



THE WAY



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome back to Term 4!

Please enjoy a Welcome to Term 4 Video Message from Mr Whelan.

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Hello everyone and welcome back to College for Term 4. It's been a great week for students and staff at Thomas Hassall - perhaps not so for the Premier or the COVID numbers, and we continue to watch carefully for any impacts on our College community. We have a project team that continues to meet twice each week to examine ways we can be the very best in terms of healthy and safe practice in every College classroom, staffroom and program. Regulations are being reviewed for music events, excursions and interschool sport. In one important playground project, we are changing 50% of the bubblers into taps for drink containers to be filled, and every room continues to have hand sanitizers and additional cleaning of surfaces. I was talking just yesterday to the owner of our cleaning firm, who said that new technologies are improving the level of cleaning that is now available, as a result of COVID. That's good news. Where are the opportunities for us all from this difficult event?

We held a special webinar last night for Orientation for the new 2021 Year 7 students. It went for 90 minutes and students and parents were able to have their questions answered by a live panel of our

teaching experts, and from all accounts it was well received. We've found that parent teacher evenings might be just as effective on Zoom, where parents can be seated in comfort at home with their child, and the meetings with teachers can stay on time and be relevant. Let's continue to test this one and in a survey later this term, we can gauge your opinions about continuing such a change in 2021. Where are the opportunities for the College out of this event?

And we are all thinking about Year 12 students as they make their final preparations for the Higher School Certificate exams that start next Tuesday. We all remember the final days of preparing for special events don't we - there's a mixture of butterflies and hope, and a nervous optimism that we will get through it well and as quickly as possible. It's been an interesting and difficult year for these young adults and we have stood with them; worked with them; prayed regularly for them and we have every confidence in their next journey into university or TAFE or work. Year 12 had a great last week and they've allowed us to start 2 new traditions for the College. The 'Hassall Gift' - a Prep to Year 12 House Relay with the whole College in attendance was a special race with over 100 runners. Many of our students have had their school years here at Thomas Hassall from Prep to Year 12. The Hassall Gift will be a special event every year from now. And we started the 'Year 12 Walk of Honour' this year which allowed every Year 12 student to be celebrated by every other student in the College. It took quite a while to walk right around the College and allowed them to relive some of their happy memories of their time at the College. They've also had a special study week here at the College over the vacation. The Year 12 Graduation Ceremony will occur in a special outdoor evening event on the Oval on the day after the HSC finishes - parents and family members will be here and it will be a great time. They will also be able to have a Formal night as well - it will be held in the city in the following week, and it will be a night to celebrate such a big year. Year 12 2020 have been a special group - they've been our 2020 heroes really, and we wish them well. Please pray for them next Tuesday and for their future.

How are you and your family coping with the year so far. It's been an uncertain time hasn't it. Thanks for your support too of all that has been occurring here at the College. What about next year - 2021. Without a magic vaccine for COVID, and the way the international scene is looking, it's likely that we will be in much the same steady program of managing the virus and its impact, I imagine. At the College we are taking a measured approach, to continue to support students and staff and families. We think that we can hold fees where they are - perhaps \$25-35 more per term only for the whole year.

We want to hear from you as you need. We want to continue to connect more with each family and each student. Are there other opportunities to develop our links - a digital business directory perhaps; or a network for past students who can benefit from their links with the College and each other. There was great interest and joy from the '20 years in 20 days' project - the old photos posted on Facebook and Instagram, and we want to continue to connect the community at this time - let's benefit from the 20 years of the College story.

Take care; talk to us if there are issues for your family. We are a Christian community. We have a God who cares, and His son the Lord Jesus Christ has won the big battle of life for us if we believe in Him and follow Him. Thanks for your continued support.

Ross Whelan

'...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe'. Hebrews 1:2

Mr Ross Whelan
Principal