



Principal News – June 2026

Idol-Vision! And what a vision it was!!

What a great night and what a spectacular community event! The competition gets hotter and hotter each year. Huge thanks to our organisers Tim, Dave, Amy and Lucy for all their wonderful work. To the band:

Cam Macklin — Guitar & Vox	Mat Hardy — Guitar
Nicole Jones — Vox	Guus Hoevanaars — Bass
Kylie Davies — Bass	Damian Janeski — Keys
Cam Lobb — Trombone	Stuart Earl — Sax
Daimon Brunton — Trumpet	Tim Williams — Drums

Thanks for the time in transposing, arranging and rehearsing music and for your gentle support and encouragement for the nervous performers.

Thanks to the Idol stalwarts whose youngest students finish at Westgarth this year: Tom Hannan, Mike Dodd, Batya Atlas, Jacinta Tse, Anissa Webb, Cam Macklin and Adrienne Biscontin – you will be missed. Thanks to the performers: Tony Wilson, Ruckers Hill Hoods, Tina Head Turners, Andy 'Avo' Evans, Fools Gold, Mama Lipa, Bogan Bruce, The Drop-off Spring, Shades of Happiness, Primary School Dropouts, Northside Heat, and the winners on the night – Thrifties. Thanks also to the generous sponsors who supported the event **Sheet Society, July, Neuw Denim, Builders Arms, Mushroom Group, Lucas Collective, Cape Bauer Oysters, Sessions and Rocket Bar.**

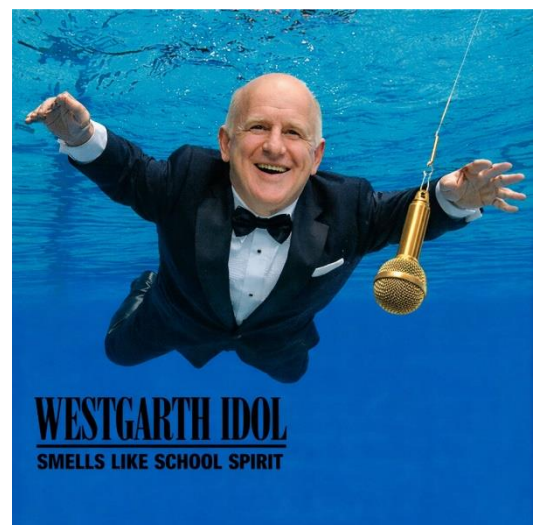
The event raised \$10,546 donation for the school, which is AMAZING!! Thanks to everyone who supported the event either by volunteering, performing, attending, donating and encouraging. We love the community spirit that comes from this event. Start your planning for 2027!!



Thanks Tony

Events such as Idol need a great front person to entertain the crowd and get the party pumping. Tony Wilson has been doing that for a very long time, as MC of Idol. In fact, Tony has been MC of numerous Westgarth events including the Fete for many years. Communities are built by people contributing, and Tony has helped build our school's parent community through his witty repartee and contribution. In honour of Tony's outstanding contributions over his 14 years as a parent at Westgarth, Westgarth Idol have named a trophy in his honour called the 'The Tony Wilson Smells Like School Spirit Award'.

We would like to acknowledge Tony for all his work with the legendary Westgarth Idol and the strong community building that comes from it. We are incredibly grateful for the time and energy he has put into the school through his contribution to idol and the other school events and programs such as including the fete and the library through his work as an author, where he has run sessions with students. You will be missed Tony. THANK YOU TONY ONE MORE TIME! (for those of you who didn't attend, that is an Idol reference).



A reflection from a retiring Idol!

One week on after my last idol, and life seems a bit less magical.

No more getting to know other parents as we sing and dance in each other's living rooms.

No more officially sanctioned beers at the farmhouse as we practice with the band.

No more pats on the back and walking on air as we all tell each other how fabulous we look.

And no more showtime with a proper band and an adoring crowd, as if you're an actual rock star.

This year was my tenth and last performance at Idol Vision, formerly known as Westgarth Idol.

It's been an absolute highlight of my time as a school parent, and I feel extremely lucky to be part of such an awesome school community. It's gotta be the most fun way to raise money for the school, and the teachers even give up their time to get involved!

I believe I am the losingest ever competitor, with a couple of exceptions: 1) I think our marvellous MC, Tony Wilson did around 12 Idols, and wasn't really trying to win, but was certainly the star of the show and set up a great night every year; and 2) We actually won it once - I'll get to that.

So here are '10 bests' from a long list of happy memories

- Favourite act I was in: Has to be our first song: Read About It by Midnight Oils. 3 minutes 51 seconds of uncoordinated rage, all for a good purpose. There were bald wigs all round for those who needed them, including the band and a few friends. There was supposed to be a flash mob of Peter Garretts towards the end of the song, but a few punters got a bit excited from the start, and it descended into confusion from there.

- Most jubilant: You Can't Stop the Music, by the Village People. It took on an extra meaning after missing idol and all our social interaction the year before with Covid. It possibly was not the wisest event to go ahead in retrospect, but everyone was so desperate for a night out. A shame Mel missed out that night, but it was worth it just to see Gaz's biker handlebar mo.

- Most challenging: Say Goodbye, by Hunters and Collectors. I picked up the trumpet for the first time since school, with Anna on trombone and had to re-learn how to play the notes. I was sweating with nerves, but it came out alright, as we mainly stood back and left it to Cam to belt out 'You don't make me feel like I'm a woman any more'.

- Silliest: a tie between Never Be an Old Man River by TISM and Song Formerly Known As by Regurgitator. One with white balaclavas and giant inflatable phallic headpieces, the other with full length golden bodysuits and giant balloons. These things seemed like such good ideas at the time. In the former, Andrew convinced us all to have a drink on stage, and then jump off the stage at the end and head straight to the bar. It's rumoured that one of the guys in TISM saw a video of that act and thought it was one of their gigs! In the latter, we reached a new level of pantomime as one of the balloons popped and the crowd pretended not to see Mike and I hiding our balloons while Sam dashed backstage to find a spare one.

- Biggest muck up: Wonderwall by Oasis. I had the first line solo and summoned all my Gallagher attitude, but it came out as "Today was gonna be the..thing..that you..na na do". A life lesson was not to go to a high school reunion the night before an important event.



- Biggest triumph: Everybody by the Backstreet Boys. This was our second effort, backing up after the Oils the year before. I actually would have been happy to leave it at one and done, but when Mark Dinza played us the opening of 'Ohmagod we're back again', I was in! We all tried our best to be boyband heartthrobs. We were by no means the most talented, hardest working or best produced act of the night (apologies to the 'Walk Like and Egyptians') but we took the win and will hold onto it for life. I still have the poster of that night on my wall, right next to my photo of John Longmire.

- Other group's song I wish I'd done: Boys in Town by the Divinyls. Such a cracking song and they absolutely smashed it. I don't think I could have done it justice, but I was screaming my head off from the crowd.



- Best act never to win: I may be a bit biased but this year's rendition of the Dog Days are Over by Florence and the Machine was beautiful, soulful and sounded amazing. It made me so happy, and I would have loved to see them do an encore.

- In a category of her own award: When Mers sang Gloria by Patti Smith, she defied all the rules - that you have to be in a big group, sing something popular and preferably be in the last set. Mers was a first timer who broke the mould with a storm of soul and passion.

- Best innovation: 'Video watching party' - what a great tradition! We all get to live the night again and have something to get us through the long cold winter. See you there for one more time!

To all the band members - you are the true heroes who make wannabes sound like celebrities, and you always put on a fantastic show.

To all the organisers and helpers with fundraising, ticketing, lighting, sound, photography, marketing, rehearsals and 1001 other things - you are the hidden stars who make it all possible.

To all the new parents - go on give it a go! You can put on a funny costume, and no one will recognise you, but you'll be able to bask in the glory of the night, have a pep in your step at school pickup and you might even find yourself performing to strangers at a caravan park on New Year's Eve!

Thank you all so much!

All the best and see you round

Tom H



Supports for Students

At Westgarth PS we prioritise student wellbeing. There are many ways in which we cater for student's needs across all facets of school life. Building a strong and supportive culture has been our focus for over a decade and we pride ourselves in what we are able to provide within the limits of our funding. Here are some of the ways we support our students:



Setting the scene – at the beginning of each school year the students spend the first two weeks settling into their new class and develop their class routines and expectations.

The school provides a bank of resources designed by the school to enable teachers to establish a routine rich and safe classroom environment where student lead processes and agreements are a feature.

WPS Response to bullying – WPS has a clear process in place when responding to incidents of bullying. The school has established an agreed definition of bullying as well as explicit teaching to support our students to recognise, report and refuse bullying.

Berry St Education Model – An evidence-based, trauma informed framework that supports our school to foster safe, engaging classrooms for students with diverse learning needs. It focuses on improving self-regulation, relationships and wellbeing to boost academic engagement and achievement.

Respectful relationships – A whole school approach designed to foster emotional intelligence, positive relationships, and gender equity. It teaches students social and emotional skills to reduce antisocial behaviour, prevent gender-based violence, and promote a respectful school culture.

Individualised Plans – Teachers collaborate with students and parents/carers to identify specific needs of students and co-create individualised plans to support them to flourish academically, socially and emotionally.

External Programs – The school has curated a selection of external providers to promote student wellbeing. This includes programs facilitated by URStrong, Life Changer, Stride Education and professional sports clubs. A parent/child online workshop is also offered.

Talking the Talk – All students receive a comprehensive and age appropriate sexual health education aligned with to the Victorian Curriculum, including the teaching of consent. A parent/carer information evening is also offered.

eSmart & Police in Schools – Westgarth PS is an eSmart school that utilises curriculum-aligned resources to promote cyber safety and prevent cyberbullying. We have a connection with Victoria Police that reiterated messaging around keeping our community safe and to choose kindness when online.

External Allied Health supports – The school has access to the Department of Education Student Support Services team; however, this support is limited. We also work closely with families to facilitate access for private providers to deliver individual therapy sessions on site, predominantly in the areas of speech therapy and occupational therapy.

In addition, the school employs a speech therapist and an occupational therapist for one day each week to deliver small-group wellbeing supports and social skills programs.

We employ education support staff to assist students with their learning and self-regulation. A supported lunch club is offered to provide students with sensory or other specific needs a safe and quiet space to play, socialise, or regulate, either independently or with friends. This support acts as a scaffold, helping students build the confidence and capacity to gradually engage in outdoor play during lunch and recess times.

All our staff are trained and experienced in supporting student wellbeing. In the first instance, our advice is always to check in with your child's classroom teacher. If they recommend it or if you have concerns beyond what your child's teacher can manage, our **student wellbeing leaders** are: Carolyn Shiels for the prep – year 2 students. Her office is located on Brooke St. Ben Cunningham for the year 3 – 6 students. His office is located on Clarke St in the WEB. If your child is eligible for support under the Disability Inclusion Funding program, Megan Robertson is our DI leader. Her office is on Clarke St, also located in the WEB.



Carolyn (P -2) Wellbeing



Ben C (3 – 6) Wellbeing



Megan Disability Inclusion

Respect for School Staff

When parents, carers and school staff work together as one team, our students do better. Everyone at school, particularly staff and parents/carers, play a role in making school a better place for learning and work. Parents, carers and school staff have a relationship that can last many years. This is an opportunity to work together to create a positive relationship in the best interests of your child. When this relationship is built on respect and trust, students learn better and feel like they belong in the school.

Every member of our school community has a right to feel safe and be protected.

The department's [Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy](#) describes the positive behaviour expected from parents, carers, and other adults in Victorian school communities. The policy sets clear standards of behaviour to create a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment for students, staff and adults.

There are also resources to support safe and respectful relationships in our school community, including information about getting involved in the school, advice on how to raise a concern or complaint, and parenting support resources. You can find the policy and these resources [here](#).

You may also see a [new posters](#) up around our school, promoting positive behaviour.

For more information on how to engage positively with our school, please contact Jo Wheeler

Teddy Bear's Hospital visit



If they didn't require a visit to the Teddy Bear's Hospital prior to this, they will now! The year 2 students took their teddy bears to visit the student doctors from Monash University when they visited the school in May. The program aims to build relationships and help reduce 'white coat anxiety' for students, so they feel comfortable going to the doctor themselves. This program is in high demand, so we are very pleased that we were successful in securing the Monash team this year. Here are two reflections from students who attended.

On Wednesday 2Amanda and half of 2Lucy went to the Teddy Bear Hospital in the General Purpose room so we could get over our fears of the hospital.

First, we went to the plastering station. We made a ring out of plaster and decorated it with glitter glue. Next, we went to the germ station. We did an experiment with pepper, dish soap and water. Then we went to the asthma station. Our teddies got to test out the puffer. Finally, we went to the x-ray station. My teddy had a broken bone. I felt curious about learning to be a doctor.

By Micah, 2Amanda

On Wednesday 2A and half of 2L did the teddy bear hospital. It was in the general purpose room. We did it so we don't get scared in real life. First, we did the plasters. You put the plaster on your finger then you put the plaster in some water so it could stick then you can decorate. I did it with blue and purple.

Next, we did needles on our teddies. You push the needle in the toy. There were little needles and big. I put the needle in the ear of my toy.

Then we looked at what tools they use, like a stethoscope.

Finally, we did the x-ray. You put your toy in the box and shake it. They slip a sheet out and my toy had teeth that looked great.

I feel very excited to learn about the hospital with my toy. I learned how to use the blood pressure machine.

By Neve, 2Amanda

Child Safety Standards

Westgarth PS is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students. We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer and asexual (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

Roles and Responsibilities - School leadership team

Our school leadership team (comprising the principal - Jo, assistant principal - Carolyn and Ben C, and learning specialists – Megan & Ben J) is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359.

Principals and assistant principals will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and prevention of, and responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

School staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school or the Department of Education and Training, and always follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our Child Safety Code of Conduct [WPS Code of Conduct](#)
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures [Reporting Obligations](#), including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.

School council

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, school council members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council
- undertake annual training on child safety,
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members
- when hiring school council employees (OSHC), ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe. At our school, school council employment duties are delegated to the principal who is bound by this policy.

To see the Child Safe Policies and Practices at Westgarth PS which ensure compliance with the Child Safety Standards – Ministerial Order 1359 follow this link to our website [WPS Child Safety Standards-Ministerial-Order-1359](#)

The next School Council meeting is being held tonight at 7pm (17 June 2026). Details of the reports and discussion will be available in the July newsletter.

Next meeting dates:

OSHC	Thursday 16 July @ 10am WebEx
Finance	Thursday 23 July @ 10am WebEx
Environment	Wednesday 22 July @ 8am Jo's Office
Fun & Fundraising	TBC
School Council	Wednesday 29 July @ 7pm staffroom

If you would like to join a sub-committee, please contact the office so we can pass on your details to the convenors of the sub-committees so you can receive the correspondence and meeting invites.

Jo Wheeler
Principal