



TERM 3 WEEKS 9 AND 10

6 – 17 September 2021

Important Dates – Term 3 2021

W9	Mon 6 Sep	SASS Recognition Week 2021 begins
W9	Wed 8 Sep	Year 11 2021 -> Year 12 2022 – subject changes close
W10	Mon 13 Sep	Year 11 2022 Enrolment Zoom Meeting
W10	Tue 14 Sep	Year 11 2022 Enrolment Zoom Meeting
W10	Tue 14 Sep	Virtual Heritage Day <i>Details to be confirmed</i>
W10	Wed 15 Sep	Year 12 2021 Zoom Meeting for students, parents, carers and families
W10	Fri 17 Sep	Last day of classes for Term 3



Principal's Report

I hope that all members of our school community are safe and well in these very difficult times. As discussed in our last two newsletters, my report will continue to be brief due to the number of community update letters you are receiving along with the assessment period both Year 11 and Year 12 have just concluded.

In the last two weeks of Term 3 we will be having Zoom meetings with each cohort separately to go over the transition from Term 3 to Term 4. The Year 11 meeting will focus on subject changes as students move from the Preliminary course to their Higher School Certificate course. The Year 12 meeting will concentrate on the Higher School Certificate examinations following the Premier's announcement that the examinations will be moved back to 9 November 2021. In addition, as a school we are conducting the enrolment process for Year 11 2022 through online forums.

Western Sydney University has shared with us some information designed by their teams to help provide advice and support to students, parents and families. We have included this material in the later pages of this

Continued over the page →

Principal's Report continued

newsletter. This material reinforces that while academic progress is important for all of our students, what is more important is the health and mental wellbeing of everyone in our community. If you need advice or support in this area, we have also provided you with a list of contacts later in this newsletter. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need help.

As the warmer spring weather approaches over the school holiday period, please try to take some time away from your screens and books. You may not be able to go far but taking some time to feel the sun on your back, listen to the birds and be more mindful of your surroundings provides you with an opportunity to be kind to yourself.

Sally Smithard

Principal





SMSHS Virtual Heritage Day

Tuesday 14 September 2021

**Culture
classes**

This year the annual St Marys Senior High School Heritage Day celebrations are going online.

On Tuesday 14 September, instead of attending regular classes staff and students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of cultural and physical activities for our Virtual Heritage Day.

The program, which will be emailed to students during Week 9, will include links to join the different sessions. Using Zoom, staff and students will be able to join the activities of their choice.

**Get active
and
dance**

The sessions available include activities such as a Heritage Day Trivia Quiz, a dance class, culture classes, yoga, a fitness class or a chance to complete an activity from the Heritage Day Wellbeing Grid.

Students will also have the opportunity to dress in their cultural dress and 'Send in a Selfie' to the Virtual Heritage Day Team via a Google Form.

We hope our school community enjoys the day and we look forward to hearing your feedback on our Virtual Heritage Day.

**Heritage
Day Trivia
Quiz**

**Chill out
in our
yoga
session**

**Learn
about First
Australian
games**

**Get moving in
our fitness class**

**Choose an
activity
from the
Wellbeing
Grid**

Questions or suggestions? Please contact

- Kerri-Anne, our SRC Staff Adviser – kerri-anne.brown@det.nsw.edu.au
- Surmeet, our Student Support Officer – surmeet.kaur@det.nsw.edu.au



SMSHS – SOURCES OF SUPPORT



School phone: 02 9623 8333	School email: stmaryssen-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
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Year 11 Student Adviser, Surnames A-G	Mitchell Baker	Mitchell.baker57@det.nsw.edu.au
Year 11 Student Adviser, Surnames H-O	Nicole Leong	Nicole.leong2@det.nsw.edu.au
Year 11 Student Adviser, Surnames P-Z	Jesse Vassallo	Jesse.vassallo2@det.nsw.edu.au
Year 12 Student Adviser, Surnames A-G	Nicola Preston	Nicola.preston1@det.nsw.edu.au
Year 12 Student Adviser, Surnames H-O	Luigi Serra	Luigi.serra@det.nsw.edu.au
Year 12 Student Adviser, Surnames P-Z	Tim Weston	Tim.weston4@det.nsw.edu.au
Head Teacher, Learning and Wellbeing	Mel Jacka	Melissa.jacka@det.nsw.edu.au
Learning Support Team	Margo Daly Carmel Harriden Nicole Leong Carly McPherson Dianne Pyne	Margo.daly2@det.nsw.edu.au Carmel.harriden@det.nsw.edu.au Nicole.leong2@det.nsw.edu.au Carly.mcpherson@det.nsw.edu.au Dianne.pyne@det.nsw.edu.au
School Counsellors	Aimee Tang Tracey Axisa	Please text the counsellor phone on 0417228192 during school hours to organise an appointment
Student Support Officer	Surmeet Kaur Helen Williams	Surmeet.kaur@det.nsw.edu.au Helen.muriel.williams@det.nsw.edu.au
Deputy Principal – Year 11	Danielle Ervine	Danielle.ervine@det.nsw.edu.au
Deputy Principal – Year 12	Leah Havord	Leah.havord@det.nsw.edu.au



This fortnight @ SMSHS

Monday 6 Sep	Tuesday 7 Sep	Wednesday 8 Sep	Thursday 9 Sep	Friday 10 Sep
12 Business Services 4U – Cluster E due 11 Business Services – Cluster B due 11 CAFS – Asst Task 2 due 11 IT Multimedia – Asst Task 3 due	12 Hospitality – Cluster F due	Year 12 2021 References – Google Form due at 3:20 pm Year 11 2021 / Year 12 2022 - subject changes close at 3:20 pm 12 Business Services 2U – Cluster F due 11 Visual Arts – Asst Task 3 due	12 Entertainment – Cluster H due 11 IPT – Asst Task 3 due	12 Business Services 4U – Cluster F due 11 SDD – Asst Task 3 due
Monday 13 Sep	Tuesday 14 Sep	Wednesday 15 Sep	Thursday 16 Sep	Friday 17 Sep
Year 11 2022 Zoom Enrolment Meeting	Virtual Heritage Day 2021 Year 11 2022 Zoom Enrolment Meeting 12 Entertainment – Cluster G due	Year 12 2021 Zoom Meeting with students, parents, carers and families 11 D&T – Asst Task 3 due 11 Geography - Asst Task 3 due 11 Photography – Asst Task 3 due	11 Music 1 – Asst Task 3 due	Last day of Term 3 2021

Our Teams

Principal:	Sally Smithard
School Council President:	Sonia Matthews
School Captains:	Alice Chitos Chloe Nolasco
School Executive:	
- Deputy Principal (Year 11)	Danielle Ervine
- Deputy Principal (Year 12)	Leah Havord
- English	Julie Robinson
- Mathematics	Simone Pett
- Science	Lidija Radovancevic
- Commercial Studies	Salochna Reddy
- HSIE (Rel)	Rebecca Langham
- CAPA	Nicole Bonfield
- Computing	Matthew Topp
- LOTE	Luigi Serra
- TAS/PDHPE	Rebecca Powell
- Secondary Studies	Liz Hemmings
- Learning and Wellbeing	Melissa Jacka
- First Australians	Leah Havord
- Sport and Recreation	Joanne Brines
- Business Manager (Acting)	Rebecca Zinghini
- School Administrative Manager (Rel)	Lynette Deuis
Student Advisers:	
- Year 11, Surnames A-G	Mitchell Baker
- Year 11, Surnames H-O	Nicole Leong
- Year 11, Surnames P-Z	Jesse Vassallo
- Year 12, Surnames A-G	Nicola Preston
- Year 12, Surnames H-O	Luigi Serra
- Year 12, Surnames P-Z	Tim Weston
Learning Support:	Carmel Harriden Dianne Pyne Nicole Leong Carly McPherson
Student Support Officer	Surmeet Kaur Helen Williams
Careers Adviser:	Lynette Tuckwell

Contact Us



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St Marys Senior High School Official Site - Facebook



St Marys Senior High School - Skoolbag App



Home Learning: Supporting Wellbeing

Dr Roberto Parada & Prof. Michele Simons



Helping you and your child through home learning

...as carers of children, we may worry even when things are going well. Remember that some of our digitally comfortable children are in their element and may be doing their work rather quickly and finishing up before some of their peers...

COVID has necessitated a level of social adaptation from everyone not seen in decades. Among these has been the need for many homes to become virtual online classrooms for their children's schools. Although this shift presents itself with many opportunities, it can also be a source of difficulty and frustration not only for the schools but also the young people and their carers. Teachers, parents, and young people must now navigate a form of schooling which, until COVID, was a part of a futuristic world. In this fact sheet we present some information which we hope can assist parents, carers, and their children make home schooling as hassle free as possible.

What are some strategies I can try?

Talking helps:

- Each week have a chat about what your children's week will look like; considering what the school has asked them to do. Perhaps even write this up into a schedule that can be displayed somewhere (on the fridge). With the young - and young at heart, you could even 'Play' school, by having a timetable and roles for family members such as Principal and extra students by using toys.
- Talk with your children about what they have to do – sometimes what might appear to be a lack of engagement of their learning could be the outcome of a lot of things. For example, sometimes children might be bored with the work they have been given. This might mean you have to contact the school and ask for some work that will extend them. Sometimes children may not know how to tackle the work they have been given. Again, this might need some additional resources from the school. Sometimes children are lonely and missing their friends and this is impacting on how they feel about their schoolwork. There could be a lot of things bringing about what you see..... talking is often the best way to find out!

Provide 'mini-breaks':

- Make sure that the 'chunks' of time spent on schoolwork are realistic – being in a room on your own studying is not like school; more 'mini breaks' might be a better way to manage the work. Remember that in a classroom, there is some natural down time. For example, as students walk in/out of class, and get ready to start/leave the class or laugh at a classmate's joke. So do not despair if they are not 100% on-task 100% of the time.

Schools are social places:

- We often forget that schools are social places for our children too. If there is flexibility in what the school has asked/sent home for your children to complete, think about how you can schedule in opportunities to engage them in activities that they would also do at school aside from learning:
 - Connecting with friends
 - Spending time just hanging about during breaks to recharge batteries
 - Doing some physical activities

- Ensure that these activities are built into the week and that you encourage these to be taken up – as well as schoolwork. This can also create opportunities for yourself and other members of the family who might be at home to do some activities together – going for a walk; playing football at the local park (whatever is allowed under the public health orders). It may help you with managing your working from home if your all have a 'recess' or 'lunch' together. Make this a work and school free' time – step outside and have a chat about everything else.

Privacy and space:

- It's also important to respect the privacy and space that going to school creates for your children. This is challenging to respect, particularly when there is a lot of anxiety and chatter around about the impact of COVID on students' progress. It's about finding a balance between being supportive and ensure that some learning is done and allowing your children to experience some of the autonomy they have when they are at school.
- Be aware of how you talk with your children about school; if the talk is concentrated only around doing/achievement this may act as a demotivator. School is much more to young people – it is a place where they engage with their friends, they can try things away from their families etc.
- Listen and check in. These are unusual times for your children as well as you. They may be missing the interaction with their friends or the hands-on aspects of their favourite class. This may be an opportunity for you and them. For example, you can do some Kitchen Science (search YouTube for Kitchen Science) or other activities that can be done at home.

It's not all bad:

- Finally, as carers of children, we may worry even when things are going well. Remember that some of our digitally comfortable children are in their element and may be doing their work rather quickly and finishing up before some of their peers. Prior to assuming that this is a challenge, discuss this with your children's teachers. If all is well, let them enjoy their new-found advantage by giving them a choice of what to do their extra time. Be flexible and perhaps think 'outside the box'... this might not be extra work.

Strategies to support students preparing for the HSC

Dr Kay Carroll



HSC - Hoping, Succeeding, Celebrating!

Supporting your HSC young person is an incredible challenge for every family. During times of stress and challenge it is important to build capacity, resilience, and hope in our young people. These strategies will help our young people to build skills to manage their time, maintain and grow their wellbeing, and be successful with making good decisions for academic and future life success.

Getting to the finish line

Many parents and caregivers feel like they too are in the most competitive high stakes event with their teenager hurdling towards the HSC and hoping for ATAR glory. It is a breathless, gut-wrenching battle to get to the finish line. You are at times a spectator, willing your teenager's success or a coach timing their efforts and getting them moving. These challenges can be addressed if as parents and caregivers we adopt a growth mindset and start to work on strategies with our young people to build future success, resilience, and hopefulness. We need to re-position what the HSC means to all of us and maybe start to see it as journey of "Hoping, Succeeding and Celebrating!"

How do I help my teenager with study?

Teenagers often feel overwhelmed by the amount and time pressures of study. Their normal support peer networks have changed during COVID-19 with online and remote learning. As parents we can often feel we cannot contribute to the content or knowledge areas our teenagers are struggling with, but we can use our skills in goal setting, meeting deadlines, and time management to really help out. Getting your teenager to write down tasks for each day in a student diary, whiteboard, or Google calendar is an important step. We can build in reward and chill out time into this schedule, and assist our teenagers to see how chunks of productive study gives them a sense of success and enables rewards to be enjoyed.

A great tip is to discuss what they really like to do with their time, what they must do with their time, when tasks needs to be finished by, and how long they think each task will take. You can start with a daily schedule or even map it out per week leading up to the HSC. Seems simple and practical, but it works. Studies by Adams & Blair (2019) show us if your teenager can manage their time and have an academic work and life balance, they achieve higher marks or grades in their subjects. It works because it buffers student stress and anxiety at the critical point in time and also builds stronger academic success for future study and work.

The “Write” way to academic success.

One of the simplest strategies to help with HSC study is through writing. Did you know that writing helps young people to comprehend, select information and store the knowledge in long-term memory? It also helps encode and retrieve information from long-term memory, and the more often we practise this skill, the faster and more efficient the retrieval process is. What this means is that if young people handwrite notes, key terms, practice answers and summarize some content, their ability to remember and apply that information under examination pressure is significantly improved. It helps them to retrieve information faster and removes the strain on their working memory under test conditions. While colourful highlighting is often the preferred choice for many teenagers, or adding to google docs is easy, handwriting these notes is more effective. According to Mueller and Oppenheimer (2014), students who used handwriting performed much better than students who had taken notes on a digital device. If you drill down little you find that the richer the summary notes or better practice attempts improve performance a little more too (Morehead, et al., 2019). Another tip is that handwritten notes that are revised (added to) outperform other techniques such as cramming, underlining or annotating (Brown et al., 2014).

How can I build my child's resilience for the HSC?

The HSC is an event. It is a moment in time and that does not define us. Our young people at this time can be hyper-sensitive to criticism and high expectations from us as parents and caregivers. Despite their preference for peer interaction and social media, teenagers really care about what we think as parents and caregivers (Butterfield et al., 2020) . It's important to give them a sense of what the real expectation is that we have for them; we want them to do their best, not necessarily get the ATAR of their dreams; we want them to feel like they have achieved success by getting through, rather than worrying if they have not learnt that final quote for English or formula for Mathematics. We do care that they prepare, but we respect their choice and judgment about what is good preparation and when they feel they have learnt and consolidated a topic or concept. Teenagers need to see how they have some choice and control over their success and become intrinsically motivated to achieve their own goals rather than worrying about the ATAR or HSC mark they think we want for them. We also need to share stories of our own successes and sometimes failures and what we learnt from this. Creating each new goal for this one moment of the HSC will help our young people to tangibly see the next opportunities and move towards these next experiences. Recognising that failure is sometimes part of the success can help young people to build this resilience.



Dealing with difficult moments and distractions

Deliberative procrastination is often a behaviour that HSC young people excel in. There is social media, gaming, Netflix, and facetime absorbing their interest and time. Negotiating the distractions can be challenging. Some tips include discussing how each distraction can take 20 minutes to re-group and reconnect with the task. We can help teenagers to build in social media time into their day as a priority, and then have open conversations about checking into social media after tasks, phone free zones or hours, and creating spaces that are comfortable, low noise and well set up for study. Ideally another room with a bench or desk space or even outdoor areas that students can access with wi-fi.

When dealing with the melt-downs try and stay calm and see this a normal setback. Over 40% of teenagers at this time can feel very distressed or even depressed or anxious. Your teenager may be negative, lethargic or a little more irritable. We need to avoid reacting and understand their pressures. If our young person is increasingly showing these signs, then help from others such as Headspace, Reach Out and Beyond Blue can really be important.

- <https://headspace.org.au>
- <https://au.reachout.com/>
- <https://www.beyondblue.org.au>

Creating safe and stable routines around teenagers' priorities and needs such as sleeping, eating, and socialising is important and can help to avoid the difficult moments or get us all back on track. So, agree on a wake-time time and the wind-down time. Making some time to share a quick lunch or coffee break with young people between study periods is a great tip and helps with connection and checking in on their wellbeing and sense of progress or mastery of a topic. Finally, it may be good to have a chat about how much sleep a teenager really needs- 9-10 hours per day. Give your teenager a reason to be asleep until 9am.

How can we create hopefulness in the HSC year?

The HSC can be a sign for hope. Hope that it could bring an opportunity to go to TAFE, get a new job, attend university or achieve a long held career goal. For others it could be a hope for some freedom from study, from routine. It is also an important rite of passage that signals the end of schooling and should be celebrated as a significant achievement for all families and communities.

Beyond the HSC

The HSC allows our young people to do amazing things beyond the school years. Today there are so many pathways to future careers and work opportunities. One way to focus on the journey beyond the HSC is to be informed and help your teenager navigate this space.

Good links to check out are:

University information for HSC students (NSW Department of Education)

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/stay-healthy-hsc/resources/university-information-for-HSC-students>

Special Program for most impacted HSC students (NSW Department of Education)

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/stay-healthy-hsc/resources/news-special-program-for-most-impacted-HSC-students>

After the HSC, there are many options (NSW Department of Education)

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/stay-healthy-hsc/resources/after-the-hsc-there-are-many-options>

References

- Adams, R. V., & Blair, E. (2019). Impact of time management behaviors on undergraduate engineering students' performance. *SAGE Open*, 9(1), 2158244018824506.
- Butterfield, R. D., Silk, J. S., Lee, K. H., Siegle, G. S., Dahl, R. E., Forbes, E. E., ... & Ladouceur, C. D. (2021). Parents still matter! Parental warmth predicts adolescent brain function and anxiety and depressive symptoms 2 years later. *Development and psychopathology*, 33(1), 226-239.
- Brown, P. C., Roediger, H. L., & McDaniel, M. A. (2014). Make it stick: The science of successful learning (p. 313). The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Morehead, K., Dunlosky, J., & Rawson, K. A. (2019). How much mightier is the pen than the keyboard for note-taking? A replication and extension of Mueller and Oppenheimer (2014). *Educational Psychology Review*, 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-019-09468-2>
- Mueller, P. A., & Oppenheimer, D. M. (2014). The pen is mightier than the keyboard: Advantages of longhand over laptop note taking. *Psychological Science*, 25, 1159-1168.