



Thomastown Secondary College

NEWSLETTER

TERM 1 2021

IN THIS ISSUE

- ABCN Program
- Sports Report
- Years 7-10 Camp Information
- Wellbeing Team
- Athletics Carnival
- PAT Testing
- Year 12 The-Summit
- School Reports

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Last Day of Term **Apr 1**

VCE Information Night **May 6**

NAPLAN Testing **May 11-21**

Multicultural Day **May 17**

College Open Day **Term 2**

College Principal's Report



Leonie White
Principal

Welcome to the first Thomastown Secondary College newsletter for 2021. Although there were regular updates on the website in 2020 it seems a lifetime ago that we were actually communicating via our newsletters and it is a pleasure to share with you some of the final celebrations in 2020, the activities your children are currently involved with in 2021 as well as those planned in the near future.

I must begin, by expressing, on behalf of the staff, our sincere thanks for the incredible support you provided your children and teachers through the extraordinary, events of 2020. This time last year, no one could have predicted what was before us. And now, coming

out of this ordeal, while a certain degree of fatigue is evident among students, parents, teachers (and people in general) we can applaud this community on the way it has managed to survive 2020 continuing to support our young people while staying connected in such challenging circumstances. Your support and understanding continued through the Blitz shutdown early this year. Most students were able to again move quickly to our online learning with little interruption to learning. It is amazing how many new skills we have all acquired.

Despite the many restrictions last year, we did manage to create some wonderful outcomes beyond the classroom. One of these was the Hero Project. For those of you who have not seen this tribute by our students, follow the link below to our website when you have a spare minute. Designed to thank frontline workers for putting their wellbeing on the line every day while showcasing local talent and helping students stay connected, this project

was made for our college community. No one could have predicted the extraordinary public response.

Letters from the Minister of Education to interviews by 3AW's Neil Mitchell, featuring on Channel 9 and the ABC breakfast program, and interviews on local radio was just the start. Public hospitals and police district divisions posted it on their websites with strong positive comments. In fact, the police force in several locations across Melbourne contacted us, doctors, nurses, administrators from hospitals wrote to tell us how big a difference it made to their lives and our own Northern Hospital placed the link and their comments on their website. Elderly couples living in the country wrote about how optimistic they felt about the future with these young people as our next leaders, and of course many of our ex-students and our current families responded. It was extraordinary. What started as a gift to others became a bigger gift to the College, to the students and staff who had worked so hard to create it.

Principal Report Continued.....

“Thank you to the Department of Education and Training for sharing and supporting our Hero Project dedicated to all our frontline workers during the pandemic. The message is still strong, important and as relevant as ever.”

The good feelings flowed on to everyone. It also showed our young people that they have the skills and talent to make a genuine difference in so many lives.

I have included some of these comments below but please follow the link to the project and to many more comments. These young people reached thousands and thousands of others and knowing that it helped make people's work easier, their day happier, sometimes changed their perspective of young people, meant it gave back to these young people far more than they had given. This was even more rewarding because it was totally unexpected. We are very grateful for everyone who took the time to share their feelings.

Our Year 12 graduation ceremony was another special moment. We were very lucky to be able to have a flexible agreement with a beautiful local venue prepared to hold our booking till early December in the hope that restrictions might be relaxed. They were also very competent in meeting the Departments' covert safe requirements.

Our young people were patient but determined. Although they had finished their exams, they ensured every student who wanted to attend received a ticket.

After such a hard year we were grateful to everyone, from the venue managers, to parents and families and to students and teachers who worked together ensuring everyone had a great night.

With so many activities planned this term it has been decided that Open Day will be moved to early Term 2 to allow time for primary schools to distribute information and for teachers to collect work for display from this year's classes. We're also hoping, as part of this Open Day, to display examples of parent creative works or items of cultural significance in our art gallery. If you have something that you would like to display, please contact our gallery coordinator Lena Torikov to discuss this possibility.

This week all our Year 7 & 8 students are travelling to the Cape Schanck Lighthouse to support the study of their English novel. This activity will serve many purposes. It will deepen their understanding of the setting of the novel, build empathy for the characters but also strengthen relationships with their peers and teachers.

2021 will be an interesting year in all schools, and possibly all workplaces. Our Year 8 students really had very little time to acclimatise to second-

ary school, our Year 7 students had very little preparation for secondary school and our Year 12 students are really experiencing life in the VCE environment for the first time. On certain days we really do have 200 Year 7 students. This is an experience shared across the State and across the world. There are hundreds of articles already published on the impact of 2020 on the school environment. Students will take time to adapt but working together, I am confident that by the end of 2021, barring further interruptions, those challenges will be addressed.

Term 1 will conclude with a parent teacher interviews for every child. VCE interviews are on Tuesday 23rd March and all others are on Wednesday 31st March. The meeting you have with your Home Group teacher will revise the second semester for 2020 (we sent reports home at the end of last year) while providing a summary of the progress your child has made so far in 2021. This face-to-face contact with your child's Home Group teacher, where interpreters will be available as needed, will provide the opportunity to have a detailed conversation and ask all the questions you have on the day.

And on a final note I'll take the opportunity to mention that if there is anything that the College can do to make transition back to onsite learning protocols easier for your child, either through the support from our well-being team, help with uniform or books or even in building/ rebuilding friendships please pick up the phone and talk to us. We will never

know your children as you do no matter how hard we work to stay tuned into their needs. Working together, where appropriate, is the best way we can provide optimum opportunities for every child.

Leonie White
Principal

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jRGom73vqo>

I live in Thomastown myself and was thrilled to read this movie/ project came from my own local community.

Sincere congratulations to one and all. You must be so proud.

Karen Malek
Director of Education Transit Dance

Hello to all the very talented students at Thomastown Secondary College.

I have had the great pleasure to watch your production that was uploaded to 3AW.

Thank you one and all- it was a pleasure to watch and to be able to witness your great talent. A special mention for the hard-working teachers too.

I am a Registered Nurse working in a major health network in Melbourne and thank you for sharing your talent to acknowledge and express your thanks to the many frontline workers.

Kind regards
Clare Murphy

Dear Leonie and staff,

I recently attended the NWVR stand-up when the video 'The Hero Project' was shown to regional staff and like many, was impressed by the quality of the production and moved by the content.

I have recently spoken to wellbeing staff at various schools about how they could prepare for their students to exit the school in a memorable way if mass assemblies/ graduations/ valedictories are prohibited. I have started sharing your video link and continue to be moved every time I see the video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jRGom73vqo>

In an era where impact is valued but often not operationalised, I wanted you and your staff to be aware of the impact of this production and extend my personal congratulations and gratitude for the inspiration in a time when hope is elusive.

Regards,

Caroline Buckley Psychologist | Student Support Services – NEMA
North-Western Victoria Region | Regional Services Group
Department of Education and Training

Hello,
I'm not sure who will receive this email but I would deeply appreciate if all the participants in the video of 'wind beneath my wings' receive this.
A friend sent it to me and I simply broke down and sobbed. It went straight to my heart. I felt the heartfelt solidarity of these times.
Those magnificent young peopleand I wanted them to know that they must NEVER give up on life because they are beautiful and worthy and talented.
You must be all proud of each other.

With sincere gratitude
Dr Jennifer Harris



Lalor 3075
4 h · 🌐

A message from Eyewatch - Whittlesea Police Service Area

We're absolutely blown away by the creativity and talent of the Thomastown Secondary College students.

Every year, Thomastown Secondary College put on a Performing Arts Production. However, due to [#coronavirus](#) (COVID-19), it was unfortunately cancelled for 2020.

Instead, this year, they produced "The Hero Project" - a message of gratitude to frontline workers.

Students, please know that we're giving you a standing ovation. 🙌

Bravo! ❤️

Graduating Class of 2020





School Reports

Involving parents in the learning process by providing them with regular feedback about their child's learning progress and strategies they may use to assist their child, has been shown to be effective in improving student achievement. Parent-teacher interviews are valuable for all involved as they can assist the Home Group teacher to understand more about the student and parents can gain a greater understanding of how they can support their child in their learning.

At Thomastown Secondary College, Home Group teachers meet with parents each term. Interim reports are conducted during term 1 and 3. These provide parents with a verbal update on how their child is progressing in each of their subjects. Formal written reports are issued to parents for each of these same subjects at the end of each semester. These reports show student progress on the Victorian Curriculum F-10. During these parent-teacher meetings students are responsible for presenting their individual portfolio through a student led conferencing process.

Their portfolio will contain samples of completed work tasks for each of their subjects.



Parent-Teacher interviews for VCE students will be conducted on Tuesday 23rd March and for Years 7 to 10 students on Wednesday 31st March, from 9.30 am to 6.30 pm. Students will not attend formal classes on each of these days, but they are expected to attend the meeting with their parents. Interpreters will also be available on each day if parents require one.

Parents should have received a letter from the child's Home Group teacher requesting an interview time. This letter must be returned with their preferred time indicated and any request for an interpreter if one is required.

Please note that if parents are unable to attend a parent teacher interview on the designated day, then they are encouraged to contact their child's Home Group teacher to arrange an alternative time.

Home Group teachers are looking forward to meeting with parents on report day. This is a great opportunity for new parents and the Home Group teacher to get to know each other and to build a positive relationship. The interviews will enable all parents to share information about their child's interests and learning and to talk more in depth about the actual progress report.

John Retica
Assistant Principal

"This is a great opportunity for new parents and the Home Group teacher to get to know each other and to build a positive relationship."

ABCN Program

This year on March 15th selected students from Years 9 and 10 will be participating in an empower program run by the Australian Business and Community Network (ABCN). The two hour fully digital program will allow students to work with mentors from different workplaces. The focus of this session will be on resilience and practical strategies to build into their day-to-day

lives. The activities will be held in online breakout rooms where two mentors will pair and connect with four students. Mentors will be sharing their own career journeys, challenges, failures and strategies to help students make informed decisions about their own career pathways. Topics that will be covered will include recognising strengths, interests, and the importance

of overcoming failure to support personal growth.

Deanna Tornatora—ABCN Program Coordinator



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Empower An Initiative of ABCN

Skills, confidence and mindsets for the changing world of work

Empower is designed to equip students with the confidence, behaviours and mindsets needed to prepare for the rapidly changing world of work.

This two-hour, fully digital program involves students at school working with mentors in the workplace to focus on resilience and practical strategies for building it into their day-to-day lives. The activities are held in breakout rooms with two mentors working in pairs to connect with four students.

The program was originally developed as a response to the increasing challenges faced by marginalised high school students as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Consultation with educators indicated that more than ever, building connections with positive role models outside of students' local communities was important in reducing the sense of isolation and uncertainty felt by many students.

Mentors sharing their own career journeys and challenges, 'fabulous failures' and strategies to build resilience can make an enormous impact as students consider their options for the future.

Empower is relevant and useful to most student groups from Years 9-12. Topics covered include recognising strengths, interests and motivations and the connection to work, and the importance of overcoming failure to support personal growth.

'It's enriching, inspiring and a lot of fun to work with the students.'

Mentor, *Empower 2020*

'It enables students to communicate and problem-solve with different people from a variety of backgrounds outside of their normal sphere of influence.'

Teacher, *Empower 2020*

'I learnt that mistakes don't always define us. We can learn from them.'

Student, *Empower 2020*

College Debating

Our Year 9-10 students are currently honing their skills in debating as they prepare for their first Inter School Debate for 2021.

They have been collaborating together during Homework Club, and brainstorming their ideas. This year we have 9 students who, split across three teams, will debate against other schools, in our region, at Loyola College.

Later in the Year we will be hosting the Junior Debating at TSC.

Both these Debating Competitions are facilitated by the Debating Association of Victoria.

The Art of Debating is an invaluable skill which promotes confidence in public speaking, encourages critical thinking, builds social awareness and interest in current affairs. These skills will come in good stead for these students as they progress through their studies.

Well done to all the students who have committed to participate in the Debating Competition and represent our school.

Frances Galea
Debating Coordinator

“The Art of Debating is an invaluable skill which promotes confidence in public speaking, encourages critical thinking, builds social awareness and interest in current affairs.”



PAT Testing

All students in Years 7 to 10 have just completed their PAT tests in Reading and Numeracy. PAT tests are held every year in February and November; they are a computer based test which assesses students understanding of many maths skills and their ability to read and understand short articles.

The results from these tests help teachers to understand the skill level of their students and target their teaching to the needs of these students. Each student repeats the test in

November and this gives them valuable information about how much they have improved over the year.

Students are always determined to do their best on these tests and take them seriously. Any student who is absent on the day of the test is given a chance to catch up on the test at a later time.

PAT tests are held by the school and your student's results are only seen by his or her teachers. Students in Years 7 and 9 will also be completing the NAPLAN tests in term 2;

these tests are completed by all students across Australia.

If you have any questions about the PAT tests, please feel free to contact your child's Home Group teacher.

David Smith
Assistant Principal



Year 12 Summit

“The students stepped out of their comfort zones, surrounding themselves in an environment, which encouraged them to think outside the box and overcome certain physical and mental challenges as a team.”

On the 9th of March, the Year 12s attended an excursion to The Summit. This is an annual excursion which VCE takes pride in attending every year. Due to the lockdown, many of the Year 12's were eager and keen to overcome this life-changing experience. There were many activities, which they participated in such as outdoor laser tag, the leap of faith, rock climbing, and many more team-building activities. The students stepped out of their comfort zones, surrounding themselves in an environment, which encouraged them to think outside the box and overcome certain physical and mental challenges

as a team. The efforts of the Year 12's was phenomenal, giving them a break from the classroom. New friendships and new achievements were made on this day. One of the most memorable events that took place was the mud challenge; everyone persisted and was not afraid to get a little mud on their clothes. Overall, the summit was a huge success and a lot of positive feedback spread through the students.



Thomastown Secondary College

Years 7-10 Camp 2021



OUR CAMP

Roses Gap Recreation Centre is situated on 120 acres of private land within the Grampians National Park, with views of the amazing sandstone mountain ranges and convenient access to features such as Briggs Bluff, Beehive Falls, and Barigar Falls. Local wildlife is abundant around the camp, including kangaroos, wallabies, emus, echidnas, birds and lizards.

Located approximately 3hrs from Melbourne and 5hrs from Adelaide, the campsite offers solitude, space and privacy in a stunning natural bush setting, with access to local towns of Halls Gap, Stawell, and Horsham when needed.

Monday 8th November 2021—Thursday 11th November 2021

The Thomastown Secondary College "Camp Roses Gap" cost of \$530 includes return transport, all activities undertaken over the 4 days, catering and 3 nights accommodation.

A NON REFUNDABLE deposit of \$100 will need to be paid by 26th March to secure a place. Payments and notes are to be handed in the General Office. The full camp payment is due by the 7th October 2021.

If you have any further queries about the camp program please contact the Camp Coordinator Bethany McGill on 9465 0844.



Athletics 2021



Athletics Carnival

On the 4th of March, Thomastown Secondary College attended the Meadowglen International Athletics Stadium in Whittlesea to spend a joyful day participating in sporting events and spending time with friends! The special theme for our VCE dress up event was 'Movie and TV Characters', and our Year 12's dressed to impress in amazing outfits! We had Spiderman's, Bananas in Pyjamas, Winnie the Pooh, The Power Puff Girls, Mario & Lui-

gi, and many more outstanding outfits! All our students made amazing memories, especially the Year 12 students who spent their final Athletics Day taking beautiful photos and making achievements in many sporting events!

Years 7-10 students competed in events and activities throughout the day with the winners moving on to the next stage of the competition to

represent the College later on this year.

The staff would like to congratulate all students who attended. We were very impressed by their enthusiasm, great sportsmanship, courteous manner and willingness to help out on the day.

“A wonderful day enjoyed by all the Staff and Students “

VCE Volleyball

The Boys and Girls VCE Volleyball Teams played a series of matches against schools in the Whittlesea Sports District at Darebin Sports Centre on Monday February 22.

The boys team won all of their six matches while the girls team won five of their six matches. Both teams finished first in the competition and will progress to the Zone Finals later in the year.

All players performed exceptionally well and represented our school to extremely high standards demonstrating excellent sporting behaviour whilst, at the same time, competing assertively in their games.

It was a great effort by all of the players. A special mention to our captains, Manu Taafua and Sydney Orie Mingi, who organized and conducted all training sessions and were exceptional leaders.

Andy Hills

Congratulations to:

Manu Taafua, John Dao
Aaron Orie Mingi, Kevin Tran
Nik Kavvadas, Ilaister Teroi,
Alex Hakai, Ng Teariki Tanga
Sydney Orie Mingi,
Kyla Condon, Mary Sagaga,
Serena Tuifeai, Lyniah Ng Lam
Bouchra Youssef, Skyla Hakai
Rhiannon Buntine



Years 9-10 Volleyball



The boys team had a good run in the next three matches winning 2 sets to 0 against Whittlesea, Hazel Glen 2 and Mernda Central. However, they came unstuck against Hazel Glen 1 and the Lakes both those teams were very hard to beat, showing great skills.

“Both teams showed great sportsmanship and represented the college very proudly.”

On Friday the 12th of March the Years 9/10 Girls and boys competed in Volleyball at Darebin Community Sports stadium. Both teams played 7 games each. The girls proved hard to beat starting strong and winning their first match against Epping Secondary College convincingly 2 sets to 0. The boys only narrowly losing their first game to Epping with an aggregate total of 26- 22.

Girls continued their winning streak through the next 5 matches, playing outstanding, competitive rallies. They showed excellent teamwork, winning against Mernda Central, Whittlesea, Mill Park and both Hazel Glen teams. The girls were only challenged against The Lakes only narrowly beating them on aggregate points 33-30.

Both teams showed great sportsmanship and represented the college very proudly. Congratulations on the girls team who will be going through to compete in the next level NMR on Friday the 23rd of April. Both teams should be really proud of their efforts.

**Abby Watts
& Joanne Cullia**

Lunchtime Group

The wellbeing team is running Lunch Time Group on Mondays and Tuesdays where students can use the Language Centre facilities to hang out during lunch times. Board games, card games, sensory activities and arts/ crafts are available for use or students

can bring their laptops for gaming. This provides an opportunity for students to get to know each other whilst exploring different interests.



CITY OF WHITTLESEA
WALKING THOMASTOWN
 Friday April 23 and
 Saturday 24 April 2021
 6pm - 9pm

Lorem ipsum del orio una lorem ipsum del orio Lorem ipsum del orio una lorem iun


City of Whittlesea

GET YOUR TICKETS HERE
 OR AT [ARTS.WHITTLESEA.VIC.GOV.AU](https://arts.whittlesea.vic.gov.au)
 Bookings essential!



‘Walking Thomastown’ is a celebration of all things Thomastown. Take a walk through part of this historic suburb, listening to information about Aboriginal relationship to country and use of the land, early European settlement, more current history and hopes for the future.

The events will take place over two nights and involve lighting, projection and illumination installations placed around a walking route, from the Bubup Wilam Aboriginal Childcare centre on Main Street, up to the historic German farmhouse at Westgarhtown and back down the creek to the reserve’s main oval.

Lighting installations will be an exciting visual feature, with audio material accessed by QR code so please bring smartphones and your own earphones to the event.

Book in to your preferred time window and enjoy all the wonders of Thomastown at night in this COVIDSafe and community led event. Booking through arts.whittlesea.vic.gov.au or scan this QR code to visit the page.

When	23 & 24 April
Time	6 – 9pm
Where	Walking tour commences from Bubup Wilam Aboriginal Childcare and Family Centre 76 Main St Thomastown
Cost	FREE

Bookings Essential!