

23rd March, 2015



Hallam
Senior College
Linking Learning and Life

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Dear Parents, Guardians and Students

There are three parts to our letter:

- PART ONE: Learning and Assessment
- PART TWO: Student Wellbeing
- PART THREE: Administration and Communication

Important Dates	
Study4Success	Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday until 5.30pm in the Library
Pupil Free Days for 2015	28 th January, 2015; 28 th April, 2015; 12 th June, 2015; 20 th August, 2015
Practice GAT: General Achievement Test is for all students undertaking a VCE Unit 3 / 4 subject	6 th May 9.00 - 12.15
GAT revision/study sessions	1 st June in SMART class and 2 nd June (Tuesday morning) 9.00 - 10.00 in The Great Space
The GAT: General Achievement Test	10 th June in the ECA and The Great Space
TERM TWO begins	Monday 13 th April
Sports Academy photos	Wednesday 15 th April
ANZAC Day	NO additional Public Holiday – the day is observed on Saturday 25 th

PART ONE: Learning and Assessment in our school

The GAT: General Achievement Test

The GAT is a test that ALL students studying a Unit 3 / 4 VCE subject do across the state. VCE and VCAL students should do the GAT. It is used by the VCAA (Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority) to moderate assessments in the VCE. It is very important that students do all parts of the GAT to the best of their ability. To assist students in our school we hold a practice GAT, that is marked externally, and students receive feedback on their performance.

Victoria University “YOUR TUTOR” program.

Our school is one of six in the state that have access to this program. All students in our school can access tutor support outside of school hours in their subjects. The tutors are all vetted by VU. It is a free service and available Sunday to Friday 3pm – 10pm. Students receive their own log in card to activate their account. Cards can be collected from the Careers and Pathways Hub.

Progress and Semester Reports and Parent Teacher interviews

- Progress Report One mailed home 12/03/2015
- Student Parent Teacher interviews bookings on line, via Compass, from 13/03/2015
- Student Parent Teacher interviews: 25/03/2015 from 4.00-8.00
- Progress Report Two mailed home 07/05/2015
- Report Writing Day 12/06/2015 (No students at school)
- End of Semester one reports mailed to parents/carers 25/06/2015
- Student Parent Teacher interviews bookings on line, via Compass, from 10/08/2015

- Progress Report Three mailed home 13/08/15
- Student Parent Teacher interviews: 19/08/2015 from 4.00-8.00
- Progress Report Four posted home 17/09/2015
- End of Semester two reports available for collection 17/12/2015

Study4Success

Study4Success runs every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday after school until 5.30pm in the library. This program was very successful last year and provided support for students in comfortable surrounds to do their homework, attend a tutorial and obtain assistance from staff, guest university students or other guests especially invited to provide help. Margaret Wieringa is looking after the program this year. Parents can find out more by making contact with Margaret or their student's sub school office.

PART TWO: STUDENT WELLBEING

Our school values: Relationships built on Respect and Responsibility

Over the term we have experienced a few disappointing incidents of inappropriate student behaviour which go against our school values. At our school we value relationships built on respect and responsibility. Clearly, any form of bullying or harassment goes against these values. Helping our young people to understand the impact that their behaviour can have on others is a joint responsibility - one which school staff and parents / carers share. We ask parents and carers to talk to their young people about instances where their behaviour might have negative consequences for other people. Sometimes behaviour that might seem just silly and immature is very damaging to the person on the receiving end of it. For example "dacking" another student is not a game if you are the one having your pants pulled down in public - it is harassing and humiliating. Unfortunately, some students have thought it to be appropriate, fun behaviour. This is certainly not appropriate for our young people to engage in.

It is also clear, despite the work that the school does around responsible cyber behaviour, that some students still believe that bullying through social media such as Facebook is acceptable behaviour. Once again we hope that parents and carers will help young people to understand that it is never acceptable to ridicule, threaten or use abusive language towards another human being.

Attendance

The link between attendance and achievement is very high. Student's attendance this term has mostly been excellent. This contributes enormously to a student's ability to complete work and do their best to achieve goals.

Student drivers

Students are to use gate 3 to access parking and then abide by all laws. Parking in the school grounds is a privilege not a given. Students must register their car with us through the sub schools and provide proof of licence.

Uniform in general

Any student having problems with the supply of school uniform should make contact with our student wellbeing services.

Student Accident Insurance

Parents and guardians are advised that DET does not provide personal accident insurance for students who are injured at school or when on College Council endorsed excursions and activities. Families are responsible for paying the cost of medical treatment for injured students, including any transport costs. Reasonably low cost accident insurance policies are available from some commercial insurers. Please make contact with the school if you are trying to locate a provider and are having difficulty. We cannot endorse one more than another but we do have the names of some who regularly advertise.

PART THREE: ADMINISTRATION and COMMUNICATION

Communication in our school community

We have surveyed parents a number of times about the most effective ways of communicating messages. The following comments are made

- **Parent's Newsletters** – parents have told us that the traditional school newsletter is an out of date mode of communication. We have opted for twice per term letters from the leadership team usually highlighting important dates or messages.
- **Compass** – Parents responded very well to Compass - attendance checks, downloading of reports, booking parent/teacher interviews, communicating with teachers. If you have not received your log in to Compass please make contact with your sub school.
- **SMS messaging** – parents are saying that they find this method of communication very effective as it is short, sharp and timely.
- **Website** – this is where we keep the most current news about activities at school. We often receive positive feedback about the website.
- **Headlines and Highlights** – this is a full colour newspaper that also highlights activities that students have been involved in. We produce one of these each term and mail it out to families. Parents and students enjoy this publication.
- **Sub Schools** – there is a team of staff in each sub school to assist students and parents. There is a leader and teachers who look after the wellbeing of students and an education support officer who takes calls about any concerns or who phones you to check on matters like attendance.
- **General Office staff** – these ladies will assist you in many ways or direct your enquiry to the most relevant person to help you.

Your Feedback

If you are finding it difficult to communicate with the school can you please send me an email or call me. In these last few and vital years of your student's time in secondary education we really want to work together with you and the students to get the best possible outcomes for them, martin.anne.m@edumail.vic.gov.au or call the College on 9703 1266.

School Council Elections

I still need a couple of parents for school council – it is not an onerous job with two meetings per term. Please consider and give me a call.

New smoking bans to apply on school grounds and at school entrances

- From 13 April 2015, smoking will be banned within four metres of an entrance to all primary and secondary schools in Victoria, and within the school grounds, under an amendment to the Tobacco Act 1987.
- While smoking was banned on the grounds of all Victorian Government schools by the Minister for Education in 2009 via a Ministerial Ban Order, the new bans are enshrined in legislation and will also apply to Catholic and independent schools in Victoria, thereby ensuring a consistent approach across the government and non-government sectors.
- It is a legislative requirement that each school installs suitable 'No smoking' signs at all entrances to the school premises.

Asbestos Management in Schools: The Department provides the following advice

In the last mail out I provided parents with the Department advice about the installation of asbestos signage in school buildings but there was still some confusion. The signage is essentially to alert any contractors that there is asbestos in some areas of our buildings. At our school we have the remains of some asbestos up in the roof cavity and eaves of the verandas. It poses no safety threat.

Following is the advice the DET gave us:

As part of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Health and Safety Management Plan, new labelling will be installed at our school.

The labels remind people to contact school reception prior to undertaking any works at the school, to ensure they have up-to-date information from the school's asbestos register.

Asbestos - which was used extensively in building materials in the past but is now banned - is considered safe unless damaged or in poor condition.

The new labels form part of a comprehensive program to ensure Victorian government schools remain safe.

Children's safety is our number one priority. That is why we are taking this extra step as a precaution.

Winter Uniform – as we approach the cooler months could I remind families about getting their winter uniform ready. The uniform shop is open Thursdays at 12.30-2.30 during terms 2 and 3. You are also able to purchase uniform on line by accessing AGS Print on our school website.

Students who travel by Public Transport

Students are reminded that they are to conduct themselves with great courtesy when using public transport. Students should vacate seats for elderly and people in need; and should never have feet on seats or obstruct passage ways. Public transport in this area is often crowded and usually our students conduct themselves as fine young members of the community.

Safety on Frawley Road

Staff, students and members of the public have expressed concerns about erratic and un-safe driving when students are being dropped off and picked up. Students are required to use the designated crossings whether they are manned or not. We are asking for your cooperation and patience especially at these peak times.

Know Our Students well

- **Attendance** – is critically linked to student success.
- **Sub Schools** – Please make direct contact with Sub Schools to ensure individual needs are met.

Arts/Humanities	Amanda Muxworthy 8795 1017 Melinda Dalforno 8795 1019 Danielle Poyser 8795 1021
Science/IT/Commerce	Ron Jooss 8795 1027 Deb Crew 8795 1048 Mark Gelderbloem 8795 1085
Sport & Health Sciences	Jamie Fardell 8795 1041 Katrina Davidson 8795 1015 Michael Boyer 8795 1060 Katie Curran 8795 1041
Traditional Trades & Technology	Sue Lubbock 8795 1080 Lori Benis 8795 1081 Alan Torcello 8795 1067 Safiye Alev 8795 1080

ANNE MARTIN
Principal