



18 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of Year 12 Students

As we approach the end of your son's time at St Edward's College, I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate and thank the Year 12 cohort on their resilience, cooperation and commitment throughout what has been a very difficult year. It was very evident through their thoughtful engagement at the recent retreat that each member of the year group is growing to be a fine young man, with whom their families and school should be very proud. I truly hope they enjoy their final days at St Edward's and wish them all the very best in the HSC examinations next term.

Your son's Trial Higher School Certificate Examination Report will be included in their portfolio on the final day. This is the final report that your son will receive from the College and provides information in the form of an examination mark and rank and an assessment rank. The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) maintains clear protocols preventing schools from providing students with their final assessment mark. This mark is forwarded to NESA and contributes to fifty percent of student's final HSC result in each course. The remaining fifty percent is determined by their performance in the final HSC examination.

I encourage all students to read carefully the comments made by teachers that provide recommendations for ongoing improvement. It is imperative that students maintain a clear focus in preparing for the final examinations. There are many examples each year of students who have been able to significantly improve their HSC result, through a consistent and determined approach to revision for the final examinations. All students will benefit from seeking specific advice and feedback from their teachers on areas of focus and strategies for ongoing revision.

We are rapidly approaching the commencement of the HSC examinations and for this reason, I wish to ask for your support and cooperation regarding some forthcoming events. It would be advisable to note these dates in the family diary/calendar:

- **Tuesday September 22 – College Athletics Carnival:** We would encourage all Year 12 boys to attend this day in the final week of term as it will provide another opportunity for the whole school to farewell them.
- **Thursday 24 September – Year 12 Final Day:** The current restrictions in place do not permit us to invite parents onsite as part of our final farewell nor do they allow us to assemble the whole school for their final assembly. We have given great thought to how we will celebrate our Year 12 students' final day, in a special way with these restrictions in mind. The day will commence with a Mass for Year 12 students in the College theatre. This Mass will be celebrated by Father Greg from St Patrick's Parish. The Mass will be live streamed for parents to watch via the this link: [Year 12 Graduation Mass](#) at 9.15am. Mass will be followed by morning tea and final group photo. After morning tea, there will be an Academic Assembly held in the Edmund Rice Centre where all boys will be presented with their portfolio from the College and the Academic and Cultural Awards announced including the Leadership Award and Dux of the College. Year 11 students will witness this assembly which will also be live streamed for parents via this link from 11.15am [Year 12 Farewell Assembly](#). This will be followed by the traditional tree planting ceremony. The day will conclude with a lunch for Year 12 students and staff on the College Oval, after which students will be permitted to leave for the day. Boys are asked to wear their full school uniform including their College Blazer on this last day.
- **Tuesday 20 October:** First HSC Exam for St Edward's students in the ERC (timetable available on College website under News and Events tab)
- **Wednesday 11 November:** Last HSC Exam for St Edward's students
- **Friday November 13: Year 12 Formal in the Edmund Rice Centre.** Catholic Schools NSW recently announced the guidelines for schools in relation to Formals. These guidelines prevent us from using the Crowne Plaza as was previously suggested due to the numbers of students attending. We will therefore revert to our original date on



Friday November 13. This event will be for boys and their partners only in order to comply with the current physical distancing regulations. Details regarding ticket sales will be provided to boys in the coming days.

- **Friday 18 December** – Internet and SMS/telephone release of HSC results.

Many of these events have evolved in the school calendar to mark in a significant acceptable way the transition of these young men into adulthood. In the words of Boys' Education expert, Ian Lillico, these events/ceremonies have become meaningful rites of passage for our young men and help them begin the transition to life beyond school. We do not want them to accept the modern-day notion of manliness to prove to their peers that they are MEN, by thinking they need to answer the following meaningless questions:

- How much alcohol you can drink?
- How fast you can drive a car?

This Year 12 group has been cooperative throughout their time at St Edward's and we are all hoping that this attitude continues as we approach the important final chapter in their secondary education. The Year 12 Pastoral Leader, Mr Scott Beattie has emphasised with this group of young men the two key themes of support and respect - support for each other, for their families, and for the College and likewise respect for each other, their parents, their teachers and all they meet. If they can embody these attitudes in all they do, then we can be sure they will be happy, safe and achieve their personal goals. Today however, I wish to share with you some issues in relation to a successful and happy period of closure for the year.

1. **Use of Cars** – We attempt to control the use of motor vehicles by Year 12's. Boys have agreed to certain guidelines in seeking permission to drive to school. I ask that parents remind their sons of the privilege of driving and of the risks involved in reckless behaviour behind the wheel of a motor vehicle. I hope it does not get to the stage of needing police to become involved. "Wheelies, burnouts" etc, become a very valid concern for other neighbours and road users. The very last thing we want at this time is someone being injured. Due to very restricted parking facilities on the College grounds, unfortunately it is not possible for any students to bring vehicles on to the College property, at any time and this includes during examination period.

2. **Study Habits** – We all know that there is life after the HSC and it is not the "be all and end all" of everything. However, I would like to think that all of our Year 12's will enjoy the satisfaction of "passing" this first real test in adult life. By "passing" I really mean achieving an outcome consistent with their true ability. Much can still be done in the way of study and preparation for their final exams. There are many resources available from the school to assist with systemic revision. If they are unable to chart a study program of their own then, I would be very willing to assist them. There is still time. Much can still be done in the weeks ahead and in the Term 3 holiday period.

3. The value of school assessments depends on the performance in the final exams of the whole College candidature in each course. When everyone does their best, all St Edward's students benefit. Of course, the converse is also true. Boys not making an effort can drag down the value of classmates' assessments. I am really asking for one last big effort from all of Year 12 as we start the final countdown to the HSC. I would hate to think that any of our boys have given up trying. We must be positive and encourage, support and applaud any efforts they might encourage them to do the very best they can with the talents God has given them. Finally, let us not forget the power of prayer in helping them to manage the many challenges they face in the days ahead.

4. **End of Year Behaviour** – This time can become for some, the "silly season", when students think completion of school is an excuse for various forms of anti-social behaviour. The excellent standing and reputation of St Edward's within the community is paramount and consequently any misbehaviour that brings discredit upon the school or family would require appropriate disciplinary action. Boys need to be reminded that one "brain explosion" can have very unpleasant consequences for many people. There is an excellent tradition within St Edward's of Year 12 students acting responsibly. I





have every confidence that the HSC Class of 2020 will maintain this tradition. The St Edward's College Year 12 end of year activities Statement of Policy was developed in conjunction with Principals of other Secondary Schools on the Central Coast. A copy of the statement is enclosed for your information. Paragraph five in this Statement of Policy emphasises the possible sanctions that might be applied by Principals if the advertised policy is not respected by students. I would sincerely hope that it would never be necessary to apply any of these unpleasant sanctions to St Edward's students for irresponsible behaviour as they conclude their school career.

5. We need all Year 12's to approach the HSC exam period with a positive attitude. The boys are still students of St Edward's whilst they are undertaking exams and as such are expected to comply with the usual standards of personal grooming. In a true spirit of co-operation, I believe our young men can create and engender a positive atmosphere within the exam room by being faithful to the following requirements of the College for the duration of the HSC exams:

- Arriving punctually for all exams and being attired in the complete summer uniform, especially and including correct school shoes, and respecting school regulations regarding haircuts, jewellery, being clean shaven etc. In previous years some seem to think they are exempt from these requirements for the duration of the HSC exams.
- Remaining in the exam room for the full duration of each exam. It is most unsettling for candidates to have other students leaving the exam room before the allocated time expires.
- To arrive and leave from the school premises quietly with due respect to the needs of other students in the school environment.

I trust that parents will accept the concerns I have expressed in this letter in the spirit in which they are offered. I am hoping we can work together to ensure our young men progress with dignity and pride through the final stages of their school careers. Do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss any issues that have been raised in this letter.

I would like to wish all Year 12 students the very best of luck in their final examinations. We are very proud of their achievements and wish them the very best for whatever their future holds.

Yours sincerely

Mr Mark Bonnici
College Principal



Year 12 End of Year Activities Statement of Policy

With the end of school year approaching for Year 12, I would like to wish students well in their HSC examinations.

In recent years, the behaviour of Year 12 students during their end of year activities has been very responsible. Staff and students at St Edward's have recognized the importance of well organised and supervised events during this crucial period leading up to the Higher School Certificate examinations. The end of school education is one of the major transitional events in a student's life. It should be a very happy time where students in Year 12 are able to remember the good times and reflect with pride on their individual development and their achievements. Staff at St Edward's wish to see this transition occur smoothly in a positive environment.

It is important however, that students and parents do not lose sight of the demands of the examinations. Some end of Year 12 activities have been turning students' energies away from their studies. Preparing for the various events has been taking precedence over using the final weeks to maximize access to teachers and to making the most of important revision time.

Activities such as scavenger hunts, champagne breakfasts, street closures, beach parties and inter-school pranks are not approved of by any school and are certainly not welcome. It is a matter of great regret that inappropriate behaviour, often involving the abuse of alcohol, can result in accidents of the most serious nature which on occasions have led to injury and even death of students.

It must be made perfectly clear that we will not tolerate acts of vandalism or violence by young people, either within or outside the school, nor can they expect to be exempted from the law on the basis of their status as students. If students indulge in such anti-school, anti-community activities, there will be clear consequences. These may involve the withholding of school documents such as references and reports or requiring students to find another school in which to sit for their examinations.

The concerns underlying this policy extend to events involving students in other school years, including events that are not specifically approved by a school. The provision of alcohol to underage students is illegal. Schools are seeking the support of students, parents and the general community in implementing this policy. Each school will outline its individual requirements through meetings, letters to parents, newsletters and other forms of communication.

Yours sincerely

Mr Mark Bonnici
College Principal