

TRUTH AND COURAGE

# SFX NEWS

ISSUE 3

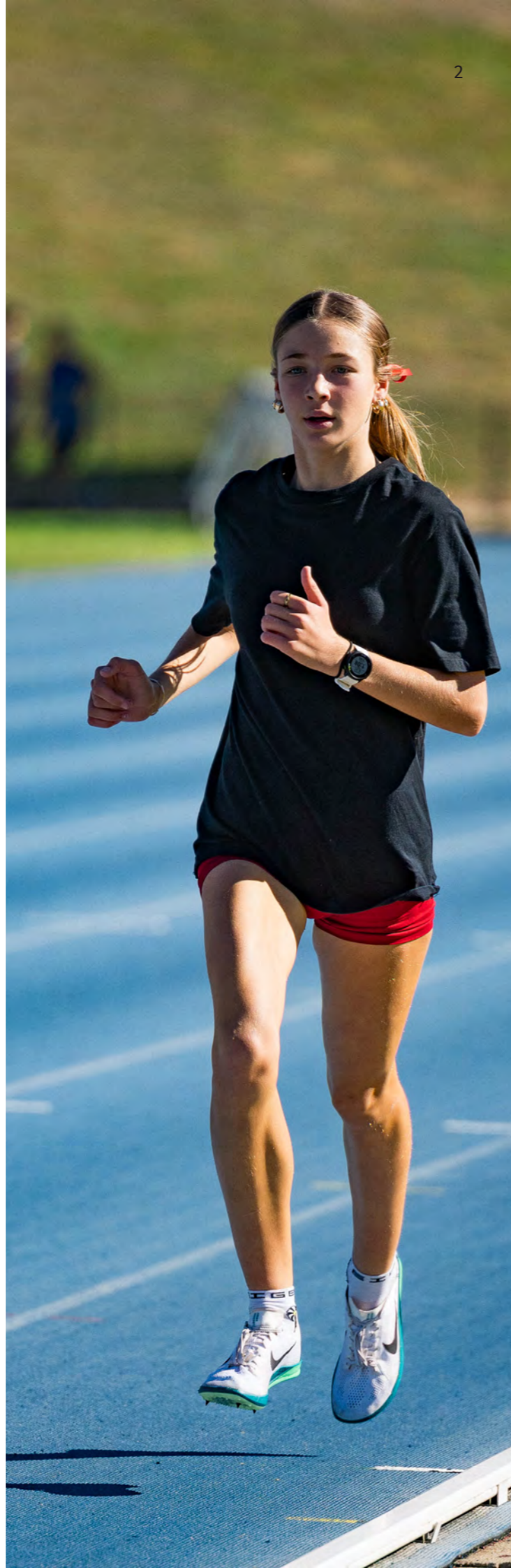
MAY / 2026



Truth and Courage

# What's inside?

Principals Message	3
Year 8 Report	7
Visual Arts Update	9
VET Update	10
Student Voice	12
Senior Music Showcase	15
New Food Technology Room	16
House Spirit	20
SFX Try-A-Day	22
The Power of Reading	24
Notices	26



## A message from the Principal

Our students have made an exceptional start to the term and I am absolutely delighted with their positivity, their engagement with learning, their care for each other and their teachers and their pride in the College. On behalf of staff and students I wish our senior students well as they finalise their assessment and prepare for their end of Semester examinations.



Staff and students gathered in candlelight in our gymnasium at the beginning of the term to commemorate ANZAC Day, the theme of which this year was Pozieres. Each year we select a theme for our ceremony through which we commemorate and remember our service men and women both past and currently serving our nation. Our ceremony was facilitated by our student leaders and designed to follow the protocols of both the ADF and RSL and was most moving and dignified. We were very privileged to have Colonel Mammino join us to deliver the occasional address reminding us of the cultural and historical significance of ANZAC for our country and school.

Momentum is certainly building around our 2027 Enrolment Period, and I was delighted with our College Expo Day at which we welcomed Year 6 students from over 35 feeder schools for a day of classes, activities and hospitality led by College staff and students. Following on our Tour Day we welcomed families to the school for tours of our facilities and to meet staff and students. This too was a very successful day and gave our prospective parents and their children the opportunity to view our facilities and to meet our staff and students. Many of our visitors spoke with great admiration about our facilities, our learning environment and how impressive your girls and boys are.

Our Year 11 Information Evening and Careers Expo at which we had over 1000 in attendance was a great success again this year. Our Year 10, 11 and 12 students had the opportunity to have conversations with our Faculty teams about senior studies at St Francis Xavier College. They also took the opportunity to engage with our community partners to learn about their post school learning and employment pathways. I was very impressed by the accessibility and generosity of the many community partners who joined us for the Careers Expo and very grateful to those parents and students who attended.

Last Monday evening I received a call from Catholic Education to advise that the brief and contracts for the refurbishment of our Administration Block had been approved in an 'out of session' meeting of the CAGEL Board. I could not have been more excited! The refurbishment will incorporate a range of much needed Student Services including a new reception, sick bay, counsellors offices, a new reset room, student wellbeing spaces, meeting rooms and offices. Thank you for your patience as we have rotated our entry and reception points in preparation for the build.

Thank you for the many ways in which you support the College and our young people to succeed in their academic and extra curricular endeavours. They are exceptional and I cannot express enough my pride and confidence in them.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely  
Sandra Darley



## Year 8 Report

It has been a busy and engaging period of learning for our Year 8 students, with opportunities to explore creativity, develop new skills, and strengthen their confidence across a wide range of subjects. Students have embraced both academic and practical challenges, showing curiosity, resilience and a willingness to try new things. A strong theme throughout the term has been personal growth, with many learning activities encouraging students to reflect on identity, creativity, and the idea of having the courage to be themselves.

In English, students have been immersed in their novel study. Alexa's class has focused on *A Monster Calls* by Patrick Ness, a novel that explores complex ideas around grief and emotional resilience. As Alexa explains, "The novel is about a young boy who is faced with a monster in his dreams, which is a metaphor for grief," and this has led into a creative portfolio where students are asked to incorporate the theme of 'Courage To Be Me' into their writing.

*"... encouraging students to reflect on identity, creativity, and the idea of having the courage to be themselves."*

Creativity has also been a key focus in Visual Arts, where students are designing and constructing clay sculptures that represent aspects of themselves. Isabella shares that "we are using techniques like pinch pots, coil, and slab to build our work," highlighting the variety of practical skills being developed. She adds that she enjoys the subject because "it is hands-on and something different,"

reflecting the enthusiasm many students have shown for this tactile and expressive project.

In Japanese, students have been building both language skills and cultural understanding through their Capstone projects. Aseem said, "I love Japanese because it is fun to learn a new language," and explains that students are currently researching Japanese festivals. This work encourages curiosity about global cultures while strengthening communication skills in a new language.

Physical Education has provided students with opportunities to stay active while building teamwork and coordination. Liam G describes that in basketball and netball we are focusing on shooting, passing and teamwork. He adds that he enjoys PE because "it is fun to be active and play sports at school," capturing the positive energy students bring to these lessons.

In Digital Technology, students have been exploring cyber safety in a creative way by designing and coding scratch animations. Jaunsz explains that "it is fun and engaging because it is a more creative way of learning," demonstrating how students are combining technical skills with important real-world knowledge about staying safe online.

To round off the term, keep an eye on our social media channels for an exciting student-led wellbeing initiative developed by the Year 8 SRC. This project is a wonderful example of student leadership in action and highlights the care Year 8 students have for the people in their school community.

Abbey Kennedy  
Year 8 Coordinator



**ENROLMENTS CLOSE**

**FRIDAY, 29 MAY**

[sfx.act.edu.au](http://sfx.act.edu.au)



## Visual Arts Department Update

The Visual Arts Department has had a busy and creative term, with students from Years 7–12 engaged in a range of hands-on projects, workshops, and excursions that continue to build their artistic skills and confidence.

Year 9 Art students have been exploring the traditions of ancient Greek pottery, reimagining the classic amphora form through sgraffito. Working with heavy red raku clay and traditional coiling techniques, they etched personal stories into the surfaces of their vessels, producing contemporary works that draw directly on ancient craftsmanship. In Years 7 and 8, students have been developing their observational skills through still-life painting, drawing on a range of artistic influences to experiment with different styles and techniques. The results reflect genuine growth in confidence and visual thinking across both year groups.

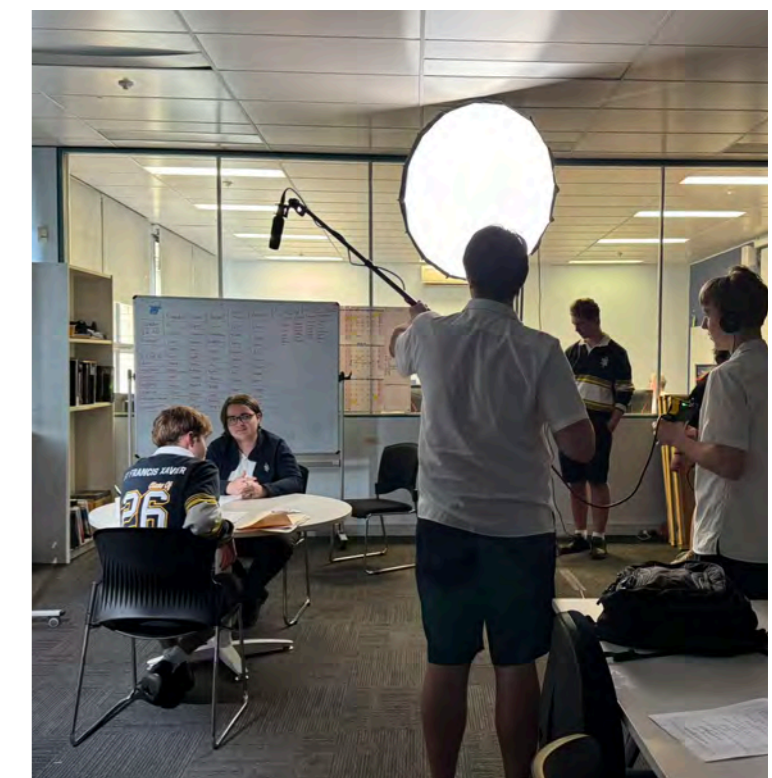
Photography and Media students have been equally active. Year 9 students refined their technical skills while examining how print and short-film media are used in advertising, and Year 10 Photography students took a more conceptual approach, capturing images that use surrealist devices to challenge perception and visual logic. At senior level, Year 12 students attended a workshop at AIE where they were assigned professional industry roles — director, actor, camera operator, lighting, and sound — and filmed a complete scene using professional-grade equipment. Year 11 students joined a separate session focused on film editing in DaVinci Resolve, gaining practical experience with industry-standard software.

Year 10 Art students have been investigating street art and visual communication, including a visit to the National Gallery to experience key works firsthand. Back at school, each student selected a historical or contemporary changemaker and designed a three-colour screen-printed t-shirt using hand-cut paper stencils and silk screens. Photography and Media students also attended an evening at the National Film & Sound Archive, exploring behind-the-scenes filmmaking processes and screening *Paper Planes*, a documentary-style film. The ideas introduced that evening are already shaping students' work this semester.

Senior Art students have been experimenting with unconventional materials to create sculptural works that show both technical ambition and a willingness to take creative risks.

Across all year levels, it has been rewarding to see students embrace new challenges, explore different media, and express their ideas with confidence. We look forward to sharing more of their work as the year continues.

Juliet Harris  
Head of Visual Arts



# VET Department Update

Our Year 10 Introduction to Construction students have recently completed their White Card and Asbestos Awareness training through Quality Training in Construction — an important milestone in their vocational learning journey.

This qualification is a legal requirement for anyone entering or working on active construction sites in Australia. It confirms that students have undertaken essential Work Health and Safety (WHS) training and understand the responsibilities and safe practices expected in the industry.

With their certification now complete, students are eligible to participate in work experience on construction sites and in trade workshops, allowing them to further develop practical skills and gain firsthand insight into a range of trade pathways.

The Introduction to Construction course forms part of our Vocational Education and Training (VET) offerings. Through this program, students earn credit toward their Year 10 Certificate while also working toward a nationally recognised VET qualification.

To learn more about VET opportunities at St Francis Xavier College, please visit the College website. Under the Teaching and Learning tab, you'll find the relevant Senior or Junior handbook containing detailed course information.

Chris Beerworth  
Head of Design and Technology





2026 Student Leadership Team

# Student Voice

**M**ental health is how a person thinks, feels, and copes with everyday life. It affects stress, relationships, sleep, school, confidence, and how someone handles hard moments ( World Health Organisation, 2019).

For young people, mental health struggles can feel confusing and overwhelming, but they are real and common. In Australia, around 4 in 10 people aged 16–24 experienced a mental health disorder in 2024, and anxiety was the most common condition (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2024).

Mental health problems usually arise from a mix of biological, psychological, and social factors rather than a single cause. Everyday habits also matter. Poor sleep, substance use, lack of exercise, and isolation can amplify struggles, while discrimination, loneliness, and major life changes create additional strain (Health Direct, n.d.). For teens, academic pressure, social media comparisons, and peer or family conflicts are common contributors.

Mental health problems are not caused by weakness or by one simple thing like “just being stressed.” They usually develop from several factors building up over time. That is why support, treatment, and early help matter so much.

Young people can help themselves by telling someone they trust, such as a parent, teacher, school counsellor, GP, or coach (Kids helpline, 2024). It also helps to keep a routine, sleep well, stay physically active, eat regularly, and take breaks from things that make stress worse. Small steps matter, especially when everything feels too big.

Parents can help by listening calmly, believing what their child says, and avoiding judgment. Supportive responses like “thank you for telling me,” or “let’s get help together” can make it easier for a young person to open up. Parents should also watch for warning signs such as withdrawal, big mood changes, sleep problems, loss of interest, or hopelessness.

If a young person may be in danger or thinking about self-harm, they should get urgent help straight away from a trusted adult, a crisis line, or emergency services. Getting help early is not a sign of weakness; it is often the strongest and smartest step.



## Senior Music Showcase

The SFX Theatre came alive on Tuesday evening as our Year 11 and 12 Music students took to the stage for their Senior Music Showcase and recorded assessment performances.

Performing in front of family, friends, staff and fellow students, our musicians showcased the results of months of preparation, dedication and practice. The evening featured a diverse range of musical styles, instruments and performances, highlighting both the talent and hard work of our senior students.

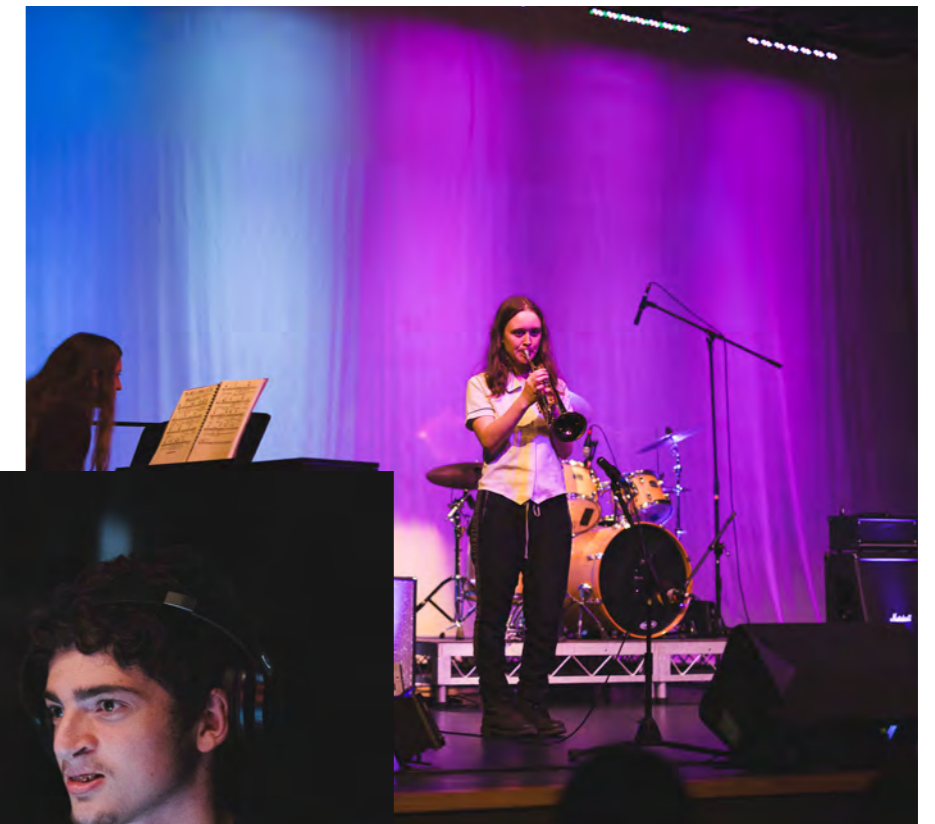
For many students, the showcase formed an important part of their assessment program, with performances recorded for marking. While understandably nerve-racking, each performer approached the opportunity with professionalism and confidence, delivering performances of an exceptionally high standard.

Events such as these provide students

with valuable experience performing in a live setting while developing skills in preparation, resilience and stagecraft that extend well beyond the classroom.

The College would also like to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of our Performing Arts staff, whose guidance and encouragement helped students prepare for the evening, as well as our dedicated sound and lighting crew who ensured every performance was presented professionally. Congratulations to all students involved on a fantastic evening of music and performance. We are proud of your efforts and the commitment you have shown throughout your musical journey.

Hannah Carey  
Head of Performing Arts







## New Food Technology Room

**O**ur newly opened Food Technology classrooms have already been getting a real workout. Students have eagerly embraced these modern, purpose-built learning spaces, filling them with energy, creativity, and the delicious aroma of hands-on learning.

It's fantastic to see our young chefs making the most of these upgraded facilities as we continue investing in environments that support excellence in education. These classrooms are more than just kitchens — they're vibrant hubs where practical skills, teamwork, and confidence are built every day.

We look forward to seeing many more culinary creations as the year unfolds.



# House Spirit



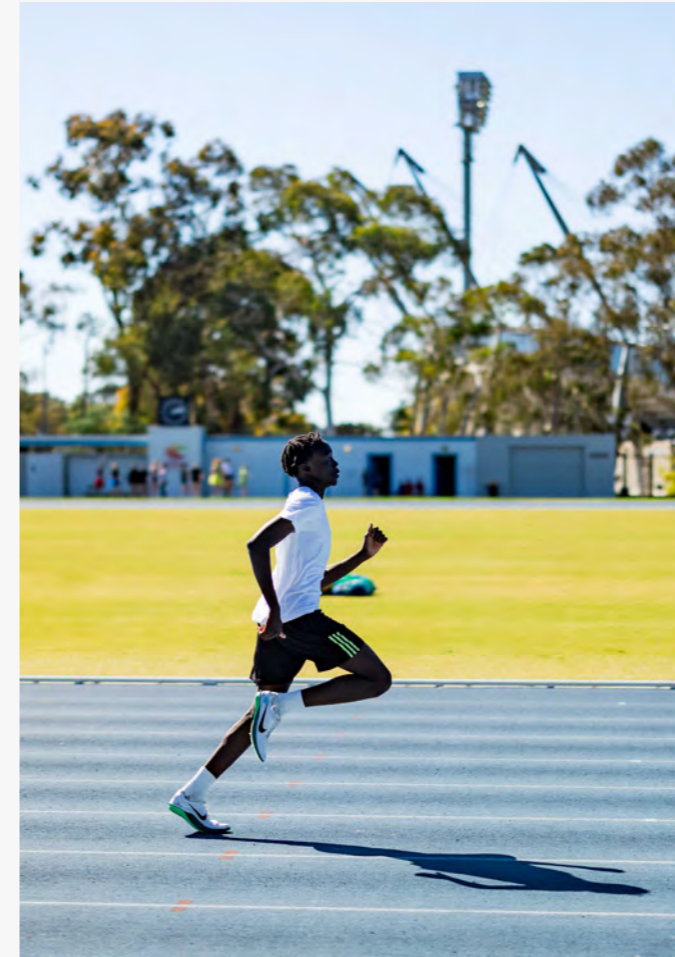
*Well done to all students for their enthusiasm and participation — Term 2 is shaping up to be just as exciting.*



A huge congratulations goes to Pindari House, who claimed first place at this year's Athletics Carnival with an impressive 4,701 points. Their teamwork, determination, and school spirit were on full display throughout the day.

We also recognise Cooper Todd as the Individual House Points Winner, acknowledging his consistent commitment and contribution.

Adding to their success, Pindari House was also crowned the Overall Term 1 House Points Champion, rounding out a remarkable start to the year.





## SFX Try-A-Day

Earlier this term, we were delighted to welcome Year 6 students from across the region for our annual SFX Try-A-Day — and what an incredible day it proved to be.

Our future students immersed themselves in College life, taking part in a diverse program of subjects including Art, Humanities, Science and PE. The day offered a genuine insight into the engaging, hands-on learning that defines the SFX experience.

After enjoying lunch on campus, students were treated to an outstanding concert by our talented Performing Arts cohort. Their creativity, confidence and passion lit up the stage, showcasing the vibrant culture that makes SFX such a dynamic place to learn and grow.

The enthusiasm, curiosity and excitement shown by our visiting Year 6 students made the day truly memorable. We loved having them with us and look forward to welcoming them back next year as the Year 7 Class of 2027.

A reminder for families: Enrolments for 2027 close on Friday 29 May 2026. We encourage applications to be submitted ahead of the deadline.



# The power of 20 minutes a day

In a world full of distractions, finding time to read can sometimes feel like a challenge. Yet research continues to show that one simple habit — reading for just 20 minutes each day — can make a remarkable difference to a young person’s learning, vocabulary and academic success.

Consider three students. One reads for 20 minutes each day, another for five minutes, and a third for just one minute. While the daily difference may seem small, the impact over a school year is extraordinary.

A student who reads for 20 minutes each day will spend around 3,600 minutes reading across the year and be exposed to approximately 1.8 million words. By comparison, a student reading for five minutes a day will encounter around 282,000 words, while a student reading for only one minute a day may see just 8,000 words.

The benefits of regular reading extend well beyond literacy. Students who read frequently develop stronger vocabulary, improved comprehension skills, greater general knowledge and enhanced critical thinking abilities. Reading also supports concentration, creativity and empathy, helping young people grow both academically and personally.

At St Francis Xavier College, we encourage all students to make reading part of their daily routine. Whether it is a novel, biography, magazine, newspaper or non-fiction text, every page contributes to building knowledge and confidence.

The message is simple: small habits create big results. Twenty minutes of reading today can open doors to greater learning opportunities tomorrow.

So tonight, why not pick up a book and discover where reading can take you?


## WHY CAN'T I SKIP MY 20 MINUTES OF READING TONIGHT?

**★ STUDENT A ★**

reads **20 minutes** each day

---

**3600 minutes** in a school year



**1,800,000 WORDS**


**90<sup>th</sup> PERCENTILE**  
Top 10% of readers

**★ STUDENT B ★**

reads **5 minutes** each day

---

**900 minutes** in a school year



**282,000 WORDS**


**50<sup>th</sup> PERCENTILE**  
Average reader

**★ STUDENT C ★**

reads **1 minute** each day

---


**180 minutes** in a school year




**8,000 WORDS**

**10<sup>th</sup> PERCENTILE**  
Below average reader


**BY THE END OF 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE...**





Student A will have read the equivalent of  
**60**  
WHOLE SCHOOL DAYS!



Student B will have read the equivalent of  
**12**  
SCHOOL DAYS!



Student C will have read the equivalent of  
**3**  
SCHOOL DAYS!


**WHICH STUDENT WOULD YOU EXPECT TO HAVE A BETTER VOCABULARY? WHICH STUDENT WOULD YOU EXPECT TO BE MORE SUCCESSFUL IN SCHOOL AND IN LIFE?**


**READ A LITTLE TODAY, ACHIEVE A LOT TOMORROW! ★**

# Notices

ART COMPETITION - MAY 2026

## UNMASKED

"CREATIVITY AS A TOOL FOR WELLBEING."

**Who:** Open to ALL SFX Students.  
**Theme:** Resilience, mindfulness, and staying grounded through life's challenges.  
**Mediums:** Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Photography, Anything goes!  
**The Reward:** Win prizes and feature your work at the Term 3 Variety Night.  
**Where:** Drop physical work at the Visual Arts Staffroom.

**Submissions Open:** May 1st  
**Deadline:** May 31st  
**Where to Drop Off:** The Visual Arts Staffroom.  
**Digital Requirement:** Email your 50-100 word Artist Statement to [Juliet.Harris@sfx.act.edu.au](mailto:Juliet.Harris@sfx.act.edu.au)

Questions? Chat with Jasmine Mitchell (Creative Arts Captain), your Art teacher, or Juliet Harris (Head of Art).

"THE GOOD IS CLOSE AT HAND"

**SFX POET LAUREATE 2026**

POEMS DUE BY END OF TERM 2  
SPEAK TO YOUR ENGLISH TEACHER

**HOODIE DAY**

FRIDAY  
29 MAY

GOLD COIN DONATION

# Notices



ROYAL AERO CLUB OF NEW SOUTH WALES



picture yourself in the pilot seat!

Royal Aero Club's

## TRY & FLY WEEKEND

**When:** Sat 6th - Mon 8th June  
(King's Birthday Long Weekend)

**Where:** Camden Airport  
(located off Macquarie Grove Road)

Trial Introductory Flights | Static Displays | Airside Tour  
Career Talks | Sausage Sizzle | Tea/Coffee

[LEARN MORE](#)

[royalaero.com.au/try-and-fly-weekend](http://royalaero.com.au/try-and-fly-weekend)

# Psychology Clinic Student-led Healthcare

UC Health Clinics

## Individual Therapy

The UC Psychology Clinic is currently accepting referrals for individual therapy. We offer low-cost, evidence-based psychological services for children (7 plus years), adolescents and adults who are experiencing mild to moderate mental health issues. Services are provided by provisional psychologists who are practicing under the supervision of clinical psychologists.

### What we offer

Affordable, in-person sessions for clients referred with a range of conditions, including:

- anxiety disorders
- anger management
- dysregulated emotion
- sleep issues
- mood disorders
- self-esteem
- stress related concerns
- grief and adjustments
- social skills

### How we support you

Access up to 20 sessions of psychology therapy. Each client will have a unique, evidence-based treatment plan developed for them.

### Service limitations

As a student-led clinic, we are unable to treat:

- significant behavioural issues
- trauma
- eating concerns
- risk/self-harm
- more complex presentations



Ready to book or need more information?

(02) 6201 5843

Corner Ginninderra Drive and Allawoona Street, Bruce ACT



Scan to book



St Francis  
Xavier  
College



02 6258 1055



[school.office@sfx.act.edu.au](mailto:school.office@sfx.act.edu.au)



Barnard Circuit, Florey ACT 2615



PO Box 3248 BC, Belconnen ACT 2617



[facebook.com/StFrancisXavierCollege](https://facebook.com/StFrancisXavierCollege)



[@sfxflorey](https://www.instagram.com/sfxflorey)



[St Francis Xavier College ACT](https://www.linkedin.com/company/st-francis-xavier-college-act)