

PIN OAK



*SWIMMING
CARNIVAL!*

HANDWRITING
Year 1 to Year 12

BIG ISSUE
Social Media

ART
Virtual Gallery

CONTENTS

OLD OXLEYAN

3. Head of College
4. Head of Academic and Innovation
5. Head of Senior School
6. Junior Gallery
7. Head of Junior School
- 8-9. Feature Article
10. In The Media
11. Inspiration
12. Big Issue
13. Senior Gallery
14. Virtual Gallery and Calender
15. Good and Other News
16. News Flash

Pin Oak Team

Student Editorial Team

Lily Magill, Ava Lambie, Peggy Holmwood,
Liam Verity, Pearl Bendle, Evie Crowley, India
O'Brien, Tika Conway, Ella Jackson, Lucy
Cavanough Quince, India O'Brien, Esther
Rough, Hugh Corbett, Emily Byrne, Olivia Bow,
Ruby Zupp, Charlotte Florida, Daisy MacDonald.

Designers

Lara Fischer, Bianca Gibson-Brown, Leah
Halstead

Head of Marketing and PR
Emma Calver

Staff Editor
Beattie Lanser

Oxley College
Railway Road, Burradoo, NSW, 2576.
Ph: 4861 1366
office@oxley.nsw.edu.au

Photography: AJ Moran



Tristan Mercer Class of 2000

Now that you're off in the big wide world, what have you made of yourself since finishing school at Oxley?

I've travelled extensively, built a successful renewable energy business, studied, have a great family and group of trusted friends, I now serve the community of NSW as a Paramedic and business leader.

What is your biggest achievement since high school?

Building enough renewable energy capacity to provide clean energy for my entire regional community, and the friendships that come from my varied career.

Were these things that during high school you expected you would end up doing?

Definitely no. Although I was an enthusiastic volunteer for several local emergency services from the age of 15, until very recently I never considered the possibility of serving on the front line during a global pandemic, nor dare I say did many of my colleagues.

How did Oxley prepare you for your future?

Oxley instilled a strong sense of community and personal responsibility, particularly through the outdoor education programme that rapidly evolved during my years at school. This focus, as well as academic study in economics and science helped me understand the meaningful impact that each of us can have at both a local and national level.

Is there anybody from the Oxley community who inspired you throughout high school?

The leaders (including several past students) of both the Kayaking and Duke of Edinburgh's International programmes were hugely influential, and the Drama department particularly Mr Graham kept me interested in literature and the expression of complex ideas.

What would you say you miss most about being at school?

The opportunity for consistent mentoring and the privilege to be challenged by new ideas and experiences.

What would you say to your fifteen year old self?

Hold back on reminding people every time they're wrong.

HEAD OF COLLEGE'S REPORT



Enlightened Academic Rigour

On Wednesday, the Executive team attended the annual Sydney Morning Herald Schools Summit on succeeding in an era of change. We heard from a range of educators, thought leaders and policy makers. It was affirming to hear Director of Chenine (Change, Engagement and Innovation) University of Ottawa, Andy Hargreaves speak about the things we value at Oxley College in our liberal enlightened and rigorous education. Creativity and Magic, Meaning and Purpose, Attachment and Belonging, Voice and Involvement, Focus and Mastery are the elements that will help our students to flourish and achieve their personal best in their learning and we can see these in our classrooms and in our Oxley Distinctives that the students experience through their journey at Oxley.

As part of our normal practice, staff have been busy reviewing, reflecting and planning strategies for our students from the data received around our HSC results from 2020. This is an important exercise as we can look more broadly and deeply at the student's achievements, than just the narrow measures which are reported in the paper. I have always found it very interesting that a School's success, as perceived by some parents, can come down to a ranking in a league table rather than on more broader measures of the whole student. For example, in NSW, the league tables are based on the percentage of Band 6s students receive within a school. Whilst important, these results bare little correlation with the student's ATAR which is the measure put on by the universities for entry into courses. Nor does it consider other important factors such as student character, critical thinking, creativity, leadership, independence and resilience which we all know are important for life beyond the school grounds.

We don't shy away from the fact that we were disappointed with our position on the Better Schools League table, however, given all the complexities of 2020, we were very pleased with the individual growth and achievements of the 2020 cohort. Interestingly the data we have received and will share with the College community in the next Pin Oak has been impressive with most students achieving their desired post school destinations. The vast majority of 2020 leavers are commencing their journeys at a range of universities around Australia or taking up career opportunities in other fields. We even have a few brave souls who are pursuing their dreams of travel and completing GAP years in the UK.

As always, we continue to improve and grow our culture of academic excellence and support our students across all years to build the muscle of study, revision and

academic preparation and grow the habits and skills for them to achieve their personal excellence outside the normal classroom lessons. A few of these strengthened initiatives include the growth of Study and Supper Club for Year 11 and 12 students in the evenings from 5.00pm-7.30pm, Year 9-11 Sunday Hub from 2.00pm-4.00pm and Year 7-10 Tightrope Homework sessions. All these sessions take place in the library.

I am often asked by parents how much homework and academic preparation our students should be doing each night. Working on a five-day week, the rule of thumb is approximately 10 minutes per day, per year level which means by Senior School our Year 7s should be doing a regular one hour per night and in Year 11 and 12 they should be building from two hours to three hours per night. Of course with sport and other activities some of this may be done on a weekend as well but this acts as a useful guide to help get students into the consistency of sitting down and learning the skills of revision, academic preparation and homework.

Masterplan

"Grow our culture of academic excellence and support our students across all years to build the muscle of study, revision and academic preparation and grow the habits and skills for them to achieve their personal excellence"

As I mentioned at the Parent Welcome drinks, the College Board and Executive have been working with Architects and consultants to complete a Masterplan for our campus. This is a very involved process and includes planning refurbishments of existing facilities and new facilities as well as addressing our traffic and parking issues to ensure students safety. Our Masterplan has been completed on our mature model of the College and it is important to re-iterate there are no plans for increased student capacity. In finalising our Masterplan, we are currently working on a Landscaping overlay to ensure our outdoor areas are also maintained and create engagement and a sense of belonging for our students.

I am very excited about the journey ahead and look forward to sharing more details with our community in the months ahead.

One element of the Masterplan which we have already underway is the provision of parking for Year 12 students on the Northern end of the campus adjacent to Railway Road. As mentioned, this should have been finished by now but unfortunately the weather has held the works up. I am hopeful with some fine weather forecast in coming weeks, we will get this completed and in turn it will free up more space for short term parking for parents in the main driveway.

As part of our ongoing strategy to improve traffic flow, we are looking at a Green travel plan to find ways to reduce the traffic around the College. If any parents have particular expertise or experience in this area, I would be delighted to hear from them. More information about this initiative will come out later next term once we have commenced our planning.





Head of Academic and Innovation

Handwriting:

Year 1 to Year 12 and beyond.....

It does seem that there are moments lately when I have been saying "everything old is new again." If you are old enough to remember landlines, record players and buying music on itunes, you may relate to this. The contrast between technology and back in "the day" seems to be increasingly in the news.

I was thus very interested to find some additional material about handwriting. We have long known at Oxley that we need to be sensitive to the balance of writing by hand, compared to taking notes and "writing" on our laptops. This was highlighted by the release of a recent report which delved into what happens in the brain when we write, and what happens when we type.

In 2020, a team of researchers observed children as they wrote by hand, drew and then typed words. This followed an earlier, 2012 study where brain scans of young children showed a flickering when making hand-printed letters, but this effect faded considerably as letters were typed or traced. The 2020 study also investigated the difference in young people as they handwrote, drew and typed words and concluded that handwriting and drawing produced neural tracing indicative of deeper learning. "Whenever self-generated movements are included as a learning strategy, more of the brain gets stimulated. It also appear that the movements related to keyboard typing do not activate these networks the same way that drawing and handing do.

Year 1 Creative Writing

It is always a joy to visit our Junior School classrooms and see the foundational skills of writing emerge on a daily basis. The Year 1 students are progressing through creative writing and it is a magical experience to see their thoughts transfer gradually to paper. We treasure the daily guidance of our teachers as they watch over this essential form of communication. We celebrate too the grit it takes to make a letter, to make sense, to get to the end of a sentence that expresses meaning. I hope you enjoy these gorgeous examples of our very youngest work samples.



Year 12 Writing Workshop

Mrs Simpson, Year 12 Academic Master tackled this very issue with Year 12 on Monday. As we launched our 2021 Stretch, Strive and Stick for HSC Success programme, Mrs Simpson took the opportunity to help students understand the "why" behind writing, and how it helps a busy student hone their skills and process. We will continue to provide workshops along the Year 12 journey to help students become more and more match fit. In Mrs Simpson's words:

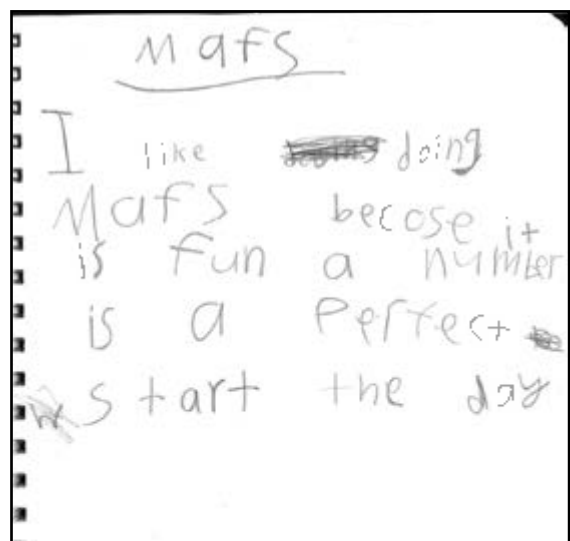
The HSC is an 'old fashioned' exam – the more you practice handwriting, the more automatic it becomes. If you have real difficulties with the legibility of your handwriting, then now is the time for us to begin addressing that. If the HSC markers can't read it, they can't award you marks.

Handwriting must be automatic in the HSC – fast and legible.

Analogy of learning to drive a car (road rules, controls and features of vehicle) -> once automatic you can enjoy the scenery, listen to music or talk on the phone (handsfree of course) or just enjoy the ride. Would you expect to pass your driving test having spent the preceding year avoiding actually driving as much as possible?

Research tells us that writing is a much longer process to master than driving a car – perhaps as long as 20 years. So, as we prepare for a series of handwritten HSC exams, we need to practice actually writing instead of surrendering that process to auto-complete, auto-correct, spell check or my mortal enemy, Grammarly.

So, in light of the research about the importance of handwriting, and based on my experience of the strategies that differentiate more successful HSC students from less successful ones, the single best piece of advice I can give you as your Academic Master is to practice writing by hand as often as possible.





Head of Senior School

Co-Curricular Awards Policy – 2021

No school co-curricular awards system is perfect. Within any school community, there will always be significant variation between and within stakeholder groups about the purpose of such awards – not just what should be recognised and celebrated, but who, when, and how: is it for excellence in performance? Is it for achievement? Is it performance/achievement of the team/group, or of the individual? Is it for contribution and commitment? Is it a combination of the above – and what about values, leadership or service and how to we measure this? The 'devil is in the detail' certainly applies to the criteria of awards policies, especially when it comes to comparing within and between activities, year groups or seasons and years.

Consideration must also be given to the outcomes – intentional and unintentional – of any awards policy. The impact of decisions may be felt less by those who receive an award than by those who do not – hence the oft quoted phrase, "it's not about who you appoint – but who you disappoint". On one hand, more general awards criteria may provide latitude and enable the opinions of decision makers to hold sway; on the other, strictly data driven, detailed and specific criteria may assist in justifying objective decisions, but can lead to ever increasing complexity and a loss of the 'big picture' purpose of awards and negatively affect student motivation. Some systems attempt to combine these to get the best of both worlds, but in so doing risk getting the worst of both. According to Self-Determination Theory, three components of psychological growth that fuel intrinsic motivation are skills competence, social connectedness and autonomy. The challenge this presents for schools' awards policies is that (i) unexpected positive reward can increase intrinsic motivation and (ii) intrinsic motivation and autonomy can be reduced by extrinsic rewards for behaviours that are already intrinsically motivated.¹ Achieving both of these for every student in an awards system is a near impossible task!

After becoming Chair of the Awards Committee at Oxley in 2019, I commenced a thorough review of the Awards Policy in September that year, which was concluded in late 2020 (delayed due to COVID). The review consisted of consultation with key staff across the school, an investigation into awards policies at peer schools in Australia, a review of educational literature in this space as well as feedback and input from students. The scope of the review included the purpose of the awards, timing, criteria, areas/activities covered by the policy, decision making processes, and physical appearance on the blazer.

Whilst there is much that is positive in the previous Awards Policy, the review highlighted some significant ongoing issues and challenges. In summary:

- Challenge of combining Academic and Co-Curricular Awards under the same policy
- Comparison of what excellence means between activities and between co-curricular areas
- Comparison of what excellence means within an activity between different seasons/years
- Comparison of ISA sports (mandatory one ISA season per year) with additional sports/performing arts/spoken word, which are voluntary and have varying commitments
- Complexity and variations of criteria across different activities, and between the three levels of awards
- Significant variation in ISA benchmarks between sports and also genders
- Visual representation of the levels of awards on the blazer

- Timing of awards; especially for Year 12 students being considered for awards late in Term 3

- Subjectivity and variation between coaches recommendations in different sports

The significantly disrupted co-curricular programme in 2020 due to COVID only made judgments even more challenging. In 2021, we will transition to new Co-Curricular and Academic Awards policies, which we hope will address many of the issues above. To avoid disadvantage in this transition, students in Year 12 will continue to be considered under the previous policy (except that Water Polo has been added to the sports under consideration for awards).

The new Co-Curricular Awards Policy applies to all students below Year 12. The policy is available in full on the website, but below is a summary of key changes:

- There will be separate Awards policies for Co-Curricular and Academics

- There are two types of award: Tabs (for individual activities) and Colours (for Sport, Performing Arts, Word).

- Tabs are awarded for significant commitment to an activity at a high level on a yearly/seasonal basis, for students in Year 10 and above only and will have the year of the award, e.g. "Basketball 2021"

- Awards will not be sequential (ie Tabs, Half Colours, Colours). Students can receive multiple Tabs for activities when they meet the criteria in different years/seasons.

- There are three categories of Colours: Sport, Performing Arts and Word (not individual sports/activities). The criteria for Colours include: outstanding and sustained commitment, excellence, a 'personal best' approach, active leadership, a team ethic and service within that area.

- A student receiving Colours for Sport/Performing Arts/Word may be recognised for the breadth of their contribution within that co-curricular area, or for their contribution to a specific activity within that area.

- Colours are only awarded to students either in Term 3 Year 11, or Term 1 Year 12. The first Colours to be awarded under the new policy will therefore be in Term 3 2021 to existing Year 11 students.

- Students will complete an application process to be considered for Colours by the Awards Committee. The Awards Committee will strive to balance the need for a consistently high benchmark for Colours across the co-curricular areas, alongside a consideration of individual circumstances and contexts.

- Colours will be physically represented as a new pocket on the blazer. Receiving double or triple Colours (ie for more than one co-curricular area) will also be represented by a pocket.

The policy will undergo review at the end of 2021.

Whilst the College's awards policies can play an important role in student motivation, "the reward of a thing well done is to have done it." It is in such an approach that students can truly 'find meaning' in their co-curricular endeavours as well as to develop qualities of persistence, grit and resilience.

1 Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior, by E. Deci and R. Ryan (Springer, 1985)

2 Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

Link to the Oxley College Awards Policy: [Awards – Oxley College](#)

JUNIOR GALLERY





Weekly Awards

Learning Journey

K: George Kindred
Yr 1: Em Hunt
Yr 2: Heidi Sinclair-Hill
Yr 3B: Lili Giro
Yr 3R: Charlotte Bentham
Yr 4A: Zoe Sneddon
Yr 4W: Harry Gaunt
Yr 5C: Vivienne Talbot
Yr 5N: Molly Harwood
Yr 6H: Estelle Beckett
Yr 6S: Thomas Bode

Oxley Values

K: Eden Mason
Yr 1: Otto Richards
Yr 2: Scarlett York
Yr 3B: Nina Zelunzuk
Yr 3R: Max Guilly
Yr 4A: Isabella Sicari
Yr 4W: Oscar Johnson
Yr 5C: Ben Gregory
Yr 5N: Max Greenfield
Yr 6H: Archer Guilly
Yr 6S: Olivia Hill

Excellence in Leadership

Leila Palmer

Students of the Week

Learning Journey

K: Clara Peebles
Yr 1: April Sneddon
Yr 2: Angus Kean
Yr 3B: Greta Saviana
Yr 3R: Anna-Sophia Psarakis
Yr 4A: Will Carioti
Yr 4W: Ivy Bacon
Yr 5C: Hugo Adams
Yr 5N: Thomas Adamson
Yr 6H: Blake Ramear Y
Yr 6S: Lulu Eagan

Oxley Values

K: Arthur Bell
Yr 1: Tom Pierce
Yr 2: Angus Sheer
Yr 3B: Jack Smith
Yr 3R: Archie Adams
Yr 4A: Pollyanna Landrigan
Yr 4W: Oscar Choo
Yr 5C: Charlotte Gordon
Yr 5N: Rosie Vild
Yr 6H: Claudia Carpenter
Yr 6S: Miranda Hunter



Head of Junior School

'School should be a joyful place.' Scottish Children's Parliament, 2017

Last week at Parent Information Sessions, I shared this quote from the Scottish Children's Parliament, an organisation that seeks to foreground children's voices to advise government on improving life and education for young people in Scotland.



Their 2017 report highlights children's perspectives on school, and I felt their sentiments rang true of children in our Australian context, too. That school is a joyful place was the standout message. Students believed there were elements that created this: feeling safe; feeling that they belong; are engaged in their learning; are challenged, and have a sense of agency in aspects of their learning.

Another key theme was that children want schools that promote excellence as well as a sense of equality. I found this aspect heartening and challenging, that children care about these things, that they notice that not everyone has the same opportunities in life and furthermore, that they are watching to see how we will act with integrity to create schools that promote this.

Students with a social conscience

Our Oxley value in Week 4 has been social awareness, and our capacity to see the bigger picture, where we fit in the world and to be concerned about social inequality and disadvantage.



This week, I had the opportunity to attend the Sydney Morning Herald Schools Summit. A theme running throughout was the theme of equality and the subsequent call for integrity in government and school leadership in the important work of education. Within this context, Professor Andy Hargreaves encouraged educators to teach not with the end goal of test scores (though, that may be a natural by-product of good schools and teaching), but that educators should be focused on the skills that matter most. He highlighted the top importance of building schools where creativity is nourished, and on building schools where character is important. That we set our goals higher - to grow students, as people of integrity - who together create a future we all want to be a part of.



In Stage 3, our students are looking at citizenship, through a study of governments. Through this unit, students become keenly aware of inequality and human rights. With a democratic theme at the fore, students see that opportunities they enjoy are not necessarily available for all, and begin to see there is a need to act as citizens and that there is scope for improvement in the world. A social conscience begins to develop.

Our Oxley Junior School students this year, from Kindergarten to Year 6, take on service learning. Through partnerships with Meals on Wheels, Harbison Care, and Honour our Fallen, for instance. There are also opportunities to build a social conscience through Harmony Day and Anti-Poverty Week.

Co-curricular Clubs, Sports and Activities

A key source of joy for students this week has been the commencement of co-curricular activities, including Science Club, Art Clubs, Multi-Sports, Bike Skills, Drama, Choir and Tightrope. I am most grateful to our co-curricular staff for providing such exciting offerings, to build student passion and potential. As twenty keen cyclists took off on an afternoon adventure around the playground today, and as our drama ensemble enthusiastically participated in drama warm-ups for Fantastic Mr Fox! I see that we are set up for a wonderful semester of exciting co-curricular learning ahead.



STEM Uncovered!

STEM learning is a key to learning for the future. Through STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) learning we develop critical young thinkers who can design, and work with a range of materials and technology to create solutions to all kinds of problems. In Kindergarten, we have discovered that a hand has 27 bones, the human body has 206, and that an X-ray machine can see inside us. Years 5 and 6, students are creating their own films and animations. Years 1-4 are investigating the disciplines within STEM and design-thinking. It will be an exciting year ahead in STEM learning at Oxley.

By Katherine Halcrow, Head of Junior School

2021 NEW FACES

WE ASKED A FEW OF OUR NEW STAFF SOME QUESTIONS TO GET TO KNOW THEM...MORE TO COME IN THE COMING ISSUES.



MR JUSTIN VERCO TEACHER OF HUMANITIES

What have been your initial perceptions of Oxley?

Love it. Students are very hard-working, respectful and everyone has made me feel very welcome here.

When and how did you first become involved in education?

I started doing an Arts degree until my Dean pushed me into education. After my first teaching prac (when I was 20), that was it – I was hooked! Haven't looked back since.

Which aspects of education have changed the most since you became involved in teaching? The implementation of technology for sure. It has its ups and downs but some of the stuff we as teachers can do in the classroom is pretty incredible.

What's the most memorable aspect of your own education?

Like most students, I gravitated towards the teachers I liked and respected. Specifically, my History and Geography teachers have a lot to answer for my chosen career! I also was involved in a few school productions – which was definitely a highlight for me.

What traits do you most admire in a person? Genuine, worldly, and kind.

What skill would you like to master?

I've just inherited a piano, and whilst I can play I want to get much, much better. I also wouldn't mind mastering a new language.

Do you have any hidden talents? I can name every James Bond film in chronological order. Sad but true.

What is on your bucket list for the future?

Just travel again. I really miss going to new places so I can't wait to start exploring and experiencing new countries and destinations.

MR THOMAS KINDRED HEAD OF SPORT AND PDHPE K-12

What have been your initial perceptions of Oxley?

A warm and friendly school that has and continues to grow in culture, opportunity and success.

Why did you first become involved in education?

I had some very passionate teachers when I went to school that taught and coached me. It was those people who inspired me towards the vocation of education. Being a great industry, education provides a potential for higher moral and social values than other industries. We always need great educators and I encourage any student that is interested in education to talk to a teacher that they have a good connection with and learn more about what we do as educators. In the end it is people that inspire people, you will always be remembered not for what you did but how you made a person feel.

Which aspects of education have changed the most since you became involved in teaching?

1. I think technology is (and most likely for a while longer) and will continue to drive an exponential rate of change in teaching and education. At certain times it can be difficult for individuals and organisations to keep up with that rate of change and defy what is meaningful for student learning and what is not. In a way that is becoming the art of teaching.

2. Schools need to be far more transparent, connected and accountable for the service they are providing. This has created competing demands for teachers and leaders in schools. However, I believe ultimately this is for the better. It ensures safer more rigorous learning communities in which students, staff and parents are all a part of.

3. The students. The opportunities and connections that students have to

participate in a passion and share that with like-minded people has created more vibrant, well-rounded and worldly young people. Particularly in schools like Oxley. It makes you feel excited about the future.

What's the most memorable aspect of your own education?

This may not come as a surprise, but the Sport and co-curricular activities. Playing all the sports available to me and grand final day certainly sticks out for me. I loved my education and was very fortunate to go to a great school like Oxley that allowed me to experience all different sports and performing arts.

A really specific memory was of a teacher I had in Junior School (Mr Thomas). His famous catch cry was always "have a go!". This memory has steered me well in my life and I am grateful for those wise words.

What traits do you most admire in a person?

Humility, humour and the ability to cook. I love food and admire people that want to make it for me.

What skill would you like to master?

I am an average baker and a mediocre guitar player. If I could eat nice bread that I have cooked and play nice music that I can listen to I am in a good place.

Do you have any hidden talents?

I can play a lot of sports, but that doesn't really count as a hidden talent.

As I mentioned earlier, I can bake and play the guitar. I am also quite good at eating cheese accompanied with a selection of other beverages.

What is on your bucket list for the future?

I wish to walk the Kokoda trail and complete an Ironman (4.5km Swim, 130km Bike ride and 42km run).





DR BEK DUYCKERS THOUGHT LEADER IN RESIDENCE

the College has attracted to the Highlands in 2021. From masters of foreign language to exceptional sportspeople, our staff truly embody commitment to excellence whilst upholding simultaneous dedication to rigorous, yet exciting, teaching.

However, one new member of staff has arrived somewhat discreetly, and immediately embarked on developing innovative and admirable programs for both our Junior and Senior school students. Designated Oxley's 'Thought Leader in Residence', Dr Bek Duyckers hails most recently from Perth College in WA, where she held the position of Head of Imaginarium.

Mrs Ethell says of Dr Duyckers, "Bek has the ability to not only create new ideas but the knowledge and experience in how to deliver results by drawing on people's strengths, to back up her hypotheses, working towards a shared vision and goal." The establishment of the internationally-renowned Imaginarium serves to facilitate and inspire gifted learners, a cause deeply intertwined with Dr Duyckers' own education.

"What I recall of my own schooling was being disengaged because I was bored," she says. Translating such dissatisfaction into a teaching philosophy that "draw on students' interests, ideas, strengths, and abilities, and creates engaging learning opportunities" has enabled Dr Duyckers to gain international acclaim for her work. However, her admission that this task is "what I am most passionate about" speaks to a genuine dedication to the wellbeing of each child under her mentorship, an inimitable characteristic of the finest teachers. "I started a teaching degree at university because I wanted to make an impact on students' lives where their voice was heard," she admits. The goal to facilitate "learning opportunities that inspired and stimulated a natural curiosity" remains a key component of each of her many successful initiatives, such as the Imaginarium and consolidation of the Oxley PIP subject.

Dr Duyckers' own commitment to lifelong learning is evident in the completion of her doctoral studies. "One of my proudest achievements so far is completing my doctoral studies," she says. "To accomplish this feat took a great deal of grit and organisation over a long period of time." Her innovative work has been presented at international conferences, perhaps most notably presenting three sessions at the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children's conference in Nashville two years ago. Conference attendees praised the 'unique initiative' of the Imaginarium, and intense interest and positive feedback consolidated the pursuit of her authentic quest for holistic education.

Dr Duyckers has also accepted numerous other accolades over the past four years, indicating her exceptional and sustained commitment to constructing a program of international repute. Highlights include inclusion in the 2018 Educator's Hot List under the category of 'Influencer', being a finalist in the Head of Department of the Year at the Australian Education Awards in 2018, 2019 and 2020, and receiving an ACEL New Voice in Education Scholarship. Clearly, the combination of her compelling passion, ability and dedication has resulted in exceptional outcomes for all her students and mentees.

Mrs Ethell also had much to say about what the role of Thought Leader would entail. "An educator's role is to prepare students for life," she remarks. "Bek's

areas of expertise are in leading the development of a shared vision with strategic focus to ensure students, staff and the school community are working collaboratively and cohesively to prepare students for life, through a holistic lens." Such themes are synonymous with the core Oxley values of striving, stretching and sticking. Mrs Ethell is also excited about future contributions Dr Duyckers will instigate. "She will draw on her strengths by contributing to the conversations of what is happening in our school today, whilst also being able to speculate what is going to happen in the future with insight and informed suggestions, bringing a unique point of view to the table that might not be obtained elsewhere."

When asked which characteristics she deems most valuable in a 21st-century learner, Dr Duyckers was decisive in her response. She indicates that "developing global competence, being socially and emotionally intelligent in your thoughts and actions, being agile and flexible in your thinking, and knowing how to learn and how you learn best" are most advantageous. "We can cultivate these qualities through purposeful interactions with others locally, nationally and globally that include collaboration, considering our own wellbeing and that of others, and reflecting on our strengths and weaknesses," she adds.

In a personal context, Dr Duyckers enjoys exploring nature. "I am in my element here in the Southern Highlands (and down the south east coast of NSW)" she says. I have visited many of the national parks, waterfalls and beaches in the area and look forward to visiting more over time. I also enjoy meeting people, learning their story and their 'Why' (what they are passionate about). I also enjoy cooking and reading but tend to leave reading novels to the holidays as I often become so immersed in the book I am reading, that I read until the sun comes up!"

Her zest for life is highly conspicuous. "I have recently achieved my biggest bucket list goals in completing my doctoral studies, travelling to/ around Morocco, and raising a well-rounded happy and healthy son (who turns 20 next month)," she recalls. "The coming month or so will see new items added to revitalise my bucket list and create new big hairy audacious goals to work towards." It seems her eloquence, maturity and consideration is indisputably ingrained in all she does.

Clearly, Oxley has been fortunate enough to attract an educator whose unique contributions to student learning so far are largely unrivalled. The community of Oxley is certainly excited about what 'new frontiers' of education Dr Duyckers will explore. Only five weeks into the term, year 9 students in her PIP class already speak highly of their new teacher. "She has lots of great ideas and really listens to what we have to say", shares one enthusiastic learner. "I really like her focus on big ideas", indicates another. The creation of the role of Thought Leader has certainly attracted one of Australia's – and, indeed, the world's – most innovative and high-calibre educators.

By Ava Lambie Year 12

Dr Duyckers is establishing a database of people from our school community who are willing to share their strengths, interests, talents, expertise, and careers through a range of opportunities over the coming years. When we work together as a community, drawing on our strengths, we can achieve great things.

Please click on the link below to complete your Expression of Interest.

<https://form.jotform.com/210417875672057>



MS TERESA ROGERS STUDENT SERVICES

What have been your initial perceptions of Oxley?

Oxley is a lovely school with very friendly staff, very friendly students and a welcoming environment.

When and how did you first become involved in education?

I began working in education administration in 2007, at the school my son was at.

Which aspects of education have changed the most since you became involved in teaching?

The most significant change in the education industry has been the transition from 'pen and paper' to automation-based platforms.

Do you have any hidden talents?

I am actually a musician! I can play several instruments such as the guitar and piano and speak multiple languages.

IN THE MEDIA

The importance of the “Framing Britney Spears” documentary.

Well that blew up.

Since my last article on the #FreeBritney movement in August of last year, the New York times released the groundbreaking documentary “Framing Britney Spears”, detailing

To recap; Following singer Britney Spears’ highly publicised deterioration of mental wellbeing throughout the duration of 2007, she was placed in a legal arrangement called a “Conservatorship” in 2008. The conservatorship, commonly referred to as a legal guardianship gave control of Britney’s estate, financial and personal assets (Valued at over \$59 million) to her father and a lawyer. Under the conservatorship, Spears is legally unable to make her own personal and financial decisions. Britney Spears as a 37-year old woman is unable to have her own phone, engage in a romantic relationship, vote, drive a car, chose where to live or consent to medical treatment.

The strange conditions of Britney’s conservatorship, Namely; how is Britney unfit to the extent to which she is unable to have autonomy over her own life but is still able to complete such a large volume of high-intensity work, when her finances would easily allow her to retire from her spotlight. Why are her Conservators so willing to profit off of Britney’s career; her previous co-conservator dubbing the arrangement a “Hybrid Business Model” with Britney paying an annual \$1.1 million USD, on legal and conservatorship fees; her father (and primary conservator) taking home \$128,000 USD of that (Lindsey Lohan’s father tried to enact a similar legal hold over his daughter, but unsuccessful). Lead to the rise of the #FreeBritney movement, in which fans concerned by the unfolding events and Britney’s odd social media activity began to advocate for further clarity regarding Britney’s conservatorship and justice for Britney Spears.

“Framing Britney Spears” suggests that following the Monica Lewinsky-Bill Clinton affair in 1998 lead to a hypersexualised and dramatized media portrayal of women. Journalist Wesley Morris saying in the wake of the media’s portrayal of Britney’s relationship with Justin Timberlake “The way that people treated her, to be very high school about it, was like she was the school sl*t and he was the quarterback”. As a teenager Britney often

being asked personal questions regarding her intimate relationships for the media’s amusement. As she grew older the narrative shifted to Britney being a bad parental figure to her two sons, fuelling her alleged post-partum depression. Escalating until Spears was photographed with her son sitting on her lap whilst she was driving in 2006, Britney later deeming the incident a “mistake”; footage revealing that she was merely trying to shield her son from paparazzi her were banging on the sides of the car. Her father capitalizing upon this negative press in order to deem her in need of legal guardianship. “Framing Britney Spears” forces us as the viewer to reanalyse the legitimacy of the media’s portrayal of celebrities, and think of how these perceptions can be detrimental to a person’s wellbeing.

The corruption at the core of Britney’s conservatorship is further highlighted throughout the documentary; when Spears’ father argues she has dementia in order to retain sole power over her, or when Britney’s lawyer is forced to quit after it is argued she is too unfit to have a defence and the gut-wrenching news that one of the lawyers advocating for Britney throughout the duration of the first half of the documentary joins Jamie Spears’ side; The complex nature of a conservatorship leading to the bizarre realisation that as Britney is technically paying for both sides it is in all parties (besides Britney) best interest financially to draw out the proceedings.

“Framing Britney Spears” in it’s (at the time of writing) week and half since release, has already caused shockwaves in the media landscape, not only creating increased awareness for the #freebritney movement; but most notably following the release of the documentary, court proceedings have taken place to allow for a corporate fiduciary to act as Britney’s co-conservator-her dad no longer retaining sole power over Britney’s person and estate. Whilst Britney’s desire to have her father removed entirely has yet to be granted, it shall be discussed during future court hearings on March 17th and April 27th.

By Pearl Bendle (Year 12)

INSPIRATION



TV SERIES

Buffy The Vampire
Slayer

Admittedly, I didn't willingly start watching this show, as a matter of fact it was sort of a hostage situation. I sat down to watch tv at the end of the day, hot chocolate in hand, blanket securely positioned when my mother walked in with a suspiciously joyful twinkle in her eyes, and a box set of her favourite show in hand.

And so started my minor obsession with 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer'. The show starts with the classic new kid, new school, introduction, the only difference being that Buffy (our lovely protagonist) is the slayer, the one chosen to fight evil. As such, she has the equivalent of a set of superpowers: all tailored to fight vampires. The rules are pretty simple, at day her life is normal, school, boys, lip gloss, the works. At night she has to slay vampires, with the help of her mentor Giles, his job is to be her 'watcher' (the equivalent of a slayer babysitter).

While trying to fight evil, Buffy also encounters the horrors of high school, from mean girls to trying to make new friends. The series covers the issues of day-to-day life as well as the paranormal. The writing is some of the best I've seen, the dialogue is witty and sharp and is still just as relevant and relatable despite the show's age. The characters are well established, from the bumbling but lovable Willow, to the dorky and somewhat pathetic Zander to the whip sharp Cordelia.

As much as it pains us young people to admit that adults actually have a good idea of what they're doing, in this case they truly did have good taste. Though it could now definitely be considered 'vintage' this show is worth a watch, or more likely a binge. My rating would be a resounding 4.5/5. The 0.5 was taken away purely because of the 3 episodes where Auz had blonde hair (trust me, it was a horrifying fashion decision on the stylist's part). And with that, enjoy!

By Violet Fitzsimons, Year 8



FILM

Kiss the Ground

A strange and yet an intriguing documentary! Kiss The Ground is all about what we're doing wrong about global warming and how to solve it. Woody Harrelson (the narrator, who is very passionate about environmental issues) confessed at the start of the documentary that he'd given up all hope of saving the planet and its inhabitants from the dangerous effects of climate change. By the end of the documentary he had a ray of hope that there was a solution to fix it all. Ray Archuleta a conservation agronomist (an environmentally friendly farm guy) had travelled many places and seen that they were all having the same problem, Mass Erosion! Rapid erosion began long ago when humans developed the plough. The idea of the plough was to break the soil to sow seeds. By the Bronze age, vast areas around cities were ploughed up to plant grain but as these soils eroded those once huge empires vanished into dust. We have lost nearly one third of the earth's topsoils thanks to ploughing. (tilling) The documentary explores how no till farming not only improves farming outcomes by reducing erosion but is a possible way of sucking carbon into the soil improving environmental outcomes and finding a solution to climate change, there is still lots to be done! The documentary looks at both sides of the fight and goes into some detail about the solution. Soil-carbon has recently been an interest in the federal government and has been spoken about on many occasions by the Prime Minister. I learnt a lot about soil-carbon and different ways of farming that could influence our future. After watching this documentary I was excited and it left me feeling really positive about what we can do to help the planet. I highly recommend watching it and hope it influences you like it did me.

By Myles Magill, Year 7



TV SERIES

The Wilds

Stranded on a desert island. The subliminal psychological impact of this complex trope is torn apart and meticulously examined in the Amazon Prime series by Sarah Streicher, 'The Wilds'. After a miraculous survival from an enigmatic plane crash, eight teenage girls' limits are pushed physically and mentally as they claw their way for survival on a stark and desolate island. This hostile environment is only heightened as hurtles are launched at the young women from all directions, forcing every ounce of internalised anger and fear to swim to the surface and bear its ugly teeth. As the series progresses and the days on the island get longer, this profound intimacy builds a sense of unity between this divided collective. All the while, the island is being surveyed – an elaborate social experiment designed to prove the validity of female-governed communities.

While this overarching plotline provides tension and dramatism, the guts of this narrative are embedded in the stories behind the young women. Across the ten episodes, each character has the chance to explore the intricate hierarchy of young adulthood in a series of diverse and honest ways. Delving deep into the psyche of the 'teenage girl', 'The Wilds' simultaneously criticizes and comments on the myriad of struggles that are placed onto the shoulders of adolescents.

The powerhouse female cast provides raw and vulnerable performances that speak to the engrained fear and hurt that comes along with the trials and tribulations of being a young woman in the 21st century. 'The Wilds' offers a candid portrait of the frenzied exterior brought about by life-threatening circumstances while studying the subconscious paths that lead to this behaviour.

By Ruby Zupp, Year 12

See the next Pin Oak for a story about Old Oxleyan lead actor in 'The Wilds', Mia Healey, and her visit to Oxley!



SOCIAL MEDIA

You've won the cruise of a lifetime, a seemingly beautiful trip to the pacific islands off the coast of Australia. You are entitled to limitless buffets, spa treatments and karaoke nights. Though, as you embark on your adventure you realise those 'specialties' and unlimited 'coupons' were effectively a ploy for your entry. Alongside with the rocky and sleepless nights following the aftermath of one too many coconut beverages, it becomes apparent that this 'cruise of a lifetime' is not as spectacular as envisioned.

If my elongated metaphor wasn't sufficient...social media is the cruise we all enjoy up until our sea sickness tablets run empty. There is no doubt the phrase 'social media' has varying connotations, so it seems appropriate to break it down to a simple meaning, the Oxford definition is as follows: "websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking." A 2020 study found that 71% of Australians are active users of social media, compared to only 58% in 2015. This rapid growth of social media usage is most definitely a reflection of the building prominence of the internet in constructing and maintaining human relationships. This is by no means an inherently negative characteristic, it is more so a comment on the dependence humans place upon social media to sculpt socially minded beings. This raises questions surrounding the true validity and depth of our global knowledge if it is only sourced from social media.

Though, the doom and gloom is cut short as we rightfully celebrate the triumphs of social media in creating safe and supportive communities online, where places of comfort would normally lack in some user's reality. This is seen through movements such as #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo and #LoveWins. It is crucial to not undermine the power of these hashtags yet being open to criticism of their flaws is simultaneously essential. Online activism is at the heart of the global drive for change, yet this instant

sharing of information can be of surface level, absent of genuine interest. Do we really desire the \$10 combo deal or are we just falling into the cruise's trap of the oh so customary consumerism? I only make this connection because social media is inherently a product, one which has daily influence over how we live our lives.

I have disembarked from the majority of my social media 'apps' for nearly a month now. On an hourly basis, I found myself religiously checking my phone, looking for something that would both entertain me whilst rid me of the present moment. This addiction pulled me away from my school work, friends and family. This alternate reality sitting in the palms of my hands seemed to overwhelm my everyday existence. After over four years of being an Instagram user, I began to be disinterested in other people's online lives and thus an interest in my own existence surprisingly sprouted. The same goes for Tik Tok, in a reflective state I realised that perhaps scrolling for hours on end through pointless videos wasn't overly beneficial to my wellbeing. This is not a unique 'once in a life-time' revelation... my parents have been telling me this for as long as I can remember. Maybe it was my childlike disobedience that stood between me and the high level at which I formally placed social media in my life.

So, I turn in my ticket and refund it for an all-expense authentic trip of life itself. Don't let social media define, constrain and control you; It is not a map but a mere tool to navigating this peculiar planet we call home.

Peggy Holmwood, Year 11

SENIOR GALLERY



VIRTUAL GALLERY



In 2021, the Art department will continue to look celebrate the inspiring and diverse artwork created by students from 7-12 at Oxley College

Recently in Year 7 Visual Arts, students have been developing their confidence and understanding of fundamental skills; involving tone as well as colour and tints.

Milla Fischer is one of many students who extended her ability to display tonal drawing skills, by drawing her own image and how she would appear in sixty years from now!

Milla has been very considerate of the light source and tonal gradation and she has been courageous enough to present her future self, without any thought of modification-celebrating the beauty of the ageing process. Congratulations Milla!

By Matt Bentham

YEAR 7 SPORT

Year 7 Winter Sport Pre-Season Development Sessions

All Year 7 students are invited to attend two weeks of pre-season winter sports sessions on Thursday 25 Feb and Thursday 4 March from 3.30pm-4.30pm on Founders Field. After these sessions, students will begin Winter sport trials/training the following week.

Students will be taken through the fundamental athletic skills required for all Winter sports and will have a chance to meet Senior students in those sports who can explain some requirements and expectations of the game.

WHAT: Winter Sport pre-season training. Students must wear sports uniform and have running shoes. Students will take part in general sport skills and small sided games for a variety of Winter Sports.

WHO: Exclusively for Year 7 students led by Senior School staff, Senior students and Winter sport coaches. Any student who is competing in a Winter ISA sport is required to attend (Rugby, Football, Tennis, Hockey and Netball). Other students who are competing in other sports or intend on selecting a Summer Sport are welcome as well.

WHERE: Meet on Founders Field. The session will conclude at 4.30pm.

WHY: Students will gain further insight into the expectations of training and competition for Winter Sport at Oxley College.

Further details regarding Oxley College Winter Sport can be found on the website in the winter sport booklet, [LINK HERE](#).

By Oxley College Sport Department.

GOOD & OTHER NEWS



T The Kid and 11 Radion

What / who inspired you to uptake rapping?

11Radion: I was inspired to begin rapping when I had first heard about XXXTENTACION. I listened to some of his music and loved it, shortly afterwards I found a passion for writing lyrics.

T The kid: I started to listen to rap in 2018 and after listening for so long, I developed a passion for writing lyrics.

When did you start your love for music?

11Radion: I started a love for music when I was about seven or eight, but it was always a love for Hip Hop/RnB and when I first started loving music, I never even thought about writing or recording my own.

T The kid: There was no specific date, I'd always listened to music, but I really started to love it when I discovered rap and artists like Juice WRLD, XXXTENTACION and Lil Skies. Three of my favourite artists till this day.

What made you chose rap as a music genre?

11Radion: I chose rap because I find rap a lot like poetry and there are many different ways in rap to express your feelings and emotions.

T The kid: The music itself, and its ability to be so different and vary in style depending on the artist and their music.

How did you create your stage names?

11Radion: My stage name was created a while after I began writing lyrics. 11 is my lucky number and RADION is an acronym for Respect, Ambition, Desire, Insight, Optimism and Nonconformity. These are my personal values, that is how I created 11RADION.

T The kid: Mine was very simple, I listen to Rich The Kid and The Kid Laroi quite often so it made sense for me to be called T The Kid.

What is the meaning behind each of your songs?

11Radion: The meaning behind Alone is actually the thought of losing someone and in my case that's my dog, who's sixteen now and one night we had a discussion about losing him because he is getting quite old. But I wrote it in a way that can relate to anyone handling any type of loss of a loved one. I like to base my songs of real-life experiences or world issues because through my music I would also like there to be a message behind the lyrics.

T The kid: I write most of my music with the intentions to just have an overall positive and catchy vibe to it, but still similar to original fast paced rap.

However, I Refuse was very different to my other music as it had a Universal message behind it and was more meaningful in the sense that people could relate to it.

What is the thought process behind writing your songs?

11Radion: I write my own lyrics then we head to our producer's studio and give him the flow and rhythm and he creates a beat for the lyrics.

T The kid: I come up with the first line of the song, continue to write more lyrics with that flow and then decide which parts should be the chorus, verses etc.

Where do you see your music career going?

11Radion: I would like to take my music career as far as possible and become a mainstream artist in the future.

T The kid: I aim to become a professional artist, to the point where I can build a future career out of it.

What's your favourite part of making music?

11Radion: The best part of making music is being able to listen to the finishing product and feeling proud of being able to do that. I also love that other people are able to listen to my music and enjoy it or be able to relate to it.

T The kid: Recording the music in the studio and hearing the final product.

What is the meaning behind your latest song 'I refuse'?

11Radion: I Refuse was written around the time of the death of George Floyd and all the BLM riots were happening in America. The message is not to judge anyone based on their race, religion appearance etc.

T The kid: It was inspired by the Black Lives Movement around the time of George Floyd's death and my brother and I felt that we had to get involved in some way, so we decided to make a song.

"We'd like to give a shout out to all our friends for being so supportive about our music and we thank the Pin Oak for interviewing us."

11Radion and T The Kid - Jerome and Tristan McIntosh Year 7 and Year 8.

Link to I Refuse: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whCLQZzoQOk>

By Lily Magil, Year 12



Gold DOE

After completing a total of 6 hikes, 104 hours of logged practice of a skill, 91 hours of community service, and 91 hours of physical recreation the final step in my Duke of Edinburgh journey was the residential project. This entailed becoming involved in the Veteran Mentors program held at Optimum Experiences Outdoor Adventures in Fitzroy Falls. Veteran Mentors is an organisation comprised of ex-military servicemen and women who run 9-day military boot camp style programs across Australia to support struggling young teens.

When I was not repairing bikes, cutting branches or raking leaves I got to witness, and sometimes experience, firsthand what the kids were put through to accomplish reform. Alongside strict discipline of conduct, activities included abseiling, nutrition and cultural lessons, and skydiving. For me, skydiving was the highlight of the project, not only for the experience of jumping out of a plane but also seeing the kids who I had seen scared of climbing up a ladder then skydiving. It was incredible to see the smiles on their faces when we had all landed, and their new sense of pride and ability they had in themselves.

My residential project provided me with experiences that I did not know I would leave with but am glad that I did. I would highly recommend staying with the Duke of Ed programme till the end due to the diversity of experiences it provides.

By James Blissett, Year 12



GABI VON SPERL: RUNNING SUPERSTAR



There has been some exciting news in the Junior School this week as Year 4 student, Gabi von Sperl, makes it to the State championships for long distance running once more. Receiving two firsts and two seconds in the Wagga Wagga regional Little Athletics competition earlier this month; Gabi qualified for the Homebush State championships in March. When speaking to Gabi, I picked up on some of her key pre-race rituals which includes stretching, eating some sour lollies (for energy) and of course drinking some water. This talent not only comes easily to Gabi, but she trains hard at Little Athletics Bowral every Friday and has been for two years. Whilst running in competitions, Gabi has a certain winning mindset which consists of trying her hardest and always aiming for a personal best. This attitude has clearly taken Gabi far in her sport and is something we should all learn to apply to our everyday lives! Well done Gabi and good luck!

By Lily Hogan (Year 11)

WEEKEND SPORT

We have started the term off strong, with a commencement of ISA rounds. Saturday 6 February was our first weekend back, and it was a very special game for our girls Firsts Basketball, who played a brilliant game against Barker College, in tribute to their coach, Rick Davies. Stay strong girls, and congratulations on a great win.

Our second weekend of ISA was on Saturday 13 February, we had many games at home and it was a successful weekend. Girls touch football 1sts and 2nds played against Oakhill, both teams coming away with a win, 4-0 and 5-1. For playing in the heavy rain, the girls played a brilliant game, keeping the spirits high throughout the whole game. Girls 1sts Basketball had another great win against Central Coast, it was a close game, however, the girls came away winning 12-10. Boys 1sts Basketball had a great game against St. Pius, defeating them 52-32. The boys 17A Basketball, also came away with a win against St. Pius in another close game, 15-14. Unfortunately, for the 1sts Cricket, they travelled up to Sydney, however upon arriving their game was cancelled due to wet weather, which was a shame.

Overall, our first two weekends of sport have been extremely successful and it is great seeing everyone getting into their sport, and getting back on the bus for those early morning buses. Being back in the ISA competition is a lot of fun, and we have a couple more weeks to enjoy it. Good luck to all teams on the weekend, play hard, keep the spirits high and represent Oxley with pride.

By Liv Bow, Year 11

JUNIOR COUNTRY WATERPOLO CHAMPIONSHIPS

A number of Oxley students were recently selected in the representative Southern Highlands Water Polo teams that competed in Newcastle. We had Oxley representatives in the U14 and U16 teams for both men and women.

The Southern Highlands was well represented and our teams all made the semi finals of the competitions.

The U14 girls managed a bronze medal after a disappointing 7/6 loss in their semi final - all their other games results were all in the teens. Annabelle Bow, Ilana Sheezel, Xanthe Macdonald and Chilli Sparke were all strong members of this team and did Oxley proud with their sportsmanship and playing abilities.

The U14 boys came 4th after a penalty shoot out loss in their semi final, and the U16 boys also were narrowly defeated in their semi, finals coming 4th. The U16 girls were drafted to a Tamworth team.

Overall the Highlands definitely won the tournament for enthusiasm, good sportsmanship and supporting their teams.

Year 7 Camp



P & F

Equestrian Day - Sunday 2 May 2021

Please save the date for the Oxley Equestrian Day scheduled for Sunday 2 May. This great community event is run by the Oxley P & F at the Bong Bong racecourse. If you are interested in volunteering or getting involved, please contact Holly Kramer via holly@kramernoad.com.au

The P & F Meeting for Term 1, will be held on Tuesday 2 March at 5.00pm in the Oxley David Wright Library. All welcome.