

# PIN OAK



—  
**AHLETICS**  
Junior School

—  
**BIG ISSUE**  
Hypocrisy

—  
**ART**  
Drive-Through Gallery

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Photography: AJ Moran



### 2021 Junior School Athletics Carnival Results

Age Group	RUNNER UP	CHAMPION
8-		

Winter Holidays are Here

It is important we take time to pause and reflect on the term. We can be extremely grateful that it has been such an active term for our students and staff. We have really been able to burst into more 'normal' operating conditions with great energy and success. Students have been able to attend camps, excursions, visitors have been welcomed, sporting competitions are back in 'full swing' including Equestrian Day, musicians are playing with full audiences and of course our



## Head of Academic and Innovation

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As we rapidly reach the end of term and a well-deserved break, it is important to stop, breathe and reflect on the time that was and is yet to be. Certainly, as a school, we feel very proud of what has already been experienced and achieved in 2021.

One of the measures of progress that we value is the Evidence of Learning regularly collected and collated from Kindergarten to Year 10 students. In the Junior School we see this every day, every moment! It is only necessary to peek inside a classroom to see the visibility of the learning that has been undertaken. From "Where to Next" walls, to mobiles, to self-portraits, to models and drawings and writings about everything that you can ever dream of – it is obvious that our students have been thriving under the care and guidance of their inspired and passionate teachers!

One of the particular joys of Junior School reporting this semester, has been the addition of Student Reflections to the reporting process. There is nothing like the words of a Kindergarten child to centre us back on what is most important:

*Learning about the oak tree at school was really fun and I learnt that the Pin Oak is part of our natural environment. I got to draw a picture of this tree and I painted it. I think my drawings are better now that I am older, and I like drawing dogs and rainbows the most. I want to keep getting better at my reading where I stretch out words to read them. I will then be able to read books.*

And then to the final year of Junior School:

*Something that went well for me this semester was the writing and performing of my persuasive speech on the topic, 'Students should have to complete voluntary work.' The area where I have shown the most growth this semester was in my descriptive language as part of Nugia Canbe and homework imaginative writing tasks. My goal for next term is reading my Math Olympiad questions more thoroughly, because most of the questions I got wrong were due to not reading carefully.*

Year 7 – 10 students will also receive their reports shortly. As we know, the secondary school road can get bumpy at times, so we encourage families to take note of the Learning statements that have been reviewed and refined for this reporting period. We hope to be able to encourage students to focus on these attributes as they gain experience in balancing both the acquisition of knowledge and constant revision to ensure they are ready for formal testing when it occurs.

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We were proud to celebrate the work of each of our Year 10 students at our inaugural Year 10 PIPS Exhibition recently. The diversity of projects was outstanding and it was impressive to hear the stories that led to the final product. Often the journey was more significant than the end. Students were recognised for their excellence at the assembly this morning and have already started their second PIP project with enthusiasm.

Last Friday, Year 11 students took part in their second round of consultations. These involved students looking at their cumulative assessment data and comparing this with their performance in the Half Yearly Examinations. For many, there was quite a contrast between both, and this led to an important conversation about what was required to achieve success in the next formal examination period: The End of Preliminary Examinations. These examinations take place at the end of Term 3 and will be an important indicator of success toward the HSC Year, which commences in Term 4.

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We continue to be so proud of the hard work being done by our Year 12 students – they are indeed maximising their time here at school. It is also very heart-warming to see our dedicated Year 12 teachers regularly meeting with small groups of students outside the timetable, providing individual help to students who ask, running before school and lunchtime "help" sessions that supplement the learning and teaching in the classrooms. A visit to spare classrooms, the Art and DT studios, the library, the Music School, Hoskins Hall and more will often find teachers helping students during Academic Prep lessons in addition to their timetabled lessons. We are very grateful for this "above and beyond" commitment of all our Year 12 teachers at this time – we know that this is a team effort, with all determined to help our students achieve their best.

Study Club continues to attract impressive numbers, despite it being the end of term with many assessments due. We thank Mrs Simpson for her ongoing coaching support in exam technique and skills and encourage students to take advantage of her availability in Weeks 2 and 3 of the break. Students and parents have also been emailed the details of Break Study Centre times, the Holiday Exam Practice Timetable and the timing of workshops for those students with projects due in Term 3. We look forward to celebrating the excellent work in recitals, exhibitions and performances throughout the term.

By Kate Cunich, Head of Academic and Innovation



Students must wear Oxley Sports Uniform / School Uniform when attending Saturday sport

Oxley has a longstanding relationship with Batyr, a leading preventative mental health organisation that is run by young people, for young people. Batyr returned to Oxley again last week to deliver age appropriate year group presentations to students in Years 9, 10, 11 and 12. Through the sharing of personal stories, the presentations aim to develop a positive attitude towards help-seeking behaviour and a culture of openness and dialogue, which lifts the stigma often associated with talking about mental health.

Girls: Either a pair of studs or sleepers in the earlobes only – no earrings in other parts of the ear; make up and nail varnish is not permitted– concealer is allowed; skirt length must be 'to the knee'.

Boys: Hair must be of the collar and out of the face; students must be clean shaven; earrings/band aids over earrings are not permitted.

The College will be undertaking a review of our current Uniform Policy in Semester 2.

Unnamed property in Student Services has approached

near biblical proportions at the end of this term; especially Tupperware lunch boxes and drinks bottles. When property is named it can be quickly and easily reunited with its owner; please ensure that all such items are named.

<https://www.batyr.com.au/>

For their Term 2 oral presentation assessment this week, my Year 11 Philosophy students were required to choose or create a question of their choice about the acquisition of knowledge. They had to link the question to their studies or another real life experience, analyse different perspectives and responses and justify their own views. Here are some of the questions they explored:

Following the positive feedback from Term 4 2020, Brent Sanders returned to Oxley yesterday to deliver presentations to Years 9, 10 and 12 around safe partying, consent and the law. Brent has over 20 years experience as a police officer and has been delivering presentations in schools, universities and workplaces around Australia for many years. Given the national discourse around consent in recent months, I am pleased that we were able to get Brent back to Oxley this year to speak on these vitally important issues.

<https://www.brentsandersconsulting.com.au/>

As stated in the Student Diary, "Oxley College views the wearing of the correct uniform as one of the disciplines which contribute significantly to the development of the right kind of pride in one's school and the right codes of conduct" (p148). Students were reminded about some of the rules around uniform and appearance in today's assembly, in order both to address trends that have developed as the weather has turned cooler and to ensure students begin Term 3 correctly dressed. It will be helpful for parents to be aware of some of these key messages:

8 Q L I R U P

- Shoes must be leather and must be polished
- Rings and bracelets are not permitted
- House hoodies are to be worn for House Sports Competition Days / the House Festival only

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For their Term 2 oral presentation assessment this week, my Year 11 Philosophy students were required to choose or create a question of their choice about the acquisition of knowledge. They had to link the question to their studies or another real life experience, analyse different perspectives and responses and justify their own views. Here are some of the questions they explored:

- Is the pursuit of causation in History a pointless endeavour?
- Can we separate the art from the artist?
- Is knowledge in Mathematics discovered or invented?
- Are the Natural Sciences advanced more through imagination or through reason?
- "The past can never be known". Is History a waste of time?

I hope you enjoy discussing some of these questions at home as much as I enjoyed the presentations!

By Mark Case, Head of Senior School

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Please note the following opening hours for the

Oxley Shop:

Week 1 T800tel

# JUNIOR GALLERY



Stage 3 have been involved in a number of engaging learning opportunities across the



## ‘Plandemic’

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In early 2020, on ‘Wellness Wednesday’, prominent Australian model Miranda Kerr set alight her incense burner. Then, reaching for her ‘Empower Yourself’ cards, she revealed to her teleconferencing followers their daily wellness goal – channel the full moon energy to self-immunise against coronavirus.

Just weeks later, via Facebook Live, notorious influencer Pete Evans announced the release of his ‘BioCharger’. A hybrid subtle energy revitalisation platform” with a \$15,000 price tag, the device purported to cure coronavirus through the use of light and harmonies.

They are the ‘new age community’; an impenetrable association of seaweed-wrapping, raw-food-only, crystal-detoxing, juice-cleansing influencers. The \$4.5 trillion wellness industry has never seemed so seductive, with the pandemic creating an opportune climate for gurus to proselytise a newly receptive online audience. Capitalising on relentless expansion of alternative health therapies in previous years, and an equally newfound health consciousness amongst the public, wellness has indeed entered mainstream culture. Pseudoscientific terms foreign to our vocabulary a decade ago – clean eating, apple cider vinegar and activated charcoal – can now be found branded on products in our supermarkets, tagged in posts on our Instagram feeds and stamped on pamphlets in our letterboxes.

However, there is a darker side to this craze, this optimistic insistence that we can all be our own doctors and gurus. Several months later, Kerr posted

a *Virus Protection Guide* derived from her apparent communication with the gods, which claimed the virus was a hoax. And just last December, amidst the Avalon outbreak, Evans urged Sydney residents to ‘not get tested’, spreading the conspiracy that COVID was a ‘plandemic’ and mere tool of mass manipulation.

It’s a Venn overlap hard to fathom. The wellness industry. Far-right believers in a Great Awakening. Conspiritualism. How did wellness warriors antithetically come to unite with the far-right QAnon community? Coronavirus provided fertile ground for the convergence of these two radical and dangerous belief systems, because of one pre-existing point of intersection – vaccines. From there, the overlap of New Age and conspiracy beliefs has proliferated. Now recognised as a separate entity altogether, ‘conspiritualism’ is rapidly becoming one of the most dangerous, consuming and perversely unlikely trends of the 21st century.

Conspiritualism is by no means a random and unfortunate alignment of ideas; it is the result of the intersection of similar personality traits and online audience captivity. Wellness influencers depict adherents as privy to the ‘real truth’, an exclusive spiritual narrative leading to personal empowerment. Yet I argue this description also applies, unsettlingly, to far-right conspiracy theorists. And the visibility of both ideologies to online audiences makes their messages even more potent to vulnerable audiences.

The addition of a global pandemic created the perfect storm for misinformation of the masses. With political trust at an all-time low, and the world becoming more complex and noisy, it is easy to mistake truth for truthiness, and seek expedient answers. Hence



the birth of #doyourownresearch and paradoxically alt-right, yet 'mindful', scepticism.

On January 6, 2021, Dr Christiane Northrup began a six-day water fast. She pledged to consume nothing but alkaline water with "maybe a pinch of Himalayan sea salt" to "reset" herself. In the following days, a dissonant blend of health advice and conspiracy theory permeated her feed, culminating in an ardent cry to reject DNA-altering COVID vaccines.

For a distant audience like you or I, it may seem easy to dismiss her claims as unfounded and trivial. However, the troubling genius of both far-right extremist conspiracies and wellness fallacies is how innocuous they can initially appear. For new mother Sarah, she felt Northrup validated her 'gut instinct' to 'decide for herself' on vaccines, which led her to investigate overwhelming and viral extremist campaigns claiming government censorship and Chinese virus engineering. Herein lies the danger: our tendency to favour social proof, rather than evidence-based proof, leaves us susceptible to false information. It is the Sarahs of the world – the well-meaning individuals searching for answers – that become the victims of this occult subculture. Indeed, Sarah herself began proliferating COVID mistruths, radically converting her own sphere of followers. And, with a CDC report finding social media outlets fail to act on 95% of reported COVID-related misinformation, mere exposure to the sheer volume of conspiratorial mistruths sustains irrational adherence and, more insidiously, indoctrination. Inherently, engagement trumps truth. Voluminous posting trumps rationalism.

Ideas are as contagious as viruses and, as it turns out, equally dangerous. And so, there lies an obligation for authority to intervene, and suppress this alarming narrative. Indeed, I initially underestimated the ubiquity of this zeitgeist of wellness. Yet, only last week, as I was reading the news, did an unsolicited link appear. 'Women experiencing severe side effects from the coronavirus jab' claimed one self-described cosmic doula, sharing stories from anonymous women who experienced excruciating menstrual bleeding and fertility issues post-vaccination – a claim since disproven by multiple authorities. Upon clicking, I was taken to her social media account, where I was stunned to see over 3000 comments praising her rejection of 'mainstream brainwashing'. We can no longer afford to treat conspiratoriality as a hypothetical, an issue insignificant to the 'majority.' The implications of such misinformation extend beyond poor individual health outcomes. We can – and will – see widespread paranoia, logic-twisting and anti-knowledge. Facts

are superfluous, inconvenient or both, and intellectual exploitation disguised as empowerment holds an unnerving ability to bend reality. We could see our political institutions crumble under undue scepticism and radical rejection.

So, how is we can overcome this tide of hazardous indoctrination? Our media outlets must take greater accountability in identifying and removing posts. The so-called 'Disinformation Dozen', 12 individuals responsible for generating an astounding two-thirds of health-related conspiracy claims last March, are not banned from Facebook, Instagram or Twitter, despite each platform committing to removing 'COVID-relating misinformation' only weeks before. In response to the 'cosmic doula's' unwarranted claims, I reported the post. Three days later, with no response, I spoke to an Instagram representative, who assured me the post would be removed. To this day, it remains.

We must also recontextualise our cultural understanding of conspiracies, reframing absurdist theories not as humorous contemplations, but serious threats to collective safety. Aviatin (f)10.8 pok



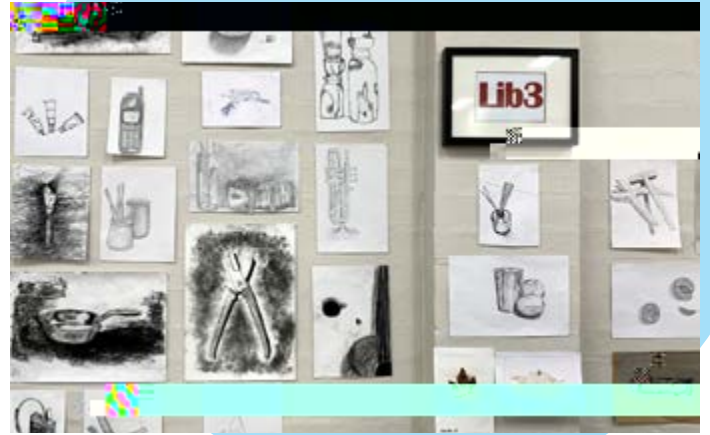
My English class was doing a unit on Speculative Fiction, and one of the examples to demonstrate the Genre was The Truman Show. The movie itself is framed around the life of Truman Burbank (Jim Carrey), an ordinary man, living in a town on an island. He is good natured and friendly, always having a smile on his face. The part that makes it a piece of Speculative Fiction, however, is that his entire life is controlled by a production crew, dedicated to making his life seem as authentic as possible, while keeping the cameras rolling. He was adopted by the studio when he was a baby, so he has no memory of the outside world. All the people he interacts with in his day-to-day life are actors, designed to keep him content in life, so he doesn't try and leave the set they created. The Studio Executives manufactured an accident at sea which "killed" Truman's Father, or the actor playing him, giving him a deadly fear of the Ocean. The inciting incident that kickstarts the plot is when Truman believes he sees his father on the streets, when actually it is just a reused actor. This

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To so overtly define – “Hypocrisy is the practice of engaging in the same behaviour or activity for which one criticizes another or the practice of claiming to have moral standards or beliefs to which one’s own



# VIRTUAL GALLERY



Year 9 students explored everyday objects as relevant subjects for their artmaking. Students created dry-point etchings, charcoal drawings and pen drawings to execute the diverse textural surface qualities and forms of each object.

In Year 10, students presented a portrait of celebrity, using grisaille as a basis to execute form and tonal gradation. A diverse range of techniques were employed, from fine detailed works to more expressive and atmospheric paintings.



## *Stage 1 Help Year 9 with their Nightlight designs*

Design and Technology students are designing coded night lights. Our two classes spent time interviewing the Kindergarten and Year 1 students last week about their preferences for night light designs. Year 9 will use this information to help them design a responsive night light using Arduino electrical circuitry and coding, laser cutting & 3d printing.

November 6, 1917

Ypres, Belgium

Battle of Passchendaele

Thank the Lord for my gas mask – today the third battle of Ypres ended, and without it I would not have made it through the last few battles.

Yet the gas that seeped through my woollen clothes in the past weeks has caused me to break out in excruciatingly painful infected blisters. I lie now in my hole in the trench in burning pain, but the images of the swirling greenish yellow cloud smelling of dead horses and garlic that was blown here by the wind from the Germans will not exit my head. I would estimate that there were hundreds of metric tons blowing through the air. The Mustard Gas is what they call it.

I know the effects of mustard gas. Blindness, blisters, and a slow and painful death. It is used as a threat as well as an attack strategy – most of us of our Australian divisions participated in the third battle recently, and the amount of gas was hard to comprehend. Luckily, we had an advantage – gas masks. My division, the second, worked with divisions one and two and we captured Broodseinde Ridge a few weeks ago despite the gas. We were trapped in deep mud under a heavy attack, but I survived unlike most of my mates.

DWWDFNHG E\ JDV \$OO ÀYH


We, the Allied Forces, were spread from south to north as the British Second Army. The number of dead bodies I saw just hours after the attack were in-numerable. Those without or with broken masks number of deaths – the cowardly Germans could not even face us yet attacked us with one of the deadliest substances known to man. Millions of shells have

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H[SORGHG LQWR WKH PXG DQG WKH EDWVOHÀHOGV KDYH  
WXUQH G LQWR DQ DSRFDO\SWLF PLQHÀHOG RI GHHS VKHOO  
FUDWHUV ÀOOHG ZLVK ZDWHU FKHPLFDOV DQG EORRG GHHS  
enough to drown a soldier amongst the churned graves of murdered soldiers.

The senseless slaughter of these battles will haunt my memory forever. Even though it was ostensibly an Allied victory, the madness, rain, mud, deaths, war means that since so many lives were lost, no one really wins. I do not even understand what we

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DUH ÀJKWLQJ IRU

Our troops are exhausted, and we plan to hand over to the Canadians sometime in the next few weeks – I



On Wednesday 9 June, the Year 10 elective drama students got on a bus to Parramatta Riverside Theatre to compete in the sixth annual Sharp Short Drama competition. After a term of playwriting, 4 out of the 18 plays written for our assessments were chosen to go to compete. Each play was cast with students from the elective and directed by the writer. The plays were 'Writers Room' – by Tyra