THE WAY

TERM 1 | THE WAY NEWSLETTER | FRIDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2026



FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

The last few weeks have been a series of first impressions. As I have begun my role as the new Deputy Principal at the College, I have been conscious of the impression I leave on students, parents and staff in my early interactions. I have also had the unique opportunity to gather a range of first impressions of the College as I've been involved in events from Prep to Year 12. I thought I would share a little about my initial experiences, beginning with the latter.

The outworking of the Christian ethos is clear, purposeful and impactful. As staff gathered for professional development days at the start of the year, we began with a time of reflection and worship led by staff from across the College. Being reminded of the College's mission and the God at the centre of it, clearly set the tone for the year ahead. This has been mirrored in early interactions with students, as staff have taken time to share devotions and pray with them.

This is a welcoming community. You may not have considered this, but the role of a Deputy Principal is unusual. While I have opportunities to interact with all students, I have direct responsibility for only a few classes. This can result in limited individual connections. Despite this, I have been pleasantly surprised by the warm welcome I have received and by the number of students who have gone out of their way to introduce themselves, use my name, greet me as we cross paths, and be open to my involvement in various activities. This has also been the case with the parents I have had the opportunity to meet.

There is great potential here. I have been impressed by the calibre and capacity of both the students and staff. This has been evident across all areas of College life and was further

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acknowledged today at the High Achievers Assembly, where we celebrated some of the outstanding results from last year's graduates.

This final point segues into the first impression that I have sought to leave on the student body this week. My message to students has been consistent and simple: we have high expectations of them and we are committed to providing high levels of support.

While students often see expectations (or rules) as draconian or burdensome, I have encouraged them to view them through a different lens. We set expectations because we believe they can rise to meet them. In doing so, they will reach their potential and help create a positive learning culture across the College.

Equally, it is only fair to have high expectations if we are committed to providing high levels of support. Much of this support is obvious in the teaching, learning, and pastoral care provided by staff. However, other forms of support include clarity, consistency and, where necessary, consequences. This age-appropriate support is critical in helping students move from being disciplined to having self-discipline, an essential part of development and maturity for all young people.

I am pleased to say that students have responded brilliantly over the first two weeks. To my surprise, I even had some senior students tell me that they felt the new mobile phone policy made sense and would help them avoid distraction during school hours.

I look forward to working with the community as we collectively maintain high expectations and provide high support for the young people of the College as they reach their potential.

> *Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.*
> *- Proverbs 22:6*

Mr Chris Wyatt
Deputy Principal

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