COLLEGE NEWS

Autumn 2026

Creating a brighter future



[L-R] Eve, Nisha, Bella, Bryson, Keith, and Taylor (not pictured: Emma and Nikita)

New Boarding College students start lifechanging journey

A new chapter has begun at STEPS Pathways College as we welcome our newest Boarding College students, eight young adults ready to take their first steps towards a future filled with independence and opportunity.

Taylor, Nisha, Eve, Emma, Nikita, Bella, Keith and Bryson each bring their own passions and dreams to college life. Taylor has his sights set on working with Marvel Studios, Keith is working towards his driver's license, and Bryson is pursuing a future in the music industry.

Nikita dreams of acting in movies, Nisha hopes to become a babysitter after graduation, and Bella is saving for her own car. Eve dreams of riding horses at Arundel Park Riding for the Disabled, while Emma's goal is to live independently.

From cooking healthy meals and travel training to building confidence and everyday life skills, this group is already diving headfirst into the hands-on curriculum.

STEPS Pathways College Executive Principal Stephanie Patey said this marks the beginning of a lifechanging journey for these new students.

"Watching our students grow over their two years at STEPS Pathways College is so rewarding," she said.

"We are so proud to walk alongside these students in this important next chapter of their lives and help them step confidently into their future and unlock new dreams, new journeys and new stories."

STEPS PATHWAYS COLLEGE

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Principal's message

Welcome to the latest edition of the STEPS Pathways College newsletter.

This edition marks an exciting new beginning, as we welcome our new Boarding College students. Taylor, Nisha, Eve, Emma, Nikita, Bella, Keith and Bryson have each arrived with their own goals and the drive to achieve them. It's already such a privilege to watch them embrace College life with such enthusiasm.

You'll hear from alumni Alec and Lachlan, who returned to campus to share their stories of life after graduation, a powerful reminder of what our students are working towards every day.

There are also stories about the hands-on experiences shaping our students' journeys, from practising their bond cleaning skills to the upcoming Steps for STEPS walking challenge this April.

Finally, we shine a spotlight on Student Support Officer Kylie and student Skye, two wonderful members of our College community whose stories reflect the warmth and spirit that makes STEPS Pathways College so special.

Thank you for your continued support of STEPS Pathways College and our students. I hope this edition inspires you as much as our students inspire us every day.

Stephanie Patey
Executive Principal and CEO
STEPS Pathways College and STEPS Social Business

How you can help

The generosity of our community helps make STEPS Pathways College possible.

Your donation is fully tax deductible and has the power to change a student's life for the better, giving them the skills they need for independence, empowerment, and connection.

With your help, we can continue to build a brighter future for young people living with a disability and autism.



Thank you!



Prima Commercial Fitouts Managing Director Brendan Wavell-Smith with STEPS Managing Director Carmel Crouch AM at 2025 Grand Winter Ball

Thank you to Prima Commercial Fitouts

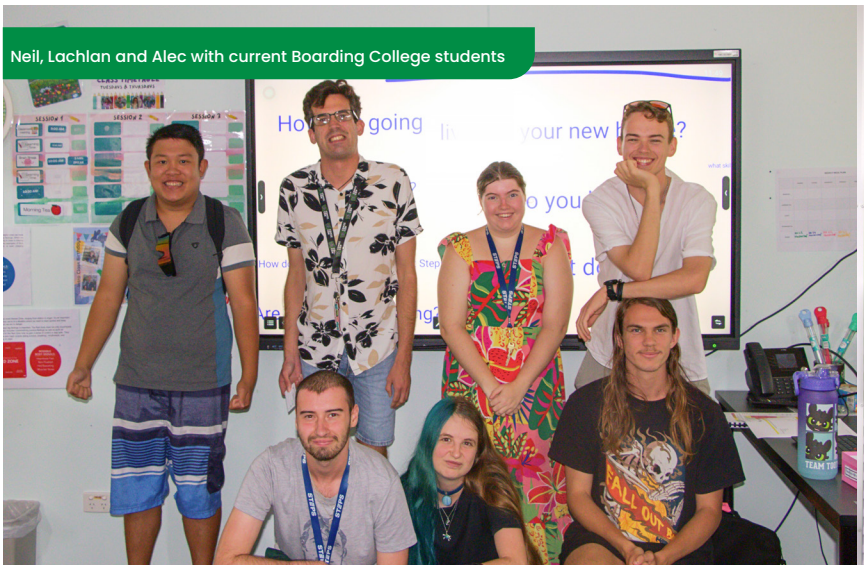
For more than 35 years, Prima Commercial Fitouts has delivered quality design, construction and furniture fitout projects across the Sunshine Coast, helping hundreds of businesses grow and thrive.

Prima's partnership with STEPS Pathways College reflects their genuine belief that strong businesses help build strong communities. As Presenting Partner of the 2025 STEPS Grand Winter Ball and through years of ongoing support, they've shown what it looks like when purpose and professionalism go hand in hand.

For Managing Director Brendan Wavell-Smith, the partnership is deeply personal. "It's a great sense of fulfilment to be a part of STEPS' great work. It gives me a purpose and adds a greater depth and meaning to the business."

We're incredibly grateful for Prima's continued commitment to helping us create brighter futures for young people living with a disability and autism.

Curriculum news



Neil, Lachlan and Alec with current Boarding College students



Alumni visit shines light on life after graduation

What does life look like after STEPS Pathways College? Current Boarding College students got to hear the answer firsthand when alumni Alec and Lachlan visited campus to share their stories.

Both graduates are now renting their own units and thriving, sharing their homes with former College housemates. While Alec shared that their limited rental history made the initial search a challenge, once they found their place, it's been smooth sailing.

"I use everything I learned at STEPS Pathways College in my day-to-day life," Alec said. "My routine off-campus isn't very different to what I was practising here, so the transition was pretty easy."

Alec is now studying a Certificate III in Hospitality three days a week. It's keeping him busy, with plenty of work and assignments, but he's enjoying every bit of it. He's also clocking up his required learner drive hours, with the goal of earning his Provisional Driver's License firmly in his sights.

Lachlan shared that he prefers taking things one day at a time, hoping to line up a job of his own sometime soon.

The current cohort of students were full of questions, curious about everything from employment prospects to common household chores, and left with plenty of inspiration for their own brighter futures.



Nisha prepares a cleaning plan in class before getting to work



Students master the art of bond cleaning

Moving house is a rite of passage in a life of independence, and at STEPS Pathways College, students get a practise run.

At the end of each six-month block, some Boarding College students pack up their belongings and move to a different on-campus unit, using the transition as a hands-on opportunity to master bond cleaning.

Armed with a cleaning checklist created in class, they work through the unit from top to bottom, learning the best strategies for a thorough clean and ensure nothing is missed. It's also a chance to take stock of their belongings, deciding what to keep, donate, sell, give away or throw out altogether – a skill that will serve them well long after graduation.

Recently, a group of students tackled the move with enthusiasm, turning the experience into a fun occasion by listening to music and sharing their progress with their Trainers along the way.

Shout out to these awesome students for leaving their units sparkling clean and ready for the next cohort.

Trainer profile

What do you teach at STEPS Pathways College?

As a Student Support Officer, I support students across their social, emotional, and physical needs, helping them learn to be independent, problem-solve challenges, and develop strategies they can use in College and after graduation. I work closely with the broader College team to make sure students feel supported and understood across every part of their experience, collaborating with external providers and allied health teams where needed. My aim is to create a safe space where students feel heard, empowered and confident.

What do your students teach you?

Our students have taught me so much about resilience and confidence. Many arrive having faced real challenges in previous learning environments, and watching them gradually rebuild their confidence at STEPS Pathways College is powerful. It shows in the way they answer questions, advocate for themselves, and make new connections. They remind me daily that with the right support and environment, anyone can uncover their strengths and move forward with courage.

What do you enjoy teaching your students?

Above all, I love helping students believe in themselves and embrace what makes them unique. I also enjoy helping them build healthy relationships with themselves and others, and developing practical strategies they can continue using long after graduation.

What is the most valuable thing that you have learnt in your role?

That there is always more to learn. Every student I work with teaches me something new through their passions and goals. Knowing I'm part of helping someone develop lifelong skills and independence makes every day very rewarding.

What has been a highlight for you so far?

There are too many to choose from! But what I value most is the genuine culture of growth here, for both the students and the team. The fun, laughter and kindness that fills the College campus makes it truly special.



Kylie



Skye

Student profile

What hobbies or activities do you enjoy?

I like to play games, draw, walk, and knit.

What classes do you enjoy taking at STEPS Pathways College?

Budgeting and learning how to spend less money. I also love cooking.

What do you enjoy about STEPS Pathways College outside of the classroom?

I like Fancy Friday. Once a month, we get to go out for dinner and try something new at a local restaurant, or sometimes someone will cook something unique.

What are some valuable life skills you have learnt so far during your time at STEPS?

I've learnt a lot about being a good cleaner.

Who is someone you look up to?

I can't think of anyone in particular at the moment. I'm trying to focus on improving myself.

What are your goals for the future?

I would like to get a house with a roommate, and a job, and make the time to hang out with my friends.

What advice would you give to someone wanting to attend STEPS Pathways College?

You will learn a lot of new skills, but it will get easier and you'll use them every day.

We are accepting STEPS Pathways College enrolments







Steps for STEPS: College limbers up for April walking challenge

STEPS Pathways Charity is calling on the community to get involved in the upcoming Steps for STEPS fundraising challenge in April supporting STEPS Pathways College.

We invite you to register for the walking challenge, sponsor a College student, or donate. The month will culminate in our Boarding College students walking 24km from Maroochydore to the College campus in Caloundra.

The numbers behind the campaign are no coincidence: 24km, 24 students, and 24 months of transformative learning. Register, rally your friends and family to sponsor you, and walk towards a brighter future for our students.

STEPS Pathways Charity Manager Katrina May said she encourages the community to support Steps for STEPS in any way you can.

"Registering or supporting a student is more than an act of generosity, it's a meaningful way of showing that you believe in their potential, and you are invested in them stepping into a future filled with opportunity to build independent, fulfilling lives," Katrina said.

Find more information by visiting stepspathways.com.au/stepsforsteps or scanning the QR code.

Make a difference. Become a volunteer.

Volunteers are an integral part of STEPS – and we want your help to deliver lifechanging opportunities to our students.

Whether your skills lie in the kitchen, classroom, garden or beyond, we have a role that suits your unique experience and interests.

If you are unable to commit to a regular volunteering role, we have opportunities for one-time positions at our many community events.

For more information, please contact our Volunteer Relationship Coordinator, Karla.

07 5458 3040
volunteer@stepsgroup.com.au



Mark your calendar!

Steps for STEPS walking challenge - April
STEPS Pathways College Open Day - Wednesday 15 July
STEPS Grand Winter Ball - Saturday 25 July



Visit our website for more information and to RSVP

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Snapshots of the last few months of College life













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Creating a brighter future