

Hi everyone, as I reflect on my time here at Wheelers Hill, I am grateful for all the opportunities and memories that helped shape me into the person I am today.

Sport has always been a big part of my life, and throughout high school, I loved getting involved in as many school sports as possible. Whether it was swimming, diving, athletics, or cross country, I enjoyed competing, having fun, and representing the school. I'd encourage everyone to give school sport a go because it's such a great way to meet people, challenge yourself, and be part of the school community. As an outlet, netball has been my biggest passion where I am able to push myself and have fun away from the school environment. I started playing a bit later than most but through hard work, determination, and a real love for the game, I've been able to reach where I am now, playing for Hawks Netball in the Victorian Netball League and hopefully one day playing professionally. Balancing my netball with school was something I wanted to continue doing into year 12 where although some weeks were incredibly busy, I found it a key to managing my time, staying organised and motivated with schoolwork and studying.

Year 12 was definitely one of the most challenging but rewarding years of my life. There were times when I felt like it was all too much, the workload felt overwhelming, the stress was high, and it felt like there weren't enough hours in the day, but what really helped was finding balance. School is important, but it shouldn't stop you from doing the things you enjoy, whether that's sport, exercise, playing an instrument or just taking a break. Staying active, both in school sport and outside of school, made such a difference in keeping me motivated and managing stress to take time for myself. Another thing that really helped me was making the most of my teachers. They're there to support you, and asking questions whenever I was unsure made such a difference—especially when it came to studying for exams and SACs. Taking the time to reach out for help not only made things clearer but also made the whole process feel a lot more manageable.

Going into the VCE years, there is a lot of pressure to choose subjects that will assist in achieving a high ATAR, but I chose subjects that interested me, and I knew I would enjoy. My year 12 subjects all scaled down, but I still managed to be successful and reach a high ATAR, so I encourage you to choose subjects not based on how they will lift your score, but what you are interested in, and if you put in the effort and hard work, you can still be successful.

At the end of the day, all you can do is put in the work and be the best version of yourself. Now that I'm on the other side, I can tell you that while Year 12 was tough, it wasn't everything. I probably stressed more than I needed to, and if I could go back, I'd remind myself to take a breath and enjoy the little moments along the way. But now, I'm excited for this next chapter—studying a double degree in Exercise and Sport Science/Business (Sport Management) at Deakin—and I know that everything I've learned throughout my schooling journey will stay with me.

Thank you to all my teachers, friends, and family for your support along the way. And to everyone here today, I encourage you to make the most of the opportunities you have at this school.

To the year 12s, this year may seem impossible and incredibly daunting but just know to take it one step at a time and enjoy every bit of the journey. Keep pushing yourself, find balance in your life, and never forget that with hard work and perseverance, you can accomplish anything.

Thank you.