



Principal's Update

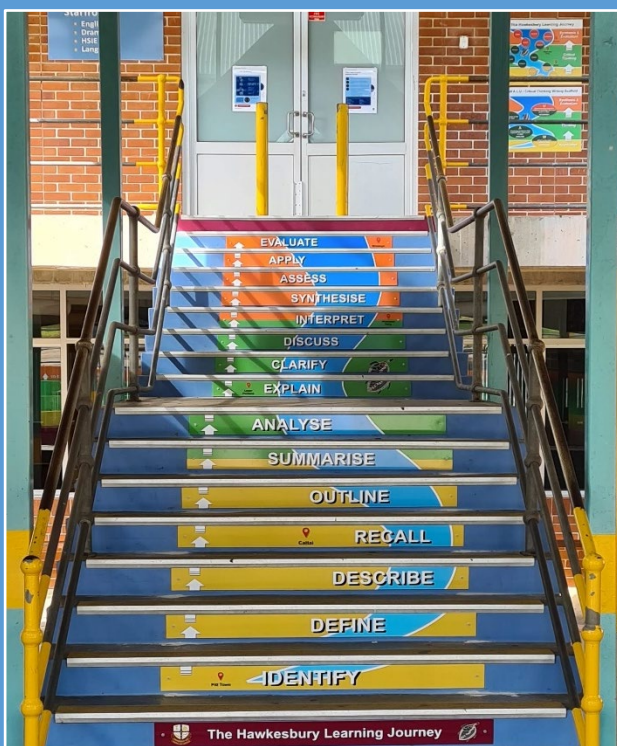
10 August 2020

Our mission - building a caring and safe learning environment where great teaching supports and inspires all students to grow, develop and succeed.



Focus on Writing and Critical Thinking Skills

The school's focus on developing future-focussed skills, including communication and problem-solving skills, continues with the introduction of the WALU Amphitheatre and the Hawkesbury Learning Journey Walkway. These visual enhancements not only brighten and lift the physical learning environment, but also continually remind students of the key skills and capabilities needed when constructing paragraphs, and the key skills that allow them to progress on their learning journey. As students move around the playground, and on their way to and from class, they can retrace these key capabilities through their physical movement that reinforces the daily focus on the same skills which takes place in the classroom.



P&C to be replaced by a broader representative school community body

At the P&C Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 21 July, the P&C decided to become dormant, with no one standing for any of the vacated offices. This decision was made by the P&C to enable the formation of a less formal parent and community representative body that would engage in ongoing consultation about matters of importance to the school.

In my experience, parents are more likely to participate and contribute to school life in a less formal environment and during the day, rather than attend formal, structured meetings at night. In addition, the new consultative body will not engage in fund-raising but would, rather, be asked to contribute with ideas and feedback on how to improve different aspects of the school for the benefit of their children.

I am anticipating that the new body (name yet to be decided) will be made up of parents, students, staff and members of the broader school community. In the coming weeks I will be in contact with all parents via email and Skoolbag, seeking input on how the new consultative body might be structured and how it would operate. My hope would be to see a strong, consultative body that would engage in genuine, informal and constructive dialogue with school improvement as its ultimate goal.



Hawkesbury High School

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Semester 1 Reports

Semester 1 reports for years 7-10 have been published on the Sentral Parent Portal on Friday, 31 July. Year 11 and 12 students have already received their progress and half-yearly reports earlier in the year, with Year 11 and 12 Yearly Reports to be issued at the beginning of Term 4.

This year's reports have seen some adjustments made to reflect the extended learning from home period due to COVID-19. These adjustments not only include the publication of reports in electronic form on the Parent Portal, but also the way student achievement is reported. While these changes are different to previous reports, they align with best practice as they include a table that shows students' relative performance to other students in each course, as well as the overall level of achievement in the form of a grade (A-E) which aligns with a state-wide course achievement descriptor.

Parent Teacher Interviews

This year's Parent/Teacher interview organisation has been adjusted to reflect social distancing requirements as a result of COVID-19. All Semester 1 Parent/Teacher interviews will be conducted by phone. From **Monday, 3 August and Friday, 7 August**, you were able to **book** a phone interview with your child's teachers through the Parent Portal. The booking system ensured that all parents who wish to discuss their children's progress will have an opportunity to connect with their children's teachers. Once booked, Parent/Teacher phone interviews will take place between **Monday, 10 August and Friday, 21 August**. Teacher availability will vary and depend on their teaching timetable, however, once you have booked an available session, your child's teacher will call you at the pre-booked time. If a teacher is unable to reach you, or if there are connectivity issues, the teacher will make every effort to connect with you at a mutually suitable time. In the meantime, please make sure that your contact details have been updated if you have recently changed your phone number and that you have registered for the Parent Portal.

Parent Teacher Interview Tips

Parent Teacher Interviews are a wonderful opportunity to touch base with your child's teachers and seek clarification, if required, on the information provided in their school report. This is also an opportunity to ask for additional information about your child's progress, their strengths, areas for improvement, and strategies to achieve their improvement goals. Please see below for tips on questions to ask your child's teachers when you talk to them. The following questions are good conversation starters for parent teacher interviews:

1. What is my child good at?
2. What are the areas for improvement?
3. What does my child need to do to improve?
4. How can I help my child improve?

Wednesday Early Finish, SRE and Homework Centre

A reminder to all parents that timetabled lessons finish at 1:50 pm on Wednesdays. Students who are picked up, or who normally walk home, are allowed to leave at 1:50 pm. However, all students who are picked up must be picked up from the school and **NOT** from the Kurmond Road shops.

All other students, including students enrolled in SRE, must remain on school grounds. Students enrolled in SRE are expected to attend SRE classes between 1:50 pm and 2:50 pm, while other students can take advantage of the Homework Centre. In addition, teacher supervision will be provided in designated playground areas until school buses depart at their regularly scheduled times.



Parents

Find advice for parents and carers to help children have safe, enjoyable experiences online.



eSafety Commissioner

I urge all parents to visit the eSafety Commissioner site on esafety.gov.au. This site contains excellent tips on how to stay safe online during the COVID-19 pandemic. The site also contains current information and advice to parents on how to help children stay safe online.

COVID-19 Update

Current advice on COVID-19 is available on the school's website and on the Department's website on <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/school-safety/novel-coronavirus>. NSW Health have processes in place to identify any close contacts with confirmed cases. NSW Health and the Department of Education are in constant and close communication, as is the school. In the meantime, I ask everyone to monitor their own health, seek medical advice if they feel unwell and maintain good hygiene practices – as we would in any case. If you or your child develop flu-like symptoms you should seek medical advice, get tested for COVID-19, and keep your child at home until they have recovered. If any case of COVID-19 is confirmed in your family, please advise the school promptly.

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