



# VUSC News

Issue 11 · 02 Dec 2020

*Create the Future*

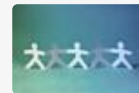
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# Principal's Message

Dear Families,

Well, as 2020 nears to an end... thankfully for most people I imagine due to the rollercoaster it has been..... it is a fantastic opportunity to reflect on the amazing resilience and achievement of our wonderful students at VUSC.

I have been blown away by our students' ability to navigate challenges and bend to the demands of the ever-changing restrictions placed on them throughout this extraordinary year.

This year has caused us to see our lives and work through a very different lens, to pause and to reassess what matters, what is worth spending time on, and what makes a difference. As a school community, we have reflected on and analysed what we have learnt as a result of the challenges, and the often surprising successes, of online learning. The challenges we have had to face will inform and shape our focus areas, aspects of the way we teach, work and connect with each other. We have learnt so much, and it is exciting to be part of many conversations regarding how we move forward and plan for 2021.

Whether on site or in the remote learning environment, I am very grateful for my staff's commitment to our students and families within our community. Term 4 was a critical time for us to re-engage students, re-establish school routines, and prepare for successful transitions into 2021.

Supporting students who need to catch up, and inspiring students who have progressed well to continue to excel, is central to our planning for 2021. I know some students have thrived in the remote and flexible learning environment; others have maintained their progress, and some have fallen behind despite their best efforts and those of their families and teachers. We have made every effort to ensure successful transitions for the Grade 6's moving into Year 7, and the Year 12's moving into employment or further education and training.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank parents, students and staff for all the support they have shown the College over the last 6 months. During the year there have been so many twists and turns with new routines and rules, school closure and the back and forwards between remote and on-site learning. Through it all staff and students have been fantastic, living our college values of Respect Yourself and Others, Aspire to Achieve and Strengthen the Community.

Our Year 12's have been impressive beyond belief throughout this year but especially over the last few weeks. Our Year 12 VCE students have just finished sitting their examinations and are anxiously awaiting their results. Regardless of their final VCE and VCAL results, I know they have all impressed me with their resilience and determination and I have no doubt that this cohort of young people, our Class of 2020, will be strong and successful having been through a year like no other.

### **End of Year Program — Year 7—9 Students**

Students in Years 7—9 will continue with learning programs throughout the rest of this term, making the most of being back on-site together with their peers and teachers. Students will participate in a range of activities throughout the final weeks of term including reflection on their learning and general progress. This targeted reflection is important for the development of their learning goals for 2021. Students will complete a range of work programs aimed at ensuring they are prepared for their next level of schooling. The final week of school is a short week of just three days that we promise to pack full of fun activities and end of year celebrations. The End of Year Program will commence on Monday 14th December. Full details of the three day program will be available soon.

### **Year 12 Graduation**

Our end of year assemblies, award presentations and graduation celebrations have been very different this year. It is sad in particular for our Year 12 students who have been unable to celebrate 18th birthdays, formals and celebration days, like in previous years. However, we have endeavoured to continue to provide moments of reflection and acknowledgement while at the same time ensuring we follow strict Department of Education and Training guidelines.

One event that I am hoping Year 12 students will join us in is celebrating the Year 12 Graduation Day on Monday 7th December. This event will be held at the Senior Campus in our gym with staff. We feel this is the best way to bring together our students and staff to celebrate and recognise our class of 2020 graduating students.

### **Home Group Structure and New Bell Times 2021**

We have restructured our home group model for next year and made some changes to our bell times. Our Junior and Senior SRC students met on Microsoft Teams on Monday 31st August during remote and flexible learning to discuss our home group structure and how they would want it to continue next year. The majority of the students preferred to have home group at the start of the day and they also suggested swapping lunch and recess times around so that students could have a longer break after periods 1 and 2. Students also asked for a longer period of home group time where they felt real connections and work could take place with their home group teacher. Please see the 'New Bell Times' page in this newsletter for more details.

### **College Captains Announcement**

Congratulations to the following students for being elected to the College Captaincy and Vice Captaincy positions for 2021:

**College Captains:** Danita Caruso and Emily Kerbage

**College Vice Captains:** Regi Cruz and Brooke Moncur

I would also like to congratulate and acknowledge the remaining candidates who participated in the process: Camille Afa, Michael Chol, Toakase Ofamooni and Taiwania Pua. All the candidates will form the VUSC Student Leadership team. They will all have the responsibility of running campus assemblies and attending various meetings to represent the College, eg. Parent Information nights etc.

Once again, congratulations to all the candidates for their current and future contributions to VUSC. The Junior Campus Captaincy positions are currently being finalised and we will announce the successful candidates on Compass by the end of term.

### **Staffing 2021 – Valuing Staff and Building Capacity**

A number of staffing positions have been advertised and filled for 2021. Victoria University Secondary College is now a destination school for quality applicants. With regards to workforce planning, the overall goal is to retain, develop and attract quality people to the school. With an increase in student numbers I have recruited staff to the school from diverse academic fields with specialist area expertise such as Chinese, EAL, English, Accounting,

Numeracy and Science. Over 500 applicants have been screened over the past month. Newly appointed staff will be introduced to the community in the first newsletter of 2021 and to students at the first School Assembly of 2021.

### **School Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024 / Annual Implementation Plan 2021**

Our school's Strategic Plan for 2021 – 2024 sets out our strategic goals, priorities and targets. The three major goals of the Strategic Plan are:

1. Improve the learning growth and achievement of every student.
  - Identify and target the learning needs of all students.
  - Review, monitor and embed the school-wide instructional model.
  - Enhance the capacity of teachers to implement evidence-based teaching and learning strategies.
  
2. Empower all students to become confident and self-reliant learners.
  - Enhance student voice, agency and leadership across the school.
  - Review and monitor the attendance policy.
  
3. Improve the wellbeing of all students.
  - Further enhance the Positive Behaviour Model.
  - Review and monitor the college student wellbeing framework.

### **Annual Implementation Plan COVID response**

The Department of Education and Training (DET) has made significant commitments and guidelines for 2021 to support students through the impacts of COVID-19.

Our 2021 Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) will have three main priorities:

1. Learning catch-up and extension: Some of our students have thrived in the remote and flexible learning environment, others have maintained their learning progress, and some have fallen behind, despite their best efforts and those of their families and teachers. We will support both those who need it to catch up and those who have thrived to continue to extend their learning.
2. Happy, active and healthy kids: We will make sure we look after our students' mental health and enable every student to get back outdoors, get active and get creative.

This means effectively mobilising available resources to support our students, especially the most vulnerable.

3. Connected schools: We will build on the stronger connections that schools have established with their families, carers and communities through 2020 to embed and spread improved ways of working to support our students.

### **Tutoring Program**

A tutoring program for 2021 has been announced by the Victorian Government, designed to support students whose learning has been disrupted as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

To enable schools to employ more than 4,100 tutors to support more than 200,000 students, the Victorian Government announced total funding of \$250 million, representing the largest initiative to support individual student learning in the history of the state.

To ensure every school is able to participate effectively in the program, each school, irrespective of size, primary, secondary or specialist, or level of disadvantage, will receive a base level of funding of \$15,000 to engage tutor support, with additional loadings reflecting levels of both enrolments and disadvantage. VUSC has been given a budget of \$436,867.00 to fund this program. We are currently planning and recruiting for this program.

### **Our New Buildings**

Stage One of our new school buildings are well and truly underway at our Cairnlea campus. SJ Higgins builders were appointed to our Cairnlea campus upgrade project. The \$23.9 million project will see the campus receive a new Learning Village building, Performing Arts building and STEM building. Construction on this project has started and there is a lot to look forward to, especially after seeing the designs and watching slabs and the framework for the buildings go up (see photos below).

At our last site meeting we were told that the anticipated completion date for stage one is looking like approximately September 2021. We certainly will be busy next year buying furniture and moving in.



### **Booklists and Essential Items/Electives Fees**

Students have been given their booklists for 2021. Copies are also available at the office. The Essential Items fees and electives fees for 2021 are now due. Parents who pay these in full will receive a **FREE Stationery Pack**, valued at \$48.95, which includes all of the stationery on the booklist.

Booklist collection orders will be available at our Junior Campus on Thursday 21st January from 10.00am to 1.00pm.

Finally, I would like to wish all of our school community a very happy Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year. I look forward to seeing you all in 2021.

*Elaine Hazim*  
*College Principal*

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## Child Safety at VUSC

Victoria University Secondary College is a child safe organisation committed to protecting students from all forms of abuse.

Our College has stringent protocols in place and endeavours at all times to be fully compliant with the Child Safe Standards set out under Ministerial Order 870.

Our College has the following documents and policies in place to achieve compliance with the Standards. All of these documents are available for downloading on our website or contact the school for a copy.

1. Commitment to Child Safety
2. Child Safety Policy
3. Child Safety Code of Conduct
4. Child Protection Policy and Procedures



# Important Dates 2020-21

**Last day Year 12 VCE exams**

Wednesday 2 December

**Last day for Year 10 and 11 students**

Friday 4 December

**Year 12 Graduation**

Monday 7 December

**Year 7 2021 Orientation Day**

Tuesday 8 December

**Last day of classes for Year 7-9 students**

Friday 11 December

**End of Year Activities 7-9 students**

Monday 14 - Wednesday 16 December

**School Clean Up Day / Semester 2 Reports available on Compass**



Thursday 17 December

**Last day of Term 4 - school closed**

Friday 18 December

**Campus Offices open at both campuses - today only**

Thursday 21 January 2021

**Booklist Collections 10am - 1pm**

**Junior Campus only**

Thursday 21 January 2021

**Teachers return (student free day)**

Wednesday 27 January 2021

**Year 7, 11 VCE and 12 VCE students return**

*Year 10 students who have a VCE class on this day must attend their class but may go home afterwards.*

Thursday 28 January 2021

**Year 8, 9, 10 and VCAL students return**

Friday 29 January 2021

**VET classes begin**

Tuesday 2 February 2021

To view a full calendar, please click [here](#).



# New Bell Times 2021

Please note the new bell times for 2021 in the attachment below. The College Board has approved these changes to allow for longer and more meaningful Home Group sessions twice per week. Teachers will deliver lessons during Home Group next year relating to health and wellbeing, positive behaviours and respectful relationships.

School buses will run according to these new bell times.



Bell Times 2021.pdf



# Scholarships available now

Students in years 4 to 12 can now apply for a share of scholarship funding from a range of philanthropic organisations.

More than 140 scholarships, ranging in value from \$600 to \$30,000, are available to Year 12 students undertaking further study in 2020. Recipients are able to use their scholarships to pay for iPads/computers, tertiary fees, and accommodation.

More than 100 scholarships, ranging in value from \$300 to \$1000, are available to students in years 4 to 11. Previous recipients have used their scholarships to purchase textbooks, school uniforms, and computers.

## **Apply for scholarships**

Applications for all scholarships are now open.

To explore the scholarships available and for information on how to apply, see: [Student scholarships](#)

Students are encouraged to identify and apply for all scholarships where they meet the criteria. **Applications close 28th February 2021.**



# eSafety's free webinar series

## 2021 Webinar Series for Parents and Carers

The education team at eSafety has been working on a new free webinar series for parents and carers, to be delivered live in 2021.

Each term, we will offer a new topic that will run numerous times. These webinars will provide parents and carers with the knowledge, skills and tools to support their children to have safe, positive online experiences.

This is especially important in an era when we are all online more than ever before.

The Term 1 webinar topic is eSafety's guide to cyberbullying and online drama. This will be offered five times over the term. We will let you know when the topics for the following terms are announced.

Attached is eSafety's 2021 webinar schedule and information on how to register.



eSafety Webinar series - Schedule 2021.pdf

# Head Start Success Story

## ***Jasmine Beki - Automotive Mechanic***



Jasmine Beki is one of our Year 12 VCAL students who entered the new Head Start program to secure herself an apprenticeship as an auto mechanic. She started out on her apprenticeship journey in January this year. The Head Start program has enabled Jasmine to complete Year 12 VCAL combined with the Certificate III in Automotive Technology at Kangan TAFE. Jasmine successfully completed her VCAL program and is now working full time at Lakeside Kia, in Caroline Springs. She loves her job and the Kia team.

Jasmine has been a car enthusiast for as long as she can remember and was elated to have discovered Head Start as a pathway for herself. She has always had an interest in cars, and wanted to do something where she was around cars all time.

"I chose to do Head Start and not wait until year 12 was over because it was an opportunity that will only come once. Getting a job when you're finished school is sometimes very hard and Head Start made my career so much more successful than what I thought it'll be like."

She's not challenged working in a male dominated industry. "Working in an industry that is male dominated is the least of my worries. If I want to work in a male dominated workplace I have to be prepared to be there, at the end of the day that's what I want to do. I do expect some people to say stuff or judge me, but it'll never affect me."

The Head Start program is an option for VUSC VCAL students with a passion for an apprenticeship career. Students need to be highly organised and committed. The program enables students to combine their VCAL program with a part time apprenticeship, working 2 to 3 days a week and also undertaking a Certificate III at TAFE.

When asked if Jasmine had any advice to students thinking about Head Start, she said “If I was to give anyone advice re Head Start I would tell them to do it and you won’t regret it; school helps you be prepared for work, but Head Start actually makes that happen and I personally think that is the most important part. You’ll constantly have support which is needed when taking big steps!”

Well done Jasmine, we wish you all the best in your career!

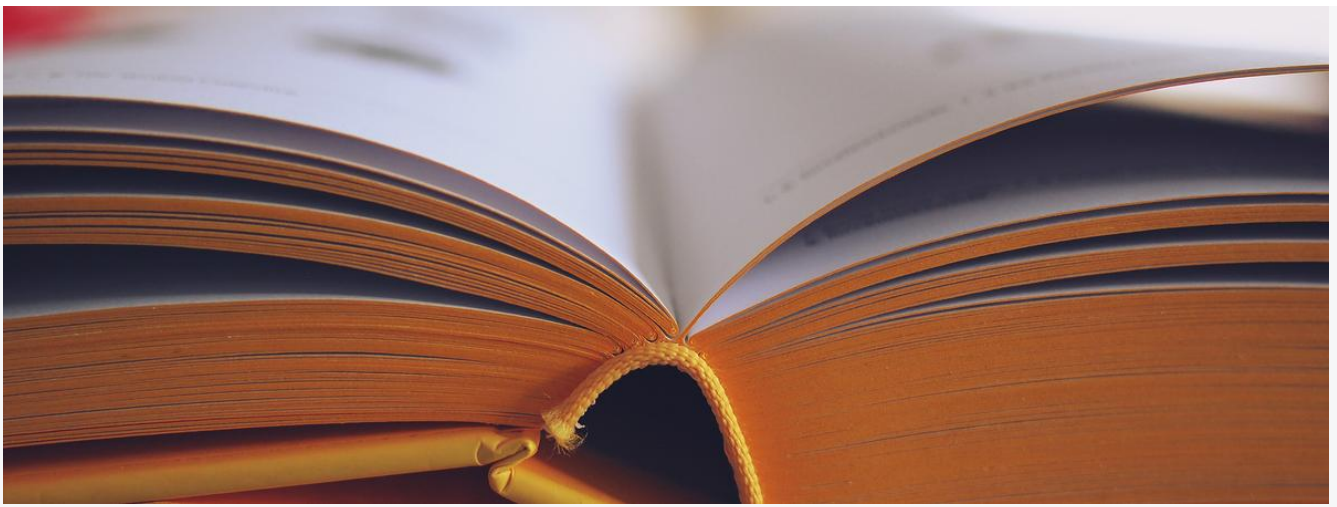


## Year 10 Literature

Students in Year 10 Literature were asked to create a 'masterpiece' that connected to a theme, character or value in 'The Great Gatsby'.

Here are some of their outstanding works below!





# Change of Preference & VTAC Information

Attached is important information for Year 12 students regarding change of preferences and VTAC offers.

Please speak to the Careers team if you have any questions.



Change of Preference Information VTAC 2020 - 2021.pdf





# Community News

## Tuning in to Teens

Brimbank Youth Services are running a free program for parents and carers of young people aged 10 to 18 years old. Their seven-week Tuning in to Teens program teaches parents how to help their teen develop emotional intelligence.

### **Register your interest now for Term 1, 2021**

When: Wednesdays 6-8pm, 10 February—24 March 2021

Where: Online via Zoom

For more information: [www.brimbankyouth.com](http://www.brimbankyouth.com) or call 9249 4110 or email [youthsupport2@brimbank.vic.gov.au](mailto:youthsupport2@brimbank.vic.gov.au).



Tuning in to Teens Flyer - Brimbank Youth Services.pdf




# Parenting Ideas


## Our school is a Parenting Ideas School


Parenting Ideas was founded by Michael Grose, author of nine parenting books and parenting educator to over 1500 Australian schools.


Parenting Ideas features up-to-date research, timely advice and inspiration, providing parenting strategies on everything from sibling rivalry, teen health and creating resilience in kids, for children of all ages.


Parents and guardians can view articles published regularly on this page and access free webinar vouchers valued at \$37.

 [Being an askable parent.pdf](#)

 [The power of sorry.pdf](#)

 [Modelling self-kindness.pdf](#)

 [Managing the mother load.pdf](#)

 [Building deep emotional connections with kids.pdf](#)



# Keeping holiday bodies and brains active

## **Exercise is important for their brains.**

As well as having positive effects on mood and physical health, boosting your child's fitness levels will keep their minds sharp. Even half an hour of activity when your heart rate is up improves concentration levels and speed of learning and decision-making, and processing in the pre-frontal cortex for at least two hours. And that has a cumulative effect. Simply saying, "Go for a run!" can demotivate children. Inspire children by setting little challenges where they're trying for personal bests. Try seeing if they can run from their home town to where another town where grandparents live by working out the distance and running a little of it in the park every day. Or they could compete with a family member to see who can run 5k in the best time.

## **Don't ban the Xbox.**

Gaming is not always time wasted. Many multiplayer games value teamwork, strategic thinking and other social skills, which will help our children to negotiate school and indeed life. In *Minecraft* children might help their friends to gain resources and defeat a dragon; playing *Fortnite* during lockdown has helped many children to stay connected with their friends. In much of life now we do better when we work as team. Get children to consciously think about the group dynamic by asking our young gamers: "What do you like about what your team players do? What do you find annoying?"

These games are designed to give children a feeling of self-competency. They get to level up every few minutes. They get the right amount of challenge. But, satisfying though that is, we don't want them to leave the summer with the sense that they only felt good about themselves when they levelled up in video games. As parents, just make sure they have other skills they're working on to become more capable and secure, whether it's cooking, running, cycling or helping with chores.

**Send your teenagers on a hike with a proper map.**

Bolster confidence and resilience by giving them a map and sending them on a hike. Try other challenging outdoor activities, such as surfing, paddle-boarding or canoeing.

**Ask your 14-year-old to recommend audiobooks.**

Books need to be what they want to read, and how they want to read. They need to choose the content and format, whether they prefer to read by e-book or paperback. Audiobooks are a great way for young teenagers to plug their earphones in and get off the screen.

Sometimes parents can feel that it's not proper reading, but the science behind it would suggest that it prompts much of the same work inside the brain as if you were reading the book. You can support them by getting them an audiobook account and listening to their favourites. They can bring books to you, not just the other way around. It's a lovely insight into what your teenager's thinking and feeling as well.

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**Reintroduce a civilised bedtime.**

Children's brains are developing and sleep is essential for their emotional wellbeing and cognition. 11-year-olds should get approximately 9½ hours' sleep; 12 and 13-year-olds about 9 hours and 15 minutes; and 14 to 16-year-olds about 9.

Establish a time, including the child in the discussion ("What time makes sense to you?"), on weeknights at least, when devices go downstairs and they go to bed. Don't leave it until the last week of the holidays to restore good sleeping habits. Like when we change time zones, our body clock can't jump instantly — it needs time to adjust. If we try to do it all at once, it can cause problems with sleep and concentration, just like severe jet-lag.

We can help teenagers to reset their body clocks by exposing them to sunlight in the morning — and if we can't tempt them out of bed, open the curtains. It allows them to wake naturally by the light.

**Encourage every writing opportunity, from shopping lists to journals.**

To get younger children to practise their writing skills you could ask them to write down your shopping list. Or you could suggest they make up their own board game or garden assault course — and ask them to write down the rules. Teenagers enjoy experimenting with blog writing or what they post on social media but they have to feel motivated.

**Watch films with subtitles (even the ones in English).**

Children often read much faster on the screen than they would normally. Watching subtitled foreign programmes is also an effective method of surreptitiously brushing up on language

skills. It's an excellent way to be exposed to the language spoken by a native speaker in a conversational way.

### **How to help your fidgety five-year-old.**

One of the best ways parents can get young children — four and five-year-olds — ready for school, is to keep them physically active and busy over summer. Activities that focus on motor development are really useful. Fiddly stuff, like bead threading, pasta on a necklace, Lego, Meccano, glueing twigs together, are good for writing because they improve the fine motor skills. Developing balance is a key skill for young children and is achieved by working on gross motor skills and muscle strength. Walking along a skipping rope as an imaginary tight rope, or walking along a wall, climbing, standing on one leg, learning how to bounce on a space hopper — that's great for balance and core stability.

### **Do some engineering projects with your 12-year-old.**

Lots of children are bursting to get outside and do some practical learning. They throw themselves into design and engineering projects where they can get out in the garden and be more active.

Try the 44 ingenious science challenges from engineers at Dyson, such as working out how to make an egg fit into a bottle without breaking it ([jamesdyson foundation.co.uk](http://jamesdysonfoundation.co.uk)). You can also plan and design projects around the home like a new garden or gate.

*Acknowledgement: Anna Maxted, The Times, July 11 2020*