

THAT'S CLEVER

Low-cost schools rival expensive elite counterparts

EXCLUSIVE
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PRIVATE schools costing as little as \$3000 a year are getting academic results to rival their costly elite counterparts. Altona, Broadmeadows, Cranbourne, Mentone, West Melbourne, Preston and Mulgrave all have affordable private schools that post top VCE results.

It puts them among some of Victoria's most prestigious — and expensive — schools. Sinus College in Broadmeadows, which charges fees of \$3500 a year, led the way.

Its students posted a median VCE study score of 32 out of a possible 50 last year. The result puts it on a par with far more expensive private schools such as Wesley College, where fees are 10 times higher.

Killester College in Springvale, which costs just \$2500 a year, had a median VCE study score of 31.

Principal Sally Buick said the Catholic girls' school, which has 965 pupils including many from non-English speaking homes, focused not only on academic success but also the growth of students.

"We are not just academic, we are also committed to helping students achieve their personal best," Ms Buick said. "We are very proud of what we do."

Sinons Catholic College in West Melbourne, with fees of \$3500, was also a standout. It had a median study score of 31 — equal to Tintern Grammar, Geelong Grammar and Oakleigh Grammar.

Some of the state's best academic performers were Jewish schools such as Beth Rivkah Ladies College, which had a median study score of 37 and charges of \$4389 a year. Yeshiva College charges the same fee and had a median study score of 34.

St John's College in Preston, charging average annual fees of \$6360, had a standout score of 34 — the same as Melbourne Grammar, Caulfield Grammar and Xavier College, where fees are at



Our Lady of Mercy College College captains Catherine Tooteil and Eliza Corcoran. Picture: JOSIE HAYDEN

VALUE FOR MONEY

The 10 cheapest schools with a median VCE score of 31 or higher with fees of less than \$10,000

NAME OF SCHOOL	SUBURB	MEDIAN VCE SCORE	AVERAGE ANNUAL FEE
Lighthouse Christian College	Cranbourne	31	\$2061
Killester College	Springvale	31	\$2510
Sinus College	Broadmeadows	32	\$3559
Simons Catholic College	West Melbourne	31	\$3523
Yesodei Hatorah College	Elwood	33	\$4232
Beth Rivkah Ladies College	St Kilda East	37	\$4389
Yeshiva College	St Kilda East	33	\$4389
Mount St Joseph's Girls' College	Altona	31	\$4941
St Aloysius College	North Melbourne	32	\$5075
Hume Anglican Grammar	Mickleham	31	\$5550

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least four times higher. The all-girl Kilbreda College in Mentone, which costs \$6776 a year, had a median study score of 33.

Other schools with VCE median study scores of 32 and fees under \$8000 include Sacred Heart College in Geelong, Ave Maria in Aberfeldie, Mazenod College in Mulgrave and St Aloysius in North Melbourne.

Top performers charging \$8000 to \$10,000 with median VCE scores above 33 included Sacred Heart Hugesdale, St Paul's Anglican Grammar, Waverley Christian College, St Columba's EsSENDON, and Our Lady Sacred Heart College, Bentleigh.

Our Lady of Mercy College, Heidelberg, had a VCE median study score of 32 with fees of \$9474.

Principal Judith Weir said the school "strives to keep its fees as low as possible to remain as accessible as possible to families".

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claiming millions more in JobKeeper payments. One of the state's wealthiest schools is Haileybury College, which received \$124m in 2019, including \$30m from taxpayers. The school, which has 4000 students, has \$45m in capital.

Wesley College, which had a total net recurrent

income of \$114m for its 3145 students in 2019, received \$14m from government in addition to the \$97m it raised from fees, charges and parent contributions. The school — in the spotlight after allegations of abuse and harassment by students were reported to police — also has \$16m in accumulated capital.

Another top earner is Caulfield Grammar, which has an annual net income of \$105m and capital reserves of \$105m. It was given \$18m in taxpayer money in 2019. Other schools receiving generous federal and state funding include Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School, which got \$19m. St Kevin's College, which got \$12m,

Carey Grammar, which got \$10m, MLC and Xavier which each got \$8 million. Scotch College and Melbourne Grammar, which each got \$7m, and Trinity Grammar, which got \$6m.

The Herald Sun last year reported that at least a quarter of the state's 219 independent schools received JobKeeper.



Brad Battin

Victorian Libs pass the Battin

SARAH BOOTH

STATE Liberal MPs Matthew Bach and Brad Rowsell were promoted to the opposition frontbench on Sunday as the fallout from Brad Battin's failed leadership spill continued.

Michael O'Brien, who survived last week's challenge 22 votes to nine, appointed Sandringham member Mr Rowsell to the energy, innovation, bay protection, and fishing and boating portfolios.

Former teacher Mr Bach will take on early childhood, higher education and training, Roads and youth justice.

Mr Battin looked after until he and his backers quit the frontbench on Tuesday, has been split between Tim Smith and David Southwick respectively.

David Davis added the planning portfolio to his jobs, and David Morris will now look after local government and housing.

In addition to roads, Tim Smith will get emergency services, resources, industrial relations, workplace safety plus manufacturing and industry. Bridget Vallance has the equality portfolio.

James Newbury will be the new assistant spokesman for scrutiny of government while Bernie Finn will be assistant police spokesman.

Ump cops sexist taunt

A TEENAGE female umpire was allegedly subjected to sexist abuse during a heated senior men's football game at the weekend.

AFL Barwon is investigating a series of incidents during and after a practice game at Ocean Grove on Saturday, some of which reportedly continued after the woman had left the ground.

It is understood the teenager had to report and send players off the field after several fiery incidents.

It is also understood that after the female umpire reported a Melton South Football Club player, a supporter of that club hurled sexist abuse at her and questioned her ability to umpire a men's game.

Officials told about the abuse levelled at the umpire are now pushing for a full investigation from both AFL Barwon and AFL Ballarat, which oversees the Melton South Football Club.