazzam, Saanika Singhal

Team 5: Lucy Davis, Meng-meng Deng, Lucy He, Yazhini Dhachina

Yazhini wrote this reflection upon returning to school:

"The UN Youth Voice competition was such a valuable and memorable experience for me. It gave me the chance to speak about important global issues that I genuinely care about while also learning from the unique perspectives of others. Throughout this event, I developed more confidence in expressing my ideas and improved my public speaking skills. What made it even better was the supportive and encouraging atmosphere. Everyone was so kind, and it really felt like we were all learning and growing together. Overall, it was not only a fun and inspiring day but also a meaningful learning experience that helped me step out of my comfort zone and see the power of youth voices in creating change."

Web.Comp HTML and CSS Competition

Congratulations to Issie Morgan and Charlotte Munro, who were placed first in the Web.Comp Competition in the intermediate section. This is an international competition and the Intermediate section is specifically tailored for students who are new to web development and focuses on teaching the fundamentals of HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) and CSS (Cascading Style Sheets). This competition attracts participants from around the world, making this achievement particularly significant for our students and the school community.

Artist in Residence

Middle School Art students have enjoyed the opportunity to work with Tess Bartholomew, our 2025 Artist in Residence, over the last couple of weeks. These photos are from a session with Year 7 students.







SENIOR SCHOOL

Leadership, connection and what's ahead

[Kate Hanson](#)

As we move toward the end of Term 4, our community is entering a season of celebration, transition and preparation. Alongside farewells for our Year 12s, the Senior School has been focused on looking ahead to 2026. Our Year 10 and Year 11 girls have now received their formal invitations, and our newly elected SRC members have begun stepping into their leadership roles with energy and purpose. I am looking forward to seeing our families at the Advent Service and Speech Night in Week 8. Please remember that both events are compulsory for all students in the Senior School.

SRC Big Lunch

Our 2026 SRC launched their theme, Bloom, a celebration of growth, optimism and the collective strength of our community. To introduce the theme, our new school leaders hosted the annual Big Lunch in Week 5, featuring poke bowls, a bake sale, face painting and lawn games. With the campus dressed in florals and colour, the girls enjoyed a wonderful afternoon together. All proceeds will support our ongoing partnership with the Bhadaure School in Nepal.

New Girls' Morning

We were delighted to welcome our new girls to campus this week. The morning included a scavenger hunt and opportunities for our current students to guide, support and connect with the girls who will be joining us in 2026. It was heartening to see friendships forming and to witness the warmth with which our community embraced its newest members.

Exams

Year 10 and 11 parents will have received details regarding examination arrangements for Week 7, including subject schedules and expectations. Please direct any questions to our SACE Coordinator, David Pyman.





BOARDING

A busy and beautiful term in the Boarding House

[Carolyn Matthews](#)

The last few weeks in the Boarding House have been busy with lots of events.

Our Year 12s finally all departed the house last week and there were lots of tears and hugs; they will be very much missed by us all. Although, a number of them have been popping in to say hello!

We have announced our in-house leaders to their roles for 2026 and will work closely with our House Captains, Bea and Mimi, to support them in their role of leading the house.

Year 7–10 Boarding House Coordinators: Sophia Holmes, Khloe Lam and Stacey Major

Year 11/12 Boarding House Coordinators: Polly Matters, Greta Pratt and Anna Rasheed

Events/Celebrations Coordinators: Annabelle Basham and Whitney Johns

Activities/Events Coordinators: Lucy Allen and Indy Holman

Our new leaders will be hard at work over the remainder of the term, helping with key events, including our orientation sleepover for our group of 2026 new girls, our final Boarders' Birthday dinner for the year, and planning events for the start of next year. There is a lot of work to be done, and the girls have lots of great ideas and enthusiasm which stands the house in good stead for next year.

Our 2025 House Captains, Annabel and Ella, as part of their leadership plan for the year, decided to introduce family groups to which girls were allocated when they arrived in the boarding house, and to run a family group competition over the course of the year. Families would compete against each other in competitions for points and the family with the most points would be awarded the Mary Home House Cup in Term 4. It was very

exciting to announce our inaugural winners of the Cup, who were the Dutton family. We held a special supper to celebrate this, with an enormous red cake being enjoyed by everyone! Huge congratulations to all the members of the Dutton family on their win, and equally to Annabel and Ella for creating and bringing to fruition such a wonderful addition to our boarding house.

On Sunday, 9 November, we hosted our Thank You Afternoon Tea on Memorial Lawns for families who have helped our boarders out over the year. It may have been with transport, a meal, words of encouragement, or a place to stay. We all enjoyed some spring sun, great company, food and drinks and the opportunity to say thank you to the amazing families who support our girls.

Last Sunday night we hosted our orientation sleepover for our new 2026 boarders, where we welcomed eight new boarders in Years 9 and 10. Our House Captains, Bea and Mimi, put together a fantastic evening of events to help orient the girls to life in the boarding house. They enjoyed meeting their new family group and their Buddies and Big Sisters. A friendly netball competition was held, a scavenger hunt helped them get familiar with the various parts of the house, and of course a trip to Yochi completed the night. The girls got used to handing their tech up at night and understanding emergency procedures! They then enjoyed their morning at day school before heading home.

I am very pleased to announce that the 2025 Boarders Fashion Parade raised an astonishing figure of \$14,958. A huge thank you must go to Alice Duncan for all her hard work in sourcing the brands which were modelled on the night and the donation of items which were raffled or auctioned, and of course our auctioneer, Joe Murdoch. The donation of items which we were able to sell all contributed to the fantastic result. The girls and St Peters boarders were brilliant in modelling the garments, and the girls who sold raffle tickets, showed people to their seats, and helped set up and pack up all contributed to the success of the event. To the staff who worked away in the background, assisting with the organising, make-up, getting the runs on stage, and selling drinks, it was truly a whole-house event. To the Wilderness community who continues to support the night in raising valuable funds for the Bhaduaire School, it is just an amazing result. We were supported by an incredible array of South Australian families and businesses. Thank you to everyone for your contribution to the night and for allowing our boarding community to support another boarding community educating young women.



