



HEAD OF YEAR 12

Newsletter

Michael Clarke

Dear Parents and Carers,

Whilst I imagine you may have expected this communication to come from Mr Jason Ashton, I write to inform you that Jason has recently accepted a promotional position in North Queensland. I will be stepping into the role of Head of Year 12 for 2026.

Jason is a fantastic operator, and I know he will be missed. Having worked closely with Mr Ashton during his time here at The Gap State High School, I believe we share similar approaches to supporting students, and I hope to step into the role with continuity and care as your young people move through their final year of schooling.

Whilst I have been a Head of Year in the senior space since 2020, this is my first opportunity to work directly with you and your children in this capacity. I have just finished a successful year with the 2025 graduates, and my goal is to support both families and students to navigate Year 12 with confidence and pride.

Support Staff

Year 12 is an incredible year. Whilst it presents exciting opportunities, it also comes with increased expectations and responsibility. As such, I would like to remind you of the support available to students at school:

Year 12 Guidance Officer – Sarah Toohey

Year 12 Deputy Principal – Melissa Robertson

Pathways and Performance Head of Department – Georgia Simmonds

School GP – Tania Macdonald

School Chaplain – Kristen Akenson

Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)

Attainment of a QCE often comes to the forefront of students' minds during Year 12, particularly as they approach confirmation of results. The QCAA [website](#) provides a comprehensive range of information, including:

- Queensland Curriculum and Assessment requirements
- A student portal to track current data and QCE progress
- Past papers for ATAR-eligible subjects



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- Annotated responses for ATAR-eligible subjects
- Sample assessment instruments for ATAR-eligible subjects

Please know that we are here to help. If you are ever unsure about processes, requirements or next steps, I encourage you to reach out.

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)

I would like to highlight the following links, which may be useful depending on your young person's circumstances. For general information about how ATAR works, the QCAA [website](#) is the best starting point. If you are interested in gaining insight into potential ATAR outcomes, the ATAR Predictions Queensland [website](#) may also be useful.

Whilst there is a paid version of this service, the free version can provide helpful general insight into possible pathways. Please note that these predictions are indicative only and do not guarantee a final ATAR outcome.

Key Events

Year 12 includes several significant milestones for students and families. The information below is provided to assist with forward planning, recognising the important role families play in these events. While we are planning with these dates in mind, they are based on current information and circumstances.

Please note that all dates are subject to change.

Year 12 Formal – Tuesday, 11 August

Year 12 Graduation – Thursday, 19 November

Further information regarding these events will be released closer to the time.

Managing the Year Ahead

The final year of schooling can challenge any young person's ability to manage their time. When life becomes busy, it is often the simple but essential habits that slip first. Sleep and physical activity are commonly the first areas to decline, yet they play a critical role in wellbeing, safety and learning.



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Dr Michael Carr-Gregg delivers some excellent short resources that highlight the importance of maintaining these foundations and how we, as parents and carers, can support our young people:

Sleep

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

Physical Activity and Exercise

<https://thegapshs.eq.schooltv.me/newsletter/physical-activity-exercise>

As parents, we also recognise how challenging it can be to juggle these priorities ourselves.

In line with our theme for this term of Paying it Forward, we encourage families to view wellbeing not just as an individual responsibility, but as something we actively support and model for others. The habits we prioritise, the conversations we have, and the understanding we show during challenging times can create a ripple effect beyond the individual.

Paying it Forward invites our young people to consider how caring for themselves enables them to contribute positively to others — showing up with energy, focus and emotional regulation. By supporting healthy routines, we are helping students not only manage pressure, but also be reliable friends, learners and community members.

Throughout the term, students will be engaging with our Paying it Forward theme, with a particular focus on encouraging careful decision-making and foresight. This learning supports students to reflect on how their choices impact not only themselves, but the wider community.

Year 12 is an exciting and meaningful time for our young people. However, we also recognise that the year does not always unfold exactly as planned. If you or your child ever needs support or guidance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Michael Clarke

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