



# HEAD OF YEAR 8

# Newsletter

ALISON MOORE

## TERM 1: PAYING IT FORWARD

Dear Parents and Carers,

Students have settled well into Year 8 and time is certainly flying. It has been great connecting with parents and carers, and your communication and feedback has been invaluable — thank you. As we move into a busy part of the term with assessment and exams approaching, it is important that our young people are looking after themselves and establishing healthy routines to support their learning and wellbeing.

### A few simple ways families can help at home include:

- Encouraging consistent sleep routines so students are well rested for school.
- Supporting your child to plan for assessment, breaking tasks into smaller steps.
- Helping them create a quiet space for homework or study.
- Encouraging regular breaks, physical activity and time away from screens.
- Checking in with them about how they are feeling and reminding them to seek help early if they are unsure about their learning.

If you don't yet have access to Daymap and are unsure about what assessment your young person has coming up, please don't hesitate to reach out to their teachers or to me. I'm very happy to help guide you through where to find this information so you can best support your child at home.

This term, our focus is on Paying It Forward. Using GEM chats a part of your dinner routine to reflect, check in, practice empathy and Pay It Forward.



- ★ Thank each family member for something they've **done or said** today.
- ★ Give each family member a **compliment**.
- ★ Share a time when someone has done **something kind for you** this week. Describe how it made you feel.
- ★ Think about someone special in your life. **What makes them special**, and how will you let them know this week?
- ★ Who made you **feel cared** for this week? What actions did they take?



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## PIVOT WELLBEING SURVEY PILOT

We recently trialled the Pivot Wellbeing for Learning survey with our Year 8 cohort to better understand how students are feeling and their readiness to learn at school. The tool uses short, evidence-based fortnightly check-ins where students report how they are feeling and factors that influence wellbeing such as sleep, schoolwork, friends and health.

This trial has already provided valuable insights into student wellbeing across the cohort and helped us identify students who may need additional support. As a result, we have been able to follow up with targeted check-ins, strengthen support for students who reported struggling, and better understand trends affecting our Year 8 students.

The goal of the trial is to ensure student voice informs our wellbeing approach so we can respond early and continue creating a supportive environment where every student can flourish.

As part of our trial of the Pivot Wellbeing for Learning survey with our Year 8 cohort, 283 students completed the baseline check-in, which has already provided some valuable insights into how our students are feeling and functioning at school. One area of concern that emerged was sleep, with over 30% of students indicating they are not getting enough sleep. Research consistently shows that teenagers are the most sleep-deprived segment of the population. When young people sleep well, they are generally more settled, happier and better prepared for the school day. Sleep also supports immune health, development and daily functioning. In contrast, students who are not getting enough sleep may be less attentive in class and more easily frustrated.

I strongly encourage families to explore the resources available through SchoolTV, including information from Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, which provide practical strategies to support young people in improving their sleep hygiene.



Link: <https://thegapshs.eq.schooltv.me/newsletter/sleep>

## YEAR 8 CAMP

Year 8 camp will take place in Term 2. The purpose of the Year 8 Camp is to provide opportunities for students to develop independence and interdependence in a supportive team environment. The camp is scheduled for Weeks 6 and 7 of Term 2 at Maroon Outdoor Education Centre (MOEC), near Lake Maroon. Over the four days, students will participate in a range of adventure-based experiences including: high ropes, canoeing, aquatic activities, initiatives and a team building night activity. Students will camp out in tents for one night, and sleep in cabins for the other two nights. More information will be provided over the term.



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## GET IN TOUCH – YEAR 8 TEAM

Staff Member	Role	
Alison Moore	Head of Year	General Year Level Support
Carla Sampaio	Guidance Officer	Social and Emotional Wellbeing Support
Georgia Simmonds	Head of Pathways and Performance	Academic Support
Gouri Sharma	Deputy Principal	Year Level Oversight
Martha Cameron	Student Support Coordinator	Year Level Oversight

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your young person, please don't hesitate to contact me via email at [headofyear8@thegapshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:headofyear8@thegapshs.eq.edu.au)



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## CONNECT UPDATE

### GEM Focus:

*Emotional Literacy*

In Connect this term, students will be learning about Emotional Literacy. Emotional Literacy teaches students about the impact of emotions on mood, behaviours, and wellbeing. In our lessons will focus on:

**GEM in Action:** Gratitude, Values, Resilience & Famous Failures

**Positive Health and Relationships:** Identifying emotions in others

**Engagement:** Games & Movement



Here is an activity you can complete as a family which will reinforce understandi

### TRY IT AT HOME FAMILY ACTIVITY:

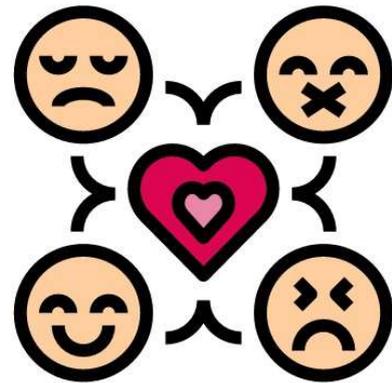
## WHAT MAKES YOU FEEL...

### YOU WILL NEED:

- Time together as a family.

### WHAT TO DO:

- Get together as a family. This may be after dinner or just sitting together in the living room.
- As a family, take turns sharing events in your life or parts of your day that made you feel:
  - » Joy
  - » Excitement
  - » Frustration
  - » Regret
  - » Love
- Sharing stories about your past that your children might not be familiar with can help strengthen their feelings of belonging and lead to higher self-esteem and a greater sense of identity.



### Family Emotional Literacy habit builder:

Every night at dinner, have each person describe a feeling they felt during the day and what made them feel like that. If negative, discuss what did, or could have helped them turn their emotion around to positive.



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## Real Schools Partnership & Affective Language



As part of our partnership with **Real Schools**, our school uses **affective language** to support positive behaviour and strong relationships.

**Affective statements** express personal feelings — both positive and negative — to help children understand how their behaviour impacts others.

### What does this sound like?

It's as simple as adding a feeling word to a request you might already use.

- Instead of *"Put your towel on the rack,"* we might say:  
*"It upsets me when the towel is left on the floor - can you please hang it up?"*
- Positive examples are just as important:  
*"I'm really pleased that you hung up your towel."*

### Why do we want to use affective language?

Affective statements help young people develop **empathy**, accountability, and self-awareness. Over time, our young people begin to think about how their actions affect others and adjust their behaviour accordingly - not out of fear of punishment, but because they care.

### What does this look like at school and at home?

You'll hear staff and students naming feelings, acknowledging positive choices, and calmly addressing behaviours in a respectful way. Families can support this by using similar language at home focusing on how actions make others feel, rather than just the behaviour itse

HOME Default statement	HOME Restorative Statement	SCHOOL Default Statement	SCHOOL Restorative Statement
"Please set the table for dinner"	"I would be really pleased if you set the table for dinner"	"Please put your hat on"	"I'd really love to see you wear your hat properly"
"Don't leave your shoes in the hallway"	"I'd like to see your shoes put away, so no one trips on them"	"Thanks for lining up"	"It makes me so proud to see you lining up properly"
"Thank you for being kind to your sister"	"It makes me overjoyed to see you being kind to your sister"	"Please don't swear"	"It is upsetting to me hearing you use such offensive language; please choose your words carefully"