



Year 9 Horizon 2026



OLMC
Heidelberg

What is Horizon?

Horizon is a term-based program that offers students diverse learning opportunities. It is a blend of explicit cross-curricular teaching, inquiry-based learning and activities held within the school and the community. Students venture into Heidelberg and their city to expand their understanding of learning outside the College walls.

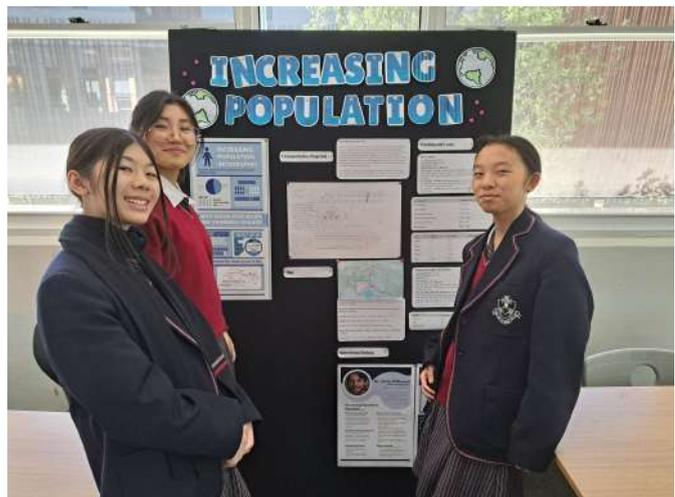


Research into the middle years of learning has identified that dissatisfaction and disengagement with schooling peaks in Year 9. Middle-school reviews have identified the importance of schools meeting the developmental needs of young adolescents, including opportunities for abstract and critical thinking, reflection and decision making, as well as experiencing success and feeling valued. Reviews have emphasised the importance of student care and advocacy through greater teacher/student contact to address the risk of disengagement.

One of the aims of Horizon is to encourage students to feel more connected with the local community. We seek to promote independent learning and create opportunities for students to develop connections and resilience.

Horizon is focused on improving student engagement with their learning. For instance, students may be investigating the concept of justice. In order to make links between classroom content and application, an Old Melbourne Gaol Trail Day is organised to help facilitate this connection.

Trail Days are a weekly event. They are held on a Thursday and offer students the chance for learning and an appreciation of their city and local surroundings.



A series of outdoor education experiences are undertaken so students can explore their abilities to problem solve, support their peers and reflect on their own personal and social development. Horizon encourages students to learn by doing. Capabilities and 21st century skills are always on display when Horizon students rock climb at an indoor wall, abseil at camp or challenge themselves on the Grid at Bounce.

Term-based Program – 2026

Term 1	9A & 9B
Term 2	9C & 9D
Term 3	9E & 9F
Term 4	9G & 9H

What does Horizon involve?

During Horizon a student's term timetable will contain a number of codes. These include:

HOR – Horizon:

- During this time students subjects of Religious Education, Mathematics, Science, English, Humanities, HPE will be taught around the themes of future pathways, financial literacy and justice. The Inquiry-Based Learning sessions will occur four times each cycle.

- These timetabled sessions will also include some Outdoor Education which will involve activities such as bike safety/riding along the Yarra Trail and visiting Bounce.

- One session per week will be dedicated to Altruism Hour. Students will contribute an hour of their time to helping the local community. This opportunity asks students to give without immediate reward. There is a simplicity in this, and many students enjoy this hour for that very reason.



HTDA and HTDB – Horizon Trail Day:

This is the opportunity for us to connect the ideas, experiences and understanding from our lessons to a place outside the College. One of our first Trail Days is an exploration of the Heidelberg community. Parental approval is required for Trail Days, as well as the Outdoor Education program, and this will be done through PAM.

Assessment Tasks

Students are required to complete a variety of assessment tasks. These may include:

- Beyond the Baggot – exploring pathways and future study options as well writing a resume and cover letter
- My Life at 25 snapshot including financial maths, explicit decision making and entrepreneurial understanding
- The development of entrepreneurial skills such as collaboration, communication and critical and creative thinking
- Justice ethical thinking – an analysis of justice articles and a written reflection on ethics in decision making
- Inquiry-Based Learning project including three assessments throughout the term.



Inquiry-Based Learning Project (IBL)

The Inquiry-Based Learning project is a term-long research task. Students formulate a question to explore relating to a topic or issue in society. They work in pairs or small groups. A key part of the project is conducting primary research. This may include interviews, surveys, data counts and observation. Students are expected to undertake at least two forms of primary research in addressing their question, as well as review secondary research from existing sources. The students aim to create knowledge that is based on both their secondary and primary research, with the aim of pitching a proposed 'solution' at the end of the term.

The IBL project can be stressful. Students may go through a range of emotions during the term, from elation at having secured an interview after a dozen refusals, to despondency and confusion as to whether the topic they have chosen is the right one. They also have to manage the social and collaborative aspects of the project. This is normal, and for many it is an important part of the journey over the term. These experiences help your daughter develop the perseverance and resilience that are required in her future studies. The life skills demonstrated by involvement in IBL project cannot be underestimated.

Inquiry-Based Learning Expo

The culmination of their research and inquiry is the IBL expo day. Each group presents their IBL project to their teachers, peers and parents/ guardians in the form of an extended pitch. Students discuss their research and findings. The floor is open for questions after the pitch. These may relate to the challenges and surprises of managing a long-term project or how the students' understanding of the issue has changed over time.



Camp

Each semester there is a three-day/two-night camp held at Clifford Park Activity Centre in Wonga Park. This is a highlight of Horizon for many students. They undertake a variety of activities including abseiling, a commando course and cooking for their group. A letter with further details will be sent out to parents/guardians during the Horizon term.



2026 Camp Dates

Term 1 group	9A 9B	Monday 1st June – Wednesday 3rd June
Term 2 group	9C 9D	Wednesday 3rd June - Friday 5th of June
Term 3 group	9E 9F	Wednesday 9- Friday 11 September
Term 4 group	9G 9H	Tuesday 17 – Thursday 19 November

Expectations for learning at home

During the Horizon term, students are expected to undertake regular research and reflection activities at home. These may include:

- **Reflection:** Students will be asked to complete a number of reflection tasks throughout the term. These may relate to our main classroom topics and Trail Day experiences.
- **Inquiry-Based Learning:** It is expected that students will undertake at least an hour of research, investigation and reflection on their IBL topic as homework each week.
- **Assessment tasks:** Many of the assessment tasks will require the students to undertake work at home, either preparing for or completing tasks. Students are encouraged to submit drafts of written assignments for feedback prior to the due date.

Being involved

There are many opportunities for you to be involved in the educational experiences of your child throughout the Horizon term.

Whether it is helping your child explore different areas of interest in a career pathway or talking about their experiences during Altruism Hour, the term offers an excellent opportunity to discuss a variety of topics.

We are all different and there may be a time when a student is concerned or anxious about an activity. For some students, the change in routine is a challenge in the first few weeks. A positive attitude is important to gain the most from the term's opportunities, and discussing this may help alleviate a situation.

We want all students to gain the most that they can from the term so please contact one of the Horizon teachers to discuss any issues. We can alter a program or modify an activity if the need arises, so it is best to alert us as early as feasible.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Ms Lucy Davies, Horizon Coordinator, via email ldavies@olmc.vic.edu.au or calling the College 03 9459 2511.



The Horizon 2026 Team

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