



# HEAD OF YEAR 11 *Newsletter*

Rex Bertrand

## Year 8 Mid-Term 3 Parent Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

It's hard to believe we're already halfway through Term 3. Year 8 students have been working hard both in and out of the classroom, and we'd like to take a moment to share some of the highlights so far, as well as give you a glimpse of what's still to come.

### Let's Chat – Respectful Relationships

Year 8 students recently had the opportunity to hear from Emma Wynne, an educator who delivers workshops designed to help teenagers develop a positive understanding of their bodies and the confidence to have open conversations with parents and caregivers.

Topics covered during the session included:

- Recognising red and green flag behaviours in relationships.
- Assertive communication and building empathic connections through thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- Understanding coercive control and the socially constructed influence of gender roles on intimate relationships.
- Exploring gender inequality as an underlying driver of domestic violence.

We encourage you to talk with your child about the program and the ideas discussed during the session.

### Brainways Competitions

Several Year 8 students have proudly represented the school in the Brainways Competitions, showcasing their problem-solving, creativity, and teamwork skills. We're incredibly proud of their perseverance and commitment. Brainways programs give students the chance to explore complex, abstract, and multidisciplinary problems, events, and phenomena. The programs are built on the principles of gifted education and encourage higher-order thinking, analysis, and reflection.

If you would like to learn more about Brainways, please visit <https://brainways.com.au/> or contact the Performance and Pathways Department here at The Gap State High School.

### Principal's Awards – Week 4

In Week 4, many of our Year 8 students were recognised with a Principal's Award for their



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outstanding academic performance, as well as their effort and positive behaviour towards learning opportunities. These awards were presented and celebrated in their Connect classes. Congratulations to all our award recipients — your hard work, positive attitude, and dedication have not gone unnoticed.

## Looking Ahead

With the second half of the term still to come, we encourage students to stay organised, ask for help when needed, and maintain healthy routines. Assessment dates will approach quickly, so now is the perfect time to plan study sessions and stay on top of homework. Thank you for your continued support in helping our Year 8 students grow as learners and as young people. We look forward to celebrating more successes before the term is through.

## Finishing the Term Strong – Academic & Wellbeing Tips

Academic Tips:

Think of the last few weeks of term like the final sprint in a race — every step counts.

- **Prioritise your deadlines** – List what's due and when, then tackle the hardest or most urgent first.
- **Use class time well** – Complete tasks during lessons so you reduce the amount to do at home.
- **Ask for help early** – If you're stuck, speak with your teacher before it becomes a bigger challenge.

Wellbeing Tips:

- **Move your body every day** – Even 10 minutes of walking, skipping, stretching, or playing with friends can boost your mood and focus.
- **Take screen breaks** – Step away from devices regularly to rest your eyes and reset your mind.
- **Connect with positive people** – Spend time with friends and family who make you feel supported and bring out your best.



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## Student Uniform Expectations – Winter Reminder

As the cooler weather continues, we'd like to remind families that students are expected to wear the correct school jumper each day. The school green fleece jacket and v-neck jumper are available from the Uniform Shop. Non-school jumpers will need to be removed.

### A few additional reminders:

- Jewellery – Students may wear up to two earrings in each ear. Hoops large enough for a finger to fit through do not meet workplace health and safety requirements; small sleepers and studs are acceptable. A watch may also be worn. All other jewellery should be removed during the school day.
- Shirts – Short-sleeved shirt options can be worn untucked, with or without a tie. Any long-sleeved shirt options must be tucked in and worn with a tie.
- Hair – Hair that touches the collar must be tied back.

The school's Uniform Room is located in **E03** and is open between **8:10 am and 8:30 am** each morning. For more information, please refer to our current Uniform Policy.

## SchoolTV – An Online Mental Health and Wellbeing Platform for Parents

SchoolTV is designed to support schools and their communities in the important task of raising happy, confident, resilient, and mentally healthy young people. We encourage all families to explore this valuable resource as part of ongoing education about issues that can impact children and teenagers.

Below are some featured links to topics that may be relevant for our students:

- [Exam Jitters](#)
- [Sleep and Study Balance](#)
- [Youth Anxiety](#)
- [Drug and Alcohol Use](#)





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## **STYMIE – Supporting a Safe and Respectful School Culture**

At The Gap State High School, the wellbeing and safety of our students is a top priority. As part of our commitment to fostering a respectful and supportive school environment, we continue to promote the use of Stymie — an anonymous online reporting tool that empowers students to speak up.

Stymie allows students to confidentially report concerns such as bullying, mental health issues, harassment, and other wellbeing-related matters, without fear of judgement or retaliation. Reports go directly to the school's wellbeing team, enabling staff to follow up promptly and sensitively in line with school policy.

We encourage all students to be *upstanders*, not bystanders. If they witness or experience something that doesn't feel right, using Stymie can be the first step in making a positive difference.

Students can access Stymie through the **Student SharePoint** page. More information is available at: <https://about.stymie.com.au>

Together, we can build a safer, more respectful, and more connected school community.

## **Student Attendance – Celebrating a Milestone**

We are incredibly proud to share that our Year 8 cohort's attendance rate is currently above 90%. This is a strong result; however, our 2025 target is 92%. Congratulations to the Year 7 cohort for meeting their target with an impressive 93.8%. Year 8, we are confident we can close the gap and reach our goal!

Consistent attendance is one of the strongest predictors of academic success and positive post-school pathways. By being present and engaged each day, our Year 8 students are building the habits, routines, and resilience that will support them through their transition into Senior School.

We thank our families for your ongoing support in reinforcing the importance of attendance and helping students maintain strong routines. Let's keep up the momentum through Term 3 and finish the year on a high.

Everyday counts — and we're proud of every student who is stepping up.

## **Seeking Support in Term 3**

Deputy Principal – Carolyn Speers

Head of Year 8 – Mr Rex Bertrand – E Block Staff room

- Wellbeing support



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- General enquiries
- Connection to the Performance and Pathways team

Guidance Officer – Ms Sarah Toohey – Lower E Block Staff room

- Assistance with AARA applications for Year 8
- Guidance, wellbeing, and support
- Future planning and pathways advice

## Important Term 3 Dates:

### Week 6 – 19 August – Brainstorm Productions

We are excited to welcome Brainstorm Productions, one of Australia's most experienced and respected educational theatre. The live theatre performance will be followed by a Q&A session. The program is designed to inspire students to build resilience and positive connections.

### Week 7 – Book Week – 24 August

The library will host our 2025 Book Week celebrations. Keep an eye out for more details about special events and competitions. Don't forget to start planning your book character dress-up for Friday of Week 7.

### Week 8 – Father's Day Breakfast – Thursday 4 September

We invite families to join us for our Father's Day Breakfast from 7:15 am to 8:30 am. Our special guest will be John Kosmina, former Socceroo, who will share his experiences and insights. More information is available on The Gap State High School website.

### Week 9 – 7 September – R U OK? Day

Research shows that when people are regularly asked, "Are you OK?" they often feel happier and more supported. In fact, a third of Australians say they've been checking in with others more often over the past year. This R U OK? Day, we encourage families to take the opportunity to continue these important conversations.

## Closing comments





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As we move into the second half of Term 3, we're reminded of the many achievements, events, and learning opportunities that make our Year 8 community so exciting. From celebrating academic success and strong attendance to engaging in wellbeing programs and upcoming activities, there is much to be proud of being at The Gap State High School. We thank our students for their hard work, our families for their ongoing support, and our staff for their commitment to providing engaging and meaningful learning experiences.

Kind Regards  
Rex Bertrand  
Head of Year 8