“Live as if you were to die tomorrow, learn as if you were to live forever.”
Mahatma Gandhi

This week marks the end of our first series of Exhibitions. Having attended quite a few, I am so proud of the achievements of our first cohort here at CHC. We have some students who have not attended school for over a year, getting up in front of an audience and presenting their work. What an amazing achievement. This brings me to those behind the scenes.

Our amazing group of Advisory teachers have worked to engage, encourage, cajole and support our young people. They are such patient and wonderful champions of our children. They get what learning is all about. It is the skills we develop for life that take priority here. They champion small successes, the little moments that mean so much.

Students are madly completing their portfolios for submission and assessment, making sure their Maths Online work is complete for Matt, and finishing their journals. Our staff will then write their first narrative for students to provide feedback on the challenges and successes from this term.

You can help. Encourage your child to seek answers from the Moodle page. Ask them to show you their progress page on Maths Online. Have a conversation around time management and work completion with their school planner.

Give them some feedback from your point of view on what they did well in their exhibition. It is a partnership that encourages them to find focus in their learning and give them opportunities for success beyond us. One student at a time, in a community of learners.

TRACEY BREESE

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:**

**TERM 2 WEEK 1**

**Monday 28th April:** Staff Development Day/Pupil Free Day

**Tuesday 29th April:** Students with Internships/Shadow Days will be in the workplace. All other students should be at CHC.

**Wednesday 30th April:** All students back to school as normal.

**NO SPORT** in Week 1

**NAPLAN**

Year 9 students will be sitting the NAPLAN tests 5, 6, 7th May. Brendt will walk the students to Newcastle High where we’ll have our own room. Exact times will be forthcoming soon.
STUDENTS: MAKE SURE YOU HAVE ALL OF YOUR INTERNSHIP PAPERWORK FILLED OUT AND HANDED IN BEFORE ATTENDING THE WORK PLACE.

While it was hoped that all students would have found placements by the beginning of Term 2, there are still several students who are yet to finalise a placement. Please seek advice from myself and your advisor to help this to happen. Don’t stick your head in the sand—take the initiative and make the calls, visit workplaces (with adequate preparation) and show the world who you are.

Parents are encouraged to have a look at the LTI information on the Moodle page to get an idea of how it works and how their child is progressing.

Thank you to those parents who have offered some workplace contacts of people who might be interested in being a mentor, it’s helping us make some great links with passionate students.

Arron Stevens
LTI Coordinator

The Internship is a vital part of the Big Picture design. Students gaining experience in a field of interest develops their knowledge and understanding, as well as personal qualities such as confidence, self-esteem, and initiative.

PEOPLE IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Thanks to Jayne and Sharyn for their help with students this week.

P&C Quotes

“I have never seen my child able to talk so much about what they’ve learned.”

“Happy. They come home everyday happy.”

“My child has made so many friends here. Real friends.”
Week 11 and we have all succeeded this term and are very proud of ourselves and the campus. Our last Check-in at Town Hall was to give ourselves a star rating out of five. Most students gave themselves more than five, feeling more successful in our learning system.

This week in R.F.P.’s we rearranged our room for a change next term. On Wednesday we watched a road safety video and then went to Cooks Hill Fire Station to listen to the D-platoon Fire Fighters talk about their role in freeing trapped drivers in motor vehicle accidents. The fire fighters don’t call them accidents; they call them crashes because most accidents are preventable. Slow down, stay alert and drive safely; driving is statistically the most dangerous activity that we may do in our lives, and it’s one we perform on a daily basis. They showed the steps involved in cutting up a car as if they were rescuing a victim. Also, they stressed the impact one moment of irresponsible action can affect more than just a family. Like the waves in a pond, the suffering caused through car crashes ripples out through a community.

On Thursday, we walked to Nobby’s Lighthouse to watch some of Newcastle High School’s musicians perform for Youth Week. They were impressive and inspirational.

We’ve also been thinking of ideas for next term’s Personal Interest Project. Scott is designing a skateboard, Josh is focusing on Soccer coaching, Erin is into music, Chelsea is doing photography, and Matthew is researching the USA to prepare for his trip at the end of the year. Charley and Abby are writing a fiction and non-fiction texts: Charley on Ancient History and Abby on Forensic Science. We will let you know everyone else’s next term. We are all very excited for the holidays.
With our final exhibitions coming to a close, we take a deep breath in and all say together “It wasn’t actually that bad.” So, now as one we write pages after pages of journal entries….

Do you think you did well?
How could you improve next time?

That’s all we’ve been hearing. Once that is all completed we can take the time to understand our passions.

Callen: “I’ve got my internship at the butcher’s in Medowie.”
Mackenzie: “My exhibition was second up and I finished my extra work. I finally got an internship at Belmont High working with Special Ed kids.”
Lennox: “I am working at Active Cycles.”
Daizee: “Well, I’m close to sorting out my internship, which feels great. It’s been a long road trying to figure out my internship. I did my exhibition on Tuesday and it wasn’t as bad as I thought it would be. I think everyone would say that they could’ve done better, but in the end we all still went great.”

This week we also worked on a re-design of our room as we lost and gained new members to the Advisory.
This week in The Zen Pen we are so relieved about the fact that our exhibitions are over. Alex’s was the final one and he did well.

Monday was a very relaxing day, we began to create our mind-maps for next term, plus we have also started putting our proposals together. Some of the ideas that people are coming up with are fantastic and we strongly believe that next term is going to be amazing.

The Zen Pen has so much imagination, we all enjoy coming up with amazing ideas for one another. As well, on Monday, we brought in a coke with candles on it for Caellum’s birthday. The class had a great laugh at that one.

On Tuesday, some of our class accompanied the other advisories when they went to the beach.

On Wednesday we summed up everything for this term. We have been working on our Maths Online, English, LTI and our project for next term. We also went to the fire station and watched a car get pulled apart.

On Thursday we went to Nobby’s Beach to watch Newcastle High School students perform for Youth Week.

Friday is our last day for term one, we intend to all go down to the beach and spend the afternoon eating sausage sizzles and playing games, if the weather stays clear.

This term we have enjoyed getting to know the people in our advisory better. We have all grown closer and have watched each other become better people. It has been a great experience so far and we can’t wait for the rest of the year.
I’ve taken the liberty of writing my own column for this newsletter. During this term the columns for our advisory have come from the minds of Tom McMahon and Kaitlin Boyce and I thank them for their work. Now it’s my time to say some things…

I can honestly say that the past 11 weeks have been the most rewarding, most memorable weeks of my teaching career. Every day I drive back home with a sense of accomplishment and a sense of gratitude that I get to work with such a wonderful group of students. I tell my colleagues from other schools I’ve worked at how I can boast that I know the students in my advisory more in 1 term than I used to know my students in 5 or more different classes over a whole year! Not only do I know the students’ interests, history, strengths and weaknesses, but I also know their families as well. That is just one of the ways that proves that Big Picture really works.

Now that exhibition time has come to a close I can express how proud I am of my Linchpins and how they performed in their exhibitions. It gave them, myself and their families a greater understanding of what they have learned than any test or essay could hope to match. Those who had put a tremendous effort in all term could readily show and explain the depth of understanding they’d come to about their past, their future and their family. Even those students whose effort has been varied throughout the term were able to reflect on and express the challenges they’d encountered and their plans for improvement next term. We move ahead with confidence that next term’s exhibitions will be even better. Each week sees wonderful moments happen: moments when the whole Big Picture “clicks” for students, or when they arrange an internship in the real world, or one student reaches out to another and makes their life better. I’ve savored these moments—what’s more, there have been far too many to list here.

This week we’ve been uncovering students’ interests (an integral part of the BP design) and writing proposals for some exciting projects. Here are just a few examples:

Brittney—investigating the difference in fitness levels among city & country people.

Jade—recording a demo cd of 12 of her favourite songs.

Lara—investigating the development of children in the first few months.

Scott—developing an arcade machine using the Raspberry Pi.

Zoe—making and exhibiting mixed media art.

Kaitlin—a reptile day at a child care centre.

Rhiannon—a documentary about the plight of racehorses sent to the knackery and those who are rescued.

Just to name a few. The projects will form a major part of their learning plan for next term and it’s so pleasing to see student taking control of their learning, for some the first time they’ve ever had to at school.

I’d also like to thank the parents for making me a part of their lives this term, letting me know what has been happening from their perspective and giving me wonderful feedback about the growth they’ve seen in their child over the term. At each exhibition parents loved to talk about how their child was now enthused about attending school for the first time in many years. I look forward to the months and years ahead as we grow our advisory family.

Finally, a note on the name I’ve given our advisory. A linchpin is a small, seemingly minor part that holds the wheel to the axle. In truth, the linchpin is the indispensable part that helps everything happen, that keeps the wheels from falling off. It is my aspiration that our students will become the indispensable members of our future society. The skills they’re learning here will help them to change their worlds.

Thanks for an unforgettable term! Have a safe and happy holidays.  

Brendt
What our stars have been working on…

Students have been working hard to decide and plan what they are going to be working on next term. Everyone is very excited to be creating a project based solely around their interests.

END OF TERM CELEBRATIONS

Some advisories have been planning a celebration for end of term. On Friday, the whole school was hoping to walk down to the beach to enjoy a sausage sizzle and games to finish off the term. Unfortunately, the weather had other plans so we enjoyed a relaxed barbecue and handball competition at school. Special thanks to Michael and Darren for helping sizzle the snags!

Professional SHOUT OUT!

This week’s Shout Out goes to the TGIF Committee for doing such a great job with the newsletter this term.

The next Shout Out goes to everyone for doing such a great job this term. You’ve all worked really hard adjusting to this new style of learning and have done a great job with your exhibitions. We can’t wait to see what’s in store for next term.