



# THE WAY



## FROM THE DIRECTOR OF STUDENT WELLBEING - SENIOR SCHOOL

**Senior School had a brilliant three days on their respective programs this week from February 5 to 7.** It was great to see how our students and staff persevered through activities that pushed so many of them out of their comfort zone. These camps were not only a fantastic opportunity for students to build on the friendships they have made at Thomas Hassall, but also to overcome several challenges and some serious fears of heights! On the whole, the students demonstrated a great level of respect for each other and those around them as well as made the most of each camp. Despite both staff and students coming back on Wednesday afternoon completely exhausted, camps continue to be a valuable experience for our student cohorts. They have returned with a greater sense of unity and strength after testing their limits in the great outdoors and different environments.

Year 7 had their program at College. With a mix of initiative and team building activities as well as sessions that focused on a variety of key skills needed as a year 7 student, e.g. how to write an email or cope with multiple stresses, students had the opportunity to try new things in a relaxed and enjoyable environment. They particularly loved the minute to win it game and the inflatable activity time.

Year 8 attended a Youthworks site at Deer Park. The 3 days were packed with awesome experiences and plenty of new friends. They participated in water activities, big group games and smaller more challenging activities in their groups. The Youthworks staff were fantastic in supporting the students participating in the range of activities and our College Staff went beyond to ensure that students had a fun time.

Year 9 had an inaugural camp at Wedderburn. The rain and grey skies did not dampen their spirits or anticipation of their great adventure, despite having to relocate to dry areas in the very early hours of the morning on Day 2. The year 9 students grew in confidence, resilience and made memories that will last a lifetime. Many of the students are looking forward to signing up for our Duke of Edinburgh (DUKES) program this year.

Year 10 completed the much-anticipated Urban Challenge. It was a joy to hear about and witness the excitement of the year 10 cohort when students, together with their teachers, waited to board the buses to take them into the city for their Amazing Race type camp. During the next three days they moved in small groups around the city completing various activities in groups, embarking on an unfolding adventure to complete urban-flavoured activities, clue chases, meal preparation, surfing lessons, a silent disco on Cockatoo Island and much more.

Year 11 camp was at Rathane, just down the road from Year 8 at another Youthworks site. It was a wonderful time to be together as a cohort and build teamwork skills. They had a variety of activities which included fishing and hiking but also some great seminars and time to reflect on what type of student they want to be.

Year 12 program was onsite with a variety of seminars and activities. As students continue on their last year at College this program allowed students to reflect on learning, study techniques, need to sleep, where to get helpful resources as well as having time as a grade to bond including at Aquatopia. Our hope is that the skills and strategies they gained through the different presenters will equip them well for the oncoming year.

A big thank you to the staff and students who helped make the experiences fantastic. A special mention to the year advisors in their planning, organising and execution of their respective programs. It is a massive effort which often results in a lot less sleep than normal and time away from their families.

Some of the student reflections from camp:

"I loved Minute to Win-it the most but loved all the other activities too" (Menelaos D, Year 7)

"Camp was really fun this year as we went to deer park and participated in a lot of water activities such as the pool, water slide, raft making and dragon boating. All of these required us to get into the water and be refreshed on the hot days. We also learnt skills for Duke of Edinburgh such as putting up a tent, making hot chocolate, learning how to read maps and the equipment used to hike! We are really glad we learnt these life skills as it prepares us for Dukes and we won't forget all the things we learnt from camp." (April & Lourdes, Year 8)

"I really enjoyed Year 9 camp. One of my favourite activities during camp was when we went on the giant swing, I loved seeing the beautiful view and the feeling of falling down from a five meter drop. I was very surprised at how good the food was at camp, my favourite thing we had was roast beef with hot chips, steamed veggies and gravy. One more activity that was fun was the hike we went on with Mr Yako, I loved jumping off the cliff into the water and the long walk it took to get there over the hills and on some paths." (Silas T, Year 9)

"Throughout the course of year 10 camp, we were able to participate in the Urban Challenge. My team had a theme of 'Men in black' and we did various activities all over Sydney Harbour. One highlight from this camp was the silent disco. It was on Cockatoo island where we had to travel by ferry to get there. I particularly enjoyed this disco because it allowed different teams to combine and socialise after being separated and scattered around the city in their own teams." (Year 10)

Student)

“Year 10 camp this year was in the city and it was challenging because we had to find our own way to get to the places we needed to be. Some of my favourite things about this camp is that we got to choose where we were going to eat that day and how to manage our money so we can all eat. I also loved surfing on the second day. I think it was a fun challenge that really pushed me.” (Year 10 Student)

"During the start of Week 2, the Year 11 cohort and I engaged in yet another school camp experience, serving as a foundational endeavor preceding our 18-month trajectory towards obtaining the high school certificate. During this period, the PC staff provided comprehensive insights, covering pivotal topics such as the future implications of Artificial Intelligence, effective memory retention strategies, and the art of purposeful revision. Emphasis was also placed on the enduring importance of motivation aligned with our guiding mottos. A notable highlight of the camp was the presence of our recently appointed principal, Mrs Easton, who shared insights into the narrative of our senior school journey. Her address underscored the resilience required during challenging moments, encouraging us to extract valuable lessons from setbacks. Beyond the substantive discussions, the camp facilitated opportunities for reconnection within our cohort. Activities such as hiking, swimming, and fishing not only added a recreational dimension but also contributed to the reinforcement of camaraderie developed over the preceding four years. This camp proved to be an enriching experience, equipping us with a foundational framework for the impending 18-month odyssey towards the HSC" (Dean S, Year 11)

“Study Camp was very helpful in being able to learn and be guided on different study methods for this upcoming year and was also good to connect more as a grade.” (Isabella C, Year 12)

**Dr Anna Nalla**

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