

# 'City Week' challenge for Bialik students

## BIALIK COLLEGE

Some of the most important lessons at school can take place outside the classroom. This is why Bialik College developed the immersive program "City Week".

Year 9 co-ordinator Julian Duband said: "As the year 9 students stand on the brink of young adulthood, it is beneficial that they develop navigation skills, learn to manage their time properly and become familiar with Melbourne's public transport network."

For a week, the students are expected to make their own way to events in the city, which gives them many important choices to make. Students may decide to go alone or with a group of friends, they need to plan well ahead and take into account things that may hold them up – like bad weather or tram delays – and if they get lost, they need to use their initiative and be resilient when finding their way back to the group.

All aspects of Melbourne lifestyle and society are explored in City Week – arts, history, culture, sport - from the MCG to the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, the Shrine of Remembrance and the Malthouse Theatre — everything that makes Melbourne the most liveable city in the world. Students also spend time at the East Melbourne synagogue, learning about the city's earliest Jewry and listening to a talk by Rabbi Dovid Gutnik.

A highlight for many year 9s is visiting the Melbourne Magistrates Court. Here, they get to witness court hearings, presenting them



**Bialik students during City Week in Melbourne**

with an opportunity to understand the laws that govern our society. This is contrasted by an excursion to the Old Melbourne Gaol, giving our year 9s an insightful comparison of justice now and then.

This year, the cohort gathered at the Malthouse Theatre for a performance of Picnic at Hanging Rock, watched a movie together and visited the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. They were also assigned tasks during the week, which enrich the learning outcomes. The 'Snapshot' task asked the students to photograph images that clearly depicted contrasts in the city, while 'Race Around the World's Most Liveable City' was the chance to film and

edit their own video memoirs.

"City Week is now five years old," says Ian Poyser, head of middle school and pastoral care at Bialik, "and, as any program should, has been reviewed and adapted in order to provide our year 9 students with a thoroughly challenging, exciting and varied experience while learning their way around the city."

In true Bialik spirit, there is a tikkun olam (repairing the world) component during City Week. The Big Issue Classroom is a unique educational experience that provides real-life insights into homelessness and disadvantage. Our students were addressed by individuals who are personally experiencing homelessness. Bialik students



were moved by the experience and many of them expressed an interest in doing more to help Melbourne's less fortunate population.

*City Week inspires a love for and appreciation of our beautiful city. It creates confidence and independence and is a snapshot of how society works. As one of the students said: "I learned that trains aren't actually scary and also that public transport is pretty easy. I feel a lot more comfortable in the city now."*