

NEWSLETTER # 2-MARCH 2021

Principal's Reflection



Lately I have been despairing at the increasingly polarised nature of debate on a whole range of important issues that dominate the media cycle. Unfortunately, I am a bit of a news junkie, so I may be more exposed to this than others, but I expect I am not alone.

Lockdown or no lockdown? For Dan Andrews, or against him? Should there be an inquiry into the behaviour of the Attorney General 33 years ago or not? Is racism endemic in the AFL? Are the Covid vaccines safe or not? Should Harry and Meghan have left the royal family? There is no shortage of current issues to choose from to test my thesis that the vast bulk of people will 'take sides' and choose a 'yes' or 'no' position.

I recall being mystified back in the 1980s in the aftermath of the death of Azaria Chamberlain that people either took the position the baby had been murdered by the mother, Lindy, or that she was the victim of a corrupt, inept police force that framed her. The arguments raged for years and people held their positions with great passion. Many people who believed she was guilty refused to change their position even years later when both Lindy and Michael Chamberlain were exonerated and compensated for what they went through. What mystified me was very few of us had access to all the evidence required to take such fixed positions.

We have witnessed an even more interesting example of this recently with the refusal of Donald Trump to accept the presidential election result. Despite every court throwing out the notion of fraud due to lack of any evidence, Mr. Trump's followers' fixed position that he was the *real* winner saw many of them storm the capitol on January 6th - some even ending up in prison as a result!

Why am I talking about this? I read the following short article by Tim Adams in The Guardian this week and it really resonated for me. As educators we teach students the skills of critical thinking and the importance of using evidence to support an argument. What if we don't have access to the evidence as distant observers of an issue? Here's the part of the article I found interesting:

"Many years ago, on leaving university, I was asked to go to a windowless office in the Mall to see if I might be interested in becoming an agent of the British secret service. Over a series of interviews, it became clear that I was not cut out to be George Smiley, let alone James Bond. A single bit of wisdom that I picked up in that process has never left me, though. At one point, the interviewer set out the hypothetical details of a complex conflict in a distant corner of the world in which I was theoretically stationed.

What steps would I take to advise the desk in London of how to respond to this crisis? I set out a few embarrassing platitudes about gathering information from all sides, before coming to a firm opinion and a clear course of action. When I'd finished, my interviewer leaned back in his chair.

"There is a crucial question you haven't asked yourself," he said.

"There is?"

"Why do we need to have a strong, settled opinion about this conflict at all?"

In the years since, as strong, settled opinions about everything from home-schooling to hijabs have apparently become essential markers of personal identity, I've often been reminded of that put-down. It came to mind watching Oprah's interview with Meghan and Harry and the inevitable, fevered which-side-are-you-on? arguments that followed. "Do I need to have a strong, settled opinion about this?" a voice in my head asked. On balance, I guessed, "probably not".

I would suggest we should ask ourselves more often, the question "Do I need to have a strong, settled opinion about this?" and allow ourselves the luxury of the "probably not" option every now and again.

Matt McPhee

Principal

2021 TERM DATES

Term 1	Thursday 28 January – Thursday 1 April
Term 2	Monday 19 April – Friday 25 June
Term 3	Monday 12 July – Friday 17 September
Term 4	Monday 4 October – Friday 17 December

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Rory Standfield	Brooklyn Lay-USmar	Rose Stephens	Tommy Vitols
Emma Chandler	Hannah Chandler	Amber Zuidema	Scarlett Sloane-Gibson
Tyson Delbridge	Isabel Armstrong	Chloe Fulkerson	Tyler Koolen
Scott Couper	Alice Cashin	Kiara Leach	

IMPORTANT DATES

Year 9 Hike (GROUP B)	Wednesday 24 th – Friday 26 th March
Interschool Athletics	Monday 29 th March
Girls AFL 'Come & Try' Session	Tuesday 30 th March
Year 7 & 9 Naplan Trial Test	Wednesday 31 st March
Parent/Student/Teacher Conference	Wednesday 31 st March (4pm-6pm)
Parent/Student/Teacher Conference	Thursday 1 st April (9am-12pm) Students are required at school only for Parent/Student/Teacher Conference
Year 7 High Rope Adventure Day	Thursday 22 nd April
State Swimming Carnival	Thursday 22 nd April
VCE Careers Camp-Year 11 & 12	Wednesday 28 th – Friday 30 th April
Year 10 Work Experience	Monday 31 st May – Friday 4 th June

CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSION FUND (CSEF)

CSEF is a program provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school camps, sports and excursions. If you hold a valid means-tested concession card you may be eligible for CSEF. The allowance is paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, sports and excursions for the benefit of your child/ren. The annual CSEF amount per secondary student is \$225.00. Please contact the office for an application form.

MUSIC FEES

All Music fees are now on your account and have been emailed to you. Please ensure that you use the BPAY details as per your statement to avoid confusion with school fees. Note: Primary School and sundry debtors have different BPAY codes than family codes. These fees are payable by 1st April 2021. Students who withdraw from Music after 1 April will be charged for the full year as fees are already forwarded on to SGSMP.

SPORT TOPS



The school will be putting in an order for school personalised sports tops. Students can have a personalised name/nickname and number on the back of their top. The tops can be used for all Interschool sports e.g. Basketball, Athletics ect as well as for PE classes here at school. Orders will be closing on 30 March 2021. \$40 must be handed in at the office prior to this date.



If you have any questions please contact the office or Mr Hawking.

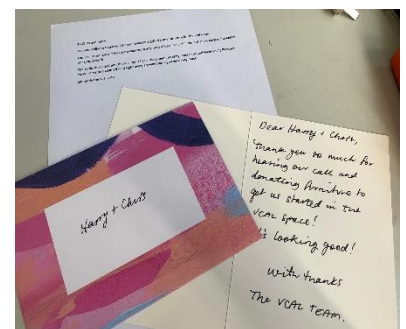
VCAL ENGLISH

We started the year strongly by establishing a new learning space for our VCAL team in the Technology Wing. A shout out to the local community helped to temporarily furnish our space with couches, a 'family learning table', as well as donations to help purchase a fridge, coffee machine and toaster. The space is cosy and our routine is taking shape.



Tyde preparing a cuppa before work.

VCAL students often have multiple demands on their time – work placements, TAFE – as well as learning at school – we have seen incredible resourcefulness, independence and organisation in getting it all done! Three assessments in; only 13 to go!!



A thank you letter written by the students.

This week saw the merging of all three levels of VCAL (years 10-12) for the first time at Foster Secondary College. As an introduction the famous EGG-speriment and String-Cup Challenge replaced Literacy 101, as we learnt to communicate, delegate and plan together.

I'm looking forward to next term as we take on the biggest challenge yet – supporting the creation of the school production – which, of course, will be an outrageous success.



Can you save the egg?



Hayley-excited her egg survived



Ryan-ruthless in his preparation

ATHLETIC SPORTS



House Athletics Sport Winner
BROOKS



Mr Matt McPhee presenting the cup to Brooks house captains Lachlan Gale and Matilda Gee



Age Group Champion	Runner Up Champion
Lachie Rathjen	Oliver Callcott
Toby Mitchell	Will Cashin
Zane Duursma	Steven Armstrong
Reghan Lewis	Max Howard
Willem Duursma	Josh Gale
Rye Cicero	Jarrah Cicero

Age Group Champion	Runner Up Champion
Tyla Angwin	Leila Tracy
Yasmin Duursma	Ebony Van Dyke
Macey McGlead	Bree Allen
Ally County	Chelsea Brown & Pearl Quinn
Chelsea Whale	Hailey Boyd
Myunah Duroux	Brydee Shanks

WARATAH BEACH CAMP



We have been blown away by the generosity of Peter and Jessica Gould of Waratah Beach Camp who kindly donated the full cost of our Year 7 adventure program. This program encourages empathy, understanding and resilience and this donation will allow all Year 7 students to attend the Glen Harrow High Ropes Park in Term 2. We are very grateful for their generosity.



The school is very excited to announce that we will be performing The Addams Family Musical early Term 3. Planning and preparations are well underway with performance dates set for Friday 30th of July at 7pm & Saturday 31st of July 1:00pm and 7:00pm. Tickets will go on sale mid May.

If you would like to get involved at all please contact or email Kiarna.Smith@education.vic.gov.au.

YEAR 7 CAMP-RUBICON

