



THE WAY



BUILDING BETTER LEADERS AND THE POWER OF GRATITUDE

Thomas Hassall Anglican College seeks to create and provide opportunities to develop the whole student and fulfill our graduate aims of excellence in Learning, Wisdom and Service. A wonderful opportunity that Year 11 students have had throughout Semester One, is the privilege to participate in the Student Mentoring/ Peer Support Program, which is run by the Coordinators of Student Growth and Welfare.

At the end of Year 10 2022, our current Year 11 students were invited to apply to be considered to be a Peer Support Leader for Semester One of this year. Students needed to be willing to attend a

- Year 7 Pastoral Care class at least once a week,
- collaborate with of their student mentors in their groups,
- regularly debrief with Mrs Nalla,
- assist with the running of games,
- participate in any other student based activities that could support Year 7 students as they settled into life at THAC and begun their learning journey in Senior School.

The meaningful connections that our Year 11 students have created with our Year 7 students has been intentional and facilitated a positive and safe start to the year. While serving Year 7, our Year 11 leaders refined and developed their skills in leadership, organising, planning and communication. These leadership skills establish an excellent foundation for those interested in holding a formal Student Leadership position in Year 12.



At the end of Term Two, Year 7 were provided the opportunity to share some specific experiences and words of gratitude to their Peer Support Leaders. Then, during Year 11s' first Year Meeting of Term Three, Ms Sharma and Mr Fortuin presented our Peer Support Leaders with individualised thank you cards, which contained personalised words of gratitude and thankfulness: Some of the expressions of gratitude that were expressed by our Year 7 cohort include:

"Thankyou for being friendly, reliable, enthusiastic, kind and a lot of fun".

"You were always there for us, giving us advice and giving us lollies".

"You are nice and always there for us and you are always trying to help us out".

"I really enjoyed the activities and games you thought of".

"You are funny & I appreciate that every time you saw me, you said 'hello'. That meant a lot to me".

"At camp, you helped me to go on the giant swing even though I was scared".

"Thanks for always preparing activities and putting your own time and effort for us".

"Thank you for always talking to us about peer pressure and bullying".

"I appreciated your help in PC and you gave me a new perspective of high school".

"You are super caring and supportive and you support us in hard times and when bad things happen".

"You have helped me throughout the whole semester. Thanks for being a great peer support leader".



Our Year 11 leaders also shared some of their insights and learning experiences from serving as Peer Support Leaders:

“I was really excited at the start of the year to be selected as a Peer Support Leader. I remember how much my leaders assisted and supported me in Year 7, and I wanted to make the same difference for them. This year I have enjoyed every bit of it. It has been great to help my PC class navigate their way through their first Semester of High School and build relationships with each other. I have also grown in my confidence as a leader and have learnt to trust my instincts and choices for the benefit of others.”

“Being a Peer Support Leader was an amazing experience and it was also accompanied with the occasional moments of chaos. I think it was a great way for me to develop my leadership skills while connecting with younger students. My favorite experience with my PC class was when we made signs for Liddell House. It showed me how interactive and willing the boys were and they were happy to give things a go. Overall, I’m really grateful for my PC class and they helped me grow to be more inspired and confident as a person.”

“Peer Support has been an amazing experience and a great way for us to help Year 7s in the beginning of their high school journey. It was special, not only to build new relationships with year 7s, but it was also a great opportunity to build confidence in myself and learn how to be a good leader.”

“Being a Peer Support Leader was not only really fun but a way for me to become closer with other grades as well as my friends. I enjoyed getting to know new people and seeing the Year 7’s light up whenever they saw us. I’m happy that I was able to be a ‘safety net’ for those who had been nervous about their transition to highschool. My favorite memory would definitely be going

to their camp. It was an amazing way to see how their friendships had changed through PC and how close they had become to each other. Overall, being a Peer Support Leader was an amazing experience and I would do it again in a heartbeat.”

So, to our Year 11 Peer Support Leaders, thank you for caring for and serving our Year 7 cohort this year. Your leadership and modeling of generosity, diligence, kindness and compassion hasn't gone unnoticed and we are thankful and grateful for all your contributions to the Wellbeing of our Year 7's. We look forward to further growing and enriching students through this program in the years to come, as it builds and sustains connection across the Senior School. May God Bless you as you approach your Year 11 Final Examinations and your HSC final year. Thank you, Peer Support Leaders!

Mrs Helen Bull

Acting Coordinator of Student Growth and Development
