



THE WAY

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FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Partnership between home and school

Over the last couple of weeks, I have had the privilege of being part of a number of parent meetings. (Before you assume anything, the reason for my involvement in these meetings has varied, not purely because a matter has been escalated.) The common theme of these meetings has overwhelmingly been the importance and impact of positive partnership between home and school.

Partnership is also a regular point of discussion at enrolment interviews. Increasingly, one of the key determinants for parents choosing Thomas Hassall for their child's education is partnership. Big ticket items are important, including shared values and standards, a strong focus on developing the whole child, strong academic results and a breadth of co-curricular opportunities. However, the College's stance towards and commitment to partnership is a common talking point.

An article published in June 2024 by AITSL (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership) titled 'Strengthening parent engagement to improve student outcomes' highlights that students achieve higher academic outcomes and experience greater wellbeing when parents and schools share responsibility for learning and stay connected in meaningful ways. I find this to be compelling.

My experience would affirm this finding and it also just makes sense. Parents are the most important people in the lives of young people but given the amount of time students spend with teachers at school, particularly Class Teachers in Primary and PC Teachers in Senior School, it is

no surprise that alignment between home and school would play a key role in supporting learning and wellbeing. When both are on the same page, it makes it easier for students to navigate their two worlds seamlessly, with expectations remaining consistent.

As a College we are committed to supporting this partnership. Events such as the recent Year 12 Learning Partnership meetings are a great example of this in action as students, parents and teachers came together to reflect on progress and to develop plans for future success and growth. Whilst we appreciate this requires additional time commitments from parents, we believe these types of meetings are critical in developing the partnership between home and school.

In a different way, this week's Easter Hat Parade and Eggshibition in the Junior School offer an opportunity for shared experience as we foster community and celebrate the significance of Jesus' death and resurrection.

The AITSL article provides the following helpful guidance about parents can support this partnership at home:

- Talk regularly with your child about learning, not just results, by asking what they're enjoying, finding challenging, or feeling proud of at school.
- Encourage effort and persistence, helping children see learning as something that develops over time rather than something they are "good at" or "not good at".
- Stay connected with the school, using newsletters, emails, or conversations with teachers to keep informed and raise questions early if concerns arise.
- Support learning at home in simple, everyday ways, such as reading together, discussing ideas, or helping children organise their work - without needing to be an expert in the content.
- Share relevant insights about your child (strengths, interests, needs) so teachers can better support their learning and wellbeing at school.
- Model positive attitudes towards school and learning, as children are strongly influenced by how adults talk about and value education.

We look forward to working with parents to strengthen our collective partnership across a student's time at Thomas Hassall and celebrating the positive impact this has on each student's growth.

"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
