



# BIRRONG BULLETIN

The Newsletter of Birrong Girls High School

Cooper Road, Birrong 2143 Telephone: 9644 5057

Issue No. 6

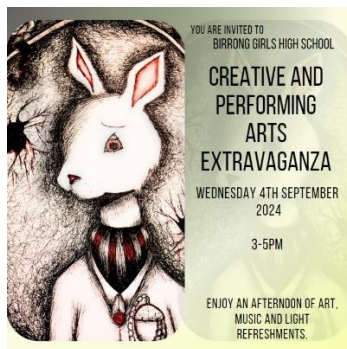
September 2024

## RELIEVING PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Dear BGHS Community,

### Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) Extravaganza

Exceptional art including pottery, portraits and paintings, lively musical performances and high-quality catering made this year's CAPA Extravaganza a memorable one. The showcase of student talent was held in our Ross McBride Visual Arts Centre on Wednesday 4 September where it was great to view so many creative art works on display from students in all year groups while our talented singers and musicians entertained parents, staff and students. Special thanks to Ms Winchcombe and the CAPA team and to Ms Morozov, the TAS staff and the Year 12 Hospitality classes for their contribution to the success of this year's extravaganza.



### Community Care Kitchen (CCK) Donations

I am so humbled by our school community with their generous and giving mindset. We had a three-week donation appeal (gold coin or toiletry products) to support families displaced from their homes both in Australia and overseas. Our school community raised \$800 and a table load of toiletry items. CCK will continue to update the school regarding the donated items as they are placed in packs and distributed to those in need. Giving to others less fortunate should always be a priority for the school and wider community.



## KANE Construction Workshops

We have been fortunate to be involved in special workshops organised by the construction team leading our capital works project. So far, we have attended two workshops focusing on Engineering (Week 8) and Building Internal Design and Fit Out (Week 8). The workshops have a theory component and then the participants take a tour of the construction site to see the action firsthand. The Year 12 girls had a great time at the Engineering session.



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Year 12 students at the KANE Construction Workshops

### Year 12 Graduation

Parents of Year 12 are invited to join us as we farewell the Year 12 class of 2024 at their Graduation Ceremony on the second last day of this term, Thursday 26 September. Year 12 may your HSC results reflect your effort and application, and may you experience great happiness and fulfilment in your future studies, careers and personal lives.

Congratulations to the following Year 12 students on their Rotary Youth Vocational Education Award nominations:

- Ayesha Charchouh – Hospitality Certificate II
- Noor Al Ali – Hospitality Certificate II Cookery
- Catherine Le – Entertainment Industry Certificate of Attainment
- Manal Moubayed – Retail Services Certificate III
- Shrouq Abu-Aguleh Business Services Certificate III

### Tell Them From Me Survey

The Parent Tell Them From Me survey will go live towards the end of Term 3 and continue to run at the start of Term 4. Parents who are not able to access the survey at home will be given a number of opportunities to complete it at Birrong Girls. The survey is completely anonymous. Our school values the informed views and opinions of our parents and all parents are encouraged to complete this survey. Data from the survey will be used to determine future directions and support whole school improvement. We will provide further information when it is available.

### Thank You:

- To all the Year 10 parents who attended the Subject Selection Interviews on Tuesday 13 August. It was a great time to sit and discuss your daughter's long term educational goals and to use a team focussed approach with the subject selection planning.
- To all the parents who attended the P&C meeting held in the Common Room on

Wednesday 21 August. Your attendance at the meeting and input into school processes were highly valued by all.

- Ms Shinas for your relentless support in the lead up to the Year 10 – 11 Subject Selections as well as the time invested to help the Year 12 girls with their applications for UAC. Ms Shinas has also organised all the University partnership programs running across Years 9, 10, 11 and 12.
- To the students, staff and parents who attended the Zonta Birthing Kit project morning on Saturday 31 August at the school. The Social Justice team raised over \$2,000 to purchase the necessary items to assemble the birth kits. This project involves putting together simple, clean birthing kits that are sent to help birthing assistants in developing countries. The kits consist of a sheet of plastic, gauze, string, a blade, soap and gloves. This is the eleventh year Birrong Girls HS has engaged with Zonta for this wonderful cause.

### Coming Events

- We are in the middle of the Year 11 examination period. We wish all of our Year 11 students the very best of luck.
- Year 11 VET Business Services are heading out to Work Placement when they return from examinations. We wish them all a productive week in their selected placements.
- Welcome back Year 12 from your examination period. Use the feedback from your teachers to help you plan and study in the lead up to the HSC examinations in Term 4 starting Tuesday 15 October 2024.
- We look forward to the launch of the Year 7 21<sup>st</sup> Century Rollercoaster project following their Immersion Day on Monday 2 September.
- We look forward to joining you and your families at the Parent Assembly on Wednesday 18 September 2024.

It is important that parents take careful note of their daughter's attendance as every day of school missed interrupts her learning. Participation in extra-curricular activities such as debating and sporting teams as well as school clubs should be encouraged also. Well documented evidence demonstrates that those students who have excellent attendance records and participate in extra-curricular activities are highly engaged with their learning and achieve outstanding results.

Two trained teachers supervise the homework centre Tuesday to Thursday from 2:50–4:50pm each week, assisting students with their homework

and supporting them in developing an improved understanding of course work covered in class. I urge all parents to encourage their daughters to access this valuable service.

### **Student Behaviour**

It is vital that all students follow our school values at all times. I believe our school values are the same value set that our families expect at home.

#### Birrong Girls High School Values:

**Personal Excellence:** do your best at all times. Be true to yourself and always be the best version of yourself

**Respect:** Students needs to be respectful of the teacher, the learning environment and of each other

**Responsibility:** to add value to each lesson by supporting the learning objectives of the teacher

**Cooperation:** to be demonstrated with the teacher and each other

**Tolerance and Inclusion:** we are all one, we are all equal

**Integrity:** being the best version of yourself even when adult eyes are not watching

It is very important that we all cooperate and work together to make the learning environment enjoyable for all.

I invite you to contact the school (Tel: 9644 5057) to make an appointment with me if you have any issues that you wish to discuss about your daughter's education. I hope you enjoy reading about the achievements and activities of the school in the following pages.

Warmest regards,

Renee George  
**Relieving Principal**

### **REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS**

Every year we ask parents and carers to complete the 'Tell Them From Me – Partners in Learning Parent' survey. This survey asks questions about student wellbeing and engagement. The information provided by parents and carers helps us to understand more about your child's experience at school. You can help us to confirm our school's areas of strength as well as areas for us to focus on in the future. The survey is anonymous and only takes around 15 minutes to complete on a computer, tablet or smart phone. The parent survey asks a range of questions related to the following areas:

- feeling welcome
- being informed
- being supported with learning at home
- parents' participation at school

- how the school supports positive behaviour
- student safety
- inclusion
- how the school supports student learning.

Our school survey will be open from Monday 14 October until Friday 25 October (Weeks 1 and 2, Term 4). We will provide the link for the survey via text direct to you.

**Year 12 students** have completed their Trial examinations. It is very important for all students to use the critical teacher feedback in preparation for their HSC examination next term. This is a time for Year 12 to modify their study habits and make the necessary changes as they travel towards the HSC. After all study notes are complete, students should be engaging in past papers and send the completed questions to their teachers for feedback regarding content and writing style. Motivation will be the key and it is very important for our students to keep their eye on the prize.

All Year 12 students must continue working until the end of Term 3 and all through the September / October school holidays in preparation for the HSC. Sustained dedication, time and effort towards examination preparation will lead to success. The school community wishes you all the very best!

Check out the HSC Study Guide 2024 which is a great resource for students:

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/hsc-study-guide-2024-20240709-p5js85.html>

### **Helpful tips for Preparing for HSC exams**

A little bit of strategy and some good time management will make these months – even the final days before exams – all the more productive. Sticking to your study schedule while allowing for breaks will help you manage your time.

### **Stick to a study schedule**

We've all heard it before: the evidence shows cramming isn't very effective. Here's how to create a well-balanced schedule:

- On a weekly or fortnightly schedule, mark down all your commitments like work, social occasions and sports activities.
- Add blocks of study time – 20-minute chunks for the most effective use of your brain.
- Allocate time for exercise and relaxation.
- Don't plan to study when you should be sleeping. Sleep helps us to concentrate,
- Remember things and keeps us energised.

### **Reduce the distractions**

Whether it's the notifications popping up on your phone or a noisy study space, make sure you sort

out the distractions before you buckle down into study mode.

- Switch your phone to 'Do Not Disturb' mode during study sessions or just switch it off.
- Choose a background sound that works for you – whether that's music, white noise or just plain silence.
- Find a space and time that will allow you to concentrate without being interrupted.

#### **Year 12 Key Dates:**

- Year 12 Picnic - Wednesday 25 September: Birrong Girls High School (Periods 4 and 5).
- Year 12 Graduation - Thursday 26 September: Grand Ballroom, Bankstown Sports Club (10.30am).
- HSC commences Tuesday 15 October.

**Year 11 students** have commenced their Year 11 Final Examinations. In Term 4 they will officially begin their Year 12 course of study. All Year 11 students need to ensure they understand the importance of this year and set up effective study habits that will ensure their success leading to their HSC exams in 2025. Year 11 students are also in the process of electing the Prefect body who will lead our school from Term 4 this year and into 2025. All Prefects must demonstrate the Core Values of our school and follow our Code of Behaviour.

**Year 10 students** attended *bstreetsmart*, an initiative of the Trauma Service at Westmead Hospital. The event aims to reduce the fatality and injury rates of young people by promoting safe behaviours as drivers, riders and passengers. The interactive event is based around a car crash involving young people. It is very confronting and successfully communicates messages about the potential deadly impact of driver and passenger behaviour. As many of your daughters are (or will soon be) old enough to become learner drivers we encourage you to talk to them about this experience.

Year 10 students have also completed the subject selection process for Year 11, 2025. All students will receive a personalised letter confirming their selections and the learning charges associated with the different courses. They should be preparing for their Year 10 final exams which will be held mid Term 4. Year 10 students are expected to keep working at a consistent pace for the remainder of the year, making sure they complete all class and assessment tasks to a high standard to ensure no warning letters are sent home.

Congratulations to the students who graduated from the Youth Opportunities Personal Leadership Program, mentored by Ms Ferris: Aurora B, Jessica

L, Israa A, Mishaal K, Kayla T, Layell M, Suelayma B, Salam B, Nourel A and Rouqayya N.

#### **Free to Fashion (Years 9 and 10)**

Selected Year 9 and Year 10 students participated in a Free to Fashion experience, a combined project of English and Textiles. The first drop of product featuring the Free to Fashion project fabrics is now on the website of The Social Outfit at:

<https://thesocialoutfit.org/collections/spring-summer-2025>

The silk screen print has been named Amplify and the screenprint will be known as Storyteller. Congratulations to all the teachers and students involved in this project.

**Year 9 students** have participated in a range of learning activities this month. All students participated in Digital Thumbprint workshops to support students to recognise fake news and misleading content. *Commerce* attended Parramatta Westfield to put theory learnt in class into practice. *PASS* showcased their coaching and leadership skills at the Year 8 Field Day and represented our school with pride.

**Year 8 students** have completed the process of selecting their two elective subjects for Year 9 and Year 10. Our elective program provides students with the opportunity to supplement their mandatory courses of study with courses in which they have a particular interest. All Year 8 students have received their personalised letters indicating their 2025 elective courses.

Year 8 also recently competed at Field Day, representing the school well in netball, basketball, Newcombe ball and soccer. Congratulations to everyone who participated!

#### **Year 7**

Year 7 engaged with the 21st Century Skills Development Day on Monday 2 September. It was a day filled with team challenges, building collaboration, communication and problem-solving skills. On Tuesday 3 September, the Year 7 Rollercoaster Challenge was launched, and students have been working together to plan and design, ready to build a working model rollercoaster. Stay tuned for the results of this showcase in our next edition.

Year 7 also engaged in their Field Day this term. This was a fun sports gala day where the girls play a variety of sports with other girls' schools from the area.

All students should be practising their GEM skills (Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness) every day to build positive learning environments, mindsets and peer relationships.

Ms Andrews, Ms Blue, and Ms Boyle (Rel.)  
**Deputy Principals**

## VALE – LIVIA BOLANCA ENGLISH FACULTY AND TEACHER LEADER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

We pay tribute to our dearest friend, colleague, mentor and esteemed teacher, Livia Bolanca, who passed on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024. Her passing has left an unfillable void in our school, but we were blessed to have experienced her incredible passion for education and for life, her compassion and empathy for all around her.

Livia Bolanca was an active member of the education profession for 30 years, impacting the lives of countless young women as an inspiring English and Drama teacher and Year Adviser at Birrong Girls High School.

She was selected by the Department of Education as an Expert Teacher on the English team in the HSC Strategy in 2019 in recognition of her teaching practice as amongst the best in the state. This provided Livia the opportunity to extend her sphere of influence from the faculty and school to the wider community of NSW and she was instrumental in designing and delivering the Department's HSC Strategy to lift teacher practice and student performance statewide.

Livia's exemplary practice and contribution to the profession was recognised through the Minister of Education Award in 2021.

We will always remember Livia as the brightest star in the universe,

Ad Astra.



If you would like to view Livia's tribute from the HSC Strategy Team of the Department of Education, please see the following link:

<https://vimeo.com/1004275708/2c0f4521d1?share=copu>

## 2023 Presentation Day Speech delivered by Livia Bolanca

Last week I engaged in a deep, philosophical conversation with a colleague. We were talking about the value of committing to further study and she said something to me that very strongly resonated. It was a simple statement, but true and accurate for the life choices we make, no matter our age. Our conversation centred on whether we had the time to truly commit to further study, and she said, 'the time will pass anyway'.

Reflecting over my life I have come to recognise that as a teenager, a child, I thought I had infinite time. As I've gotten older, experienced more of life's trials and tribulations, I've become acutely aware of how finite and fragile life is. How relentlessly time marches on, immune to us all. So, does that mean that I must tread carefully always, be cautious and wary? I don't think so. For me, it's meant that I should grab life by the horns and live each moment fully. That can range from stopping to smell the roses (yes, we always say we're going to do that), but we never do, or at least, we don't sustain the practice. We say we don't have time, but we make time for what we WANT to do and that usually takes the form of scrolling our socials, or binge-watching streaming services. Essentially, we choose to spend our days picking the 'low hanging fruit' because the alternative is too difficult. We con ourselves that we will get to the high hanging fruit, in time, but we never really do, at least not well and certainly not in a timely fashion. But, what would we gain from engaging in challenging projects that take time, intellect and collaboration with others? What would happen if we chose to step into that more difficult and potentially highly rewarding world? It's hard to say, isn't it? Because we are distracted by 'shiny things', 'easy things'.

We seemingly fill our days with what we choose, but are we choosing? Or are others choosing for us? Are we a discriminating audience, critical of the information that assails us every moment of every day? Can we choose what we want exposure to, or do we let others do the choosing for us? Do we give away our power? Are we complicit in this disempowerment?

When I was a child, I lived in my homeland until I was 5 and, from what I can remember, I was perfectly happy there. I was adored and loved. Enfolded. But my parents chose to migrate to Australia in 1970 and I really had no say in that.

Starting school with no English would have been challenging for me even if I had the words to express the alienating sense of displacement. I remember vividly that I was the victim of very insensitive teachers who declared me stupid,

because I couldn't express myself in English. I was expected to pick up the language from the students next to whom I sat. And this sense of isolation compounded over years. It wasn't until I had completed years 5 and 6 that I began to suspect that their premature assessment of me was grossly inaccurate.

Let me segue to a little story that might give you insight into how disembodied I felt about learning and my abilities. When I was young, I watched a Disney movie with Kurt Russell who played the role of Dex Dexter. From what I remember, Dex was accidentally trapped in a box of some sort and was unexpectedly exposed to an electrical current that hit his head. Once he got out, he discovered that he was extraordinarily intelligent and became an overnight sensation.

Like Dex, when I was in year 5, I was playing hide and seek with the kids in the street, and I accidentally hit my head on a nail head while I was hiding. Around the same time, my teacher started to call on me to contribute to class discussions and celebrated the insights I shared. I started to feel valued and worthy and thought, like Dex Dexter, I've become smart because I hit my head. I was so disconnected from my sense of worth, that I didn't attribute it to my own tenacity and hard work.

Looking back now, I realise that my intelligence was a hard one achievement. It wasn't because I had hit my head, it wasn't a fluke. It matured as I discovered reading. Over time, language, words, and sentences opened worlds that I had never imagined, that I had no access to before I had the key to language. But, because my parents promoted the value of education at home and because I did not like feeling disempowered or stupid, I persisted. I didn't allow these comments to limit me. I welcomed the escape that books gave me. And I still do. I can still get lost in books. It's nerdy, I know, but that's how I relax.

Fast forward to December 2023 where I am near to completing my 4th year in a dual role, moving between leading at Birrong to leading in the state, I have come to see that we all must play our parts. Whether child or adult, how we choose to spend our time is inextricably tied to who we become as human beings. I am in the very privileged position of seeing how hard teachers work not only at Birrong, but across the state.

I can say without a shadow of a doubt, that teachers' greatest concerns centre on their students and how best to prepare them so that when they leave the protective fold of high school, they can contribute to a truly democratic society in intelligent and discerning ways.

Teaching is an honourable profession, a highly intellectual profession with degree qualifications. We didn't just have our degrees handed to us, we had to work hard for them. We had to be tenacious, resilient, and often in the face of deep exhaustion, we had to persevere. And that is still true today. Every day, teachers avoid the low hanging fruit, they pick the high hanging fruit, they tackle the challenges they are faced with honourably.

So, I ask you.... how will you choose to spend your time? It'll pass anyway but consider the person you will be by this time next year, in 2 years, in 5 years, into seasoned adulthood.

I recently celebrated my 40th high school reunion. Where did that time go? What have I done? There are many achievements that I can be proud of and there are many more opportunities that I have let slip through my fingers.

However, there is one comfort that we can all take as I leave you. There is still time, for each and everyone of us, no matter our age.

We must be gentle with our past selves because that time has passed. Now, we must turn to our present selves. How will we spend our time? This sometimes-perceived enemy of ours? Will we fritter away our precious hours? Or, given that we are in the prime of our lives, guided by adults that are experts in their field, will we suck the marrow out of every moment, meet our teachers' challenges head on and give ourselves a fighting chance to navigate the world when we enter it as fully fledged young adults?

There's only one person that can answer those questions and that's you.



## STUDENT WELFARE REPORT



Maintaining attendance over 90% is extremely important for ongoing and consistent student learning and achievement. Maintaining high levels of attendance is also very impressive when applying for work, whether it be in part-time work or full-time work post schooling.

All students should be at school every day unless they are sick or require medical attention. Every student can improve their attendance percentage by coming to school every day from this point on. Look at this example to see how every student can make great improvement - if in Semester 1 you had 10 days absent, then you have an attendance rate at 89% attendance. If you have no more absences in Term 3 then your 10 days absent will put you at 93% attendance. If you have no more absences in Term 4 then your 10 days absent will put you at 95% attendance. That is, you attended 184 days out of 194 school days over the year in 2024. Improve your attendance, start from today.

### School Vaccinations

The school vaccinations for Year 7 will take place on Wednesday 18 September 2024.

Parents can register their consent online or through a hardcopy consent form that was issued to Year 7 earlier this term.

### How to provide consent:

1. To complete online consent for your child's school vaccinations, visit: <https://nswhealth.service-now.com/school>  
Or use the QR code in the image on this page.
2. Follow the steps to log in to your existing ServiceNSW account. This is the same account you may already use to renew your driver's licence. If you don't have a ServiceNSW account, refer to ServiceNSW to create one.
3. Update or confirm your personal details in ServiceNSW as required.
4. Complete the School Vaccination Consent Form for your daughter(s). You will need to:
  - a) Enter your daughter's personal details

- b) Provide the Medicare card details for you and your daughter
- c) Read the linked Parent Information Sheet and privacy statement
- d) Provide consent

If you and your daughter do not have a Medicare card, consent can still be provided by requesting a paper-based consent form from Ms Salvagio at the Learning Support Staffroom.

The NSW Government logo is located in the top right corner of the poster, featuring a red stylized flower above the text 'NSW GOVERNMENT' in blue.

## Is your child in year 7 or year 10?

**Provide your consent for routine school vaccinations online.**

At the beginning of the school year, your child's school will share the link to complete the online consent form.

**Benefits of providing online consent:**

- easily update your child's details
- get SMS notifications when vaccinations are given
- faster upload of vaccination records to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)

**To provide online consent, you will need:**

- the link provided by the school
- your Service NSW log-in details
- medicare details for you and your child

Scan the QR code to give your consent now.

A square QR code is positioned to the left of the smartphone graphic.A large smartphone graphic is shown, displaying a consent form. The form has two sections: 'Year 7' and 'Year 10'. Under 'Year 7', there are two items with checked boxes: 'Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (dTpa)' and 'Human papillomavirus (HPV)'. Under 'Year 10', there is one item with a checked box: 'Meningococcal ACWY'. A woman with pink hair, wearing a yellow top and purple pants, is pointing at the smartphone screen.

**For more information on vaccination visit:**  
[health.nsw.gov.au/schoolvaccination](https://health.nsw.gov.au/schoolvaccination)

November 2022 © NSW Health, SHPN (HP NSW) 221060. NSW Health

### Student of the Month Awards



Congratulations to Maryam Najafi-Fakhr of Year 12 who has been awarded the Student of the Month Award for May 2024. She has demonstrated strong citizenship and commitment to the school community. Maryam is a conscientious and mature student with a positive attitude to her studies.

Maryam has demonstrated dedication, diligence and leadership in her role as a school Prefect. She has dedicated her effort and time for many fundraising events for worthy causes. Maryam is the successful recipient of the 2024 Minister's Award for Excellence in Student Achievement in Community Languages Schools for her outstanding progress in Arabic language studies at the Imam Ali College community language school.

As a student leader she has participated in the Halogen National Young Leaders Day, enhancing her leadership capacity and resilience.

Out of school, Maryam is an active member of the community, and she volunteers for the local Arabic School where she attends as a student by assisting with activities for the younger children. She also volunteers at her local mosque supporting the children's programs. She enjoys spending quality time with her family.

Maryam's future goal is to attend university to attain a degree in Pharmacy and to complete a Master of Pharmacy to pursue a career as a pharmacist and to enable her to manage her own pharmacy. She hopes that she will make a difference in the community and have a positive impact in the lives of others through the provision of health services. She aims to travel throughout the middle east to countries such as Iraq, Iran, Syria and Saudi Arabia, to visit holy sites, shrines and make pilgrimages.



Congratulations to Hana Sabbagh Bayad of Year 12 who has been awarded the Student of the Month Award for June 2024. She has demonstrated citizenship and commitment to the school community. She has a positive

attitude to all aspects of her schooling, and she demonstrates perseverance to attain improved learning outcomes.

Hana has shown commitment to the school community through her involvement in various programs and teams over the years. She has been a dedicated member of the Social Justice Team, being involved with the assembling of ZONTA Birthing kits and an enthusiastic team member of the SRC of 2023 where she supported events and fundraisers. She has been a supportive and encouraging Peer Support Leader to Year 7 students transitioning into high school. Hana demonstrates leadership and cooperation as a member of the School Prefect Body, participating in various fundraising projects and events. She has participated in the Western Sydney University Fast Forward program providing valuable insights and enhancing her critical thinking skills.

Her future goal is to attend university to study Law and English and literature as she has a passion for English. She aspires to pursue a career as a human rights lawyer to advocate for a better future and to specialise in humanitarian issues, by being a part of humanitarian oriented work in developing parts of the world. Hana would like to travel and explore the world and its various cultures.



Congratulations to Surayah El-Hassan of Year 12 who has been awarded the Student of the Month Award for July 2024. She has demonstrated citizenship, leadership, commitment to school service and the community. Surayah has been an

enthusiastic and supportive Peer Support Leader to Year 7 students transitioning into high school and she has maintained connections with the Year 7 students beyond the program. She demonstrates leadership, determination and cooperation as an active member of the School Prefect Body, leading and participating in various fundraising events such as the Push Up Challenge, raising awareness and funds for mental health, and the Community Care Kitchen project. Surayah is a role model for our First Nations students and our whole school community by raising awareness about Aboriginal culture, reconciliation and presented in NAIDOC Week. She has also been involved in completing the May 50km run, raising awareness and making a positive impact on those living with Multiple Sclerosis. This year Surayah assisted and supported younger competing students at the Zone Athletics Carnival, and she has been actively involved in the preparations for the 2024 Year Book.

Out of school, Surayah enjoys her time doing sport, where she plays in the Guildford Knights netball team every Saturday and plays in an Oztag team on Monday nights. She also likes to read in her spare time. Surayah is a member of a Muslim youth group that attend the local mosque and have discussion groups about religion and mental health. She is also trying to learn sign language and to improve her Arabic language use.

Her future goal is to attend university to complete a degree, with her main option being in psychology to pursue a career as a psychiatrist. Whilst studying at university she would like to continue to develop her skills and play a sport. Surayah hopes to travel the world to expand her knowledge and learn to speak other languages.



Congratulations to Jamilah Elsayed of Year 12 who has been awarded the Student of the Month Award for August 2024. She has demonstrated citizenship, leadership and commitment to school service and the community. Jamilah has excelled in sport over the

years representing the school at zone level cross country, athletics, badminton and soccer. She also competed at regional level in soccer and cross country. Jamilah has been an enthusiastic Peer Support Leader to Year 7 students transitioning into high school. She demonstrates leadership and



cooperation as an active member of the School Prefect Body, participating in fundraising and projects. This year she assisted in the organisation of the Push-Up Challenge, raising money for mental health awareness.

Out of school, Jamilah has been involved in various pursuits that reflect her commitment to physical and mental health, leadership and community service. She participates in gym weights training and has captained a soccer team. She has participated in sports boxing, Oztag and taekwondo, in which she is currently working to attain a black belt. She supports the wider community by volunteering for AusRelief, a local charity dedicated to alleviating poverty and sickness. Jamilah has developed a deep appreciation for nature and the outdoors, such as the ocean and the outback, through the Outward Bound Program as well as reinforcing her belief in the value of peace.

Her future goal is to attend university to complete a degree in Sports and Exercise Science at the University of Technology. She aims to improve the overall health of individuals, particularly athletes and to branch off in different career pathways in this field. Jamilah also intends to travel around the world to explore and experience different communities and cultures.

Ms Salvagio  
**Head Teacher Female Students**

### **SPELLING BEE REPORT**

In its 10th year, there was an undisputed winner of the Spelling Bee this year. A fierce competition between students and teachers leading to a student victory after the last question.

On Thursday 15 August, the final was run with class winners of qualifying rounds coming together to challenge for the overall champion prize. The stress of standing in front of an audience took its toll on several participants with girls stumbling on some relatively easy words.

After several rounds, Maha Aiche (Year 12), the senior champion for 2023 was crowned. She won the prize on a repechage round after all juniors bowed out earlier.

The final knockout for the overall championship saw a battle between Shifa Ali (Year 9) and Maha Aiche (Year 12).

A big thank you to all who participated and helped make the experience possible. Special mention to

Dr Thorpe and Ms Lai who expertly read the words and adjudicated the responses, Mr Clark for organising the random picker, the tech team who expertly set up the computer screen, Shifa Ali (Year 9) from the media team for taking photographs, Jesika Rawal (Year 12) as the “gong girl” and Naumi Raymundo (Year 7) who helped with the random picking of words.

Mr Saule  
**Head Teacher Science**



Spelling Bee winners pictured above: Shifa (Year 9) and Maha (Year 12). Congratulations!

### **WESTFIELD PARRAMATTA COMMERCE EXCURSION**

On 27 August, Ms Youssef and the Year 9 Commerce class travelled by train to Westfield Parramatta shopping centre for an excursion focused on key financial management skills. The skills they learned included comparison shopping, budgeting, and understanding the difference between needs and wants. The excursion was enlightening and productive, as it exposed students to various marketing techniques used by retailers to attract consumers, such as flashy sales, “buy one get one free” deals, and membership discounts. Each student had a set budget to spend and was successful in dividing up their money to purchase items they desired.

One of the most beneficial skills students gained was learning how to find the best prices for different items on the market. As the excursion lasted 4 hours, students had the opportunity to browse different stores, prioritise their needs, and understand how to get the best value for their money.

Students also visited supermarket giants, where they compared the shelf life of different items and

determined which products were worth buying. Students identified how much cheaper the discounted “specials” items were after passing their “best before” dates and which supermarket sold the most low-priced goods.

Overall, the experience was an investment into their financial management capabilities and provided an engaging environment students could interact with to reinforce their education in both the classroom and the community.

**By: Sireen Al Khaled, Year 9**



## SPORTS REPORT

### Year 7 Field Day

On Wednesday 28 August, Year 7 students participated in the Edmondson Zone Field Day excursion. All students demonstrated their best efforts, exemplary behaviour and built great teamwork skills. It was a great day of playing outdoor sports: soccer, netball, cricket and Newcombe ball.

Thank you to our teachers who coordinated and supervised the event and to our student coaches and referees from 10PASS. Congratulations to all involved.

Upcoming event:

### Year 7 Swim School

When: Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Location: Birrong Leisure Centre

**By: PDHPE Faculty**

## BIRRONG GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL CALENDAR

### **September:**

Monday, 16 <sup>th</sup> to Friday, 27 <sup>th</sup>	▪ Year 11 VET Business Services Work Placement
Tuesday, 17 <sup>th</sup>	▪ Year 8 & Year 10PASS Jump Rope for Heart, p5
Wednesday, 18 <sup>th</sup>	▪ Parent Assembly for award recipients, 8:45am for 9am start ▪ Year 7 Vaccinations
Wednesday, 25 <sup>th</sup>	▪ Year 12 Picnic at BGHS, p4&5
Thursday, 26 <sup>th</sup>	▪ Year 12 Graduation at Bankstown Sports Club Grand Ballroom, 10:30am
Friday, 27 <sup>th</sup>	▪ Last day of Term 3 for students and staff

*Enjoy the school holidays!*

### **October:**

Monday, 14 <sup>th</sup>	▪ All students and staff return to school
Tuesday, 15 <sup>th</sup>	▪ HSC Exams start ▪ Year 7 Swim School at Birrong Leisure Centre
Wednesday, 16 <sup>th</sup>	▪ Year 7 Swim School at Birrong Leisure Centre



## BIRRONG GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS & CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

Parents are invited to attend the  
**P & C MEETING**  
at Birrong Girls High School  
(in the Common Room)  
on Wednesday 13 November 2024  
at 5pm  
Please register your attendance  
by phoning the school office



Calling all cricket enthusiasts! Hoxton Park Tigers Cricket Club is excited to announce the hiring of new junior and senior players for the upcoming summer season. We're looking for talented and passionate players aged 7 to 19 years to join our team.

Whether you're a seasoned player or just starting, this is your chance to be part of a club that values teamwork, skill development, and sportsmanship. Don't miss this opportunity to train, play, and grow with us!

**Age Groups:** 7 to 19 years

**Season:** Summer 2024/25

For more information and to register your interest, please contact:

- Peter Moore: 0432 299 410
- Siddiqui: 0430 100 144
- Ravi: 0411 526 457

We look forward to seeing you on the field!

Sharjeel Siddiqui  
Secretary FLCA & Presidents Cup Co-ordinator  
NSW DCA Delegate  
Member of Advisory Group Sports Committee  
(Liverpool and Fairfield Councils)  
Fairfield Liverpool Cricket Association  
[www.flca.com.au](http://www.flca.com.au)

## Special Religious Education (SRE) at Birrong Girls High School

NSW public schools offer special religious education (scripture) and special education in ethics, delivered by approved providers wherever available. During enrolment, you can choose a special religious education option for your child from the school's available approved providers. You can withdraw your child from special religious education by selecting alternative meaningful activities, or special education in ethics if it is available. You can update your preference by writing to the school or through the **online form** available at participating schools. Visit the **department's website** for more information about religion and ethics.

At Birrong Girls High School, SRE is delivered in 60-minute lessons in a 5-week block each term on Fridays during period 3 to timetabled year groups.

At Birrong Girls High School, SRE is provided at our school through the following providers:

- **Buddhist Faith**

The Hwa Tsang Monastery has been accredited to provide SRE in the Buddhist faith to primary and high schools for the NSW Department of Education since 1997.

For more information, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence please visit the following site and selecting 'Education', 'Special Religious Education' and then 'Syllabus and Approach':

- <http://www.hwatsangmonastery.org.au/>

- **Combined Protestant Christian**

Combined Protestant Christian Churches Special Religious Education (SRE) is being provided through BLAST (Bankstown Local Area Scripture Team). A number of Approved Providers of SRE that meet NSW Department of Education requirements have arranged to partner together to deliver a Combined Christian SRE curriculum.

The list of providers represent various Protestant denominations:

- Christian Community Churches of Australia  
<https://cccaust.org/>
- Uniting Church in Australia (NSW Synod)  
<https://nswact.uca.org.au/>
- Presbyterian Church of Australia (NSW)  
<https://pynsw.org.au/>
- Australian Christian Churches  
<https://www.acc.org.au/>
- Churches of Christ in NSW & ACT  
<https://ccnswact.org.au/>
- Anglican Diocese of Sydney  
<https://sydneyanglicans.net/>
- Baptist Union of NSW  
<https://nswactbaptists.org.au/>

The name of the curriculum is called Think Faith. Information regarding the curriculum can be found at <http://thinkfaith.com.au>.

- **Islamic Charities Projects Association**

The Islamic Charity Projects Association (ICPA) is accredited by the NSW Department of Education to teach Islamic Special Religious Education in NSW public schools. The ICPA works under the guidelines of Darulfatwa - the Islamic High Council of Australia.

For more information about this provider, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence please visit the following sites:

- <http://www.icpa.org.au/>
- [www.darulfatwa.org.au](http://www.darulfatwa.org.au)

- **Islamic Council of NSW**

The Islamic Council of NSW is authorised through the Department of Education to provide Islamic Special Religious Education lessons in NSW Public Schools. ISRE teachers are provided with approved teaching materials and pedagogy.

For more information about this provider, including the authorised curriculum scope and sequence please visit the following site:

- <http://www.isre.org.au/scope-year-7-year-12/>

# SMH Article: 14 August 2024

HSC

## 'We have a few secrets up our sleeve': The Sydney girls' school rising in the HSC charts

All-girls fully selective and comprehensives outperform all-boys counterparts, an analysis of HSC average scores shows.



## 'We have a few secrets up our sleeve': The Sydney girls' school rising in the HSC charts

Veteran English teacher Kelly Andrews can pinpoint when she noticed a change in the reading and writing ability of her youngest high school students.

"A decade ago we realised there was a problem with reading comprehension - it was on the decline," says Andrews, deputy principal at Birrong Girls High. "We knew we had to start teaching writing more explicitly, breaking down sentence and paragraph construction, step by step."



Students in an English advanced class at Birrong Girls High with teacher Robin Caravas. *Credit: Wolter Peeters*

The all-girls public school in Sydney's south-west has since harnessed a fundamental shift in the way literacy and writing skills are taught in years 7 to 10, spreading that approach to other faculties.

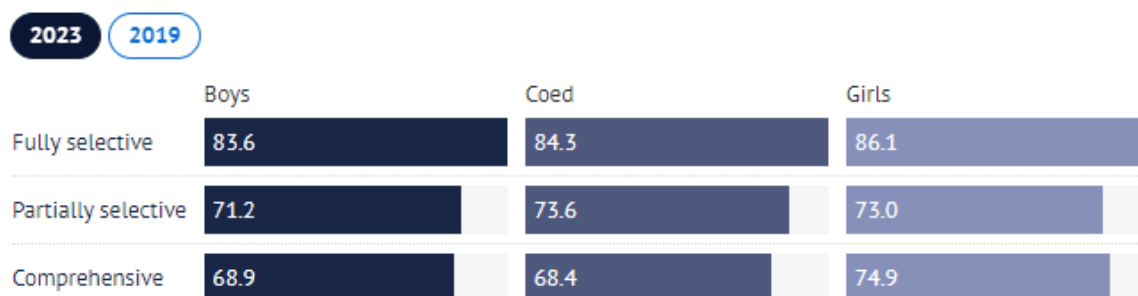
“We do have a few secrets up our sleeve,” says Andrews, who has taught English for more than 30 years. Birrong Girls takes a forensic approach to analysing student data, she explains, while it has also raised the difficulty level of its assessments.

“We don’t dumb anything down. We expect really high things from our girls.”

A *Herald* analysis shows the school’s HSC English advanced score is consistently above 85, while its average score, when the mean of all subjects is taken, has risen to above 75.

The analysis of public schools’ HSC results shows girls’ fully selective and comprehensive schools outperform their boys’ counterparts when the mean of all subjects is taken, although that gap has narrowed slightly since 2019.

### HSC average scores by school type



Average scores for government schools only.

Source: NSW Education department

Band 6 results also show [boys’ schools across the sectors are also](#) catching up to all-girls institutions. Data from 2022 shows girls are outperforming boys in [most HSC courses](#), but boys’ schools maintain the lead in chemistry and the toughest maths courses.

Most co-ed schools improved results compared with 2019, with 169 schools recording improved average scores, while 145 went backwards.

Andrews says while Birrong Girls often scores below the state in NAPLAN in the first year of high school, by year 10 “we’re seeing that glimmer of improvement ... and we rise to above the state average in year 11”.

“In the past five years, we’re getting students who are coming to us with even fewer skills. There are learning gaps so we’ve started including a specific literacy and numeracy period in year 7 and 8,” she says.

Andrews believes a fall in reading and writing has coincided with a rise in social media and more technology use. “That reading fluency has declined over time because kids aren’t getting the exposure to as many books.”

**Lucy Carroll and Nigel Gladstone**

August 14, 2024 – 7.30pm

# Birrong Girls High School and Birrong Boys High School

Project update | September 2024

Artist impression of Birrong Girls High School upgrade



## Investing in our schools

As part of the NSW Government's plan to rebuild public education, the 2024-25 Budget is delivering record education funding, including \$3.6 billion for new and upgraded schools in Western Sydney. This targeted investment will ensure growing communities get access to a world class public education.

## Project overview

A project is underway to upgrade Birrong Girls High School and Birrong Boys High School. The project will deliver upgraded facilities to support the learning needs of the local community.

## Progress update

Since the last update in July 2024, we have achieved the following at Birrong Girls High School:

- completed the structure and roof framing for the new teaching building
- completed the ground slab, roof framing and sheeting for the new hall
- put up scaffolding to start external wall and façade works for the new buildings.

At Birrong Boys High School, we have achieved the following:

- completed the structure and the roof framing for the new teaching building
- put up scaffolding for wall and façade works for the hall and new teaching building
- prepared the ground where the hall extension and new covered outdoor learning area (COLA) will be.

Internal works, including installing pipes, cables and walls, have started at both schools.

## Next steps

In the upcoming months we will continue working on the interiors and installing lifts for both schools.

At Birrong Girls High School we will also lay the façade brickwork for the hall and undertake fire hydrant pressure testing.



Email: [schoolinfrastructure@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:schoolinfrastructure@det.nsw.edu.au)  
Phone: 1300 482 651  
[schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au](http://schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au)



## More information

You can find more information about the project at [edu.nsw.link/Birrong-Boys-Girls-HS](https://edu.nsw.link/Birrong-Boys-Girls-HS) or by scanning the QR code.

If you have any questions about this project, you can contact School Infrastructure NSW during business hours on the contact details below.

للحصول على خدمة الترجمة الفورية والشفهية، يمكن الاتصال على الرقم 131 450 ثم طلب الاتصال بدائرة التربية والتعليم - هيئة البنى التحتية للمدارس في نيو ساوث ويلز على الرقم 1300 482 651.



For a **Translation and Interpreting Service** call **131 450** and ask them to call the Department of Education - School Infrastructure NSW on **1300 482 615**.







## BIRRONG GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

Principal: Zena Dabaja  
BA (Hons) DipEd

Telephone: (02) 9644 5057

Cooper Road  
BIRRONG 2143

### **RE: From 30 September 2024, Southwest Link buses replace trains between Sydenham and Bankstown**

Dear Parents and Carers,

The NSW Government recently announced the T3 Bankstown Line will close from 30 September 2024 between Sydenham and Bankstown, for up to 12 months, while the line is upgraded to Metro Standards.

During this time, trains between Sydenham and Bankstown will be replaced by a free, dedicated, and high-frequency bus service, known as Southwest Link.

To prepare for Southwest Link, between 21 and 29 September 2024, the T3 Bankstown Line will close between Birrong and Campsie, with buses replacing trains between Lidcombe, Bankstown and Campsie.

Given these changes start during the school term and may impact your child's travel, it is important they are aware and prepared.

#### **Key features of Southwest Link**

Southwest Link comprises three dedicated bus routes, which include both all stops and limited stop services.

Please see the diagram below which details the stopping pattern for bus routes SW1, SW2, and SW3 respectively.

#### **Southwest Link bus services**



OFFICIAL

*'Ad astra' - Reaching for the stars*

### **Supporting bus and train changes from 30 September 2024**

A new train service will be introduced between Lidcombe and Bankstown called the T6 Lidcombe & Bankstown Line.

Students will be able to interchange between the new T6 Lidcombe & Bankstown Line and T3 Liverpool & Inner West Line at Regents Park to access services to the Sydney CBD, Liverpool or Bankstown.

Transport will make further announcements in the coming weeks about other changes to the network to support the closure of T3 Bankstown Line and we will share this information with you when it is available.

### **Where to find more Information**

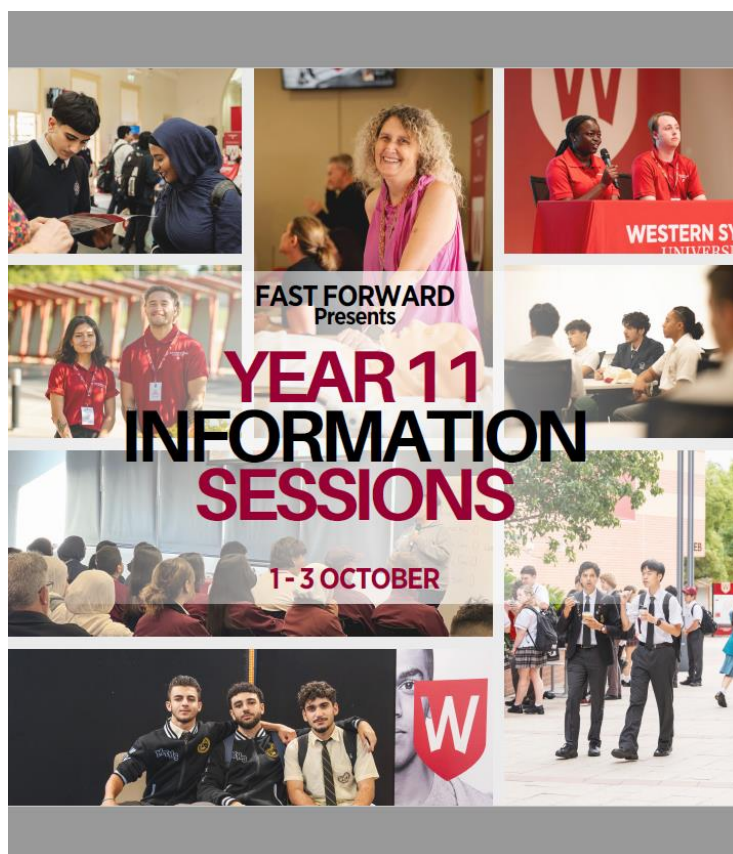
Information including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and translated information about Southwest Link can be found at: [transportnsw.info](https://transportnsw.info)

Further resources for schools will be shared with you in the coming weeks.

Kind regards,



Renee George  
Relieving Principal  
Birrong Girls High School  
2/09/2024



This event is designed to support **Year 11 Fast Forward students and their parents** as they begin their HSC year and start to navigate the common question “What are you going to do after school?” Students and parents will initially be taken on a campus tour, led by a current WSU student. The **campus tour will showcase the facilities and support services available on our campuses**. The Fast Forward team will then invite guests into our auditorium and present information regarding:

- **admission pathways including early entry pathways, and The College**
- **WSU support services**
- **HSC study sessions and Discover Western Webinars**
- **Open Day 2025**
- **Scholarships**

The information session will also include a scholarship panel, and information stands, so Year 11 students and parents can ask questions and speak to a WSU representative to help make better sense of student’s direction and goals post high school.

There are three information sessions. Attendees must register below and select the date they wish to attend.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
<b>Tuesday 1st October 2024</b>	<b>10:30am – 12pm</b>	<b>Parramatta South Campus.</b> Cnr James Ruse Drive and Victoria Road Rydalmere. Free shuttle buses are available from Parramatta Train Station
<b>Wednesday 2nd October 2024</b>	<b>5:30pm – 7pm</b>	<b>Kingswood WSU Campus.</b> Second Avenue Kingswood. Free shuttle buses are available from Kingswood Train station to the Kingswood Campus.
<b>Thursday 3rd October 2024</b>	<b>5:30pm – 7pm</b>	<b>Campbelltown WSU Campus.</b> Cnr Narellan Road and Gilchrist Drive. Free shuttle buses are available from Campbelltown Train station and Macarthur Square to the Campbelltown Campus.

- Sign in will open 15minutes prior to the official start times.

**Year 11 Students and parents are asked to register for this event by clicking on this link: [www.westernsydney.edu.au/FFinfoevent](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/FFinfoevent)**

Registrations for this event will close on: **Friday 20th September 2024.**

Registrants will receive further event details via email in the lead up to the dates.



WESTERN SYDNEY  
UNIVERSITY

**REGISTER NOW**



[www.westernsydney.edu.au /FFinfoevent](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/FFinfoevent)

# TUESDAY 1 OCTOBER 2024



PARRAMATTA SOUTH CAMPUS  
VICTORIA RD, RYDALMERE 2116  
BUILDING EA, GROUND LEVEL, ROOM 19  
(EA.G.19)



10:30 AM - CAMPUS TOUR (OPTIONAL)  
11:00 AM - INFORMATION SESSION

# WEDNESDAY 2 OCTOBER 2024



KINGSWOOD CAMPUS  
SECOND AVE, KINGSWOOD 2747  
BUILDING U, GROUND LEVEL, ROOM 43  
(U.G.43)



5:30 PM - CAMPUS TOUR (OPTIONAL)  
6:00 PM - INFORMATION SESSION

# THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER 2024



CAMPBELLTOWN CAMPUS  
NARELLAN RD, CAMPBELLTOWN 2560  
BUILDING 21, GROUND LEVEL, ROOM 03  
(21.G.03)



5:30 PM - CAMPUS TOUR (OPTIONAL)  
6:00 PM - INFORMATION SESSION

# Join our Youth Media Crew

Calling all young creators!

**Do you love creating engaging content?**

We're looking for young people aged 12-18 to help shape our online presence.

Create fun and engaging content

Share stories that matter

Gain skills and knowledge related to social media and film

If you're keen to join our media crew, register at [cb.city/youthmediacrew](https://cb.city/youthmediacrew) or scan the QR code. Applications close **30 September**.

For more information, contact [byrc@cbciry.nsw.gov.au](mailto:byrc@cbciry.nsw.gov.au)



 **CANTERBURY  
BANKSTOWN**

  
[@ourcbcity](https://www.facebook.com/ourcbcity)



## PROGRAMS



**LOWER  
PRIMARY**  
(5-7 years)








**UPPER  
PRIMARY**  
(8-11 years)



**SECONDARY**  
(12-17 years)

### Sessions include:

-  A behind-the-scenes tour of our shelters.
-  Fun and interactive animal focused activities.
-  Get hands on making enrichment toys.
-  Meet-and-Greet sessions with shelter animals.
-  Learn how to be an animal advocate in your community.

 **Sydney Education and Adoption Centre**  
201 Rookwood Road, Yagoona NSW 2199



### RSPCA NSW Education Team

 02 9782 4478     [education@rspcansw.org.au](mailto:education@rspcansw.org.au)  
 <https://events.humanitix.com/host/rspca-nsw>

**RSPCA**   
New South Wales