



Head of Junior School End of Term 2 Letter

18th June 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Senior School Students

What an enriching end to the term we have had at Junior School with a spectacular school production of Matilda Jr, a visit from Healthy Harold and the Life Education van, cross-campus visits for our youngest classes and a snowy day at Wentworth Falls to top it all off; symbolic of a term that has been packed with energy and excitement.

Student Achievement

Term 2 provided a number of curricular and co-curricular opportunities for our students to express their many talents. Our HICES Debating teams facilitated by Mrs Roberson completed a successful season with one of our teams progressing to the final stages of the competition to take place next term. We wish them the best of luck in their endeavours. Our Year 6 da Vinci Decathlon team, facilitated by Dr Drew, competed in the state finals having previously won our regional tournament, and our Kids Lit Quiz teams performed outstandingly well finishing 3rd and 6th respectively in a national competition. Noah Erne (S3 Fuji Apples) broke the NSW Primary School Sports Association 50m backstroke record for a multi-class swimmer and was named in the NSW Merit team, and Hunter Costigan (S3 Raspberries), Keeden Harrison (S3 Fuji Apples) and Tasman Harrison (S2 Cherries) represented HICES at the Combined Independent Schools Cross Country Championships with Keeden (5th) and Tasman (7th) performing particularly well, Keeden gaining selection in the CIS team for the NSW championships with Tasman as first reserve. We wish the boys the best of luck.

School Reports

As per my recent communication, Junior School Reports will be published on the parent portal during the first week of the school holidays. A member of the School's administration team will email families once the reports are available for viewing. Should the reports prompt any questions you are invited to request an interview with the teacher concerned by emailing Mrs Arrell (karrell@bmgs.nsw.edu.au) or Mrs Boros (eboros@bmgs.nsw.edu.au) who will then facilitate a meeting upon our return to school next term.

Whole School Information

I draw your attention to the Whole School section of this communication, that Mr Laffin and I have co-authored, that addresses three further topics and provides the Whole School Dates for Term 3. Please note that parents can now locate the 2021 and 2022 Term Dates on our School website.

Term 3 Events

This term many classes have enjoyed a range of excursions and activities and there is much to look forward to in Term 3 including a trip to Canberra for Stage 3, an athletics season for our Stage 2 and 3 children and the fun and festivities of Book Week. Some of these dates are provided below, however please be sure to keep an eye on the *Dates for your diary* so that you are up to speed with all that is happening.

Holiday wishes

It is my hope that your family enjoys a refreshing and rejuvenating break from school over the coming weeks, and that all the children return invigorated and excited about the richness of learning and opportunity ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Nigel Cockington
Head of Junior School



From the Heads of School – Whole of School Information

A New Student Portal and Parent Dashboard

Over the past six months, a great deal of 'behind the scenes' work has been taking place in preparation to launch our new online school management system. This is a complex and multi-faceted task, bringing together the functions of multiple software systems that have operated at Blue Mountains Grammar School over the past many years. We expect that our new system, known as Mezzo, will make the lives of students, parents and staff significantly easier, facilitating communication and a range of processes that are currently paper-based. While parents will receive more formal communications from the School with all the information they will need to make use of Mezzo shortly, Senior School students will receive briefings and the relevant training from our first day back in Term 3. Junior School students will not be needing to engage with the new systems but parents of Junior School children will. We look forward to seeing the positive difference our new system will make in the life of the School.

Wellbeing Focus Years P-12 – Compass

We have always prided ourselves as a School on the holistic approach taken to pastoral care and the strength of relationships within our Junior School classes and Senior School Tutor Groups. Throughout the course of 2021, however, Blue Mountains Grammar School is undertaking a thorough review of the School's Wellbeing Program as part of the NSW Association of Independent Schools' Compass – Navigating Whole-School Wellbeing initiative. Under the leadership of Mrs. Alicia Michielsen (Director of Wellbeing and Inclusion) and Mr. Nigel Cockington (Head of Junior School), the Wellbeing Team have engaged with experts from the AIS and across the Independent Schools sector to bring the latest research and a best-practice approach to our own Wellbeing Program. We look forward to seeing the benefits of this renewed focus for our students.

Ongoing COVID-19 Precautions

At this time twelve months ago, our community was just emerging from the depths of the COVID-19 crisis and returning to School. A year later, despite many in our community now vaccinated, it remains vital that we continue to take sensible precautions to manage the risk this virus poses. I commend the School's [COVID-19 Guidelines](#) to your reading, and draw your attention to the following specific points:

- Students experiencing even the mildest cold and flu symptoms must remain home and be tested. Students demonstrating cold and flu symptoms whilst at School will be immediately isolated in Sickbay and sent home. Parents with such symptoms are asked not to attend the campus.
- All in our community are asked to continue to practice good hand-hygiene. Throughout Term 3 students will continue to be asked to sanitise their hands at the beginning of each lesson. Senior School students will disinfect desks at the beginning and end of each lesson. Desks in the Junior School will be disinfected by the cleaners at the end of each school day.
- Parents and students are asked to adhere to the School's published guidelines and follow the instructions of our COVID Marshals at all School events.

