



BIRRONG BULLETIN

The Newsletter of Birrong Girls High School

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Issue No. 8

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PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Dear Parents,

2019 has been quite a year. It has been a year of incredible highs and some interesting challenges. It has been a year of sustaining tradition and of many firsts.

But nothing that was achieved or overcome this year would have been possible without the incredible staff at Birrong Girls High School. We are always reminding our students to look up and ahead, to aim for the highest and to settle for nothing less. We believe in every one of our girls and we want them to believe in themselves. We can hold these expectations because of the quality of staff that we have - because of what they deliver on every level, every day across the calendar year. These teachers and support staff are not the best in the south west, not just the best in NSW, but some of the best educators and education support staff in the country. We have the right to expect the best of our students because what is delivered is the best and for this, I am not just proud, or blessed, I am thankful. And I want you to know this because I am new to the school. I know what is happening elsewhere. Our school is awesome in all the ways that it needs to be. Our Deputy Principals Ms George and Ms Andrews are the hardest working and most caring Deputies anyone could have. Our Year Advisers are so committed to the students in their charge. Our Head Teachers are running harmonious and productive faculties. Our teachers extend themselves above and beyond the call of duty every single day. Our SASS staff, led by Mrs Sutton, are the most nurturing and hardworking team. The SASS staff, including Ian Sinden, our General Assistant, are what make it possible for the rest of our school community to function seamlessly and comfortably. For all the individuals who spend more time with students than they do with their own families, we cannot ask any more of our staff, but we can show them respect, acknowledgement and appreciation.

We commenced the year riding the wave of fantastic HSC results with over 80% of our KLAs achieving above state average results. We demonstrated incredible growth in our students from the time they commenced in Year 7 until the time they graduated in Year 12. Not all of that growth is measured in marks. Much of it was, but not all of it. And the growth that was not measured in academic performance was measured in the holistic growth of the individual student - in their

application to study, in their attendance rates, in their approach to interpersonal relationships, in their outlook and commitment to the future. In their post school exit destinations, further study and job opportunities. And most importantly, in their triumph over adversity.

Whether it was the sanctuary of the QuickSmart hub overseen by the passionate Ms Hmeidouch and supported by Ms Turkoz or the Extension Maths and English classes being delivered to the most gifted of our girls, every student was known, valued, cared AND catered for. The QuickSmart graduation on Monday is a perfect example of what makes Birrong Girls the most fantastic place. Both my deputies attended the graduation, Ms Hmeidouch and Ms Turkoz had painstakingly organised the event. But in attendance, not only were the proud and supportive parents, but the proud and supportive Year Advisers, the entire Learning Support faculty, our Head Teacher Maths Mr Atteya and members of the English staff. We are a family and we are all interested in how our students progress. No one teacher closes their door and operates alone - it is a team effort and there is team discussion about how to improve student results - everywhere I go - in faculties, in corridors and in offices - it is our only focus. This is the secret of our success.

<i>Inside this issue:</i>	<i>Page/s</i>
<i>Principal's Report</i>	1-3
<i>BGHS Uniform Policy: 2020</i>	4-6
<i>Approved Footwear for BGHS</i>	7
<i>Report from the Deputy Principals</i>	8
<i>Welfare Report</i>	9
<i>Careers News</i>	9-11
<i>Life Ready Program</i>	11
<i>QuickSmart Program</i>	11
<i>QuickSmart Excursion</i>	12
<i>QuickSmart Presentation</i>	12
<i>Music Report</i>	13
<i>Generation Entrepreneur – iEntrepreneur Project</i>	13
<i>Helmsman Team Project 2019</i>	14
<i>The K.O.A.L.A Excursion</i>	14
<i>Premier's Reading Challenge 2019</i>	15
<i>Privacy and Communications</i>	15
<i>School Opal Cards for 2020 Travel</i>	15
<i>Edmondson Cup</i>	15
<i>School Calendar</i>	15
<i>From the English Desk</i>	16-17

As we have told our students weekly at assemblies, success comes in many forms, as does leadership. But the pursuit of excellence, the importance of work ethic and application and above all, integrity and social conscience are not negotiable. The reward is the long term investment in your future. We need you to remember this and keep this as your prime motivation because those of you who accept the lessons we are teaching will reap the rewards sooner and for the longest time.

So, as a snapshot, what are some of the things that we achieved this year?

Our learning and teaching programs and initiatives continued to strengthen in their reach and impact. Our English and Maths faculties lead the whole school focus on literacy and numeracy as experts but they are not alone - our whole staff are committed and deeply engaged in developing student skills and strength and the impact is strong and clear across the student work samples and growth.

We extended our partnership with the Sydney Story Factory to offer a range of writing programs to our students and the results have been spectacular. We were involved in filming a promotional video about the initiative recently and we all feel a sense of excitement about taking our partnership to the next level because of the impact it will have on our students.

We have deepened our relationship with the Australian Business and Community Network and this partnership promises to increase the opportunities for our girls as the landscape of tertiary education and work - currently, these opportunities lie in finance, business, technology, STEM and environmental sustainability. We thank Allegra Spender, who is the CEO of ABCN, on behalf of our school community for championing our school, girls' education and public education.

We accessed an opportunity for our Year 11 Society and Culture students to engage in 'Stories of Strength' program where they learned how to conduct research through personal interviews, run by Bankstown Youth Development Service. The results were nothing short of spectacular and BYDS has been sharing the work of our students to promote the incredible insights they unlocked and the sensitivity in which they reported. In initiatives like this, everyone wins. Our senior students gained further understanding of what they are capable of. Our broader community has access to important narratives of personal histories and experience, the complex fabric of bicultural and multicultural exchanges and the power of giving voice to the voiceless.

Staff in our Social Science faculty have run a number of key initiatives for our students. The environmental team is beginning to gain focus and traction in raising awareness about sustainability.

Mrs Elmir facilitated a wonderful two-day workshop for Year 10 and 11 students called i-Entrepreneur and the talent of our girls was mindblowing. Mr Sarna continued to oversee the Birthing Kit Assembly day and was named an Hon-Zon by the Zonta Club of Sydney West.

Our Maths, Science, CAPA and TAS faculty undertook the first phase of our new STEM focus culminating in a showcase of student work a few weeks ago. There was bacteria. There was jelly. There was a lot of chocolate. And it was all in the name of STEM. In 2020, our STEM initiative will be entering its second phase. The STEM team was selected to join the University of Sydney's STEM Academy and have been undertaking professional learning to support the projects students will be engaged in next year. We were finalists and the people's choice in the GoIT challenge. Our senior Titration team competed against stiff and expert competition and placed within the top ten with very little between their performance and the winning result. We are planning to capitalise on this success and gain momentum to improve our results next year.

Our Vocational Education and Training programs were deemed exemplar by the external audit panel that assessed the school's delivery and performance this year. Led and overseen by Ms George, the VET team have contributed significantly to ensuring we offer a breadth of curriculum, catering to all our students' needs and exposing them to a rich array of learning and teaching experiences.

Birrong Girls High School's commitment to quality education is reflected in our passion and advocacy for learning in the humanities and the creative and performing arts. One of our students was selected to join the State Drama Team, bypassing the rigorous audition process because a selector was struck by her talent. Anyone who was in the audience of our production of A Midsummer Night's Dream would have marvelled at what can be produced when passionate and committed teachers join forces with passionate and committed students. It was nothing short of magical. Our Creative and Performing Arts Showcase was a delight and again, brought our entire community together in force to celebrate our students and their creativity. Our public speaking and debating program is going from strength to strength and I cannot tell you how much we love to see our debaters in action - as long as they are not arguing with us!

Our PDHPE faculty continued to promote active participation and competition in sport with a number of our students progressing through zone, regional and state levels as well as great success with our representative teams. Our annual Dance Display was as entertaining as ever and there are exciting plans and some surprises in store for next

year. While we have had our fair share of successes on the sporting field and in particular in representative sport, I would like to acknowledge the PDHPE faculty differently. Beyond the traditional and stereotypical activities and successes of our PDHPE faculty, they have sustained high performance in quality teaching, reflected in their HSC results - over the past 25 years, I have never met a PDHPE faculty like them. The majority of the faculty's members are heavily involved in the school's Wellbeing Team as Year Advisers and Assistant Year Advisers and they are another example of how our staff work at all levels and in partnership for the benefit of our student community.

Leadership and service learning was heavily promoted this year, driven predominantly by the SRC and Prefect bodies and the Amnesty Team. We fundraised for so many causes this year - most recently being the bushfire relief. I have never seen so much pizza, donuts and chocolate consumed for important causes. The Birthing Kit Assembly day was a huge success and Birrong Boys sent their prefect team to support. We held our first joint leadership induction day for the prefect bodies only last week and this was another success.

There are two incidents this year that demonstrate the heart of our school community. When the tragic events in Christchurch unfolded, the Prefects came to me wanting to do something. After a number of discussions two of our Year 12 girls designed an image that we had printed on a postcard. We sent copies of this postcard with an explanation of the image depicting the solidarity between Australia and New Zealand and the concept of community unity in the face of adversity. The postcard included a message of support and hope from the Birrong Girls High School community and was delivered to the two mosques where the tragedy unfolded. At presentation day, our school captain, Hanin El Khaled presented the original painting on behalf of our school to Andrew Fielding as a gift in appreciation for all his support.

The second example is when I asked for a favour. All I had to do was stand before our assembly and speak about the plight of refugees and ask students and staff to join me; in two weeks we raised over \$29,000 in a joint fundraising effort between staff and students. We were ranked the second highest school in Australia. Next year, the goal will be to come first. Because excellence is what we strive for, always.

We have continued to improve and upgrade the school's facilities. While we wait our turn on the Cooler Classrooms list, we have installed air conditioning in the school hall and common room. Technology and our technological resources have been and continue to be upgraded as part of a three-year plan and significant work is being done

over summer to upgrade our hospitality kitchens. Next year, the focus will be on installing a gym and refurbishing the quadrangle and Tumbalong areas. We continue to work towards accessing security fencing for the school premises.

We have a new uniform. Our girls are going to look spectacular. Some may say the intention is that they look like they are from a private school. I dispute this. They will look like well-groomed young women who attend Birrong Girls High School - a public school setting that has high expectations of its students and delivers the highest quality education. This is who we are, what we stand for and what we will look like.

The activities, achievements and improvements I have recounted for you are, as promised a snapshot only. So much more has been achieved and in every faculty. All of these activities are in addition to our daily classroom activities and lessons. This snapshot is an insight of the dedication, expertise and commitment of our staff in serving our community.

I leave you with this. Every day, the world is changing. We need the tools to be the change makers. We need the skills to respond to change, land on our feet, lead the way. A few days ago, Finland made the news because all five of its major political parties were officially being led by women and they just appointed the youngest ever female prime minister to lead the country, at the age of 34. You can be the face of change and it could be glorious, uplifting, impactful and game changing. And yet at the same time, the majority of the world's wealth is still owned by men. In many countries women and children in rural settings in particular are underpaid, disadvantaged and existing in regressed conditions. In a world where so many girls cannot go to school or miss days of school because of the financial expectations and strains upon their families - why would YOU ever have a day off school? In a world where so many girls increase their life expectancy, earning capacity and future prospects the closer they live to school, why would you not show up? Increasing the continuity of attendance will most definitely be a goal for 2020 and beyond.

On behalf of the staff of Birrong Girls High School, I thank our parents for their trust and ongoing support of the work we do and for their efforts in ensuring our school is recognised for the quality work and excellence that is achieved every day. I wish all our families a happy and healthy summer break, Merry Christmas to all who are celebrating and best wishes for the new year.

Zena Dabaja
Principal

Birrong Girls High School Uniform Policy: 2020

In keeping with DoE policy, Birrong Girls High School has determined their uniform requirements.

The department supports the wearing of school uniform which promotes a sense of belonging for students and creates a positive identity for the school community. School uniforms also contribute to the personal safety of students by allowing easier recognition of students inside the school and in the community.

Students enrolled at Birrong Girls High School must respect and adhere to the uniform policy. The policy supports the following values and aims of the school by promoting:

- Equity
- School spirit and pride
- Safety
- Unity
- Respect

Junior Uniform

School tunic

School blouse (short and long sleeved)

Navy school pant

School jumper

School blazer

Senior Uniform

School blouse (short and long sleeved)

Navy pleated day skirt

Navy long pleated skirt (modest option)

Navy school pant

School jumper

School blazer

Prefect blazer (by invitation only)

PDHPE/Sports uniform

Sport polo shirt (short and long sleeved)

Sport short

Sport Jacket

Sport pant

(The sport tracksuit jacket and pant are to be worn during sporting activities ONLY and cannot be incorporated into the daily uniform. Students who are not dressed in the appropriate attire will not be permitted to participate in the designated activities at the time).

School shoes

Hard, black leather lace-up shoes that completely cover the foot and possess a solid block heel. The definition of a 'school shoe' is not determined by retail stores. Parents are advised to follow the requirements in our policy, supported by the images provided. The school shoe cannot be soft leather, low cut on the side or possess any style feature that is sneaker or sandal-like in appearance. Students with podiatry issues are encouraged to be fitted for the appropriate Clarks school shoe at Shoes and Sox and to arrange insoles to fit the specified school shoe. Students without the appropriate footwear may not be allowed to attend specialist lesson settings in the interest of safety.

Accessories

Navy hair accessories (ribbons, plain scrunchies and clips)

White hair ribbons are permitted for senior students

Navy headscarves with white bands

Plain white socks that cover ankles

Opaque navy stockings

All school blouses are double lined for additional comfort and modesty. If, however a student feels they require additional layers, a plain white singlet or t-shirt are the only permitted option.

Grooming

All students are expected to wear full school uniform and attend school and related events demonstrating pride in their appearance. This begins with presenting in clean, well maintained uniform items, combed hair, and polished shoes.

Makeup and fake eyelashes are not permitted.

Nails must be natural and short in length. Only clear polish is acceptable.

Hair must be brushed, well-kept and long hair, preferably, is to be presented in a ponytail or plait and pulled away from the face. Necklaces should be short and not visible.

Jewellery is not advised. Earrings can include plain gold, silver or pearl studs. No dangling earrings, bracelets, bangles are permitted. Any additional jewellery that interferes with activity related to school is not permitted.

**** IMPORTANT NOTICE ****

The school uniform can be purchased during the school holidays on 20 – 24 January 2020 from:

Reji Uniforms
B2 / 366 Edgar Street
Condell Park

8am – 4pm
No parking onsite

Tel. 0437 794 771
Tel. 9771 5454

**Approved Footwear
for Birrong Girls High School**



REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

As the school year for 2019 draws to a close, it is a great time to reflect on personal and whole school community achievements.

Foremost is our school commitment to the delivery of Quality Teaching. Birrong Girls High School teachers take enormous pride in the quality of the teaching which occurs in each classroom. Our ongoing Quality Teaching Partnership with Newcastle University continues to improve the effectiveness of lesson delivery, assessment of student understanding and assists teachers to improve the value of teacher feedback to students and parents.

In addition to this, during the year, students of Birrong Girls High School have been honoured and rewarded for their continued application to their learning. Recently, Hanin Al Khaled Year 11 was commended for her drive and dedication towards school, sporting and leadership endeavours at the Auburn Youth Citizenship Awards evening. On Monday 25 November, Amira Chahrouk (pictured below with Mr Clare) was presented with the Jason Clare Community Service Award recognising her achievements and commitment to school and community contributions.



It was great to see so many parents attend the School Presentation Day at Bankstown Sports Club on Wednesday 11 December, it was a time to acknowledge and celebrate the great achievements of our girls.

Year 7 students attended the 2 day Swim School program which is a very important program. Not only is swimming great for health and wellbeing, being able to swim increases a child's safety around water. In addition to this annual event, Year 7 has also taken part in a STEAM (Science, Technology and Visual Arts) Showcase and Numeracy Activity Day to support their curriculum understanding in these areas.

Year 8 students participated in the VALID online Science testing during Week 3 and have finalised their elective subjects for 2020. Student applications were also submitted to be included in

the 2020 Helmsman Team program following a presentation from members of the Helmsman Team. The program involves mentoring, a community project and an adventure camp.

On Wednesday 27 November some Year 9 students had the opportunity to demonstrate their leadership skills by assisting at the Year 4/5 Enrichment day, escorting and supporting the primary school students around the school to experience a typical day at high school. Year 9 attended the Mathematics excursion to Luna Park in Week 8.

We hope the Year 7, 8, and 9 students who attended the Attendance Rewards Activity Day had a great time and enjoyed all the activities at Teen Ranch. It is a great day to reward students who have shown dedication and commitment to their attendance over the year. Excellent attendance has a positive impact on the achievement of educational outcomes.

Year 10 students completed their second work experience block in Week 8 and all students had the opportunity to gain valuable work place experiences. Thanks to Ms Wailes, Ms Shinas and the Year 10 teachers who visited and mentored the students whilst they were out in the *real world* of work. Year 10 students need to remain hard at work as they complete 'All My Own Work', a mandatory NESA requirement for all students entering Year 11. Year 10 students concluded the year with leadership training to be able to sign up and participate as a Year 11 mentor in the Peer Support Training program.

Year 11 participated in the compulsory Life Ready program on Friday 22 November. The day provided students with a greater understanding of the consequences, both positive and negative, of personal choices in various life situations. The students experienced presentations by young adults whose lives have been affected by risk taking behaviours and poor life choices.

Year 12 have officially signed out of school and attended their formal on 21 November. The night was a celebration of the end of this chapter of their lives. We wish them all the very best with their future endeavours.

The last day of the year for all students is Wednesday 18 December. All students are expected to be at school on time every day in full school uniform up until that day.

A reminder about the correct school shoe required by the Birrong Girls Uniform policy. It must be hard, leather school shoe with a solid heel. Runner or soft leather type shoes are not acceptable. Please note the poster included in this bulletin.

Ms George and Ms Andrews
Deputy Principal and Relieving Deputy Principal

WELFARE REPORT

Year 6 Transition Program

Students from 5 local Primary schools actively participated in the Year 6 Transition Program over 4 visits giving students the opportunity to work with students from different primary schools, familiarise themselves with our school setting and to experience a variety of lessons.



Student of the Month



Congratulations to Alice Cai of Year 11 who has been awarded the Student of the Month Award for October 2019. Alice has carried out valuable school service through her commitment and active involvement in various programs and teams. She has demonstrated responsibility and dedication as a Peer Reading Tutor for the past two years, supporting the literacy development of Year 7 students and as a motivated Peer Support Leader. She shows responsible citizenship through her efforts and dedication to events and fundraising as a member of the Amnesty International Team. Alice has enthusiastically participated in the Story Factory Novella writing program. She has attained strong academic results through her persistence and high quality work. Her strong leadership qualities have been recognised through her successful selection as a School Prefect for 2019 and 2020.

Alice is a valued member of her cultural community as she volunteers her time to sing and play the violin at her local church and delivers religious education to young children every Sunday morning. Her future goal is to attend university to attain a degree in either education or business.

The Welfare Team members greatly appreciate the ongoing support and strong partnership from families and the larger school community in the education of our students. We thank the parents and guardians of our school community for their ongoing commitment and efforts in guiding and encouraging our students to work hard to reach their potential and experience success in their academic and personal lives. We wish all our students and their families a wonderful school vacation and look forward to a very successful and exciting 2020.

Ms Salvagio
Head Teacher Female Students

CAREERS NEWS

Year 9 ABCN Design Thinking Workshop

On 1 November, a group of Year 9 Work Education girls along with Ms Shinas went to the ABCN building in Barangaroo where we were greeted with the welcoming mentors and hostess. As a way of getting to know each other we played a small game which included standing in a circle and telling each other our name in a speedy manner (our highest was 14 seconds for those who were curious). Afterwards we split up into groups accompanied by 1-3 mentors who discussed design thinking and what it is used for. We then played a small activity in which we had to come up with different uses and non-uses of a paper clip. After we presented our answers we received a small slip containing a problem having to do with school, we then had to follow the five Ds of design to make a list of solutions to our problems. Before we presented we had an amazing lunch with many great options. After having lunch with the mentors and learning many interesting facts about the company, we presented our ideas and solutions to the rest of the groups and mentors.





It was an exciting day with many learning opportunities. We are very thankful to our mentors for guiding us along our small project and helping us improve our skills.



By: Banen Al Jiboori of Year 9

Year 9 Fast Forward Program

On 30 October, a group of Year 9 students had the opportunity to participate in Western Sydney University's Fast Forward Program. The Fast Forward Program provides high school students with the opportunity to increase their understanding of university life and awareness of the opportunities

of tertiary education beyond high school. The group of Year 9 girls and I found this to be a very rewarding and beneficial program as we gained first-hand experience of what university life looks like and have gained a broader understanding of potential career choices available at university. We were joined by other schools such as Birrong Boys High, Ashfield Boys High and Fairvale High at Western Sydney University's Milperra campus. The day was filled with a range of individual and group activities. The first individual activity was based on Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligence. This activity involved us filling in a question booklet which would help us identify our areas of interests, ranging from musical abilities to interpersonal abilities (people smart). These were used to help us identify our individual strengths which would help us succeed as we choose careers that best suited our strengths. We completed group activities which required us to 'rise to the challenge' such as charades, solving puzzles and finding our way around the university using a map issued to us by the friendly staff and students at WSU. These activities helped build and improve team relationships and our problem-solving skills.

Overall, we all highly recommend the Fast Forward Program for every Year 9 student. It is a fantastic opportunity for students to understand what is offered at Western Sydney University. We all look forward to the future events run by Western Sydney University in the years leading up to our final years in high school.

On behalf of a group of girls a part of the Fast Forward Program, we thank Ms Shinas and Western Sydney University for planning this enriching and successful learning experience which has aided in the thought process for future career pathways and has given us a feel of university.



By: Daliya El Helou, Year 9

Western Sydney University's U Day

On Tuesday 19 November, 44 Year 11 students chose to attend WSU's annual U Day event at the Parramatta South campus. The students were given the opportunity to tour the campus, meet current uni students and academics, learn more about degrees and careers and experience what it's like to be a uni student for a day. The girls should be commended for their excellent behaviour throughout the day and feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive with one student saying "I wasn't thinking of WSU, but after today, I'm definitely considering it". A big thanks to Ms Rothwell for accompanying us on this excursion.



Ms Wailes and Ms Shinas
Careers Advisers

LIFE READY PROGRAM



On Friday 22 November all Year 11 students participated in the Life Ready Program, which is a personal development and health education course. This program was aimed at supporting senior students by addressing the changes in responsibilities, independence and identity. These were explored in the various programs attended throughout the day, including family planning, yoga and car maintenance. These activities allowed for an engaging and supportive environment where new skills and practical information was learnt for life outside school. Yoga was a practical experience of stress relieving activities and actions,

highlighting the need to take time out for yourself and relax. Road safety was addressed in the car maintenance program where information about the safety and functions of a car were taught through engaging activities such as changing a tyre and addressing the features of a car. Family planning revisited the importance of sexual health and the responsible approaches needed to take in order for a reliable future. This program was engaging and informative in addressing the responsibilities for life outside of school.



By: Amira Chahrouk, Sports Captain

QUICKSMART PROGRAM

Another year has come to an end and we have had another successful year with QuickSmart. Our students have improved immensely with outstanding effort and results.

From students using their fingers to count, to being able to add up numbers off the top of their heads. This is one example of the BGHS student achievement in QuickSmart.

It's great to see the amazing progress from our students from the very first lesson to the last lesson.

We would like to congratulate all the QuickSmart students for their hard work and dedication.

For the students graduating this year, we wish you the best of luck and thank you for all your hard work and dedication. For the students that will continue with QuickSmart in 2020, we are looking forward to working hard and working together.

Congratulations to the following students for outstanding effort:

Year 7

Term 1 - Sabrina Shublaq
Term 2 - Syrillina Sailor-Christie
Term 3 - Amina Badra
Term 4 - Liyana Abed

Year 8

Term 1 - Ella Hamdan
Term 2 - Nada Taleb
Term 3 - Maysa El-Kabbout
Term 4 - Salsabille Elrich

By: Ms Hmeidouch and Ms Turkoz

QUICKSMART EXCURSION



On Monday 2 December, fifteen Year 7 and Year 8 QuickSmart students, along with Ms Variyar, Ms Turkoz and Ms Hmeidouch went on a shopping excursion to Westfield Burwood. This excursion was to teach us how to budget on items purchased and discounts offered. We were also chosen to go on the excursion as a reward for our good work throughout the year.



We caught the train to Burwood. Once we got there we got to pick what we wanted to eat for morning tea. After everyone ate we walked around the shops. The shops we selected were Collette, Sportsgirl, Pandora and Kmart. Everyone bought something from one of these shops. There were many sales because of Black Friday. Ms Turkoz tried to get us to work out maths strategies on sale items. After that we had lunch and shopped a bit more. We stopped at Gongcha ice tea for a drink before catching the train back to school. When we got to school we worked on our booklets and recorded the items we bought, how much money

we had before shopping, how much we spent and how much we were left with after our shopping experience.

We all had so much fun and wished we could do it again. We had a great experience and really enjoyed the excursion.

By: Sabrina S and Jasmine D

QUICKSMART PRESENTATION Monday 9 December 2019



MUSIC REPORT



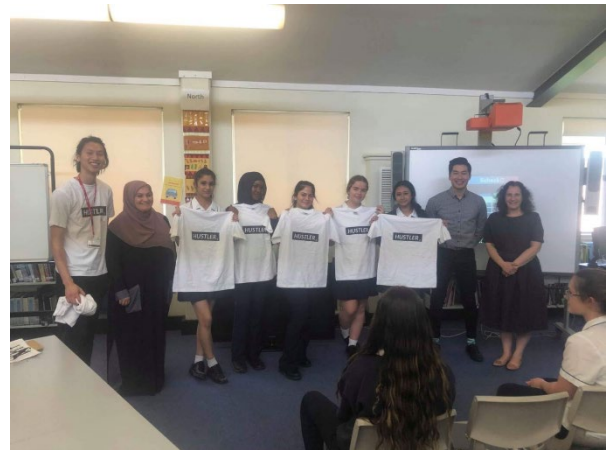
On 13 November select students from Year 8 had the opportunity to attend the Bankstown TAP workshop. This workshop was for young and aspiring vocalists to develop their skills ahead of the upcoming auditions for the Talent Advancement Program. It was a fantastic day consisting of vocal warm ups and exercises, movement classes and an extensive amount of performances from students across several schools. Each student from BGHS had the opportunity to perform on stage and receive feedback from experts that would help them develop as vocalists and musicians. The girls thoroughly enjoyed the day and gained inspiration and confidence to take them further in their musical journey. Well done to the following students: Arielle Taulapapa, Natania Sim, Chloe Harris, Shelby Potter and Mallak Elmir.

Congratulations to all the students who have worked hard throughout the year as part of our extra-curricular music programs. Wishing everyone all the best over the summer break and looking forward to another fantastic year of music in 2020!

For those of you who are not aware, Mr Eveleigh will no longer be with us in 2020. We would like to congratulate him on his new teaching position and thank him for all his hard work and dedication to music and our school over the past 5 years. We wish him luck in his future teaching endeavours and as always, 'Ad Astra'.

By: CAPA Faculty

GENERATION ENTREPRENEUR – IENTREPRENEUR PROJECT



On 23 and 24 October, Year 11 and Year 10 students had an amazing opportunity to be part of a facilitated program called Generation Entrepreneur held in our school library. The aim of the program was to build on our leadership and enterprise skills.

We participated in various workshops, excelling our entrepreneurial skills, where we then implemented to innovate a business idea that solves a common problem. Working in groups, we collectively designed our idea, whilst receiving continuous critique from our mentors to improve our pitch. After a fantastic 2-day program, filled with energy, engagement, laughter and crazy ideas we pitched our ideas to Ms Dabaja, Ms Elmir and Esmond Yu from Generation Entrepreneur. We had great fun and highly recommend this program to those who are offered this opportunity.

Congratulations to team 'Bits N Bobs': Aminata Doucoure, Lara Maxwell, Loyal El Cheikh, Mariam Mohammad and Erika Vorn for the winning pitch, and countless thanks to the mentors who ran the workshops and assisted us in completing our tasks.

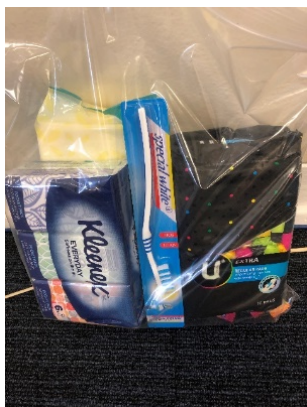
**By: Amira Chahrouk and Sarah Youssef,
Year 11**

HELMSMAN TEAM PROJECT 2019



Thirteen Year 9 students have been involved in a fantastic program during the second half of 2019. The program was conducted by the Helmsman Team and included mentoring sessions at the school, a community project and we participated in a 5 day adventure camp. The program aimed to increase our individual potential, resilience, team work skills and community mindedness.

We decided our community project would be to make personal hygiene/care packages for disadvantaged women. We raised \$520 through a cake and sweets stall that we ran in Term 3 to contribute towards our community project. The Helmsman Team also contributed \$500 towards the care packages. In total we were able to make 50 care packages (one is shown below) to support women facing difficulties.



We attended our graduation in the city on Wednesday 4 December. We have had a great time and feel very lucky to have been able to be involved in this wonderful program. We have developed so many new skills during the program and we feel honoured to be able to contribute and support members of the wider community less fortunate than ourselves.

By: Year 9 Birrong Girls Helmsman Team

THE K.O.A.L.A EXCURSION

13 November was a very exciting day for lovers of children's literature. The K.O.A.L.A Award winners were announced to the audience at Our Lady of Assumption School in Strathfield. 22 Birrong Girls were there! Over 8,000 votes including ours were cast for the most popular Australian books.

Picture Books WINNER

Seriously, Do Not Open This Book - Andy Lee and Heath McKenzie

Fiction for Younger Readers WINNER

The Bad Guys Episode 7: Do-You-Think-He-Saurus?! - Aaron Blabey

Fiction for Older Readers WINNER

The 104-Storey Treehouse - Andy Griffiths and Terry Denton

Fiction for Years 7-9 WINNER

Maybe - Morris Gleitzman



Tim Harris



Morris Gleitzman

**Mr Davidson
Teacher Librarian**

PREMIER'S READING CHALLENGE 2019



On the assembly of 26 November Ms Dabaja presented 14 students with certificates for outstanding commitment to reading through the PRC. Gold Certificate recipients were Hajer Aouadi, Hanan Aswaad, Fatima Jamshidi, Jesika Rawal, Jasmyn Reda, and Ayah Sankari. Platinum Certificate recipients were Gulalai Anwari, Xenobia Elali, and Mei Hua Li. Diamond Certificate recipients were Lamy Alameddine, Mya Ghamrawi, Zara Jalloul, and Khadija Rustom.

Mr Davidson
Teacher Librarian

Privacy and Communications

Throughout the year, the school will be publishing examples of student work as well as names and photographs of our girls in publications such as the local newspapers, the Birrong Bulletin, the school magazine and even the school's website. If you have any objections to your daughter's work, name or photograph being published in this way could you please inform the Principal in writing as soon as possible.



SCHOOL OPAL CARDS FOR 2020 TRAVEL

All students must keep their School Opal cards for travel in 2020. These cards will be automatically deactivated for school holidays and then reactivated for school travel in Term 1.

If the student already has a School Opal card and is changing schools or home address, you will need to update their School Opal card for the new school year before mid-December at: apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts

EDMONDSON CUP

On 25 November, a group of Year 8 and Year 9 students were selected to compete against Bankstown Girls, East Hills Girls and Liverpool Girls high schools at the Edmondson Cup. Birrong girls displayed great levels of sportsmanship, leadership skills and positive attitudes whilst competing in badminton and table tennis. Despite our unstoppable resilience and winning several games, teams from East Hills Girls and Liverpool Girls won their way to the finals. A big thank you to Mr Da Silva and Ms Boyle for organising another successful event and encouraging us to do our absolute best.

By: Daliya El Helou, Year 9



Parents are reminded that the last day of the 2019 school year for Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 students at Birrong Girls High School will be **Wednesday 18**

December. School development days will be held on Thursday 19 December and Friday 20 December.

School development days at the start and end of semesters allow teachers to undergo further professional training.

Note: School speed zones operate on all notified school days, including school development days.

BIRRONG GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL For your diary / noticeboard

December:

Wednesday, 18th

- Last day of the school year for students

Thursday, 19th

- School Development Day for staff

Friday, 20th

- School Development Day for staff

Very best wishes for the festive season to all.
Enjoy the holiday break!



January 2020:

Tuesday, 28th

- School Development Day - staff only return to school

Wednesday, 29th

- Years 7, 11 & 12 return to school

Thursday, 30th

- All other year groups return to school

FROM THE ENGLISH DESK

It's been a very productive term with the Drama Production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, English Writing Competition, Year 10 theatre excursion, assessments, evaluations, examinations and report writing. In this Birrong Bulletin we have chosen to celebrate our students' achievements by showcasing a wonderful imaginative response which was composed under examination conditions by Nancy Au. We hope you enjoy it as much as we have.

The English Faculty

To seize time and go back

The fresh morning air rushed in through the window leaving the drapes billowing in and out. The girl braided her silken brown hair and pushed it back, all the while humming a soft off-tune melody, *If I could turn back time....* She couldn't remember the last time she was here at this antique house but the familiar scent of eucalyptus wavered around the living room. She was back at her childhood home. The second her parents had waved goodbye and disappeared behind the wooden door, she had felt uneasy. But the feeling quickly dissipated at the familiar sight of her grandpa sitting in the well-worn lounge chair. The memory of her mother's voice lingered, "Now, your father and I will need to run some important errands for Aunt Becca, the baby is due soon, so you'll need to stay with grandpa for a while okay? Look after him for me. His nurse will arrive sometime around noon". The excited feeling of seeing her grandfather had taken her up her own stairs to rummage through her art supplies. Her visit would be fertile fodder for her creative impulses.

Now she glanced back at the old brown leather bag decorated with haphazard splodges of crusty paint on the edges. It sat waiting next to the doorway. She pulled it up over her shoulders." Okay grandpa, how about we start off with painting like we used to?" She questioned over her shoulder, while setting up the easel. No reply. She turned towards him hiding the disappointment behind her smile. That is when she realised, the cheery smile of grandpa Tamlin that had always lifted the whole room, was replaced by a sullen frown. She had not noticed immediately, but now it seemed as though time had traced his face, engraving lines into his leathery skin and with it, taken away the lively spirit that used to alleviate the cruelty of life. Amber took cautious steps to her grandpa and crouched down to examine his face closely. The silver lining of his hair had gone whiter, with age and as she searched his eyes for

any hint of brightness, all she found were the foggy black pupils stared blankly at the window as if he was looking, longing for something that was...distant. She stood up and smoothed out her dress, the one she had gotten for her thirteenth birthday last month and wondered if grandpa was waiting for grandma.

It had been a few years since she visited her grandpa. The last memory of him was happy and cheerful, his grin, toothy. She had sat on the rugged carpet twisting the ends of her favourite blanket between her fingers and giggling as she watched him swaying peacefully and in sync with grandma across the room, the sound of jazz music playing in the background. Then she had thought her grandparents had the ability to fly. The way they were floating across the floor elegantly and in time, together, harmoniously. One. She looked back at her grandpa Tamlin now, lifeless and limp. So small and frail that the lounge chair itself could swallow him. Shrivelled.

She sat on the wooden stool and picked up a paintbrush. Light had now filled the room and the tiny dust particles bounced delicately in the air. She dipped her soft bristled brush in the bright yellow paint, tapping her finger on the wooden easel to the familiar jazz tune that was ingrained in her memory. She began humming the melodious tune that she now remembered from her childhood and let her brush fly over the blank canvas. The tune, her heart and her memories, became one, bringing colour to the blankness and with every brushstroke. An array of musical notes danced on her canvas. Together, they formed an artwork. The music, the colour, her heart and her memoirs painted a landscape of joy and laughter. The beautiful memory of her grandpa and her grandma in his arms coursed through her, and she let it flow through her arms onto the canvas, humming the beautiful jazz melody.

A creak next to her averted her eyes from the canvas to her grandpa. He was standing shakily as

if one more step would make him collapse but the corner of his mouth lifted and he held his arm in the air as though he was with grandma, closing his eyes under the warm kiss of the sun that drew him towards the light. He took little shuffle, dance-like steps to a rhythm only he could hear. Amber felt the acute beauty and the sorrow of the moment. Then the lyrics came to her mind and she sang wholeheartedly as she stroked into the canvas the brightest colours possible, capturing this excruciatingly blissful moment. If only there could be enough colours in the world to express the melody of life in all of its fury and bliss.

She heard it in the painting.

By: Nancy Au, Year 10