



Pittwater House

From the Heads of Grammar and College

22 January 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to 2021! We welcome all members of our School community and hope that 2021 is a good year for everyone. It cannot be denied that 2020 certainly taught so many people so much. Through adversity we learnt that we should appreciate what we have, not take things for granted and to admire and respect all that is around us.

The start of this school year is a moment of great anticipation and excitement. For everyone, students, parents, and teachers alike, there is that wonderful sense of a new beginning and a fresh start. It is natural for students to have a bit of anxiety and maybe even a few questions, but the focus should always be on the new upcoming adventure of learning and growing and remembering some of the things the previous year taught us.

The Pittwater House community, where home and school come together, make a tremendous partnership and the beneficiary of all the care, challenge and support, nurturing and mentoring, is ultimately your child. Indeed, so many of our students realised last year that the face to face experience in the classroom is rewarding.

We hope all students use these first weeks to reflect on previous work habits and look for ways to improve their approach. We feel strongly that if we can set a good approach now, it will help students to cope better in the coming weeks and months, when work demands inevitably build. During the school year students will receive instruction and support from both their Form and Subject teachers relating to the development of personal goals, time management, organisation and study skills.

If students are struggling with organisational skills or any areas in their courses, we ask that they are encouraged to talk to their teachers and school leaders. All the staff are keen to support and assist their students. We also ask that parents encourage students not to multi-task but rather to be focused on their work. Completing homework whilst utilising social media is not effective.

Academic Success and Pastoral Care

The academic success and pastoral care of our students is always at the forefront of our thinking. Our staff are concerned with the overall wellbeing and achievement of each student. People are very important at Pittwater House and we are committed to providing a safe environment where *every student matters*.

Student academic achievement and pastoral care is most effective when there is a strong partnership between home and school. Clear two-way communication, reminders and reinforcement (at home and at school) of strategies to support progress, and early intervention in identifying and addressing problems are vital to the effective exercise of pastoral care.

Our Year Level Coordinators will work closely with the staff, Form teachers, parents and the Heads of School. Parents are strongly encouraged to use all of these highly experienced and effective members of staff and to specifically contact your daughter's or son's Form teacher as a first point of contact should queries or concerns arise. It is so important that we work together, as a team, for the benefit of our students.

Important Parent Pastoral Events 2021 (More information will be distributed prior to events)

- *Time and Space – Parent/Student Evenings*
 - **Yr12 Parents/Student Evening, Tuesday 2 February (via Zoom)**
 - **Yr7 Mother/Student Evening, Tuesday 8 June**
 - **Yr9 Father/Student Evening, Tuesday 24 August**
- *Cyber Safety – Parent Evenings*
 - **Whole School General YSafety Message, Wednesday 17 March (via Zoom)**
 - **Whole School Gaming and Gambling Focus, Wednesday 21 July**
- *Resilience Project – Parent Webinar*
 - **Pittwater House Resilience Project Partnership, Tuesday 30 March (Webinar)**

An important part of our care and support of our student community comes from our senior students. We value the contribution they make to the community as peers and leaders. The Big Bro Program and the College Union Groups have a valuable and significant effect on the contribution and nurture given and received across both the College and Grammar schools. As leaders, our students gain a real sense of their contribution to the School and the wider community.

Pastoral Programs

Our students will live and work in a world that will depend on their readiness to assess new ideas and adapt to change with confidence. Therefore, we aim to empower all of our students and give them strategies that will assist them in life, in their academic endeavours and to help prepare them for a world that is changing.

The Pastoral Programs at Pittwater House focus on cultivating an environment and culture that supports the holistic development of wellbeing and growth in the physical, social, intellectual and emotional aspects of individuals and across our wider School Family.

We strive to give our students a tool box to help them cope in today's ever changing environment. To be able to face adversity and grow. The Pastoral Programs also identify that there is a need to recognise particular gender requirements at varying times as our students mature and grow older. We recognise that effective academic learning within a school context cannot be separated from the exercise of effective pastoral care and development. Therefore, a commitment to excellence in academic performance must be accompanied by a commitment to excellence in physical health, social competence and emotional resilience and flexibility, as well as a 'growth mindset'. Our pastoral care includes proactive elements – such as developing skills that build resilience, recognising strengths, promoting a school culture that emphasises respect and empathy, teamwork and participation. We want all our students to feel that they can strive for personal success and growth in a safe environment. This year we will introduce some new Programs for Year 7 - 11. We are very aware of the impact social media has on young people. Several Programs are in place to support all our students but we ask if a student is concerned about any aspect of social media please let us know immediately.

Week 1 Reminders

Orientation Day – **Wednesday 27 January at 9.00am in the Hall for all Year 7 students and all students new to the school in Years 8 to 12.** The Year 7 Program will run until midday and the Year 8-12 Program will run until 10.00am when they can be collected. Students are asked to attend in school uniform. Year 7 students are asked to bring their laptops. More information relating to the logistics of this day will be distributed in the coming days.

First Day of Term - **The Senior School first day of term is Thursday 28 January.** All students will begin with a Period 1 Form class, where students will be allocated lockers, meet their Form Teacher and be given timetables. Signs will be posted at either entrance indicating Form Class locations. These details are also available to parents by viewing student timetables via Edumate.

There will be an Opening of Term 1 Assembly for all students, where the Principal will address the School. We ask all students to be aware of the lesson times as it is important that students arrive at class on time. The School works on a ten-day timetable. A copy of the bell times and term dates appears in the student diary and student handbook.

Uniform

We would kindly ask for your support in ensuring that your child meets and understands the high standards Pittwater House expects its' students to demonstrate, not only in behaviour, but also in uniform and personal presentation.

Please visit the Student Handbook on Page 34-36 to view the uniform expectations at Pittwater House:
[Student Handbook](#)

Any student with inappropriate skirt length, hairstyle or who does not meet the required uniform or personal presentation expectations outlined within the Student Handbook will not be able to attend classes until the issue has been addressed.

In general terms, blazers should be worn the year round and to all school functions, unless otherwise specified by the Principal. Periods of exemption are usually granted during the warmer parts of the year. In Term 1, blazers are needed for the School Photographs. School hats are mandatory for all students and are to be worn when outside during recess and lunch, outdoor PE classes and outdoor school excursions.

Yours sincerely



Ms Lorna Probst
Head of College



Mr David Heath
Head of Grammar