



BIRRONG BULLETIN

The Newsletter of Birrong Girls High School

Cooper Road, Birrong 2143 Telephone: 9644 5057

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PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to our entire community. An extra special welcome is extended to our new Year 7 cohort, newly enrolled students, families and staff. We hope you are now well settled and in the swing of things- we certainly are.

We have continued to celebrate HSC success with our highest ATAR landing at 97.8 and the majority of our KLAs featuring on the Distinguished Achiever list. Despite ongoing challenges, the Class of 2021 managed above state average performances in all courses of English, PDHPE, Visual Arts and Retail Services with overall strong results in Drama and impressive gains in Mathematics, and Band 6 performances in academically rigorous subjects including:

English Advanced, English Extension 1, English Standard, Mathematics Advanced, Mathematics Extension 1, Mathematics Standard 2, Biology, Business Studies, Legal Studies, Hospitality, Visual Arts and Community and Family Studies.

We also acknowledge the Saturday School of Languages for overseeing our student success in Chinese in Context, Arabic Continuers and Arabic Extension.

However, success is measured in a multitude of ways. Over 80% of students who applied for an ATAR at BGHS were successful in being offered early entry into at least one university course. Students who were not attempting to gain entry into university secured full time employment, traineeships and secured enrolment in the college or TAFE course that was part of their vocational plan. 100% of our students graduated with a pathway to a direct post school destination.

Our focus is to make sure our students aim high, set goals and work strategically to achieve them. Our purpose is to empower them with the knowledge and skills they require to do so. We want all our graduates to be empowered by the strength and confidence they feel in the knowledge and skills they leave with and the values they hold strong.

Year 7 have embraced their new school setting and settled successfully. The first few days of high

school were spent getting to know the school grounds, staff and each other as they engaged with fun learning activities across the school. We are looking forward to the easing of restrictions in order to welcome parents and carers onsite for a meet and greet function and discussion about their children's progress so far.

Year 12 are almost halfway through their final year and are reminded daily to invest their time wisely in order to reap the rewards of their labour. Year 11 are just commencing their two-year commitment in this culminating stage of their learning. We have specific plans for each year group in order for students to develop and be enriched. These plans include exciting STEAM related activities, opportunities to develop writing and speech as well as in sport and the creative arts. We are also very excited about the work staff across the school will be delivering to improve numeracy skills. Our new Deputy Principal, Jackie Blue, will play an important role in this work.

Student punctuality and attendance

It is vital that students arrive onsite no later than 8:15am. Citing traffic as an excuse will not be accepted. Punctuality is related to student responsibilities and commitment to learning. Students who attend late will commence detentions where they undertake active study.

Student safety (roadside and onsite)

The BGHS community is very concerned about dangerous driving and unsafe pedestrian behaviour before and most particularly, after school on Cooper Road. Students must cross the street on the crossing and should not be on their mobiles while they are walking. We also ask parents not to breach road safety rules, including stopping illegally and speeding. This includes stopping on the crossing, on the roundabout or allowing children to get in and out of vehicles when the car is not parked.

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Communication and current demands on staff and school resources

It is the responsibility of parents and students to ensure that the contact details provided to schools is accurate and updated. The school is not always able to communicate on an individual basis to our community members. We rely on a number of media and communication portals to disseminate information. If you have recently made changes to your contact details, notify the school immediately. There is a change of details form available in the Forms tab in the About our School link on the school website.

Currently, we communicate with our community in the following ways:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- School Website
- Google Classroom
- Parent Portal
- Text message
- SkoolBag App
- Phone calls
- Interviews
- Letters home

Complaints handling

We remind all families that schools are operating under guidelines and restrictions that differ from other settings in the wider community.

In order to comply with those guidelines and restrictions, our resources have been pushed to the limit.

We are an educational institution, tasked with the responsibility of educating your children. In response to broader social and health issues, we have had to also dedicate significant time and resources to meet those additional requirements.

Additionally, all decisions made in relation to the logistical operations of the school are the result of deep understanding of intricate details relating to managing a site that looks after up to 1000 individuals at any time it is open.

If you have concerns or would like to express your feelings about a matter, we are ready to listen and, if there is capacity, respond to those concerns. We are solutions focused at all times. However, we will not respond to anger, hostility or abuse. This is unjustified and will not be tolerated.

Restrictions

We will keep the school community updated about developments in relation to restrictions onsite. We thank all the members of our community who have been supportive.

Warmest regards,
Zena Dabaja
Principal

REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

As we begin 2022, the Deputies wish every student from Year 7 to Year 12 success in meeting all the challenges which await you this year. Now is the time to set your short and long term goals so that each of you can achieve your *personal best!* We trust that this will be a year during which each student can take pride in her academic growth and in the personal excellence she is able to apply to all areas of her life.

This year we will be continuing our focus on student wellbeing and self-reflection. We will be continuing with The Resilience Project this year for all year groups every Tuesday in our Wellbeing period. Throughout this project we share the benefits of Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness, and easy ways to practise these in everyday life. The 2022 student diaries provide specific resources for the teaching of practical skills. We encourage you to take some time to peruse your daughter's diary. Students are also required to reflect on their learning at the end of every week during the Friday roll call period and formally address the following questions in their school diaries:

'What went well this week and why?' and 'What do I need to improve / work on next week?'

The aims of self-reflection are for students to increase their self-awareness and self-regulation surrounding their own learning. Reflection on school work enhances its meaning and clarifies learning. Self-reflection will also provide an opportunity for students to evaluate their own personal driving force towards their learning - a recognition or affirmation of personal core beliefs and values.



There are many opportunities available at Birrong GHS for your daughter to be involved in and develop her own personal skills along the way. Year 11 students are preparing and working hard to begin their role as Peer Support leaders supporting the Year 7 students and developing communication, organisational and leadership skills of their own. This program has been slightly delayed due to the COVID year group zoning processes.

Year 7 started high school with a week of activities aimed at welcoming them and assisting with getting to know how our school works. Many of our students received achievement awards for their

participation and demonstration of our school values. We are looking forward to working with them as they journey through the remainder of the year.

Year 7 and Year 8 students are undergoing annual Best Start and Check-in testing programs in literacy and numeracy, run by the Department of Education, in order to assist us to identify strengths and weaknesses and continue to support our students' learning.

Year 9 students continue to participate in their mandatory courses but have also begun working in their elective classes. This is an important step that empowers students to take some control over the direction of their education by selecting courses they have an interest in and want to experience more of.

Year 10 has become a part of our senior school and as a result we have even greater expectations of them, their behaviour and their commitment to their learning. We have already begun our preparations to ensure they are eligible for the Record of School Achievement (RoSA) and they will be revising their subject selection and personal details to ensure our records are accurate before we progress further. It is critical that they know their address, as well as their own phone number and a parent number. Your help with this would be very much appreciated.

Year 12 are now into their second term of the HSC. They are encouraged to make the most out of their learning time by actively engaging in their lessons and asking questions. This includes planning their study lessons efficiently when they are in the Senior Study Centre, supervised by our dedicated learning support teachers. Students in Year 12 must be prepared for success with regular homework and study sessions at home as well as seeking the support of their classroom teachers. This means committing at least 3-4 hours each night to this goal.

It is important that your daughter attend school and is in the correct uniform at all times. Our uniform consists of black lace up hard leather traditional school shoes, crew length white socks, navy blue hijab and white bond, school tunic, skirt or pants and the school blouse must be worn at all times especially under the school jumper. Finger nails must be kept short in order to meet work, health and safety requirements at school and of a clear colour only. Acrylic nails, makeup and eyelash applications are not permissible.

The school competitors' only swimming carnival was held on Monday 14 February at Birrong Leisure Centre. All girls who participated showed true courage, determination and sportsmanship. We wish all the girls representing our school at the

Zone carnival on Friday 25 February all the very best of luck.



The safety of our students travelling to and from school is important to us. You will often see us at the railway station and the school crossing supervising students as they enter and leave our school. We ask you to partner with us to ensure your daughters are safe by abiding by the school zone road rules before and after school each day.

At the start of the new school year it is an important time to remind everyone about the Transport Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) seven school zone offences aimed at improving pedestrian safety around schools. For example, stopping on a pedestrian crossing in a school zone carries a fine of \$330 and a loss of 2 demerit points. Queuing across an intersection in a school zone, including roundabouts, will incur a \$439 fine and a loss of 2 demerit points. The picture below shows some of the other fines and demerits in school zones.

Our school website is updated regularly with information, photos and videos that showcase student success. The school calendar provides details of events and excursions. New information will be added as the school year progresses.

We'd like to introduce you to Ms Blue, our new Deputy Principal Mathematics and Numeracy Development. Ms Blue joins us from the NSW Mathematics Strategy at the Department of Education. Her team led a year-long research-based project for over 3000 teachers around NSW that focused on improving students' mathematical thinking from Kindergarten to Year 8. She is looking forward to working with the Birrong Girls High School community as we explore how we can all support our young people to be confident, numerate citizens. If you'd like to explore some ways you can support your child's mathematical learning at home, visit: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/everyday-maths>.

To the stars - Ad Astra!

Ms George, Ms Cross, Ms Andrews, Ms Blue and Ms Park

Deputy Principals

INTRODUCING THE NEW TEACHERS

Jackie Blue

Deputy Principal Mathematics and Numeracy Development



My name is Jackie Blue, and I am delighted to join the team at Birrong Girls High School as a Deputy Principal and mathematics teacher. I've been warmly welcomed by staff and students, and my favourite part of each day is being in the classroom with Year 8.

I grew up, went to school and have taught my entire career in the SWS region! For the last 4 years, I have been developing professional learning for maths teachers across NSW. Teaching is my passion, and I love learning. In fact, I am currently learning how to read and speak Arabic.

It's been such a pleasure to meet many of you already and I look forward to partnering with you in supporting our students as they *reach for the stars*. Ad Astra.

M Eldridge
History/LOTE



My name is M Eldridge. I have joined the History/LOTE faculty and I would like to thank all of BGHS for welcoming me to their school.

I completed my Bachelor of Arts in 2006 majoring in History and Sociology and a Post Graduate Diploma of Education in 2007 both at La Trobe University.

I started teaching in the southern Riverina in the Albury and Deniliquin school networks in 2008. I then travelled overseas to London, England where I taught History and English in London and Luton. After 2 years I returned to the southern Riverina to teach before heading back overseas to Cologne, Germany for a year.

In 2017 I was appointed as a History/English teacher at Walgett Community College- Secondary school in Western NSW. In 2019 I was on secondment to School Services where I worked as a Curriculum Adviser, developing and implementing professional learning for teachers that would improve outcomes for students in schools across NSW. I returned to my classroom teacher position at Walgett in 2020.

I have a passion for History that I enjoy sharing with my students and passing knowledge on so others may benefit from it.

Martha Jabour
CAPA



My name is Martha Jabour and I have recently joined the staff at Birrong Girls High School as a teacher of Visual Art.

I have a Bachelor of Visual Art Education and Master of Fine Arts from University of NSW College of Fine Art.

I am an art and cultural professional that has 20+ years of specialised art practice with communities that include many local government and non-government organisations, schools, hospitals, parks, galleries, art and community centres.

I also design and deliver high quality public art and education projects and art programs for local government, community centres and educational environments. I have recently worked with Glenwood High School and Marrickville West Public School. Outside of school I have a practice as a Visual artist

(sculpture and digital murals) with recent public art works commissioned and installed at Westmead Hospital. I am happy to be bringing my knowledge of creative industries and professional practice to the school and I look forward to working and creatively collaborating with the BGHS community.

Tiffany VU
TAS/CAPA



Hello! My name is Tiffany Vu and I'm extremely excited to embark on a new adventure working with Birrong Girls High School this year.

I'm a recent graduate of UNSW, completing a Bachelor of Design and Education(Sec) in 2021 majoring in precious metal jewellery production and graphic design.

I've been lucky enough to teach at a range of different schools including Bethany College in Hurstville and Sarah Redfern in Minto. I look forward to learning and sharing alongside TAS and CAPA, two amazing faculties with a wide range of strengths and a true love for education.

I'd like to thank the staff and students at Birrong for being so incredibly warm and welcoming these last few weeks. All the best! I hope to work with you all soon!

Hosay Zarmati
PDHPE



My name is Hosay Zarmati and I am really excited to be working at Birrong Girls High School this year. Being a former Birrong Girls High School student and graduate, it is great to be working alongside the teachers that inspired me to become a

teacher.

In 2019 I completed my Bachelor of Health Sciences at the University of Sydney and a Master of Teaching (Health and Physical Education) also at the University of Sydney in 2021. My teaching career began at Birrong Girls High School while completing my final year of university in 2021.

When I am not teaching, I enjoy hiking, travelling and spending time with family and friends. I also enjoy watching football, especially my favourite team, the Sydney Roosters.

I am very excited to get to know all the students and staff at Birrong Girls and work hard alongside a team that shares the same passion to achieve the best outcomes for all students. Thank you to those who have already welcomed me to Birrong Girls High School and I look forward to the year ahead.

CAREERS NEWS

Careers Google classrooms

Years 10, 11 and 12 students must join and regularly check their Careers Google classrooms. Important careers news/events, information and resources are continually being updated and delivered via these classrooms. Students have been sent numerous reminders and emails regarding how to join. If they are not on this platform they will miss out on vital careers programs. If students need help with this please see Ms Wailes or Ms Shinas ASAP.

USI and TFN

If any student is thinking about joining the workforce or applying for tertiary education they must apply for a USI (unique student identifier) and a TFN (tax file number). You need both of these numbers to gain employment and apply for HECS/VET fee help when going to uni/TAFE/college. It is a simple process and students (particularly Year 12) are encouraged to apply before they finish school. You only have to do the application once. Make sure it is stored somewhere safe.

USI - <https://www.usi.gov.au/students>

Your USI (Unique Student Identifier) is your individual education number for life. It also creates an online record of your Australian training achievements.

TFN -

<https://identityservice.auspost.com.au/ato/landing>

A tax file number (TFN) is free and identifies you for tax and superannuation purposes. It's yours for life. You keep the same TFN even if you change your name, change jobs, move interstate or go overseas.

JobJump

JobJump is a careers website for high schools that we subscribe to annually. Every student and parent/carer here at Birrong Girls High School is able to register and join for free. We would like you to register on JobJump so you will receive news on the careers you like sent to your home email address. It may only take one bit of news to unlock and inspire you towards your future career. Plus you will be able to use all parts of the JobJump website to help plan and achieve your career dreams. It is there to help you through to an extra year after your Year 12.

To register with JobJump, go to the front screen of the website at www.jobjump.com.au Click on I'm New. On the new screen, enter into the first white box the first letters of your school's name and when the full name appears just below in blue, click on

your blue school name and it will enter automatically into the first white box. In the second white box, enter your school password which is: **puppies** and click Continue. You then need to enter a few details and set your Personal Password. (Min 6 characters). So whenever you then come back to Login to JobJump, all you will then need is your email address and Personal Password.

Parent Meetings

If any parent/carer would like to book in a time to speak to a Careers Adviser, they can do so by phoning the school reception and asking to be put through to Careers.

Ms Wailes/Ms Shinas
Careers Advisers

LIBRARY NEWS

Borrowing

The Library Click & Collect Delivery Service is in operation for all students.

Students can make reservations against books in the Library Enquiry catalogue in the Student Portal. Alternatively, they can email Mr Davidson at victor.davidson@det.nsw.edu.au and request directly.

If the books are on the shelves they can be collected from the library circulation desk the next day.



Are you ready for the 2022 Premier's Reading Challenge?

The Challenge opened on Monday 28 February 2022 and closes on Friday 19 August 2022. Email Mr Davidson with any queries.

Mr Davidson
Teacher/Librarian

WELFARE MATTERS

We welcome all students and families back to a new school year. We look forward to working with our families to ensure our students are supported throughout the year with their academic and personal growth. This year we are implementing the Resilience Project which is a whole school wellbeing program to build our students' resilience and happiness which will aid our students' ability to succeed and thrive.

The Welfare Team includes the School Counsellors, Ms Athena Tselepi, Ms Patty Kalavritinos and Ms Cara Chillari, the Year Advisers and Assistant Year Advisers, as listed below, and the Head Teacher Female Students, Ms Cathy Salvagio.

Parents and guardians can make an appointment with our school Counsellors, the Head Teacher or the relevant Year Adviser if there are issues or concerns that you wish to discuss.

Below is a list of the Year Advisers and Assistant Year Advisers.

YEAR 7 ADVISER – Ms Evon Zomaya
Assistant- Ms Maryam El-Kiki

YEAR 8 ADVISER - Ms Melinda Kearns
Assistant- Ms Kirrily Hooper

YEAR 9 ADVISER - Ms Diana Graham
Assistant - Ms Emma Barry

YEAR 10 ADVISER- Ms Morgan Legg
Assistant - Ms Mona Baddah

YEAR 11 ADVISER - Ms Gaye Temizyuz
Assistant - Ms Melinda Wright

YEAR 12 ADVISER - Ms Nicky Shinas
Assistant - Ms Christie Rothwell

Student Assistance Scheme

Families experiencing financial difficulties due to unemployment or being on a pension can be assisted via school funds to purchase school uniform items and make payments for excursions and subject fees. The payment of General Contributions can be negotiated to be paid in instalments over the year.

Parents need to make an appointment to speak to Ms Dabaja to discuss their financial difficulties. Parents must be able to show that there is financial need by having their Pensioner Concession card or Centrelink card etc.

School Uniform Policy

Our school uniform policy outlines and clearly demonstrates the uniform items that our students are expected to wear on a daily basis.

Uniform items can be purchased online on our school website in the **Make a Payment** section. Please check the uniform items list and size guide on the school website prior to ordering online.

Our uniform includes enclosed black hard leather school shoes for safety, especially when working in the Science laboratories, art studios and kitchens.

For students who wear long sleeves the school has a long sleeved blouse. Wearing a short sleeved blouse with a long sleeved undergarment is **not** considered to be part of the uniform and is not acceptable.

It is expected that students have more than one school outfit and that their uniform items are washed and ironed regularly so that they are in a clean uniform at all times. The hems on school trousers and skirts should be neatly sewn. For safety the hems of pants and long skirts should not drag on the floor and should not be ragged or torn.

Being in full school uniform demonstrates a student's respect for her school community, commitment to being a positive member of it and enhances the good image of our school.

Elevate Education Study Skills Program

Elevate Education will be delivering customised study skills seminars to all our students in Term 1.

- Years 10, 11 and 12 will have 2 seminar topics
- Years 7, 8 and 9 will have one seminar topic
- Students will be provided with access to the Elevate Education website throughout the year and will be able to use the online resources to assist them with study, assignments, exams and HSC subjects content.
- The cost of the seminars will be notified in a parent note closer to the time.

Year 12 students will participate in HSC preparation seminars on 3 March during periods 2 and 3, which will focus on study strategies for the preparation of assessments and examinations and on techniques to assist students to be effective learners and to cope better with Trial and HSC examinations.

Year 11 students will participate in HSC preparation seminars on 10 March during periods 2 and 3, which will focus on effective learning strategies and study techniques to enhance students' performance as a senior student.

Year 10 students will participate in seminars on 24 March during periods 2 and 3 which will focus on time management and study strategies.

Years 7, 8 and 9 students will participate in a seminar that focuses on study skills, memory skills and time management to build positive study habits and enhance motivation in students. The scheduled times are:

- Year 7 - 17 March in period 2
- Year 8 - 16 March in period 2
- Year 9 - 17 March in period 3.

All students must attend these very beneficial seminars, which are of a reasonable cost to families as the school pays for a part of the cost. A note with details about the seminars will be issued to students closer to the time.

School Vaccination Program (NOT for COVID)

Our school is participating in the NSW Adolescent Vaccination Program for Year 7, Year 8, Year 10 and Year 11 students.

- Year 7 will be offered a 2 dose course of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination for cervical cancer prevention at visits 1 and 3, and a single dose of Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis (Whooping Cough) vaccine (Boostrix) at Visit 1.
- Year 8 students will complete the 2021 vaccines at visit 1.
- Year 10 will be offered a single dose of Meningococcal ACWY vaccine at visit 2.
- Year 11 students who had signed the consent form last year for the Meningococcal ACWY vaccine will be able to receive in at visit 2.

The vaccinations will be provided over 3 visits on the following dates:

Visit 1 on 22 March for Year 7 students (Dose 1 of HPV) and Year 8 (Dose 2 of HPV from last year's program)

Visit 2 on 22 July for Year 10 students and Year 11 students (single dose of Meningococcal vaccine)

Visit 3 on 18 November for Year 7 students (Dose 2 of HPV and a single dose of Boostrix (Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis))

The students will be issued the Parent Information Kit which includes the vaccination consent form closer to the time. Parents/ guardians should read the information provided with the consent form to understand the facts about the vaccines that will be offered. Information in languages other than English is available at

https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/page/school_vaccination_language.aspx

No student will be vaccinated without the signed original consent form.

After the vaccination students will be given a Record of Vaccination card to take home to keep their immunisation/vaccination records up to date. Please keep vaccination records in a safe place as they may be required for future work or travel.

Ms Salvagio
Head Teacher Female Students

PDHPE and SPORT NEWS

Welcome back to PDHPE and Sport for 2022! The PDHPE faculty are looking forward to meeting our new classes and getting moving again. We have a diverse faculty this year, comprising of Ms L. Boyle (HT PDHPE), Mrs D. Graham, Ms N. Greentree, Ms A. Hammad, Ms K. Hooper, Mr F. Kalayzich, Ms M. McEwen, Mrs C. Rixon, Ms P. Williams and Ms H. Zarmati.

There are many opportunities for students to participate in sporting pathways on a school, zone and regional level. Birrong Girls High School is associated with Edmondson Zone and Sydney South West Sporting Association. The school has Knock Out sporting teams that students will be able to trial for, to play against other schools in the SWS region. Central Venue Trials to represent the zone at SWS carnivals were held in Week 4, along with a competitor only swimming carnival. We have COVID-safe practices in place for all sporting endeavours, and students must not attend if they feel unwell.

There has been a slight change to how students will wear their PE/Sport uniform in 2022. Students are now required to wear their PE/Sport uniform to school on the days they are timetabled to have a PE or Sport lesson. This may require some students to purchase an extra polo shirt if they have practical lesson on consecutive days. Please look at your daughter's timetable and discuss when they will need to wear their PE/Sport uniform to school to ensure they can participate in all lessons.

All students will receive a note from their PDHPE teacher in their first lesson outlining the requirements of the course. Please ensure all parents and carers read the note carefully and return the slip at the bottom. Please do not hesitate to call Ms Boyle on 9644 5057 if you have any concerns.

Swimming Carnival 2022

Unfortunately due to restrictions, we were unable to run a whole school swimming carnival this year. We held a competitors only carnival on Monday 14

February at Birrong Leisure Centre, and swimmers had a great time participating in a variety of events.

Congratulations to all competitors, and a special mention to the following students who were awarded age champion:

12 Years – Amarah Hamdan
13 Years – Rukayya Karim
14 Years – Shadiyah Hamdan
15 Years – Bonnie Han
16 Years – Rayane Wazir
17+ Years – Daliya El Helou

A big thank you to the SLR students who assisted teachers with officiating duties on the day.



Edmondson Zone Central Venue Trials

On Monday 14 February, several students attended the Central Venue Trials at Liverpool Girls High School. Congratulations to the following students who earned a place in the zone team to play at the Sydney South West championships.

Opens Touch

Eden Jamal – Year 12
Tamia Garcia – Year 12

Netball

Ellen Kolka – Year 11
Dibe Chaker – Year 11

Football

Jamila Elsayed – Year 10

Basketball

Venus Parwany – Year 10
Naomi Sleiman – Year 11
Charlotte Otutaha – Year 10

Ms Boyle
Head Teacher PDHPE

FROM THE ENGLISH ROOMS

Happy 2022!

The English faculty is looking forward to a new year filled with rich reading, exciting discussions and deep thinking in every classroom. We had a turbulent 2021, but have strategised, and continue to strategise, ways to ensure a settled school year focused on achieving growth in student learning outcomes in English. On that note, we want to acknowledge our pleasing success in our Advanced (Ms Andrews/Ms Bolanca), and Standard (Ms Reid) and Extension (Ms Bolanca and Ms Caravas) English achievements in the HSC. Notably our Drama class had extraordinary success under Ms Legg's creative and diligent tutelage. As a collaborative faculty, we continue to seek to build on these gains.

Introducing new additions to our faculty

We have three new teachers in our English rooms. We have invited them to introduce themselves to you below:

"My name is **Mr Bowmer**. I have joined the English faculty this year. I've previously been employed as a casual at this school. I enjoy reading for leisure."



Melinda Kearns is an English teacher with over twenty-five years of experience, teaching all levels of English. She has worked at Bankstown Girls High School, Sefton High School and Hurlstone Agricultural High School and was a Head of English for fifteen years, at Georges River Grammar School, Tara Anglican School for Girls and Mount St Benedict College.

One of the most interesting jobs Melinda has had was as a consultant for the Ministry of Education in Singapore, introducing their new English curriculum and mentoring teachers throughout the country. She is currently the Supervisor of Marking for English Extension 1 and completed a Master of Education in Assessment and Curriculum in 2021. She also possesses a Master of Education, completed in 2004 and a Master of Educational Leadership, completed in 2019. Melinda is passionately committed to educating girls and young women and is very excited to return to Birrong Girls, having worked here at the beginning of her teaching life. Her favourite quote is,

"Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" Mary Oliver



Mrs Wright joins us from teaching Drama and English at Chester Hill High School. She's excited to start at Birrong and looks forward to getting to know her students over the coming year. Mrs Wright loves anything to do with science fiction and fantasy and her favourite book is *American Gods* by Neil Gaiman. In between lockdowns Mrs Wright, enjoys going camping with her family and attending the theatre.

Sydney Story Factory Event, by Natalie Brown. Sunday 19 December 2021 was a special day for three students at Birrong Girls High School. On this day Shelby Potter, Hajara Musthafa and Zanjabella Zoud graduated from the Sydney Story Factory *Year of..* project and published their first ever book!

The Story Factory is an organisation that uses creative writing to help students in the suburbs of Sydney unleash their creativity and tell unique and personal stories. The Story Factory has worked with Birrong Girls High School for many years telling stories and 2021 was no different. The *Year of Poetry* and *Year of the Novella* programs invite students who want to stretch their writing muscles to spend an entire year working with mentors outside of school writing either a collection of poetry or a novella. Shelby, Hajara and Zanjabella worked hard on all stages of the writing process, drafting, problem solving and editing to create quality pieces of writing. Even the pandemic couldn't stop them when sessions moved online during Term 3.

During the book launch in December the students read excerpts of their works in front of friends and family before signing copies and discussing their work with new fans. The books are now available for sale on the Sydney Story Factory Website, poetry collections *Searching the Void for a Forgotten Goddess* by Shelby Potter, *Auroras of Yesterday* by Hajara Musthafa and the thriller novella *Distortion* by Zanjabella Zoud. All students should be proud of their finished publications. The staff of Birrong Girls High School look forward to seeing what these students produce next!

HAPPY TERM ONE FROM THE ENGLISH FACULTY

BIRRONG GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL CALENDAR
For your diary / noticeboard

March:

Thursday, 3 rd	▪ Yr12 Study Skills
Friday, 4 th	▪ Yr12 Life Ready Program
Tuesday, 8 th	▪ International Women's Day
Wednesday, 9 th	▪ School Photo Day
Thursday, 10 th	▪ Yr12 Textile & Design incursion ▪ Yr11 Study Skills
Monday, 14 th	▪ Prefects Halogen Leadership Conference ▪ SSW Swimming
Wednesday, 16 th	▪ Catch-up Photo Day ▪ Yr8 Study Skills
Thursday, 17 th	▪ iSTEM incursion ▪ Yr7 Study Skills ▪ Yr9 Study Skills
Monday, 21 st	▪ Harmony Day ▪ Yr12 Business Services Work Placement week
Tuesday, 22 nd	▪ Visit 1 Yr 7 Dose 1 HPV and Yr 8 (2021 Yr7) Dose 2 HPV vaccine ▪ Parent/Teacher session 2-6pm
Thursday, 24 th	▪ Yr10 Study Skills ▪ Prefects Sailing orientation, pm
Monday, 28 th	▪ Yr12 Business Services Work Placement week
Wednesday, 30 th	▪ School Cross Country ▪ Parent assembly
Thursday, 31 st	▪ Yr11 VET Work Ready Day

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

EVERY DAY COUNTS...

A DAY MISSED HERE OR THERE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE MUCH, BUT...

When your child misses just...	That equals...	This is...	And therefore, from kindy to year 12, that is...	This means that the best your child can achieve is...
1 day each fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years of school	Equal to finishing Year 11
1 day a week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years of school	Equal to finishing Year 10
2 days a week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years of learning	Equal to finishing Year 7
3 days a week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years of learning	Equal to finishing Year 4

GIVE YOUR CHILD EVERY CHANCE TO SUCCEED.