



BIRRONG BULLETIN

The Newsletter of Birrongo Girls High School

Cooper Road, Birrongo 2143 Telephone: 9644 5057

Issue No. 5

July 2021

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Dear Parents and Carers,

If there is anything that can be learned from the way that we have commenced Term 3, 2021, it is the incredible nature of the Birrongo Girls High School community. It was over six weeks ago that I approached my staff and told them that they needed to prepare for online learning, in the event that cases began to spread. In actual fact, this had been an ongoing discussion and matter for evaluation and preparation since our experiences Learning from Home in 2020. We were as prepared as possible and the results so far, speak volumes about the dedication of our staff, the support of our parents and the commitment of our students to going about their core business of learning.

Latest COVID safety updates

As I write this on Sunday afternoon, we are preparing for the new phase of the lockdown that is focusing on the Canterbury-Bankstown, Liverpool and Fairfield LGAs. It is so important not to be angry or upset about the measures being put in place. Whatever we are being asked to do is temporary. In Australia, we have been so blessed not to have experienced war on our soil. We know that we will see our family members in a few weeks. We live in a country where we can access food, electricity, water and general safety and security easily. Everything we do contributes to how quickly we can get out of lockdown. Victoria experienced over a hundred days in hard lockdown and they got through it. We are doing so much better. Hold on. It won't take long and it is easier to get through it if you have an accepting and positive attitude. It always takes a few days for the newsletter to be published following all the articles being submitted. Hopefully, by the time you read this, all our families celebrating Eid would have done so complying with the COVID safety rules and our cases have dropped enough for us to see the light at the end of the lockdown tunnel.

Remember, the health advice is 'you must assume that everyone you come into contact with has COVID' and this is why you must limit contact, wear a mask at all times in public and practice meticulous hygiene practices. Our community is also reminded that people who are the most infectious have not shown any symptoms when they are infectious out in the community.

The latest COVID safety update deems that only bare minimum supervision will be offered at school, to receive the children of essential workers.

No other children should be sent to school, nor should they be travelling on public transport or stopping unnecessarily to shops.

Welcome back, welcome to new staff and farewell and thank you to staff who will be missed.

Last term, we farewelled Ms Lord, Mr Da Silva, and Ms Cosar. We wish them the very best at their new school settings. Ms Boyle will be relieving Head Teacher PDHPE. This term we welcome back Ms Krcic who has been on leave and was sorely missed. We thank Mr Atteya for relieving in her place last term.

We also welcome our new staff Lisa Lofthouse, Marwa Abedine, Tasmeea Kabir, Hosay Zarmati and Iman El Darwiche. Welcome to our staff and our school community. It is not easy to start a new school during lockdown and working from home. Meeting your students for the first time on Zoom is a very different experience. Ms Krcic experienced it last year when she started and has come back from leave to the same situation. It is very surreal.

Further advice for Parents about Learning from Home

For the best outcomes from the Learning from Home experience, parents are advised to

- Reorganise the home décor and set up dedicated study environments that are within the line of sight of parent supervision. We understand that this is challenging for large families whether they are sharing devices or not, but we remind you that our students attend classes with 20-30 and do have the capacity to focus while others are talking or asking questions.

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- Use the weekly schedule to support the organisation at home. Set up an alarm, organise the children in the family to get breakfast and pack snacks and lunch ready for break times.

Communication and support for Parents and Carers

The school has been publishing and disseminating regular information and advice through a range of communication portals. These include:

- The parent portal
- Facebook and Instagram
- The school website
- SkoolBag App
- Text messages

If you are uncertain about how to access any or all of these portals of communication, please contact the school on the phone for guidance.

Additionally, the Department of Education has the Learning from Home Hub where additional resources are provided.

The school homework centre is still running online, via email and over the phone four days per week.

Supporting Student Wellbeing

In order to support student wellbeing, we all need to model wellbeing practices. Regular breaks, fresh air, exercise and healthy eating are always a strong foundation. Supervising device use and ensuring students get the appropriate rest and sleep is vital.

Our counsellors are operating online and have proved essential for our students during this time. We recognise that some parents are struggling with their own mental health and encourage them to seek out counselling through their GPs and other support services offered by local council and NSW Health.

Please encourage your students to attend the Tuesday Wellbeing lesson timetabled for 9am for the duration of Learning from Home. This is how we remind all our students and teachers to practice GEM:

- Gratitude
- Empathy
- Mindfulness

Authentic practice of these three things daily helps all of us keep things into perspective and regulate the way we feel and see our place and purpose in the world. This is vital during these challenging times.

I hope that the next time I write to you in the Bulletin, we will be back to a more normal way of life.

I encourage you all to stay up to date with the school's communications that are released daily or every few days, depending on the need.

We wish all our families celebrating in the coming days, Eid Mubarak and send blessings and wishes of good health and safety to all.

Zena Dabaja
Principal

REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

Welcome to Term 3 2021, one of the busiest terms for all students across the school. We have commenced Term 3 under interesting circumstances. There are no words to really express the way we are all feeling with all the changes that are occurring from one week to the next. The important message is 'we all need to continue to do what we have to do to get through this'. We need to keep our focus on the job at hand and get it done. Education is our focus and we all need to work towards the common goal.



Year 12 students are working exceptionally hard online as they near their trial HSC examinations which commence at this point in Week 5. This is the last term of course work for the students before they embrace their HSC examinations in Term 4. All students will need to work hard and knuckle down into strong home study habits to assist their examination preparation. Take your teachers' advice and don't let the obstacles get in your way of success. We all look forward to teaching Year 12 back on site when we are allowed to do so.

Students should also have a look at NESA's Stay Healthy HSC website which contains fantastic resources and strategies for study techniques, exam tips and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/stay-healthy-HSC?q=>



Year 11 students are also engaging with their course work online and interacting with teachers via Zoom meetings. Year 11 will be involved in the nomination and selection of the 2021 – 2022 Prefect body towards the later part of this term.

This process is about selecting students who represent the ideal 'Birrong Girl' in all areas of life. Prefects who are selected are role models and ambassadors for our school community and the process is taken very seriously. Year 11 students also face their final Preliminary course examinations starting in Week 7 at this point. Year 11 students need to ensure they work hard with online learning to achieve their personal best until we can all be together onsite. The tips given above in the Stay Healthy HSC are equally recommended for Year 11 students. Make sure that whilst you are learning at home, you stay active during the day, change your physical environment regularly and try to stick to a consistent routine each day. Remember, your teachers are thinking of you and are there ready to support you at any time.

Year 10 students have also engaged well with online studies or with paper packages that were picked up at the start of the term. The Year 10 Subject Selection program has been delayed slightly and will be presented in a different format this year. The aims of the Subject Selection processes are to introduce information about the range of courses students can select for their Year 11 Preliminary and continue into their HSC course of study in 2022 to 2023. Students will gain valuable insights into the rigour required for all Preliminary courses before having to make their ultimate selections. The subject selection information session might be an online Zoom meeting and we seek interested parents who want to join the session which will focus on the Year 10 subject selection process regarding appropriate course selections, Preliminary and HSC requirements and ATAR information to assist in the overall selection of 2022 courses. If students or parents have any concerns with subject selections please contact the school and speak to the relevant Year Adviser, Head Teacher or Mrs George.

Year 9 students are working hard each period, logging into the Google classroom to access their work, complete it and repost the work for the teacher to mark. Some classes are also being held via Zoom which helps students and teachers to connect and discuss the finer points of the lesson together. We can't wait to see you again at school soon.

Year 8 students will be preparing for the selection of their Year 9 2022 elective subjects when we return to school life onsite. All Year 8 students will be issued with a course booklet outlining individual course information before they have to narrow their selections down to the two most appropriate courses for them to study throughout 2022-2023. It has been great to see Year 8 engaging with learning via the Google classroom. Some of the teachers have been using Zoom to lead the lessons and engage with the students whilst we are learning from home. We look forward to your return to school.

Year 7 have picked up the flow using the Google classroom to access their work. When they return to regular classes at school they will be engaging in a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) project. The project starts with a STEAM skills immersion development day and will continue to expand their skills during their maths, VA, TAS and science lessons. The girls will work in teams to create a project incorporating the elements of STEAM. This is something for you all to look forward to.

We encourage students to contact the school if they need support whilst we are learning from home. The Homework Centre is still in operation and staff are available to help any student with their online work, assessments or study routines after school Monday to Thursday.

We look forward to seeing all the girls back as soon as we can.

Keep safe.

Mrs George, Mrs Andrews and Ms Cross
Deputy Principals

INTRODUCING THE NEW TEACHERS

Lisa Lofthouse
TAS



I am so honoured to be working with the TAS department at this amazing school. You have all made me feel so welcome.

My teaching career started in 2005 as a Chemistry, Physics and Lower School Science teacher. Over the years, I have worked in some very small schools that required me to teach K-10 in Science, Maths, Art, Computing and pretty much anything that needs to be taught. I took 10 years off from teaching to raise my 2 boys but the call to work with teenagers was too strong so I started casual teaching a few years ago.

Outside of the classroom, I am an avid gamer and get my hands dirty in any art project or cooking project I can get my hands on. My dream weekend is teaching my boys (by winning) how to play Mario Kart and making pancakes for breakfast, lunch and dinner. I also love to read, my all-time favourite author is Traci Harding.

Online teaching has been an interesting learning experience for me. I really want to thank all those helping me navigate this and to my students for being AMAZING in this time.

I look forward to getting to know everyone better over the next few terms and can't wait to see everyone's smiling faces when we return.

Marwa Abedine
History



Hello Birrong Girls High School community. My name is Marwa and I have recently joined the History/LOTE faculty at Birrong Girls after completing a very positive placement experience!

I am a graduate from Western Sydney University where I have majored in two key learning areas – History and English. I am very fortunate to have the opportunity to continue my teaching and learning experience in a school like Birrong Girls High.

Teaching has always been a passion of mine, bringing together education with the opportunity of empowering the next generation. I believe that education has the power to support and acknowledge all students to be the best version of themselves, and I hope to impart this in the classroom. This is such a rewarding job, and I am super excited to start working with such talented staff members, supporting the students through their journey, and becoming part of the school community.

In the words of Nelson Mandela, *education is the most powerful tool which you can use to change the world* – so let us change it!

Tasmeea Kabir
Mathematics



Hello to everyone in the Birrong Girls High School community. My name is Tasmeea Kabir and I am looking forward to teaching Mathematics at Birrong Girls High School this year. I am a Science/Maths graduate and have been part of BGHS relief staff for a

while.

When I'm not in the classroom, I enjoy spending time with family and friends and most importantly my two boys who fill my days with lots of laughter and loud noises!

It has been strange and somewhat stressful to start this term with online teaching. However, the staff and students at this school have been very cooperative and have gone out of their way to make this stage easier for everyone. I cannot wait until we all go back to face-to-face regular teaching and continuing with the school year.

Thank you for welcoming me into your wonderful school. I am excited to meet everyone and to become part of the wider school community.

8th ANNUAL BIRTHING KIT ASSEMBLY DAY



Our 8th annual Birthing Kit Assembly Day was held on 19 June in partnership with Zonta Club Sydney West. Our focus and intent is to save the lives of women and their babies in underdeveloped countries. Each year our dedicated Amnesty Team fundraises money to ensure that this day can be made possible.

At \$5 each, a birthing kit includes the necessary equipment to improve the birthing environment for women in Africa. The kit is packed into small, lightweight packages which contain supplies to satisfy the basic requirements for a clean birth. Each kit includes a plastic sheet to prevent the mother and baby coming into contact with the ground, soap, surgical gloves, a sterile scalpel blade, 3 strings for the umbilical cord and 5 clean gauze sheets. Though basic, these materials make a substantial difference in providing clean and safe deliveries. This significantly reduces the risk of infection, disease and in some cases even death.

This year we held the largest workshop at Birrong so far, with 72 volunteers in attendance including 38 Amnesty Team members and 18 Zonta volunteers. Many members of the staff and parents were in attendance as well. The workshop was a great success. This was made possible by our volunteers who worked tirelessly to help assemble 1,000 birthing kits from 9am to noon.



Ms Dabaja, Principal and Mr Fielding, Director Educational Leadership with participants at the Birthing Kit Assembly Day

The school's generosity and support of the Amnesty Team has been critical to its success. It costs \$5,000 to assemble 1,000 kits, with \$2,000 of the money being donated by Zonta. Stalls such as the Harmony Day BBQ, Year 10 Commerce Mother's Day Stall, Amnesty Donation Drive and Amnesty Women's Day Pizza Stall assisted in raising the remaining \$3000.



We're lucky to be part of a school that encourages girls to help improve the status of women all around the world. We would like to thank the Amnesty Team members, parents, volunteers and staff for your tremendous hard work. Thank you Mr Sarna and Ms Zomaya for organising this rewarding and successful event that brought the community and volunteers together. Thank you Ms Dabaja for the delicious lunch and ongoing support toward such worthwhile initiatives. Thank you Zonta for giving us an opportunity to make a positive difference and empower women in disadvantaged communities. Lastly, we would like to thank the students of the school for their relentless support across all of the Amnesty Team's fundraising initiatives.

By: Natania Levula and Daliya El Helou (Year 11)

PDHPE REMOTE LEARNING

PDHPE has taken online learning in its stride, despite the challenges of being a predominantly practical subject. Students have been communicating with their teachers via Google classroom, Zoom and email. Students have been creating and participating in fun games with their families that use resources found in most households, such as pillows, socks and cups. Teachers have also been creating instructional videos for their practical classes which allow students to see their teacher demonstrating skills for them to try in their own homes with a range of resources. We encourage all students who are learning from home to engage in 20 minutes of physical activity every day, whether that is a walk with the family or games in the lounge room. We hope you are all staying active and healthy in this difficult time.



Ms Zarmati and Mrs Graham demonstrating their soccer skills on video for students.

By: PDHPE Faculty

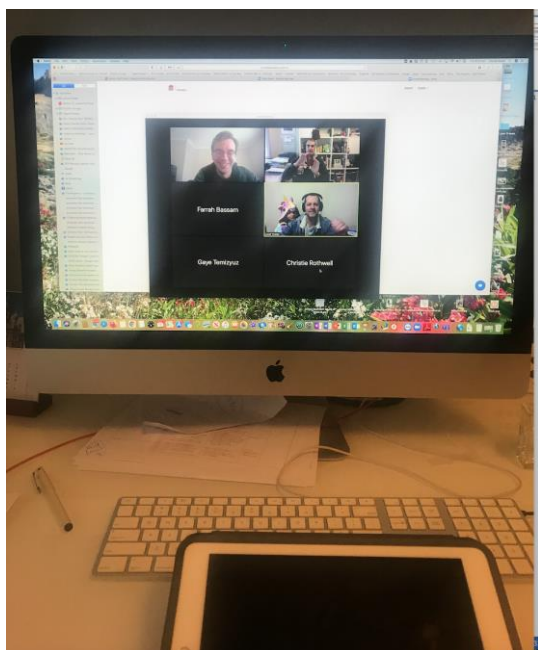
REMOTE LEARNING IN SCIENCE – WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT WE COULD SEE CHANGES HAPPENING SO QUICKLY?

Although we are all taking time to adjust to the changes that are happening, it is certainly an opportunity to reflect upon what is happening and see that science is real and it happens around us every day. Imagine being one of the many people who are involved in developing new ways to test people, protecting people, and caring for people who unfortunately get sick. These are all scientists who apply their knowledge and skill to quickly make our world a better place.

Science is at the core of our response to this challenge. It guides the decisions that are needed to keep us safe today and into the future. We hope that you stay safe and take this opportunity to learn about using technology to learn from home and think about what you may enjoy doing in the future.

We have been happy to see so many students engaging online and doing the work that we have set. We know it is not the same as being in class, but learning is at the core of identifying and being ready to take advantage of opportunities to “reach for the stars”.

Stay safe and contact your teachers if you have any concerns and focus on the opportunities that the current situation presents rather than the limitations.



What it looks like for a teacher...

Mr Saule, Head Teacher
(for the Science Faculty)

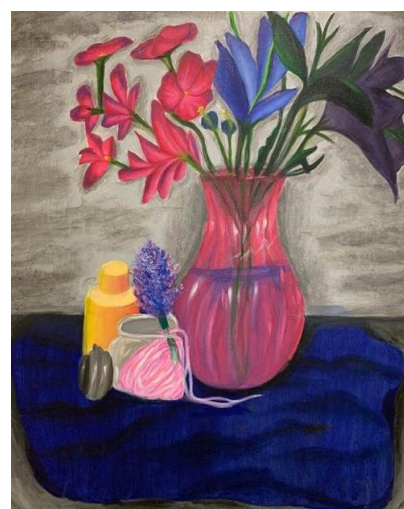
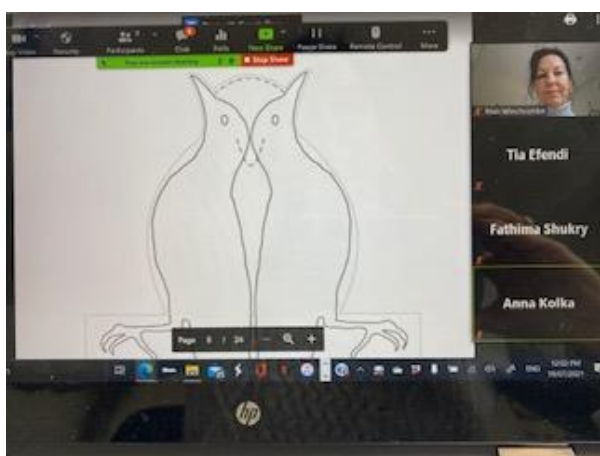
CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS REPORT

The students have transitioned to online learning in the practical subjects of Visual Arts, Music and Photography with enthusiasm and flexibility towards newly introduced approaches in their making and studying. Their practical tasks are being modified to use resources that are easily acquired from around the home and the use of digital technology has allowed for creating, manipulating and expressing the students' ideas.

Just prior to transitioning to online learning, Year 7 Visual Arts students completed the first step in creating ceramic birds using the pinch building method and expressing human-like personalities. These whimsical bird sculptures (see picture) are sitting respectfully still and quiet, eagerly awaiting their human creators to return and bring them to life by adding the finishing touches to their surface decoration. Just like the bird sculptures, the teachers are missing the face to face time with the students and are grateful to be able to still connect with the students online.

In the meantime, the Year 7 Visual Arts students are eagerly embracing the continuation of this unit online. During their online learning they are now extending their skills in creating magical, fantasy birds using templates, found objects, video clips and artist examples provided by their teachers via shared screens and Zoom lessons (see picture). This has been made possible by their connections through their already established Visual Arts Google classroom.





In the period before commencing online learning, the Year 9 Visual Arts students were developing their skills in still-life painting (see pictures). They were inspired by case studies of artists like Margaret Olley and while in the classroom, students set up and photographed their own still-life composition. As part of this process, the students were required to consider placement of their selected objects with a focus to create a visually balanced composition. During the painting process students did a great job demonstrating their knowledge and understanding about applying the Elements and Principles of Art & Design and considering the light-source and where the light was hitting objects to create highlights and cast shadows.

Well done to all of our students who are doing a fantastic job engaging in our subjects online while extending their skills in the Creative and Performing Arts. We are so proud of your continued effort.

Ms Winchcombe
Head Teacher CAPA

Photography, Video and Digital Imaging (PVDI)

The Year 12 PVDI class is currently engaged in their final photographic portfolio production using the Arranged Image concept to develop further the relevant aesthetics and photographic techniques involved in production of Still Life photography. The unit aims to inspire towards an advertising career, combining commercial design and photography. The students will be engaged in their own product marketing and website design.

The Year 11 class explored their personal or family histories, stories and experiences to develop a range of layered images in Adobe Photoshop in order to thoughtfully interpret uniquely personal concepts of time, past and present.

Term 2 was remarkably busy indeed as the Year 10 students created and edited short video samples based on the Design Elements in Adobe Premier Pro, finally adding sound samples to their experimental work with some visually unique final effects. The skills gained will lead toward a lengthier production of their own unique video using DSLR cameras.

The Year 9 PDM class completed a series of dramatic portrait photographs using DSLR cameras and Adobe Photoshop enhancement tools. These were taken in natural lighting as well as the old dark room come fully functioning photo studio with key lighting. Students were able to produce their own individually designed 'GOBOS' or Go Between cardboard filters, finally incorporating shadow and key lighting as well as photographic elements and Photoshop postproduction techniques to display highly emotive and expressive artworks.

Mr Pazin

CAPA Faculty



Yasmine Abedine Yr 9



Eman Kassem Yr 9



Keziah Buban Yr 9



Ji Nam Yr 9



Nastaran Mohammadi Yr 9



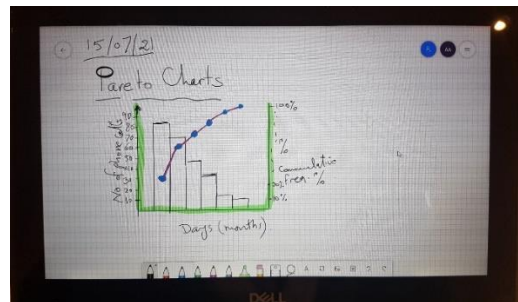
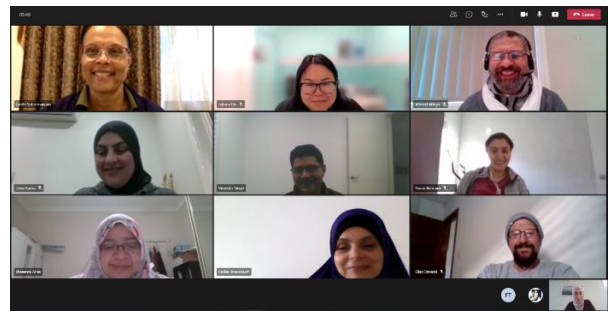
Batool Hihi Yr 11

MATHEMATICS FACULTY WORKING FROM HOME

The start of Term 3 2021 has proven challenging with the transition to online learning yet again! But the experiences of 2020 have allowed the Mathematics teachers and students to thrive in their online learning.

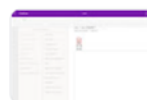
Mathematics teachers have been very positive, engaging with their students in their online classrooms and working very hard behind the scenes to develop quality online lessons for all students! The QuickSmart team and Numeracy team have been working hard to support our students with specific needs.

We are very proud of BGHS students as they have been applying themselves to their online learning. We encourage students to stay positive and continue their amazing effort.



Senida Krcic
12:31 PM

Hi Girls,
the lessons can be found by clicking on this link and following the steps



10M4
<https://schoolsnsw-my.sharep...>

2 class comments



Maysa El-Kabbout 12:55 PM
miss thanyou for today it really helps 😊😊😊

Ms Krcic
Head Teacher Mathematics

FROM THE REMOTE ENGLISH DESK

Term 3 started unconventionally with a lockdown. Thankfully, we were able to transition to remote learning seamlessly. Our capacity to interact collaboratively and professionally put us in a good position to establish protocols needed to deliver engaging and meaningful lessons. Below you'll see a selection of our experiences from last term to now. We hope you all stay safe and well during this lockdown and we look forward to seeing our students in real life very soon.

English faculty daily check-in has us smiling and connecting.



Year 7 were keen to commit their lockdown experiences to poems that are called cinquains (cinquains are a form of syllabic poetry characterised by a distinctive 5 line structure: 1st line: 2 syllables. 2nd line: 4 syllables. 3rd line: 6 syllables. 4th line: 8 syllables.)

Below is a selection of reactions to lockdown that we could empathise with.

Year 7 Cinquains

lockdown
I am stuck in
my house but not alone
I have my family but still
I'm stuck
(Hamidah)

(a poem about visiting relatives)
They/all
Gave/me/co/vid
Cause/I/went/to/their/house
And/now/I'm/in/the/hos/pi/tal
Oh/no
(Lujane)

I am
here trapped indoors
nowhere to go or see
just me and my family indoors
I'm trapped
(Zainab)

I feel
very annoyed
because it is lockdown
and I don't want to stay home
I'm bored
(Aala)

I feel
Very upset
We have to stay inside
Because of corona virus
I'm sad
(Salam)

NAIDOC Week



During NAIDOC Week, 8B chose an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who they believed should be recognised for the work they have done in our society and the contributions they have made.

They believed that students should know more about our First Nations people and put together a Hall of Fame where they researched their chosen person. This will be put up at school when we return. Please see the Eddie Mabo poster at the end of this Bulletin.

Theatresports



Throughout Term 2, our two Theatresports teams trained vigorously and gamed hard to cement their spot amongst Sydney's best. The Intermediate Theatresports Team included: Xenobia Elali, Zanjabella Zoud, Lara Tayyem, Nour Abdelkader and Bariya Nazha. The Senior Theatresports Team included: Danielle Rifahi, Alicia Kamandiyapa, Safa Laftah, Angela Gao and Gloria Barber. We battled through the heats against teams such as Mount St Joseph's, St Patrick's College, Tara Anglican School for Girls and Crestwood High School. Both teams came through having learned a lot and earning their place at the semi-finals. During the semi-finals, both the Intermediate and the Senior team had reduced numbers and some new teams to face (including Ashfield Boys and Newington College). At the end of it, both teams came out middle of the pack (5th out of 8 or 9 depending on the night). Our girls are ready and raring to go for next year's competition with a whole lot of new tools under their belt.

Year 12 Drama

Term 2 is Group Devised Performance term for our HSC Drama class and they've spent 10 weeks of it hard at work developing an entirely original piece of theatre. Even with lockdown putting a damper on most in-person rehearsals during the holidays, the students couldn't be deterred from improving and refining their piece in time for their assessment in Week 1 of Term 3. Returning to Term 3 with remote learning threw another spanner in the works, but

thanks to huge support from Ms Dabaja, our DPs, Ms Caravas, Ms Waters and Ms Bolanca, our girls were able to rehearse and perform (albeit with a few extra layers!). Here is a photo of their performance - face shields, gloves and all. Congratulations to the girls for completing their assessment under such challenging circumstances and best wishes for their ongoing rehearsals in the lead-up to the HSC!



show went on regardless and what a fantastic show it was!

Mr Kalayzich's line dancing was a hit with 7S, taking out the encouragement award for the fastest feet and best hats this side of the Great Divide. A group from Ms Hooper's Year 10 class overcame a series of injuries to take out the senior prize. Well done to Yosra Nouredine, Xenobia Elali, Breanna Leha, Venus Parwany, Mobina Ghasemi and Zanjabella Zoud for the winning choreography. Special thanks to Rayanne Akkaoui and Jasmine El Mawas for stepping in at the last minute to perform at the display, an amazing effort girls!

And finally our winning act was Ms Hooper's 8H with Salute! These girls wowed us with a sassy energetic dance showed us young women today are at their most powerful when moving in time together.

Thank you to the PE staff for their choreographic prowess and flawless organisation. We hope the crowds return to cheer us on next year.

By: Ms Waters

Story Factory Update from Ms Waters

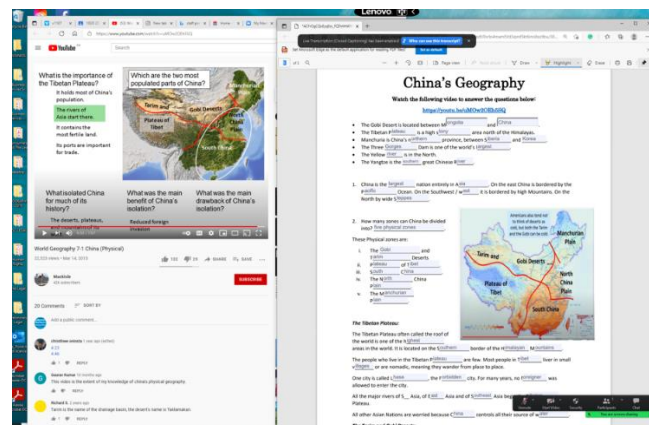


The school's wonderful partnership with The Story Factory bore rich fruit last term as both 8C and 9English6 produced original publications.

8C developed their powers of self expression while creating anthology of poetry EcoPoPro. Year 8 wrote and enjoyed sharing many poems of the natural world and made sophisticated connections to their own experience and growth.

9English6 took us on a thrilling journey through disaster in their Anthology the Clifi Diaries. For the uninitiated, Clifi is an exciting new genre which sets stories in a future beset by climate change catastrophes. 9E6 led their characters through challenges from storms, droughts, floods and even a giant snow lion. Year 9 were invited to continue to develop their stories by submitting further pages to the Story Factory to be edited by a mentor and Delilah Tuafe-Mafi received a voucher for participating in this program.

FROM THE SOCIAL SCIENCES FACULTY

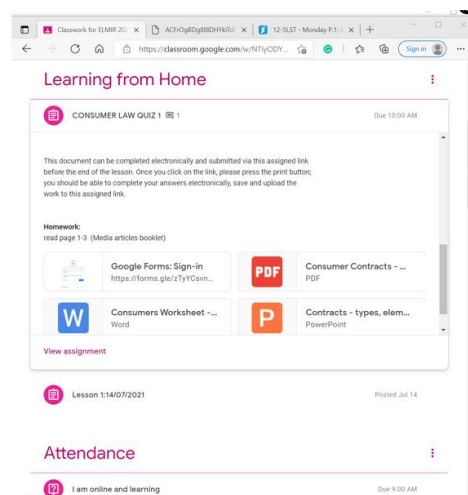


10G5 working on video together, screen sharing and answering questions on Zoom

BIRRONG DANCES!

In Week 9 the Year 7 and 8 Showcase saw a record number of dance acts take to the stage making life very difficult for the PE faculty who had to decide who to send through to the Dance Display. Congratulations to all the girls who stepped up to perform in front of their peers. Your hard work and energy shone through on the day.

In Week 10 our local primary schools were no doubt very disappointed to be told they were not able to attend the Dance Display this year, but the



LIBRARY NEWS

2021 NSW Premier's Reading Challenge



NSW Department of Education

2021 NSW Premier's Reading Challenge

Start reading now!

www.premiersreadingchallenge.nsw.edu.au

Key dates for students in K-10:

Challenge opens Monday March 1

Challenge closes for student entries Friday August 20

Artwork by Dr Bronwyn Bancroft



The 2021 Premier's Reading Challenge closes on Friday 20 August 2021!

There is still a month to go! That is plenty of time! Do you need access to books to read while learning at home?

Email Mr Davidson at:

victor.davidson@det.nsw.edu.au to access free eBooks while access to our physical collection is unavailable.

CBCA Book Week

The countdown is on to find out which books were judged the best!

The Shortlist is at

<https://www.cbca.org.au/shortlist-2021>

There are competitions in six categories for a wonderful range of prizes!

Email victor.davidson@det.nsw.edu.au with your entries for Book Review or original fairy tale. If you want to enter for the categories of manga, puppet, model or poster, you can send a photo of your entry. Prizes will be awarded in the library at lunchtime on 27 August.



Mr Davidson
Teacher Librarian

RESILIENCE PROJECT



Birrong Girls School

Messages to Martin Heppell, former Australian Rules footballer, who is now working with the Resilience Project. Martin recorded and sent us a spirited and motivational message to support us during our lockdown. The video link is below if you would like to view it.

<https://vimeo.com/573790461/dacbc6b736>

On Tuesday 20 July, students viewed Martin's wonderful video message during our first Wellbeing lesson. After viewing the video, students wrote a message to Martin and below are some examples.

Mrs Salvagio
Head Teacher Female Students

Year 12

Dear Martin,

I would like to thank you for continually motivating me and the girls at my school. We are all so grateful for you. I particularly live by GEM (gratitude, empathy and mindfulness). These three principles have guided me to a more fulfilled and enlightened life. I think that it is absolutely critical that we learn about empathy as many of us do forget to put ourselves in other's shoes. So thank you, thank you for shining a light on this. Your message is really comforting knowing that we are supported by our wonderful teachers. It's really hopeful and positive. I really liked your suggestion about a morning routine that is filled with good music, exercise and laughter. Your videos are always really optimistic and bring a smile to everyone's face. They have really enriched my wellbeing and enabled me to look at life through a new and more refined lens that is positive! Hajer Yr 12

Dear Martin,

I'd like to thank you for your positive video in the morning. Despite the turbulent times, you have made me realise that a positive outlook could alter the direst of situations so I'm attempting to keep that notion alive in the way I think and conduct myself. I will take your advice on exercising, music, laughter and dance in the morning in order to acquire and maintain a fresh start to the day. I'm highly appreciative of your message and I know I can get through lockdown with the unbending support of my community, school, teachers and individuals such as yourself. Thank you! Noor Yr 12

Dear Martin,

Thank you for the positive advice! It really made me realise that it's those little things I could do, to feel better. And it changed the way I looked at how lockdown is going. Right now I'm feeling motivated and excited to start out my day, implementing those little stress-relieving activities; colouring before bed. You've also made me appreciate the school's support network more, and how I'm surrounded by awesome teachers! It was really nice getting a little rev from your advice at the start of the day, and it put a smile on my face. Thank you:) Regards, Nancy Yr 12

Dear Martin,

Thank you for the empathetic and light-hearted message! It has made me feel as though the support network I have, has just expanded even further, and made me feel more optimistic as well. I liked the manner in which you delivered the message as it encouraged us to feel more optimistic and taught us to release stress through mindfulness activities such as colouring & puzzles, as well as doing the things we find enjoyable to do. I found the message quite helpful in reassuring us that the lockdown should not hinder our opportunities and motivation to pursue our hobbies, and the personal manner it was delivered

in also made it feel like a one-on-one conversation, which made me feel as though it was directly addressed to me. Sidra Yr 12

Year 11

Dear Martin,

Thank you for taking time out of your day to send this message. I have found a lot of what you said to be truly helpful honestly. These past few days have been gruelling, to say the least. But I have managed to find solace in the form of cleaning. I wake up early morning, I clean my room by doing my bed and making my table tidy, and then I get to work. It's been very calming to wake up in a room I feel happy being in, and it's made online school really enjoyable, minus the amount of schoolwork, of course.

While cleaning I make sure to be very quiet because my entire house is asleep until 11am at the latest so it does feel very lonely at home. But I tend to play music to fill the void of silence I'm thrown in day in and day out, which has actually been very helpful, both mentally and physically because I like moving around when I listen to music.

Though I originally was very excited about school online, I must say that that view has changed drastically. It's hard to find help when I need it, about homework or general classwork. So I do think I've fallen behind a little and I do feel myself starting to stress, but, as today is Eid, I'm going to give myself a break just for this day and then get back to work somehow straight after. Thank you again for your inspiring message. Sincerely, Aisha. Yr 11

Dear Martin,

Thank you so much for being there at Birrong Girls' toughest times and it truly means a lot to me and everyone else. Thank you for always reminding me about gratitude, empathy and mindfulness and I am now going to focus on these 3 elements and will always remind myself to be grateful for the things I have and will try and to stay positive during this lockdown. So far I have completed many colouring pages, built around 3 Legos and am focusing on a 1000 puzzle at the moment. Doing these activities with loved ones has truly helped me in staying positive and has helped me to bond more with them. Thank you so much Martin for the whole wellbeing program throughout the whole year and hopefully we see more entertaining and enjoyable videos from you soon. Yours sincerely, Hanan Yr 11

Dear Martin,

Firstly, I would just like to thank you for dedicating your time into making a video for the Birrong Girls community. Both staff and students are very appreciative towards your efforts. The past 2 terms, I have very much valued participating in the Resilience Project. Due to the current crisis we're in, in Sydney, I have found it difficult to communicate with my teachers as I'm used to

visiting their staffroom and not their emails. If lockdown does teach me one thing, it's that I'm grateful to live in a country where clever decision making is being made and wise people know how to take care of us when we're in need. For most people, it has been challenging.

I have always had a large appreciation for my amazing teachers but learning from home has made me gain a different level of appreciation for them. Most of my teachers have children of their own and during this time, as a teacher, it would be very stressful as students rely on their teachers' constant support. I would like to commend all the staff of Birrong Girls for their time, dedication and sacrifices they have made in order for the students to feel like they're still in a classroom learning. I cannot imagine what it would be like being a teacher in this current moment.

I hope yourself and your family are well. Thank you for your time and constant motivational videos, I can personally say, I have felt like a better student both mentally and physically. From Analeise :)

Dear Martin,

Thanks for the great advice and video that you sent. Thank you for taking time out of your day to film the short clip. Your energy has inspired me to have a new perspective towards online learning, you made me smile for the first time since school started. I will take on board your advice and implement the 3 things, music, laughter and exercise. Thank you for reminding me to care about my own wellbeing, and keep being the great person you are. Aye Yr 11

Year 10

Dear Martin,

What's up Martin? hope you're coping well during the lockdown in Melbourne. I hope you are spending quality time with your friends and family as I am!

Firstly, I want to thank you for the resilience project videos you made. They really helped me to become grateful, resilient and happier. And a special thank you for the personal video to Birrong Girls High School.

Your videos are amazing and creative. I know I really enjoy watching them. You make me laugh every time I watch your videos with your amazing jokes!

Furthermore, I hope you stay safe and take care of yourself during this lockdown and make the most out of the good things you have. Sincerely, Abir Yr 10

Dear Martin,

Thank you so much for creating that video for BGHS. Thank you for always being positive and uplifting in your videos. You are very funny and always put a smile on our faces. Thank you for sending out positive messages to students and teachers. It really helps us feel motivated and helps us realise how many things we have to be grateful for. What you do is great, and I really appreciate

the effort you put in to make people happy through your videos. Basmala Yr 10

Dear Martin,

The message made me feel motivated and that I had someone to support me and encourage me to not give up on my work and stay motivated.

I am grateful for the support my teachers and family give me because without them I would give up instantly, the other thing is I'm grateful for having a country that cares about our health and does many things to stop the spread of COVID and the other thing is I'm grateful for having a home to live in because there are many people that don't have that. Aicha Yr 10

Dear Martin,

Thank you for sharing your amazing tips with me and waking me up out of my bed. It is not easy what you're doing in a time like this. Staying positive and motivated is really hard right now but we are in this together and have to get through this.

100% agree with you. The teachers are doing an amazing job even though it's so hard in remote learning. They are taking extra time just to make sure our lessons run smoothly and help with our understanding.

Thank you for what you do and putting a smile on people's faces. You help school students, like myself, laugh and have a good time watching your videos and spreading positive messages.

All the best Martin, hope you have an amazing day. Amani Yr 10

Dear Martin,

In modern day society and upon reflection, I realised your optimism is a very prominent aspect about you. It isn't a dismissible trait but it makes you stand out beyond an ordinary person. As a student who watches your videos occasionally for school, your energy and motivation to do anything and everything really sets the behaviour among my classmates to be better and to be better people for society. I enjoy the message you're trying to spread to the world. Not all people can be positive all the time and you could be a figure that some people look up to, so I think that is an amazing thing to be so lively. It's not every day we see someone very full with life.

All in all, congratulations for all you have achieved and I look forward to seeing all sorts of things that you will endeavour in the future. Kimberly Yr 10

Dear Martin,

Thank you for being such a great human being and lighting up our day. Whenever I see your video I learn something new and all of your messages are so motivational that results in giving me strength to put another step towards my dreams, no matter what is going on. Your messages are really helpful and I love the way you send your messages which are so funny and light up our day no matter what is stopping us to go forward. Lastly, I just want to say thank you for your knowledgeable messages that

you give us and the tips that can help us to have a better day. Kamila Yr 10

Year 9

Dear Martin,
This message makes me feel a lot better about how to make my daily life easier and more positive for myself. I think the tips gave me a boost as to how I should train my body and mindset, which later can be used to expand my knowledge onto others who don't have the same mindset as me. I believe that you make everyone feel a lot better about themselves and especially make us feel welcomed. This encourages us to explore the unexplored world that is ahead of us and you help us jump over hurdles that may get in our way, even if you're on the screen and not seen in person. Thank you for your support and advice. I really appreciate it. Karthika Yr 9

Dear Martin,
I am writing to you in regards to your awesome video for my school, Birrong Girls. The staff and students at our school are extremely thankful for your inspiring and fun videos because they benefit us all and allow us to have a clear, open mind to start the new day which makes us all feel happy. The Resilience Project is something that I have extremely enjoyed doing for the past few terms because it allows me to get in touch with how I'm feeling and assists me in being a better person :) The Birrong Girls School community has been moved by your words of encouragement and has changed their perspective on how to view certain situations in life. Not only has your program affected us students, you have also had an impact on the staff at our school because each Tuesday they leave the wellbeing period with a smile on their face. We are extremely grateful for your program and especially that video you dedicated to us, we can't thank you enough Martin! I hope that during these hard times you are taking care of yourself and family as well as. From Breanna Yr 9

Dear Martin,
I appreciate all your effort that you put into doing these resilience lessons and I appreciate your time. Thank you for everything and for teaching me mindfulness and resilience and the other wellbeing lessons we did. God bless you, stay safe and take care. Tallarah Yr 9

Year 8

Dear Martin,
I just wanted to say thank you for sharing some things that we can do while we're in lockdown to get us out of the house and to make us happy. It would be lovely to hear from you once again. Thank you once again. Yours sincerely, Alexis. Yr 8

Dear Martin,
Thank you for creating a video. It will be helpful for getting through these tough times. I have already

started doing some of the activities you suggested such as listening to uplifting music and drawing. I also have washable chalk so I could use them later to draw on my grounds with my siblings. It would bring them joy to participate in what I am doing, ever since lockdown they have been totally bummed, I'm sure this will uplift their spirit especially because today is Eid and we can't do much to celebrate. Raneem Yr 8

Dear Martin,
I really appreciate the video, it made me feel so happy and proud. Now I feel so confident about this lockdown and online learning, and I will try to do all those things to help me. Thanks Martin. Zainab Yr 8

Dear Martin,
Thank you for all your tips and advice on what to do about this lockdown. I also want to thank you for your kind and supportive words, your advice on gratitude, empathy and mindfulness has been useful in helping me maintain a positive outlook on any situation I am faced with. Shayma Yr 8

Dear Martin,
I really like your ideas and the way you gave me energy. It's really good for me to watch your videos because you teach me new things and I am really thankful that my teachers are sharing your video with us.



Seema Yr 8

Dear Martin,
I hope you and your family are well. Thank you for taking time out of your day to deliver such a strong and powerful message to our school. The message was very heart warming and I hope Melbourne and Sydney will be out of lockdown soon. Salaam Yr 8

Dear Martin,
I hope you're doing well under lockdown and I would like to start off by saying that you're doing an amazing job and that you should keep doing what you're doing. This program that you have created is wonderful. It really helped me understand that I am very fortunate. The activities we have done in school throughout the weeks have taught me life lessons and it was life changing. I would like to thank you again Martin. Haajar Yr 8

Dear Martin,
I would like to thank you for spending your own time to film a video dedicated to Birrong Girls High School. I do recognise and respect my teachers for putting effort and supporting me through this lockdown. I have started exercising since the beginning of lockdown, you have encouraged me to exercise more. I will consider going outside, and drawing things with chalk. Thank you again for giving tips, and ideas to get me, and the rest of Birrong girls through lockdown. From Howra Yr 8

What I am Grateful for-

I am grateful for my family as they brought me up at the best level they can and try their best to keep me happy and smiling. I am grateful for my teachers as all throughout last year and this year's lockdown they have been trying to keep us learning. I am also grateful for everything I have as we should cherish everything we have and every moment that goes past in our life because time can never come back.

Dear Martin,
Your video was very educational and it made me smile through these tough times as we are in lockdown. Your video is very helpful as it sends us a brief message of how to get through lockdown without gaining stress or anxiety. You gave us good steps to help keep healthy and resilient, also to have hope and to continue to expand our education by appreciating everything teachers are doing to keep us educated during lockdown. Ferdos Yr 8

Year 7

Dear Martin, I would like to thank you for making me feel happy in these times that we are currently in. I want to thank you for always being happy and putting a smile on my face. You possibly make everyone happy to be alive and to be in the country they are in. I really don't have anything else to say but THANK YOU! Sincerely, Leah Yr 7

Dear Martin,
I just wanted to say thank you for the message sent out. Hopefully it helped girls like it helped me. I used to be tired and not active but the message made me have a thought in my mind: be active, be grateful, be thankful THANK YOU! Sadn Yr 7

Dear Martin,
Your message made me feel really positive, calm and happy. Thank you so much for sending your message to us. Mehdia Yr 7

Dear Martin,
Due to these difficult times no-one can really express anything they feel. Your words were breathtaking with great advice and helped raise my spirits. Your advice has probably helped most of the school right now. You don't know how much I

was grateful to hear that someone was giving the best advice that hasn't been repeated a million times. Your humour still keeps a smile on my face every time you make funny jokes. You have helped me keep positive in these tough times, and helped me patiently wait for COVID to finish. From Jayanna Yr 7

Dear Martin,
Thank you for the extremely enjoyable video that you have made! The video made me smile a lot, and the tips you gave us should be really helpful! Thanks for having the time to make a video for our school, and giving us helpful tips during our lockdown! Thank you so much!! Kayla Yr 7





BIRRONG GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

Principal: Zena Dabaja
BA (Hons) DipEd

Telephone: (02) 9644 5057

Cooper Road
BIRRONG 2143



Dear parents, guardians and carers,

Re: Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD)

Every year, all schools in Australia participate in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD). The NCCD process requires schools to identify information already available in the school about supports provided to students with disability. These relate to legislative requirements under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the Disability Standards for Education 2005, in line with the *NCCD guidelines* (2019).

Information provided about students to the Australian Government for the NCCD includes:

- year of schooling
- category of disability: physical, cognitive, sensory or social/emotional
- level of adjustment provided: support provided within quality differentiated teaching practice, supplementary, substantial or extensive.

This information assists schools to:

- formally recognise the supports and adjustments provided to students with disability in schools
- consider how they can strengthen the support of students with disability in schools
- develop shared practices so that they can review their learning programs in order to improve educational outcomes for students with disability.

The NCCD provides state and federal governments with the information they need to plan more broadly for the support of students with disability.

The NCCD will have no direct impact on your child and your child will not be involved in any testing process. The school will provide data to the Australian Government in such a way that no individual student will be able to be identified – the privacy and confidentiality of all students is ensured. All information is protected by privacy laws that regulate the collection, storage and disclosure of personal information. To find out more about these matters, please refer to the Australian Government's Privacy Policy (<https://www.education.gov.au/privacy-policy>).

Further information about the NCCD can be found on the NCCD Portal (<https://www.nccd.edu.au>).

If you have any questions about the NCCD, please contact the school.

Kind regards,

Zena Dabaja
Principal
21/7/21

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Icons



Eddie Mabo

**ACTIVIST FOR BLACK RIGHTS & SUPPORTED
CHILDREN IN GAINING A PROPER EDUCATION**

1936-1992

Eddie Mabo was a human rights activist who became a spokesperson for the Torres Strait Islander Community and helped found the city's Aboriginal and Islander Health Service.

Edward 'Koiki' Mabo was born on 29 June 1936 on the Murray Islands in Queensland. He is famous for his activism in land rights in which the High Court ruled in *Mabo v Queensland* against the State of Queensland in favour of Aboriginals.

The case recognised pre-colonial land interests of Indigenous Australians within Australia's common law.

Eddie Mabo was an educated man who lectured on Aboriginal and Islander issues at James Cook University. He believed in education and helped Aboriginal children receive an appropriate education.

He also was co-founder and director of the Townsville Black Community School for ten years.

"My name is Edward Mabo, but my island name is Koiki. My family has occupied the land here for hundreds of years before Captain Cook was born".