



**DJARRAGUN
COLLEGE**



**CAPE YORK
GIRL ACADEMY**

TERM 2 2025

ISSUE NO. 26



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Reconciliation Week





DJARRAGUN COLLEGE NEWS



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GREETINGS FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL

A Season of Growth, Unity and Progress

As we conclude Term 2 at Djarragun College, I reflect with pride on the remarkable achievements, relationships and experiences that have shaped these past ten weeks across our Gordonvale and Wangetti campuses.

This term has been characterised by strong student engagement, cultural connection, and academic momentum. We saw outstanding participation in cornerstone events like ANZAC Day, Reconciliation Week, and our much-loved Athletics Carnival, where Waru House took the lead in spirited competition and community celebration. These events not only showcased student talent and pride but reinforced our values of respect, remembrance, and belonging.

In our Primary School, students embraced literacy and learning through Mother's Day crafts, National Simultaneous Storytime, road safety programs, and excursions like Ratburger at the theatre. Breathing exercises, bush tucker lessons, and reflections for National Sorry Day highlighted how wellbeing and cultural identity are embedded in learning.

Middle and Senior students have continued to thrive through academic exploration and real-world experiences. From voice-controlled robots in the Deadly Coders program, to persuasive writing in English, to JCU's Bio Tech Day and STEM excursions — curiosity and critical thinking have been nurtured across all year levels. In Vocational Education, students are flourishing through their success in learner licensing, work placements, and excursions to Norweld, John Holland, and Crystalbrook Flynn. Mable Cedric, Peter Levi, and others are already carving meaningful post-school pathways.

Our Boarding program has shown significant development. Boys' Boarding saw strong attendance, reduced disruptions, and enriched cultural activities, with highlights including mentoring from Kunjur Men's Group and the successful parent-teacher evening.

The girls' boarding house marked its first term in over four years without physical incidents — a testament to the work being done to create emotionally safe, responsive spaces. Integrating boarding staff into classrooms this term has strengthened continuity between home and school, a change warmly welcomed by students.

At the Cape York Girl Academy, Term 2 was marked by deep learning, cultural pride, and joyful connection. From creative cooking sessions and hospitality training at Birrgal, to science experiments, outdoor adventures and artistic development, the program continues to reflect the strength of relationships and the potential of every girl. The teaching team is to be commended for sustaining a high-quality, trauma-informed learning environment that honours each student's story and future.

Finally, we welcomed Nicole Clemesha as our new Associate Principal. Nicole brings extensive leadership experience, particularly in working with Aboriginal students and students with disability, and has already begun forging strong connections within our community.

As we prepare for the move into our new Boys' Boarding facility in Term 3, I extend my heartfelt thanks to all staff, families, Elders and community partners who have contributed to another powerful term of growth. Your commitment is what enables Djarragun College to continue shaping futures with courage, care and high expectations.

I wish all students and families a safe and restful mid-year break.



Dr Michael Barton

Executive Principal





Year 12 Graduation Dinner & Formal

Saturday 22 November 2025

Pullman Cairns International
17 Abbott St

5pm - 11pm





CELEBRATING MOTHER'S DAY WITH CRAFT, CREATIVITY AND HEARTFELT MESSAGES

In the week leading up to Mother's Day (Sunday 11 May), our Primary and Secondary students took time during their lunch breaks to get creative and show their appreciation for the special women in their lives.

The school was buzzing with activity as students handmade beautiful cards for their mums, carers, and other important women. With coloured paper, markers, stickers, and plenty of imagination, each card was a unique and heartfelt creation.

Some students went a step further, crafting lovely paper flower bouquets to take home as a special gift. The colourful displays were a wonderful way to say "thank you" and brought big smiles to students' faces as they pictured giving them to their loved ones.

One of the highlights of the week was the Mother's Day photobooth. Students posed for fun selfies with friends, holding up small blackboards where they could write a sweet message or a funny note to their mums and carers. It was a great way to capture memories and spread joy across the school.

We hope all our mums, carers, and special women had a wonderful Mother's Day on 11th May, filled with love and appreciation.





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TRIBALMANIA

Many Communities, One Tribe

Join us at Djarragun College
Arts & Hospitality Day 2025

in conjunction with NAIDOC week celebrations



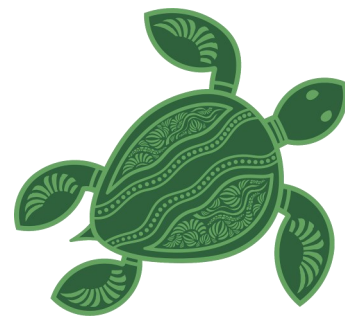
Meeting Place by Sharntel Evans, Year 11

Tuesday 16 September
11.30am - 3pm





ATHLETICS Carnival



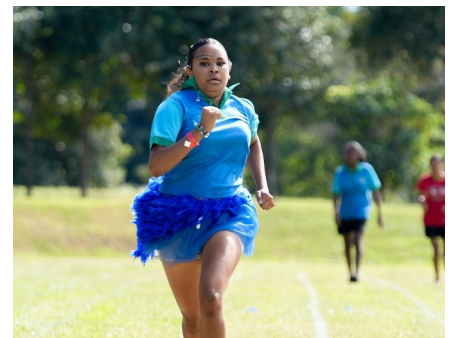
What an incredible day we had on Thursday, 12 June! The excitement, energy, and enthusiasm shown by everyone made it a day to remember. The spirit of our houses was alive and well, with so many people making a huge effort to dress up in their colours, cheering on their teammates, and participating in all the events on offer. It was wonderful to see families come along to show their support and be part of the action alongside their children. There were plenty of highlights, from the friendly competition on the track and field to the pure happiness on everyone's faces.

A number of our seniors commented afterwards how much fun they'd had — although many were feeling a little worn out and sore by the following day! The feeling was universal; both students and staff put their all into the day.

Congratulations to all our Age Champions and to Waru for taking home the House Winner trophy this time. Waru is currently leading in the overall points tally for the year, but it's far from over. There will be plenty of opportunities for houses to earn points during Term 3, and we're excited to see which team will rise to the challenge.

The day was a wonderful demonstration of unity, team spirit, and healthy competition. A huge thank you to everyone who made it such a success — from the organisers and participants to the supporters cheering from the sidelines. We're already looking forward to the next opportunity to come together and celebrate all that makes our school community so special!







Children's Book Week 2025
Dress Up Friday 22 August

READ
GROW
inspire



**DJARRAGUN
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Children's Book Week 2025: Book an Adventure!

This year's theme is "Book an Adventure!" and we're inviting all our **Primary students** to dress up as their favourite book character on **Friday 22 August**.

Primary students will have a morning filled with storytelling sessions and fun activities as we celebrate the magic of books, promote literacy and spark the joy of reading in our students. Celebrate reading at home too! Make reading a part of your day with your child and engage in meaningful conversations about the stories you share.





PRiMARY & SeCOnDARy nEWs

Primary Highlights – Term 2, 2025

Term 2 has been full of exciting learning adventures across our Primary classes!

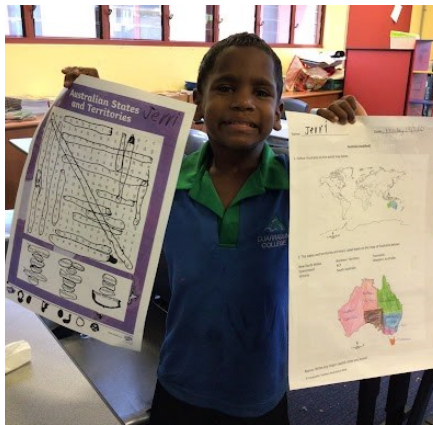
Our Year 3–4 students have been busy learning about Australia's States and Territories in their HASS lessons, while also contributing thoughtful and heartfelt reflections for National Sorry Day, alongside the Year 5–6 class. Their understanding of its meaning in their own words was truly impressive.

In the early years, Miss Kat has been teaching breathing exercises to our Prep to Year 2 students, helping them build mindfulness and self-regulation skills. They have also enjoyed lively music lessons throughout the term. In Technology, our P–2 students explored traditional food and fibre, engaging in hands-on activities about bush tucker and bush threads, deepening their connection to Indigenous culture.

All Primary students took part in the 2025 National Simultaneous Storytime, joining children across Australia to celebrate the joy of reading together. They also had a special outing to the theatre to watch Ratburger, which was a highlight of the term.

Ms Louisa's Year 3–4 Maths class explored the value of money through practical and engaging lessons, and our younger students learned vital road safety skills by practising how to stop, look, listen, and think — and use traffic lights correctly.

It's been a wonderful term of learning, discovery and fun in Primary!

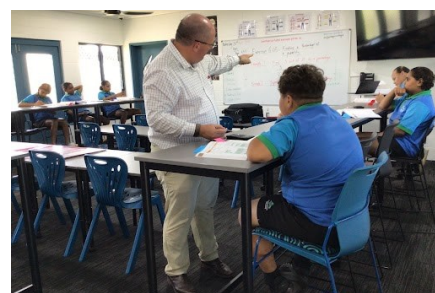




It's been a fun and productive term for our Middle School students! In Year 7 Maths, Dr Barton's class has been working hard and having fun finding percentages of quantities — great effort from this deadly crew! Over in English, Ms Tanya's students have been sharpening their critical thinking skills by analysing persuasive techniques in media texts. Well done, Year 7!

All Middle School students from Years 7–9 took part in the exciting Deadly Coders program, where they began building their own voice-controlled robots — a fantastic blend of creativity and technology!

In HPE, students enjoyed their practical sessions at MPA, staying active and engaged. And of course, our House competitions every Wednesday lunchtime were a big hit with Secondary students. From volleyball to basketball, touch footy, and a crowd-favourite tug of war, the spirit was high and the competition fierce. Waru House came out on top this term — but the race is still on. Who will take the win next term?



Years 9–11 Students Explore Science at JCU Bio Tech Day

In the final week of Term 2, selected students from Years 9, 10, and 11 had the exciting opportunity to attend Bio Tech Day at James Cook University in Smithfield. The day began with students gathering in the lab foyer and putting on their laboratory coats, ready to step into the world of science.

They participated in a hands-on DNA extraction experiment, gaining real-world lab experience, before taking a tour of the university's cutting-edge STEM facilities. Students also had the chance to chat with current JCU students about pathways into science and university life.

The day wrapped up with a fun and educational twist — a virtual reality, gamified experience called DNA Fix, where students solved challenges while learning about genetics in a whole new way. It was an inspiring day that sparked curiosity and interest in the world of biotechnology and beyond!





GREETINGS FROM THE ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

I am pleased to introduce myself, Nicole Clemesha, as the new Associate Principal at Djarragun College. Having recently arrived from Western Australia, I bring with me 25 years of extensive and diverse experience in education. Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of serving in various roles, including primary and secondary teacher, senior teacher, deputy principal, and principal in both remote and rural schools.

My journey in education has been driven by a deep passion for working with Aboriginal students and students with disabilities. I firmly believe that every student has the right to an education and deserves to feel valued and supported. My goal is to help these students realise their potential and understand that they are an integral part of our school community.

One of the most memorable experiences in my career was working in a small remote school where I met a young Aboriginal student named Knox. Knox was incredibly bright but struggled with confidence and felt disconnected from his peers. Through consistent support and encouragement, we worked together to build his self-esteem and academic skills. By the end of the year, Knox not only excelled in his studies but also became a role model for other students. Seeing his transformation was a powerful reminder of why I am so passionate about education and the impact it can have on a student's life.

Outside of my professional life, my partner and I enjoy spending time on my farm, which is home to horses, cows, and sheep. Originally from the UK, I have found great joy in the rural lifestyle here in Australia. My hobbies include horseback riding, caring for my animals, and exploring the beautiful countryside with my partner and my six children.

As educators, we don't just teach lessons – we ignite curiosity, build character, and shape futures. Every student holds limitless potential, and it is our mission to help them discover it. I am excited to collaborate with all of you to create an inclusive and nurturing environment where every student can thrive. Together, we can make a difference and ensure that our school is a place where everyone feels welcome and empowered.

Looking forward to a wonderful year ahead!



Nicole Clemesha
Associate Principal





Reconciliation Week

Commencing with National Sorry Day — a time to remember and reflect on the strength of the Stolen Generations and support the ongoing journey of healing for First Nations peoples — our Primary and Secondary students came together to commemorate National Reconciliation Week (26 May – 3 June).

Our room was beautifully decorated for the week, creating a space for reflection, conversation, and connection. During lunch breaks, students took part in wonderful activities that encouraged understanding and unity. To top it all off, everyone was treated to a delicious cake — a sweet way to celebrate this important time together.

On the final day of Reconciliation Week, Mabo Day, our students marched proudly with their banner around the school grounds and came together in the MPA for a special assembly. It was a powerful moment of solidarity, honouring the past and looking forward to a future filled with reconciliation and hope.





Come and See us at The Cairns Show

16 - 18 July 2025





VOCATIONAL EDUCATION NEWS

Learner License Success On 30 May, fifteen students proudly passed their Learner License written test held on campus. All students were successful and are now able to visit the Department of Transport with their identification to officially receive their licenses. This achievement not only marks a milestone in their personal growth but also launches them into a new phase of independence and responsibility.

As young drivers prepare to take on the road, it is important to recognise the risks involved. Statistics show that young drivers aged 16-24 account for a quarter of all driver fatalities in Queensland, despite only representing 13.7% of the driving population. These risks are due to inexperience, risky behaviours, and developmental factors. As our students transition into solo driving, we continue to encourage safe and responsible road habits.

Norweld Industry Visit Mr Brydon and ten Certificate II in Engineering students had the opportunity to tour Norweld, a local company known for their custom-fabricated aluminium trays and canopies. Guided by Special Projects Director, Isaac Edmiston, students witnessed the full production process and were inspired by Isaac's career journey, which began with an adult apprenticeship. The hands-on experience and industry insight gave students a deeper understanding of career possibilities in fabrication and engineering.

Early Childhood Success On 26 May, Mable Cedric began her paid role at Yarrabah Childcare, working in the baby/toddler room. Having already completed her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care, Mable has impressed the centre's director, Sharon, who hopes to welcome her full-time next year. Mable plans to begin her Diploma in Early Education Studies later this year. Her dedication is a shining example of how early training can lead to meaningful employment opportunities.

Emerging Educators Peter Levi is already making strides toward his dream of becoming an artist and educator. Recently, he was seen leading a weaving session during Reconciliation Week, patiently teaching and sharing his cultural knowledge with others. His natural leadership and calm instruction showed a glimpse of the teacher he is becoming.

John Holland Industry Presentation On 14 May, representatives from John Holland presented to our senior students about the vast career opportunities in the construction and infrastructure industry. With current projects including upgrades from Edmonton to Gordonvale, Palmerston Highway restoration, and a new water treatment facility in Gordonvale, students gained valuable insight into the scope of careers available locally. A special thanks to the engaging team from John Holland who offered an informative and interactive session, complete with a pop quiz and goodies!





Crystalbrook Hospitality Excursion Certificate II in Hospitality students enjoyed an exciting excursion to Crystalbrook Flynn Hotel. Hosted by Tracie Picton, students toured the luxury facilities, kitchen areas, and restaurants while gaining career insights from the head chef. A delicious lunch at Boardwalk Social followed, and students later visited TAFE to explore their commercial training kitchens, IT-cyber facilities, beauty salons, and more. This was an inspiring day filled with real-world learning.

Outdoor Adventures Throughout Term 2, Certificate II in Outdoor Recreation students participated in a variety of enriching outdoor activities. Mr Will led students on multiple bush walks and paddling sessions on the Freshwater River. These excursions provided not only physical activity but also a chance to develop teamwork and outdoor skills.

Student Employment Congratulations to Vellington Lui and Maysharn Noble, now employed at KFC Gordonvale. Vellington has also started working in our school dining hall kitchen and is preparing to begin a Chef's Apprenticeship. Casual employment is helping students build confidence, time management skills, and financial independence while exploring future career paths.

Yarrabah Junior Rangers Program The Junior Rangers Program began this term and will continue through Term 3. The ten participating students recently attended a holiday camp and are now participating in weekly training with the Yarrabah Rangers. This program is developing their connection to Country, leadership skills, and environmental awareness.

Thank you to all the staff, community members, and industry partners who supported our students throughout Term 2. It has been a vibrant and inspiring term filled with learning, growth, and opportunity. We look forward to what Term 3 will bring!



Lachlan McDonald

VET Coordinator



Jill McIlwain

VET Teacher



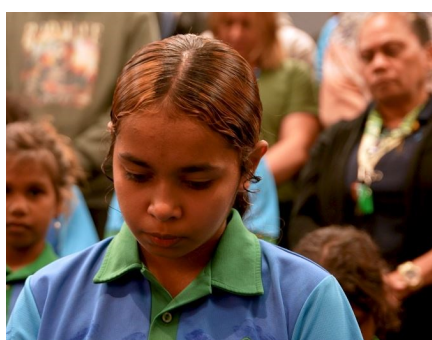


ANZAC DAY—LEST WE FORGET

On Thursday 24 April, Primary and Secondary students came together in the Auditorium to commemorate ANZAC Day with a small service led by our Student Captains and Leaders. ANZAC Day falls on 25 April each year and marks the anniversary of the first major battle fought by Australian and New Zealand soldiers during the First World War. A time to remember and appreciate the sacrifice made by those soldiers in service of their country.

Students learned that the word “ANZAC” stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. On 25 April 1915, soldiers from Australia and New Zealand — called Anzacs — landed at Gallipoli in Turkey in a brave mission that would become a defining moment in their history. Arriving in the early hours of the morning, the Anzacs fought under tough conditions for nearly eight months, and many made the ultimate sacrifice during the campaign.

We were honored to be addressed by special guests, Warrant Officer Jerry Savage and Corporal Monalita Viliamu from the Australian Defence Force Indigenous Specialist Recruitment Team. We warmly thank them for their service, their visit, and the opportunity to reflect together on the brave men and women who fought to keep us safe.





Watch Out – Cane Trains About

The 2025 cane crushing season commenced in June and MSF Sugar would like to remind families of the dangers of children playing on or near cane trains and railway tracks.

Cane trains carry very large loads and have limited ability to brake suddenly, and children often don't realise the danger they put themselves in when they jump on to moving cane trains, play around railway tracks, ride trail bikes along the cane railway and even fish from cane railway bridges.

Occasionally children are seen playing with the track points that guide the train from one track to another or placing objects on the line. This is extremely dangerous as it can cause the train to derail and result in serious injury or death.

Trains operate on the extensive private cane railway network 24 hours per day during the cane crushing season.

Please make your children aware to stay safe and remember:

- Stay away from locomotives and cane bins.
- Don't play around railway lines.
- Never walk between cane bins.
- Never go on to a cane railway bridge.
- Never walk behind a train – the driver will not see you.
- If you have to cross the railway tracks, STOP and look both ways, LISTEN and only cross when it is safe.
- OBEY Flashing Lights signals and Give Way signage at road crossings.

REMEMBER: WATCH OUT – CANE TRAINS ABOUT





BOARDING NEWS

Term 2 was a busy and rewarding time for Djarragun College Boys' Boarding. The boys participated in a wide range of activities and programs, including the ANZAC Day service, cultural cooking and dance sessions, and regular wellbeing workshops with Uncle Elijah. It was wonderful to welcome families into the boarding house to support the boys in their cultural activities.

Weekly visits from the Kunjur Men's Group provided mentorship and engaging activities, while the new Wednesday Senior Night gave older students something special to look forward to. The boys also enjoyed recreational activities such as swimming, beach walks, shopping trips, and onsite games like basketball, gym workouts, and touch footy.

Several boys represented the school in rugby league, with some making it to the grand final, and others are enjoying club AFL and rugby league—many with finals ahead in Term 3. Ethan and Ali also began driving practice as part of their personal development.

Boys' attendance and phone collection systems have improved significantly this term, contributing to a more settled boarding environment. The term ended on a high note with a successful parent-teacher interview evening, featuring cultural food and performances.

A big thank you to all staff for their dedication and support. The boys are now looking forward to moving into the new Boys' Boarding facility in Term 3!



Ralph Marama

Assistant Head of Boarding
(acting)





Term 2 has been a term to remember; a wonderful time of growth, connection, and progress for our students. We have fostered strong relationships, created lasting memories, and made great strides in improving class attendance across the school.

I'm especially proud of the girls this term. It's been the first in nearly four and a half years without physical disruptions, and we've noticed a huge shift in the number of students choosing to talk openly with our staff about their thoughts and feelings — a very positive change for everyone.

Some of our senior girls who maintained strong attendance were supported with weekly driving lessons from a professional instructor, while eligible junior girls were rewarded with a paid activity to celebrate their effort and progress.

To help foster a greater sense of community, we trialled a new roster this term, integrating our boarding Uncles and Aunties into the classrooms. This change has successfully bridged the gap between boarding and day school, and the girls have shared how much they appreciate having their boarding family alongside them in their education. As a middle leader, I feel this has been a wonderful step forward in strengthening our school community.

I wish everyone a safe holiday and a restful break. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you again in Term 3, 2025!

Until then, bye for now.

Aunty Hannah



Hannah Rosalski

Head of Girls' Boarding





CAPE YORK GIRL ACADEMY NEWS



CAPE YORK
GIRL ACADEMY





GREETINGS FROM THE HEAD OF CAMPUS

As we come to the close of another significant term at Cape York Girl Academy, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the incredible work happening across our campus—and to celebrate the shared efforts that continue to shape our school as a place of growth, pride, and possibility.

At Cape York Girl Academy, we believe that every child has the capacity to thrive when they are supported with care, high expectations, and meaningful relationships. This term, our focus on connection—between students, staff, families, and community—has remained at the heart of everything we do. These relationships are the foundation on which learning is built, and we are proud of the respectful, nurturing environment that our young people experience each day.

Across Years 7 to 12, our classrooms have been alive with curiosity, challenge, and engagement. Students have participated in rich learning experiences that stretch beyond textbooks—applying their knowledge to real-world issues, collaborating with their peers, and finding their voice in both written and spoken form. From hands-on science practical learning, to powerful creative work in the arts, from literacy interventions to senior students preparing for post-school pathways, every lesson is a step toward greater confidence and capability.

We continue to prioritise clear learning intentions, ensuring students understand not just what they are learning, but why it matters. This clarity empowers our students to reflect, improve, and take ownership of their progress. Many are now confidently setting personal goals, tracking their achievements, and proudly sharing their learning journeys with teachers and family.

Much of this success is due to the dedication and passion of our teaching and support staff. Our educators work tirelessly behind the scenes—planning lessons, reviewing data, designing inclusive supports, and encouraging every student to reach their full potential. They bring creativity, compassion, and unwavering belief in the students they serve. I want to sincerely thank every teacher and care educator who has contributed to another outstanding term. Your commitment makes a real and lasting difference.

Beyond the classroom, our students have had opportunities to connect through sporting events, excursions, community days, and leadership development programs. These experiences are just as vital to our students' development as academic success. They help build identity, belonging, and life skills, and they remind our young people that learning happens everywhere—not just between the walls of a classroom.

To our families and community members: thank you for walking this journey with us. Your trust, encouragement, and partnership are deeply valued. It is by working together that we continue to create a school where young people feel safe, strong, and seen—and where they can imagine and create a future full of promise.

As we look ahead to the next term, we do so with excitement, knowing that we will continue to learn, grow and succeed—together.



Mrs Shonell Gohier

Head of Campus - Cape York Girl Academy







TERM 2 HIGHLIGHTS FROM CAPE YORK GIRL ACADEMY

Term 2 has been a busy, fun-filled and rewarding time for the girls at Cape York Girl Academy!

The girls have been developing their cooking skills each week at Birrgal Restaurant as part of their Hospitality Course. They're not only impressing their chefs but also putting their newfound skills into practice back at boarding, cooking up delicious dishes like kiev with homemade alfredo, pumpkin soup, cottage pie with sautéed broccoli, avocado smash on toast, salads, and pastries. Some highlights were coconut pumpkin domboi, teriyaki chicken sushi, and oreo cheesecake — proving the girls are growing into talented and creative cooks!

Activity-wise, it's been a term full of outdoor fun and adventure. The girls braved freezing water at Shannonvale for a dip, cheered on Daisy from afar at her judo competition in Brisbane and cooled off at Lake Eacham.

They teamed up for a fishing competition — measuring their catches each time — adding a bit of friendly rivalry to the term's outdoor program. There were also dinner nights in Port Douglas, a trip to Palm Cove, and a day at Cairns Aqua Park where everyone challenged themselves on the inflatable obstacle course.. Other highlights this term included art lessons at Djarragun College in Gordonvale, tennis lessons, gardening at boarding, and a range of outdoor activities like laser tag, a colour run on the oval, fishing at Machans Beach, and a picnic and walk at Mowbray River. There were nights filled with barbecues, a boarding movie under the stars, art and craft sessions, and plenty of sport, from basketball under the floodlights to developing barista skills and making smoothies.

Term 2 has been a wonderful opportunity for the girls to grow, connect, learn, and have fun together, and we're all looking forward to seeing what the rest of the year holds!





Year 12 Formal
2025

DATE
November 24th

TIME
5:30pm to 10:00pm

VENUE
Pullman Cairns International Hotel
17 Abbott St, Cairns city QLD





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WITH US ON
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INSTAGRAM**
@djarraguncollege



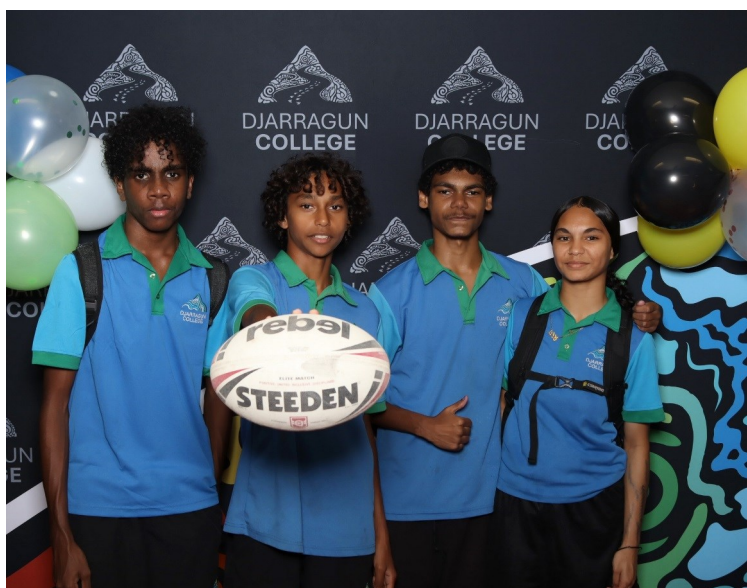
UPCOMING EVENTS

10 July	Boarders travel
14 July	First day Term 3
18 July	Cairns Show Public Holiday
4 August	National ATSI Children's Day
9 August	International Day of World's Indigenous People
22 August	Primary students: Book Week dress up day
5 September	Learner license written test
5 September	Father's Day activities
13 September	Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
15-18 September	College NAIDOC Week
16 September	Tribalmania: Arts & Hospitality Day
18 September	Boarders travel
18 September	Last day Term 3

TERM DATES

TERM 3	Monday 14 July (First day) Thursday 18 September (Last day)
TERM 4	Wednesday 8 October (First day) Wednesday 3 December (Last day)







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