Welcome to the 2016 school year. Staff have already experienced useful professional learning when we joined our Partner schools to hear education researcher, Kath Walker, speak about how to personalize the learning for each student. Her presentation corroborated our desire to embrace a Positive Psychology approach to developing relationships with the students to help them be resilient learners. We hope our parents will be interested in travelling this path with us. I shall email various readings as they become available for your interest.

Our school has 6 Values: Cooperation, Excellence, Fairness, Integrity, Respect and Responsibility. Six seems too many for students to buy in. They don’t remember them and it is difficult to build vision from them. We think three Values that sum up the essence of Brighton will be memorable and have purpose and meaning for the students. But what three values? The Home Group teachers are consulting with the students – what do you think?

Our school’s Vision created in 2005 was to be “the school of choice for the holistic education of girls and boys”. In the 2014-2016 Strategic Plan, the vision is “to develop strategic learners who are prepared for varied and unpredictable career paths in a global digitised world.” What do you think? Is this a robust vision to take the school forward?

The Year 12 students are off to a great start, voting in the Head Prefects, Celine Chia and Oliver Richardson. In 2016 there are 20 Prefects in all who have a leadership role across Years 8 to 12. Congratulations to Nina Phillips, Sung Bae, Justine Zatowski, Jordyn Binelli, Tim Foley, Oliver Richardson, Katie McGillick, Ella Harry, Isabel Mawby, Emily Lawson, Sean Henschke, Marcus Falckh, Tahlia Wesley, Lucy Mooney, Celine Chia, Gillian Taylor, Travis Collins, Rebekah Rath, Tierney Thouless and Nayer Shammaa. Irrespective of those selected for leadership, every student can build her / his capacity, as well as make a major contribution to the school, by changing the way they speak to each other: asking if it’s true, helpful, inspiring, necessary or kind. We look to the parents to reinforce this message at home.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday 7th March, 6.00pm at which the new Governing Council will be elected. I urge you to nominate. The meetings are held on the first Monday of every month 7.00pm to 9.00/9.30pm. The school works well with strong governance to maintain its excellent reputation in providing quality education and opportunities for our students.

For the past three years, we have advertised all students are required to wear the new uniform in 2016 and seek parent support.

Olivia O’Neill
Principal
### Diary Dates 2016

Subject to change, correct details as at 12th February 2016.

#### FEBRUARY

1. **Years 8 & 12 students commence**
2. **Year 9, 10 & 11 students commence**
3. **Year 8 Woodhouse excursion** (Cygnets)
4. **School Photos**
5. **SIM Year 8 launch & Acquaintance**
6. **Swimming Carnival**
7. **Year 8 Immunisations** (Holdfast & Rapid)
8. **Year 10, 11 Subject Confirmation Day**
9. **Public Holiday**
10. **Year 9 Standards Day**
11. **Year 8 Drama excursion**
12. **Year 8 Immunisations** (Holdfast & Rapid)

#### MARCH

1. **SIV Annual General Meeting**
2. **SIV Year 12 Aquatics**
3. **Lift Dance Opening night for Fringe**
4. **Lift Dance “Carapace”, Saturday**
5. **Year 8 Immunisations** (Holdfast & Rapid)
6. **SIV Year 10 Beach Volleyball**
7. **School Annual General Meeting**
8. **Year 8 Standards Day**
9. **Year 10 Poetry performance**
10. **Year 8 Standards Day**
11. **Year 8 Immunisations** (Holdfast & Rapid)

#### APRIL

1. **Sports Day**
2. **Governing Council meeting**
3. **SIM 1,000Ks 4 Kids fundraiser**
4. **SIM Stage 1 Formative**
5. **Road Awareness Program for Year 11s**
6. **SIV Year 11/12 Beach Challenge BSS**
7. **Last day of term 1, 1.00pm dismissal**
8. **SIM Evening of Jazz**

#### MAY

1. **Student Free Day / Staff Training Day**
2. **Governing Council meeting**
3. **Year 11 Outdoor Education camp**
4. **Parent / Student / Teacher Conference**
5. **Year 12 Formal**
6. **Year 11 Outdoor Education Camp**
7. **Mt. Gambier Jazz Festival**
8. **Year 8 Challenge at Heathfield**
9. **SIV Year 7 out of zone trials by appointment**
10. **Year 10 Outdoor Pursuits camp**
11. **Think Bright Study Day Academy Conference**
12. **Year 11 Elevate Seminar**
13. **SIV Eyre Peninsula tour**
14. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
15. **Year 8 Immunisations** (Holdfast & Cygnets)
16. **SIV Out zone final trials by invitation**

#### JUNE

1. **SIV in-school trials, Year 8-10 lunchtime**
2. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
3. **Year 8 Immunisations** (Holdfast & Rapid)
4. **Governing Council meeting**
5. **Challenge Based Learning Expo in Learning Laneway**
6. **Public Holiday**
7. **Student Free Day / Staff Training**
8. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
9. **Think Bright Write-a-Book-in-a-Day Challenge 8.00am – 8.00pm**
10. **Year 11 Elevate Workshop**
11. **Meet the Writers**
12. **End of Semester 1**
13. **SIV in-school trials for Years 8-11**
14. **SIV in Zone Year 7 trials by invitation**

#### JULY

1. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
2. **Year 10 KO Volleyball at Heathfield**
3. **Governing Council meeting**
4. **Last day of Term 2, 1.00pm dismissal**
5. **Student Free Day / Staff Training**

#### AUGUST

1. **Governing Council meeting**
2. **Year 10 Student SACE / VET Assembly**
3. **Year 10 & 11 SACE Parent Evening**
4. **SIV State Cup**
5. **Year 11 SACE Assembly**
6. **Year 10 Ski trip**
7. **Parent / Student / Teacher conferences, 3.30pm – 8.30pm for Years 8 & 9**

#### SEPTEMBER

1. **Year 10 & 11 Subject Conferences**
2. **Year 8 & 9 Challenge Day**
3. **Year 11 Elevate Workshop**
4. **Year 12 Trial Exams**
5. **Year 12 Exam week**

#### OCTOBER

1. **Student Free Day / Staff Training**
2. **Year 11 Outdoor Education camp**
3. **Year 12 classes conclude**
4. **Year 11 SIV Aquatics**
5. **Year 12 Breakfast**
6. **Valedictory 7.00pm**

#### NOVEMBER

1. **SIV in-school trials Years 8-11**
2. **Year 12 Exams commence**
3. **Governing Council meeting 7.00pm**
4. **Year 8/9 KO SIV at BSS**
5. **Year 8 Immunisations (all houses)**
6. **Year 8 Beach SIV**
7. **Year 9 Beach SIV**
8. **Charities & Recognition Assembly**
9. **Year 12 exams conclude**
10. **Sports Presentation Evening**
11. **Shakespeare Festival Year 10s**
12. **Year 11 Exam week**

#### DECEMBER

1. **Australian Business Week for Year 10s**
2. **SIV trip leaves for Melbourne**
3. **Governing Council, 7.00pm**
4. ** Civics and Citizenship week**
5. **Civics and Citizenship assemblies**
6. **Civics and Citizenship panels**
7. **Year 12Exam Week**
8. **Year 11 Exam week**
9. **Year 10 Outdoor Education Aquatics**
10. **SIV South Coast Tour**
11. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
12. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
13. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
14. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
15. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
16. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
17. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
18. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
19. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
20. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
21. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
22. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
23. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
24. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
25. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
26. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
27. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
28. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
29. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
30. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**
31. **Year 11 Elevate workshop**

#### BRIGHTON SECONDARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER ISSUE 1 February 2016

Responsibility | Integrity | Fairness | Co-operation | Respect | Excellence
BRIGHTON SECONDARY SCHOOL - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Will be held
MONDAY 7th MARCH 2016
6.00pm Welcome / Musical Items / Refreshments
6.30pm Annual General Meeting

BRIGHTON THEATRE

This is an invitation to attend the Annual General Meeting of Parents of Brighton Secondary School and a call for nominations for the vacancies which will exist for parent representatives on the Governing Council in 2016. We hope many parents will attend the AGM and consider nominating for membership on the Governing Council.

The Education Act and the Regulations Under the Education Act establish the membership and functions of a Governing Council. According to its Constitution, the membership of the Brighton Secondary School Governing Council should be:

- 13 parent members elected by parents at the A.G.M.
- 1 Friends of Brighton Secondary School Member (Affiliated Committee)
- 1 Music Parent Support Committee member (Affiliated Committee)
- 1 Volleyball Parent Committee member (Affiliated Committee)
- 3 Staff Members
- 2 students as elected by the 2016 Student Leadership Council
- 3 co-opted members from the community
- 1 Principal

If you would like to discuss nominating for Governing Council, you may wish to contact the Principal, Olivia O’Neill on 8375 8200. A letter with this information and a nomination form will be sent home via each student. Please contact the Front Office on phone 8375 8200 if you would like a nomination form.

Congratulations

Charlotte Rayner, Year 10, who was awarded the 2016 Young citizen of the Year at an Australia Day ceremony by the Marion Council.

Madison Newman, Year 10, selected to represent Australian in the Under 18 Cricket squad in 2016.

Velvet Klass, Year 11, who was selected to participate in the Foxtel All-Stars Time Cahill Ambitions Soccer tour for 2016, an exclusive 5 day camp, to experience the life of a professional footballer.

Bohdie Fry, Year 9, who has been selected in the South Australian State Team in the junior gold cup for Rugby Union.

Jessica Williams, Year 12, who achieved place in the Ladies Bay Sheffield final held in December.
2015 Year 12

SACE Results

The school community has cause for great celebration of the outstanding 2015 Year 12 results in the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE). These results reflect the dedication and professionalism of the teachers to make Brighton the school of choice for all students.

9 students achieved the prestigious Subject Merit awards. They are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Merits</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anyue Lang</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Physics, Specialist Mathematics, Research Project B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Oakley</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ensemble Performance, Communication Products II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Abregana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communication Products I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dionisios Bourdias</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Research Project B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabrina Larouche</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>French (continuers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Richardson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>English Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Squires</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Performance Special Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Williams</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communication Products II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimberly Wong</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Solo Performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dux of 2015

We congratulate all students who achieved personal bests and in particular, we highlight the outstanding results of the Dux, **Anyue Lang**, who achieved an ATAR of 99.95.

**Emily Squires** achieved an ATAR of 99.
In total, 20 students achieved an outstanding ATAR of 90 or above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>ATAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anyue Lang</td>
<td>99.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Squires</td>
<td>99.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra James</td>
<td>97.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire Lawrance</td>
<td>96.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhys Williams</td>
<td>96.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Wong</td>
<td>96.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Williams</td>
<td>95.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Richardson</td>
<td>94.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katarina Plush</td>
<td>94.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie Ianella</td>
<td>94.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>ATAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bianca Jones</td>
<td>94.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikaela Trout</td>
<td>93.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaya Nicholls</td>
<td>92.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Trevenen</td>
<td>92.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridie Armour</td>
<td>91.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Egan</td>
<td>91.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Picard</td>
<td>91.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgina Goddard</td>
<td>91.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meera Deshpande</td>
<td>90.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon Mandel</td>
<td>90.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All students who completed their SACE deserve acknowledgement, as Year 12 requires tenacity to navigate the academic requirements while balancing work, family and friends.

2015 Graduates - we are proud of you and wish you all success in your chosen pathway.
Volleyball News

The Australian Volleyball Schools Cup Championships was held in Melbourne from the 5th – 12th December 2015. Brighton Secondary entered 23 Teams in the weeklong tournament involving 214 students and 54 support staff.

At the end of the Presentation ceremony Brighton was named the overall 2015 Australian Champion Volleyball School. This award is determined by each schools highest 6 team results (male and/or female). Brighton also won the 2015 Girls Champion School of Australia and was runner up Boys Champion School.

The following 13 of the 23 Teams returned home with a medal – totalling 5 Gold, 5 Silver and 3 Bronze. Brighton Secondary won a medal in 9 out of the possible 12 Junior Divisions (Years 8-10) in this event.

Congratulations must be extended to the students who competed on their excellent conduct both on and off the court during the week and the resultant success that they achieved.

Heartfelt gratitude and congratulations is extended to the support staff that travelled with us – Teaching staff, Parents and Old Scholars who coached and managed the 23 teams. Without your willingness to volunteer your time and your dedication to our students these results would not be possible.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish our Year 12 Special Interest Volleyball 2015 cohort the very best for their future and thank them for their outstanding contribution over the past 5 years in Special Interest Volleyball at Brighton.

Sue Rodger
Special Interest Volleyball Coordinator

Honours Teams
- Open Girls – Gold
- Open Boys – Silver
- U 17 Boys – Silver
- U 16 Girls – Gold
- U 16 Boys – Gold
- U 15 Girls – Gold

Divisional Teams
- Open Div 1 Girls – Bronze
- U 16 Div 1 Girls – Silver
- U 16 Div 2 Boys – Bronze
- U 15 Division 1 Boys – Gold
- U 15 Division 1 Girls – Silver
- U 15 Division 2 Girls – Silver
- U 15 Division 2 Boys – Bronze
**1000 K’s 4 Kids Bike Ride**

**Geelong-Glenelg: 6-15 May**

Year 9 student Jessye Campbell is undertaking the **1000 K’s 4 Kids** bike ride challenge from Geelong to Glenelg in May to help raise funds for kids living with cancer and their families.

Diagnosed herself with a rare childhood cancer (bilateral retinoblastoma) at the age of 11 months, Jessye knows what young children are dealing with when undergoing extensive cancer treatment. Jessye is cancer free now, although the disease did finally claim her sight at the age of 5.

Camp Quality is a wonderful organisation that supports children and their families through these times and beyond (up to age 13). They are organising the ride along the Great Ocean Road over 10 days in May to raise funds for their ongoing work.

Although Jessye is now blind, she is very fit these days and keen to be involved in this event. So she will be riding a tandem with her technology consultant from CanDo4Kids, Tristan Fergusson. (They train together every Wednesday at 5.30am and Saturday at 6.30am!)

A member of Brighton’s SIM program, Jessye will be organising a special fundraising concert here at the school on **Wednesday 6 April** so please put the date in your diaries now.

Our school is happy to support Jessye in this major challenge and we’d love the whole school community to get behind her to help reach her goal of $4000 to participate in the ride. So if there are any ways you can help with this, please get in touch with us.

For more info or to donate, please visit: [https://1000ks4kids-sa.everydayhero.com/au/jessye](https://1000ks4kids-sa.everydayhero.com/au/jessye)

**Open Day**

Brighton Secondary School Open Day will be held on Wednesday **11th May 2016**.

Guided tours of the school in action will be available at 9.00am and 2.00pm.

Self guided tours and a twilight showcase of special programs will be available from 5.30pm to 6.45pm.

The Principal’s Address 7.00pm to 7.30pm will be held in the Brighton Theatre.

**Principal Tours**

Principal Tours are conducted the first Wednesday of each month throughout the year if that Wednesday falls within term time.

The tours leave the front office reception area at 9.00am and are approximately 1 hour in length.

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**Year 7 To 8 Transition**

The 311 Year 8 students have settled in to secondary schooling very well. They have come to Brighton from approximately 50 different primary schools. The main focus of the first week was to get to know their teachers and fellow students and to learn to navigate between classes.

During their second week all Year 8 students participated in a Year 8 Orientation team building day at Woodhouse in the Adelaide Hills. They had the opportunity to spend the day with their home group and the other home groups in their House. The day was filled with a variety of challenging yet fun team building activities.

We are looking forward to meeting the parents of our year 8’s at the Year 8 Parent Acquaintance and iPad evening in Week 3.

_Cali Galouzis_

_Student Counsellor_
The DayMap Parent Portal

The DayMap Parent Portal is proving a great tool for parents to keep up to date with their student’s timetable, published results and end of term reports.

If you already have a log-in, and have a Year 8 joining BSS this year, you will be able to use your current log in, and using the drop down box in the Portal, access your student’s data.

Remember it is easy to get a log-in to access this data, anywhere, anytime over the internet. If you have not previously registered, here’s how:

1. Go to the Brighton Secondary School website (www.brightonss.sa.edu.au)
2. Click on the ‘LOGIN DAYMAP’ tab
3. Click ‘PARENT PORTAL’
4. Choose ‘NEW USER’
5. Enter the email address that you have most recently supplied to the school
6. Enter your child’s school ID number (you will find it at the top of any student report or timetable)
7. Follow the prompts
8. A log in and password will be sent to your email address
9. Go back to the BSS website and log in

If you have changed your email address, or have not provided the school with one, it is important to do so. Please email sue.dixon@brighton.sa.edu.au with this information.

Kane Hillman
Assistant Principal: Human Resources & Data Management

February Parent Portal Tip:
If you have more than one student at Brighton Secondary School, you can access each student using the same password and log in!

Once in the Portal, use the drop-down box on the top left hand side to select your child’s name from the drop down list.

Student Reception

Student Reception is now situated in the Bright Centre, facing onto the courtyard. The hours of Student Reception are 8.15am – 4.00pm.

Parents visiting Student Reception are required to sign in as a visitor via the Front Office.

All students arriving late to school, or departing early, are required to sign in or out of Student Reception.

Absences From School

- If students are absent from school due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances, parents are required to telephone the school’s absence phone line on 8375 8231 on the morning of the absence. This is a recorded message, available 24 hours a day. Alternatively, parents may email the school at absences.student@brighton.sa.edu.au preferably by 10.00am on the day of the absence, and include the child’s full name, the date they will be absent and the reason for their absence. Parents are encouraged to download the BSS App available on the web site: www.brightonss.sa.edu.au (http://brightonss.sa.edu.au/contact-us/app-for-brighton-secondary-school/) and advise of student absences through the App.

- Parents / students may be required to provide a medical certificate to explain absence which exceeds three consecutive days, or for any absence on the day that a SACE summative assessment task is due.
Introducing the Think Bright Team for 2016

The Think Bright program is the newest special interest program at Brighton Secondary. Students are selected for their critical and creative thinking abilities and are together as a class for English, HASS, Maths and Science.

The program runs from Years 8 – 10 and incorporates F1 in Schools in Year 8, Challenge Based Learning in Year 9 and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) in Year 10. All Think Bright teachers focus on a teaching approach that fosters entrepreneurship and creative and critical thinking. This is an exciting year for the team, with two of us undertaking Masters research that will focus on both Think Bright and other classes. We are committed to action research in order to improve outcomes for all students.

Maj-Lis Borgen-Smith
Year 8 English, Coordinator Challenge Based Teaching and Learning Across the Curriculum

My aim is to maximise the use of class time in Science lessons. Class time is used for challenging activities that encourage critical and creative thinking. This is made possible through the use of digital learning resources to supplement curriculum content delivery. My Think Bright program focuses on an ‘inquiry-based approach where students learn through practical investigations.’

Jeremy LeCornu
Year 8 Science

As a CAD-CAM STEM teacher my focus is in developing students to be inventive and collaborative in digital and group project spaces. I aim to achieve this through challenging students around engineering and entrepreneur objectives (CBL) as well as demonstrating and enabling creative and individual learning methodologies.

Finn Galindo
Year 8 F1 in Schools

The Think Bright Maths program employs an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning to ensure authentic links between curriculum areas within STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and provides students with deeper learning experiences through these connections. Programs are designed to develop higher order thinking skills and strategies through relevant real life problem solving, critical and creative thinking and self reflection, skills that the program seeks to develop across the school.

Lyle Sutton
Year 8 and 9 Maths

My approach to Think Bright History is to give students the confidence to think critically about the historical and contemporary development of societies in Australia and around the world. This provides the opportunity for students to develop into both locally and globally minded citizens. Students are encouraged to bring their own experiences to the class and to be actively involved in the creation of learning activities.

Bennet Syme
Year 9 and 10 History, Year 8 and 9 Geography

I am always looking for new methods and approaches to add to the repertoire of pedagogy. Alongside my student-choice oriented curriculum delivery, I work to foster a respectful learning environment where students, through guided tasks, build their own understanding of the literary techniques behind a text, or the social impact of a historical event. Most recently I have begun to focus on the pedagogical work of Carol Dweck’s Growth Mindset in my work with Think Bright students, with the intention of increasing student self-efficacy. I am excited to work as part of a team that will implement the successes of the Think Bright approach across the school.

Nic Tubb
Year 9 Science

I pride myself on fostering positive relationships within school communities and challenging students to push the boundaries of what they think they can achieve. In English, I want my students in both Think Bright and other classes to understand both the power and the magic of language and how, by thinking creatively and ‘outside-the-box’, they can find solutions to real-world challenges and scenarios.

Aimee Shattock
Year 9 English

In my Year 10 Think Bright Science class I focus on Problem/Challenge Based Learning, especially the visual representation of theoretical concepts. As humans are mainly kinesthetically or visually motivated, this works very well to help students to remember concepts. We also have the Genius Hour, which is a pedagogy that allows students to pursue their own interests as part of the curriculum. Students have a differentiated curriculum and a focus on co-design. These are approaches I also use very successfully with my other Year 10 Science classes.

Sam Moyle
Year 10 Science, Year 10 STEAM

My lessons focus on personalising learning and respecting different students’ initial ability, attention span and confidence, thereby encouraging them to grow into the best version of themselves they can. I believe highly flexible negotiated assessments allow students to feel supported by their strengths and once confident enough, give scope to challenge any self-identified weaknesses. As part of our ‘Flipping’ the classroom model I’ve begun to create small Apps that give students instant feedback and can therefore self-diagnose areas of challenge quickly and independently. Basically I focus on teaching students not subjects.

Jack Egan
Year 8 History, Year 10 English

As part of our ‘Flipping’ the classroom model I’ve begun to create small Apps that give students instant feedback and can therefore self-diagnose areas of challenge quickly and independently. Basically I focus on teaching students not subjects.
Hi, my name is Chelsea Russack and I am the Pastoral Care Worker (PCW, formerly Christian Pastoral Support Worker, or chaplain) at Brighton Secondary School. For those not familiar with the work of a PCW, my role is quite a diverse one, but essentially it is to support the school community.

A typical day for me might involve visiting an art or drama class, spending time in the yard with students during breaks, visiting homegroups to get to know students, supporting peer leaders and homegroup teachers; connecting with staff in the staff room or at meetings, or having one on one conversations with students needing to share a burden. Of course there are many more activities that pop up – excursions and school events for example – but my day to day tasks generally see me supporting students in feeling comfortable and enjoying their high school experience.

Each year I particularly love visiting the Year 8 classes and homegroups, and spending time in the yard with these new and excited students. (And having been here since 2009, I have had the privilege of seeing students transition from new Year 8s to confident and hardworking Year 12s as they graduate with their SACE.) As I meet these Year 8s at the beginning of the year, I am aware that the excitement showing on the surface is not the only emotion they may be experiencing. For me, remembering back to my Year 8 days, I know there was excitement and anticipation of what this new chapter of life would bring, but also nerves and some fear. “Less than two months ago, I was the big kid and now I’m the newbie at the school. Where are all my classes? Will I remember all my teachers’ names? Are the other students going to pick on me? Will I be able to make new friends, and how do I put in a lunch order at the canteen?” My guess is that the experience I’m describing is not too dissimilar to what many of the Year 8s are feeling in these first few weeks at school.

Some students may embrace this new lifestyle and thrive on the adventure that it brings, but for others this change can be daunting and may take a little getting used to. I’ve met students in the past few weeks that are in both camps. I think the most helpful thing to remember is that these are normal feelings because transition always brings up a little bit of anxiety. Things are changing and there are new people, new information and new routines to get used to. But before long, students – and families of these students who are also adjusting to the change! – will find themselves comfortable and enjoying this new chapter.

If there is anything specifically that you would like my support in, please feel free to contact me through the school. I work Tuesdays as well as Thursday and Friday mornings.

Chelsea Russack
Brighton Secondary School Pastoral Care Worker

A Pastoral Care Worker is a trained, experienced and compassionate person who joins a school community to provide extra support to all young people, families and staff. They respect diversity and school values, and their role excludes proselytizing, promoting a particular set of beliefs, or religious education. They provide pastoral care, enhance student well-being, and support the school to be a safe and supportive learning environment.
Schools often receive information about a range of well-being programmes for students. While many of those on offer have worthwhile elements, some programmes lack a strong evidence base. Since 2014, Brighton Secondary School has been involved in research on mindfulness through Flinders University, in conjunction with the Department of Education.

Mindfulness is a form of mental skills training that specifically fosters the ability to tolerate strong negative emotion, step back from thoughts, and soften harsh self-criticism, all of which are risk factors underpinning anxiety, depression and eating disorders. Over 30 years of research shows that mindfulness is consistently effective in adults for these conditions, but research in young people is still in its early stages. How do we modify the successful adult programmes so they are digestible but still effective in adolescents and children?

Over the last two years, 865 Year 8 students from four schools across Adelaide were randomly allocated to receive either normal lessons or an eight week mindfulness school-based curriculum developed in the UK. Classes were delivered by an experienced external instructor. In the 2014 trial, although acceptability measures from students were high, testing at the end of the programme showed no immediate reductions in anxiety, depression, or weight/shape concerns.

For the 2015 trial, parents and school teachers had greater involvement to increase student exposure to the concepts and practices. Again, no changes were found immediately after the programme but at the 6 month mark, anxiety decreased in the groups who received mindfulness training, and mindfulness increased in the group with parental involvement. Participants are yet to be re-tested at the 12 month mark (in mid 2016) to investigate whether these effects are sustained and whether further benefits emerge over the longer term.

These results suggest that mindfulness programmes for young people may need to look quite different to the one-off 8 week adult programmes to be consistently effective. Moving forward, the research team at Flinders are looking to further increase dosage by training and supporting classroom teachers to deliver programmes, and also to isolate and test different elements of the mindfulness approach to see which elements are more important at different stages of brain development. In 2015, we developed and trialled a new adolescent measure of mindfulness that will help us begin to tease these elements apart. This research will make an important, world first contribution in terms of identifying active ingredients necessary in youth versions of mindfulness based curricula for successful mental health outcomes across a range of developmental ages. In turn, this will assist schools in choosing evidence based programmes and inserting these at appropriate ages across the school journey. We look forward to keeping you posted as results come to hand, and thank you for your support in developing these programmes.

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