



# THE WAY

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS & WELLBEING - JUNIOR SCHOOL

**One of the greatest challenges for families and educators is learning to support our children and students in a world of social media and 24-hour media.** The barrage of information and social connection is constant, and it is essential for us to build skills to help our children navigate the complexity of the constantly changing world around them

This year, the Junior School is partnering with Open Parachute, an online program that covers topics such as self-esteem, resilience, social media and well-being concerns that get in the way of student engagement and concentration.

Parents and educators are aware that our students may seem to struggle more than they used to, specifically with navigating the complexity of friendships. We seek to teach common language around building resilience across the different year levels from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Open Parachute is an online program that helps the Junior School teachers at Thomas Hassall do just that.

Each week, our students experience lessons based around documentary videos which showcase Australian youth sharing their own experiences of growing up. Peer role-modelling is clinically proven to help students develop resilience, while also creating a sense of safety in the classroom, enabling students to explore their own experiences of friendship, peer relations and building positive social behaviours.

Each lesson contains exercises that enable students to analyse the learning points and practice mental health skills-building exercises. These conversations change the way students interact in other contexts outside of class, minimising the isolation and vulnerability of students when they are struggling with peers at school and at home.

I encourage you to talk to your child about what they are learning through this wonderful program. Encourage them to speak with you about how to build and maintain positive relationships at College. It will help us all navigate this changing world in a productive and safe way.

**Mrs Kylie Singles**

Director of Operations & Wellbeing – Junior School

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