



UPDATE FOR PARENTS/CARERS AND STUDENTS TERM 4 | WEEK 5

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome back to school. It has been a long time coming and certainly not without continued disruption and changes to routine.

I would like to thank our students who have been wonderful in following the guidelines we have set up to comply with health requirements - differing access times to the canteen, different toilets and different playground areas as well as high compliance with mask wearing in the classroom, sanitising regularly and doing their part in wiping down tables in classrooms.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

1. It remains mandatory for all students and staff on site to wear a mask indoors, unless they have an exemption pass (by now students would have presented those requests to the DP).
2. HSC examinations – commence Tuesday 9 November.
3. No visitors onsite, unless requested and then under strict guidelines.
4. Still no transition activities for the whole Year 6 cohort - our staff continue to work with the primary staff to gather information required.
5. Staggered times for breaks, separate toilet areas and rotating year group access to the library, basketball court and the fields remain.
6. ALL students will now exit class at the regular time of 2.30 (2pm Wednesday) and are asked to vacate the site as quickly as possible.

NON-OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

Decisions to place a school as non-operational (that is, closed for a period of time) is not one that the school makes. We are ever hopeful that we will not need to close again, but you would be aware that a number of schools have had to close, including local schools Soldiers Point Public, Irrawang Public and Grahamstown Public.

If a COVID positive case is reported then the following steps are activated:

1. NSW Health will contact the Director and the Principal.
2. We will be asked for information about what classes the positive case (staff or student) has been in.
3. NSW Health - not the school - will determine who is a close contact and who is a casual contact based on the information we provide about classes and timetables.

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4. I am unable to release any information to the school community until NSW Health has completed their own tracing. Please understand that there will be a delay and that at no time is the school holding back on any information. I understand from looking at Facebook posts of other closed schools, there is a degree of anxiety and uncertainty around the process.
5. All formal communication from NSW Health will come via this email address, with a backup notification on Facebook and via SMS to check emails.
6. If your child or staff member has been deemed a close contact by NSW Health, the school will send you an email that will provide you with the information you need to know about isolating and testing. All enquires should be directed to Health (COVID-19 Hotline 1800 020 080).
7. For those not listed as close contacts, the advice will also come to you around checking for symptoms and getting tested if you have symptoms. Again, if there is any doubt about what you need to do, the COVID-19 hotline is the best contact.

For the latest advice regarding the Departments response protocols please refer to this link:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/response-protocol>

ACTIVITIES THIS TERM

As we get back into the swing of school, there are a number of upcoming activities to be aware of:

- Check in Assessments - these are online assessment specifically designed by the Department to provide feedback on where students sit in literacy and numeracy so we can tailor any additional support in our planning for 2022. These will be held for Year 7 in Week 7, Year 8 in week 8 and Year 9 in week 9. There is no need to study for these or for students to feel anxious, they are a tool we use to ensure support is targeted where needed.
- All My Own Work - This is a series of workshops all Year 10 must complete in order to enrol in Year 11 for 2022. It will be mostly conducted in Careers lessons. For any students planning to be in Year 11 next year it is a mandatory course.
- Minimum Standards - students must complete this assessment in order to be eligible to receive the HSC. We generally start the process in Year 10 and many of our current Year 11 (Year 12-2022) students have already completed the process. Some students will be catching up on missed tasks throughout the term.
- Digital Safety - Students in years 7-10 will be participating in a series of tutorials covering aspects of digital safety in Week 10 and will continue into Term 1 next year, topics to be covered include: cyberbullying, digital identity, cyber security, digital balance and digital discernment - see the attached flyer. This is a free program provided by Optus that we believe will be very useful to students as they navigate and increasingly digital world.

REPORTS, HSC

All reports are now released 'online' through the parent portal. You will receive a message when they are released. If you require a printed copy, please contact the school, or ask your child to let the office know. We are endeavouring to reduce our paper use and since we have been releasing reports digitally, we are having several hundred reports not being collected. We will continue to print final reports for Year 12.



Year 11 end of course reports are due to be released in the next week. You will be notified when available. This set of reports is in the usual format as we were able to complete all assessments for Year 11.

Reports for years 7-10 will be available at the end of the term as usual, but as previously advised, will be in a simplified format (same as Semester 1, 2020). Teachers have been using the wide range of work completed by students to provide feedback for future progress and to identify areas of success and areas of need.

Due to the disruptions of this year, we will not be having a formal academic celebration assembly. Without the full range of assessment, we are not able to identify in a fair and consistent manner students who finished in the top three of each class. We still have a number of other awards we will recognise.

The HSC is almost upon us, and I want to again congratulate our outgoing Year 12 for their tenacity and perseverance through 2 very difficult years. They are to be commended. It is hoped there will be no closures in the exam period, but if there is, students will receive an alternate venue timetable (see their Year 12 Microsoft Team). We have asked these students to provide their mobile phone numbers to Ms Jarvis should we need to advise them of a change.

2022 CHANGES

This will be my last year as Principal at Tomaree High School. I was successful in securing a new position within the Department of Principal, School Leadership. This sees me relinquishing the principal position at THS from the end of the year. The new role is an exciting move in my career, where I take on a role of support for principals in the Maitland area.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at THS, it is a great school with fabulous students and dedicated staff. The principal position is currently being advertised and I hope to be able to introduce the new principal to the community before the end of the year.

STAY SAFE

Please continue to follow public health orders and support the school in our enforcement of them. We are doing everything we can to ensure school is a safe place and expect all students to be attending every day they can

Take care,

Sue Xenos | Principal

1 November 2021