



HEATHCOTE HIGH SCHOOL

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Term 1, Week 2 2024

A big welcome to all students, parents and carers to the 2024 school year after what I hope was a happy, healthy and joyful holiday.

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all our new students in Year 7, those who have joined us in Years 8-11, their families, and also to all our new staff. We are delighted to have you join our school and look forward to getting to know each and every one of you.

I want to express my gratitude for the joint efforts of our entire school community. Your ongoing support and commitment are most valued. Please know that I welcome your feedback, concerns and suggestions. We believe that a strong partnership between our school and our parents/carers is vital to the success of our students.

As many of you know, I was on leave at the end of 2023. I would like to thank Mrs Hunter for relieving in the position of Principal, Ms Lupton as relieving Deputy Principal and Mrs Croaker as relieving Head Teacher, Teaching and Learning. We are very lucky to have such skilled leaders who can step-in and ensure the smooth running of the school.

TRANSITION TO HIGH SCHOOL

On Thursday 1 February we welcomed our new Year 7 cohort. Students are engaged in a variety of activities as part of our comprehensive Transition program.

Thank you to Mrs Hunter, Deputy Principal, Ms Parker, Year Adviser, Mr Dorrington and Ms Allsopp, Peer Support Coordinators, Year 7 teachers and support staff and the whole transition team for the excellent job they do in coordinating the activities. A big thank you, also, to the Year 10 Peer Support leaders for assisting our new students during these first weeks at Heathcote High School.

YEAR 7 FAMILIES WELCOME NIGHT

On Tuesday 20 February, we look forward to welcoming our Year 7 Families to the school. Please join us in the school quadrangle at 5:15 pm where a BBQ will be served.

Parents and carers will have the chance to meet teachers and other class parents, hear key information about Heathcote High School and be briefed on what students will be learning, assessments and how to support your child to do well in each subject.

P&C

Heathcote High School P&C Meeting will be held on Wednesday 28 February in the Common Room, 1st floor, C Block at 7 pm. Vehicle entry is via The Avenue.

P&C meetings are a great opportunity to have input into the school, meet other parents and hear of new developments within the school. I encourage all parents to become an active part of our school community through involvement in the P&C.

All parents, carers and interested citizens are most welcome to attend.

SPORT

School Swimming Carnival

The school swimming carnival will be held at Engadine Leisure Centre on Friday 16 February.

All students are encouraged to participate in events to earn house points.

As this is a normal school day, the usual rules regarding mobile phones will apply.

Concussion

Sport provides many physical, psychological and emotional benefits for students. It is crucial that sport remains a safe place for young people.

Concussion is a brain injury caused by a knock to the head, a fall or any blow to the body that is transmitted to the head. All concussion is serious.

Recently the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) released 'Australian Concussion Guidelines for Youth and Community Sport'. The guidelines provide information on how to recognise and manage concussion from the time of injury through to safe return to school and playing sport. The Department already has in place Concussion protocols developed in conjunction with The Children's Hospital; they will be reviewed in line with the AIS document.

It is important that parents advise the school if your child has had a head knock or concussion outside school, for example at weekend sport or an accident. Remember:

If in doubt sit them out.

I would encourage parents to check-out the website

<https://www.concussioninsport.gov.au/home>

These PDFs are also useful information.

Concussion recognition tool:

<https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/bjsports/57/11/692.full.pdf>

Graded return to sport framework:

https://www.concussioninsport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1133466/GRADED-RETURN-TO-SPORT-FRAMEWORK-COMMUNITY-AND-YOUTH.pdf

Some Interesting Research

Researchers at the University of Sydney, led by Dr Katherine Owen, analysed the sports participation and academic performance of over 4,200 students. The researcher found participation in sport was linked to higher NAPLAN scores, school attendance and higher likelihood of university admission.

Individual sports, for example dance, tennis or swimming, were more closely related with higher literacy NAPLAN scores. Participation in any type of sport was associated with higher numeracy scores. Only participation in team sports was linked to lower absenteeism without permission. It is thought that team sports foster more social connection which results in higher attendance.

There was an increase in academic outcomes while a student continued playing sport. Continuing sport throughout schooling can help students keep focused and provide respite from study and reduce anxiety and stress.

A 2017 Australian Sports Commission (ASC) report identified several barriers to secondary students playing sport. All of the research the ASC has done showed that students drop out because it gets too competitive. Sporting bodies need to do more to provide more social games.

Reference: Mary Ward, Sydney Morning Herald, 4 February, 2024.

Thursday Afternoon Sport

Heathcote High School provides a large range of sports both competitive and social. We have a proud sporting history, but what makes me most proud is when I hear positive feedback from sporting bodies on the good behaviour and fair play of our students.



Round Robin with Lucas Heights

On Thursday, HHS Support Unit had their very first sports round robin with Lucas Heights Support Unit. The students all worked well together learning skills of cricket and basketball while forging friendships. Students are looking forward to next week's sport. Thank you to the Support Unit staff, who continuously support and encourage the students to apply themselves to the best of their ability while having fun.



MOBILE PHONES AND PERSONAL DEVICES POLICY

From the beginning of Term 4, 2023 the NSW Government implemented state-wide restrictions on the use of mobile phones in NSW high schools. This strategy is to increase focus and learning in classrooms, remove distractions and also promote positive social interactions.

Heathcote High School had already implemented a policy where students are required to lock away their phones in a pouch when they enter the school gates. Students are not allowed to use their mobile phones at school, including during recess, breaks and lunch. Students will be able to carry their phones while travelling to and from school. Exemptions can be applied for if a student needs their phone for a medical, wellbeing or learning need. Exemptions will be granted on a case by case basis.

Smart watches must be in 'airplane mode' and headphones or earbuds cannot be used during the school day. Cash or card is required at the school canteen.

BYOD or school-issued laptops are NOT part of the ban. However, these devices cannot be accessed before classes or during breaks on school grounds. Teachers may also request or allow students to use listening accessories with their laptops as required for class learning activities.

Students must take full responsibility for any mobile phone or personal device brought to school. The school or staff will not be responsible for their loss, theft, or damage. Students, who bring their devices to school, do so at their own risk.

The mobile phone management strategy applies to school excursions, unless an exemption is made by the principal. If that is the case, information will be included in the excursion permission form.

If students have their phones or personal digital device out, they will immediately be instructed to deliver it to the Deputy Principal. Failure to follow the discipline code will incur more severe consequences.

Parents and carers are respectfully requested not to text or phone their child during the school day. If you need to contact your child in an emergency, please call the school office on 9520 9488. Students will also be able to contact parents or carers through the school office, if urgent.

If you have any further questions, please contact the school.

DANCE ENSEMBLES

Final auditions for this year's dance ensembles will be held in the gym at the start of lunch on Tuesday 13 February. Students are highly encouraged to participate. It is a wonderful way to increase strength, stamina and flexibility, build friendships, develop resilience, discipline and self-confidence and express yourself both physically and emotionally.

If you have any questions, please see Miss Rose in the PDHPE staffroom.

We look forward to seeing the dance ensembles' performances throughout the year.

SCHOOL PRODUCTION – TREASURE ISLAND

Lead auditions were held this week for the Heathcote High School Production – Treasure Island – a swashbuckling tale of love, chivalry and baking.

Performance empowers students to communicate confidently and also helps develop their artistic, creative, social, and team work skills in a supportive environment. These are important life skills both at school and beyond.

Performance date is Friday 28 June at 12:30 pm and 6pm.

RUNNING CLUB

The Heathcote High School Running Club meets every Thursday morning at 7:30 am. There are various running and fitness activities organised each week to suit all participants with the main focus on working towards achieving personal fitness goals.

On Thursday beautiful conditions allowed the group to run up to Heathcote Oval with students completing between 3 to 5 kilometres. We finished with a plank challenge and a light breakfast. Any students who are interested in joining can see Mr Barnes in HSIE.



HOMEWORK CLUB

Every Wednesday, the library will be open for an extra hour after school for supervised study sessions. The purpose is to provide a safe, quiet homework environment where research is made easier by ready access to resources and technology and where professional guidance is at hand. Everyone is welcome, no appointment is necessary, and snacks are provided.

CLASS OF 2023

HSC

I would like to acknowledge all our students who sat for the 2023 HSC and commend you for working hard, persevering and striving to do your best.

Congratulations to our distinguished achievers, those students who attained the highest band in a subject. Chelsea C – Biology, Geography and PDHPE; Jessica H – Mathematics Standard 2 and Industrial Technology; Mack S – History Extension and Industrial Technology; Alex F – Industrial Technology; Alyssa K-W – Mathematics Standard 2; Ava O – Industrial Technology; Ethan G – Industrial Technology; Makayla B – Construction Examination; Mia A – Dance; Monique F – Food Technology.

Our students performed strongly in Industrial Technology Graphics with 83% attaining a band 6. Thank you to their teacher, Mr Tsaccounis, for his outstanding teaching, knowledge, passion for graphics and mentoring of his students.

Nomination for Young Citizen of the Year

Congratulations to Class of 2023 student, Olivia Carroll, for her nomination for Sutherland Shire's Young Citizen of the Year. Olivia has been recognised for her contribution to performing arts and Sydney University Civil Rights model UN.



OPEN NIGHT – ALL WELCOME

On Tuesday 5th March, our school will open its doors to our local community to showcase all the excellent educational opportunities on offer at Heathcote High School. Please meet in the school hall at 6 pm.

Tour our school facilities. Join-in fun activities in all subject areas. Speak with our confident students and outstanding teachers who will be happy to answer your questions. Be informed about our High Potential and Gifted Program, our extracurricular activities such as Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, debating, drama, music, and dance, our comprehensive sports programs including knock out and representative sports, sustainability team, running club, homework club, musicals and cultural activities.

Please tell your friends and neighbours about the evening. We look forward to welcoming families to our school. We would love for you to join the school in 2025.

WHITE CARD COURSE

A White Card (or general construction induction card) course will be held at HHS on Wednesday 6 March. This course equips our students with the essential knowledge and skills required for safe workplace participation. A White Card is required to carry out construction work or work experience. On completion, students will be ready to begin exploring the world of work. We look forward to supporting them secure work experience and employment opportunities.

UPCOMING EVENTS

12 February (Monday)	Wollongong Discovery Day Year 12
16 February (Friday)	School Swimming Carnival, Engadine Leisure Centre
20 February (Tuesday)	Year 7 Meet the Families Night
21 February (Wednesday)	Year 10 Party Program
27 February (Tuesday)	School Photos
1 March (Friday)	Year 10 vaccinations
4 March (Monday)	Zone Swimming Carnival – Sutherland Leisure Centre
5 March (Tuesday)	Open Night
5 March (Tuesday)	School photo catchup
6 March (Wednesday)	White card course
8 March (Friday)	Year 11 Young Women's Leadership in Parliament

TERM DATES

Often the Easter Public Holidays occur during the school holidays. With Easter occurring within Term 1 in 2024, here is a list of term dates and public holidays occurring in term time for 2024.

Term 1 (11 weeks)

Tuesday 30 January	School Development Day
Wednesday 31 January	School Development Day
Thursday 1 February	Term 1 commences for Years 7, 11 & 12 students
Friday 2 February	Term 1 commences for Years 8, 9 & 10 students
Friday 29 March	Good Friday (public holiday)
Monday 1 April	Easter Monday (public holiday)
Friday 12 April	Last day of Term 1

Term 2 (10 weeks)

Monday 29 April	School Development Day
Tuesday 30 April	Students commence Term 2
Monday 10 June	King's Birthday (public holiday)
Friday 5 July	Last day of Term 2

Term 3 (10 weeks)

Monday 22 July	School Development Day
Tuesday 23 July	Students commence Term 3
Friday 27 September	Last day of Term 3

Term 4 (10 weeks)

Monday 14 October	Students and staff commence Term 4
Thursday 19 December	Last day of Term 4 for students
Friday 20 December	School Development Day – staff only

Steve Waser

Principal