

Coming Up

Fri 7 Mar - Photo Catch Up Day

Fri 7 Mar - WomenKIND 2025
School Community Breakfast

Fri 7 Mar – IWD Lunchtime
BBQ, Cake Stall and Activities

Tue 11 Mar - Year 6 Sneak Peek
& Family Open Night

Tue 8 Apr - KHS Cross Country

Fri 11 Apr - Easter Show Day

Welcome to our first KHS School Newsletter for 2025! This is where we share and celebrate student work, achievements, activities and experiences, as well as many of the amazing things that happen at school and beyond.

This edition also includes a special 'Meet our Team for 2025' feature to introduce our wonderful staff.

Students, parents and carers are very welcome to contribute news, ideas, articles and images for this newsletter. You can send content and suggestion to Nikki, our Community Liaison Officer, at nicole.boys4@det.nsw.edu.au

We hope you enjoy reading all about our wonderful school community!

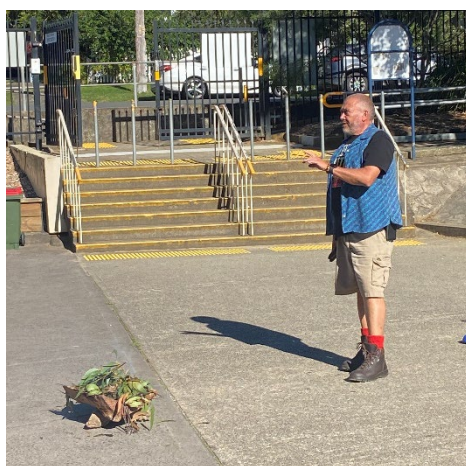
Welcoming in the year with Uncle David King

KHS Teachers and Support staff had have been busy preparing for tomorrow to give all of our students a great start to 2025. We were very grateful to spend some time with Uncle David King yesterday. Uncle David, a proud Gundungurra man, conducted a heart-warming

smoking ceremony to welcome us and offer us strength and good passage for the year that lies ahead.

Thank you, Uncle David King, for your time and generosity, and for everything you do for our young people and our community.

Katoomba High School acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live, work and learn, the Dharug and Gundungurra peoples. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, as well as to their emerging leaders.



KHS Spirit on show at the Swimming Carnival!



Written by Annabel Dignam and Lu-Anne Angwin, KHS Sports Captains

The Katoomba High Swimming Carnival held on the 11th of Feb at the Katoomba Aquatic Centre was a huge success with the highest attendance numbers in the past five years. As Sport Captains we are so proud of the House Captains and their efforts in organising their houses and the decorations for each house area. They provided amazing support and encouragement for their fellow peers. In addition to the house Captains, we would like to thank all the house patrons who all put in time and effort into supporting the reinvigoration of the house system and taking on the extra responsibilities throughout the day. It wouldn't have been a success without them.

As Sport Captains we were so proud to see our work and ideas paying



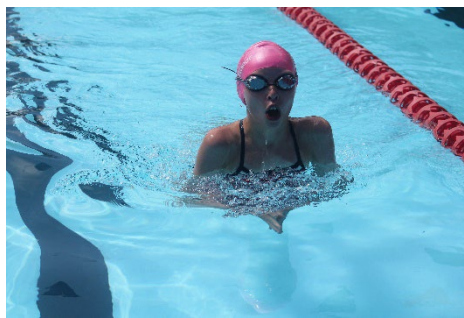
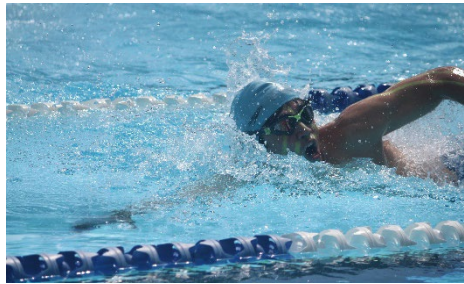
off with everyone who attended supporting their house and their peers in the swimming races. We cannot wait to see what this year brings and hope everyone has an awesome year!

Sensational Swimming!

After significant rain the day before the swimming carnival, the weather gods were kind to allow us a small window of sunshine on the day, which we made the most of. It was amazing to see so many students dressed up with plenty of house spirit and making a splash. Many students produced amazing performances in the pool with special mention to Ned Egan and Ewan Jennings for breaking records on the day. Ned broke the 13's boys backstroke record, and Ewan broke the 16s boys 100m freestyle, 50m freestyle and 50m butterfly. This is an outstanding achievement for these students. Congratulations to all competitors on the day and for all the students who attended the carnival.

A thunderstorm cut short the afternoon, meaning the carnival was finished in the Indoor Sports courts. I would like to say a big thank you to the students for their patience, understanding and positive behaviour during that time. All in all it was a sensational KHS swimming carnival!

Age Champions and Ribbons will be announced soon!



Megalong House takes an early lead!...

We are excited to announce the final results of the House competition for the day!... The points tally includes competitive points, Lizard Lane points, novelty participation points and cheer competition points. And the final result was:

1st Place: Megalong with 466 points

2nd Place: Burragarang with 383 points

3rd Place: Kanimbla with 326 points

4th Place: Jamison with 293 points

Thank you to Mrs Jeffrey and Mr Regan for setting up our revamped Sports House system with the support of Mr Murray and the office team. Thank you to our wonderful Sports Captains, House Captains, Prefects and House Patrons whose organisation, fancy dress and energy all day, especially in the war cry competition, was phenomenal!

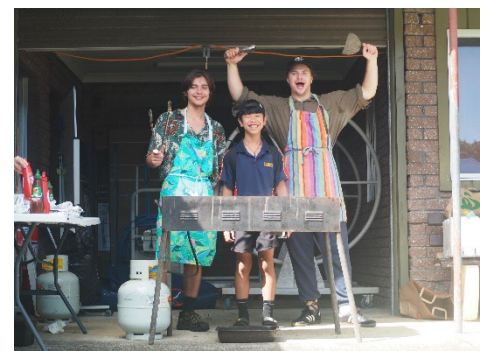
Thank you to Mr McDonell for his organisation and to all the staff who helped with setting up, marking rolls, walking students to the pool and the many other jobs on the day. And last, but certainly not least, thank you to the record number of students who came along and participated so enthusiastically, making it a really great day for everyone.

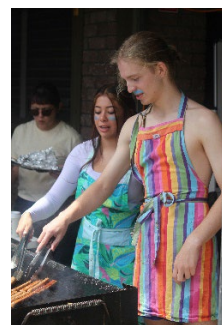


Newsletter

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2025
Term 1
Week 6





Around the Grounds

Having fun with Scarecrow Technology!

Year 9/10 Binyang Tech class are learning about food and agriculture. They worked together to create a very convincing scarecrow (in the centre with the white hat) to keep the birds off away from our crops.

Great job class!

Mr Meadth



It's Harvest Time!

Our Farm it Forward market garden is well and truly up and running this term. Each week our students harvest a bounty of fresh vegetables, which they carefully packed into hessian bags or boxes for our community. There's nothing like sharing the fruits (and veggies!) of our labour!

In our Friday afternoon Nature, Craft, Connection program we snacked on sweet vine-ripened cherry tomatoes wrapped in fresh basil—nature's perfect snack!



We took a natural approach to pest control by introducing persimilis — predator insects that feast on pesky red spider mites. This practice of

biomimicry allows us to work in harmony with nature, helping it thrive while we enjoy the benefits.

We also dove into the art of weaving with our circular and frame looms. This practice is not just about

creating beautiful textiles, but also a powerful act of care. Weaving supports our mental well-being and connects us with community.

Thank you to Farm it Forward for teaching us about nature and the magical world we live in! 🍀🌍



Our Farm Gate is Open for Business

Our delicious fresh organic veggies will be harvested and packed every Friday by the Farm it Forward team and KHS students. Veggie boxes can be ordered through the Farm it Forward website for pick up from school on Friday afternoons from the back gate on Bourne Street. All proceeds from the Veggie boxes go back into running the garden and providing enriching educational programs for our young people. Thank you Farm it Forward for all of your amazing work and support of our school, students and community! 🍏🥒🥕

You can order online [here](#).



Year 10 Set Up Camp!

Year 10 Outdoor Education started our 'Leadership in the Outdoors' unit with a refresh on setting up group tarps. It is important to know how to set up group tarps in a hurry if a storm is coming in!

Mr Huxley.



Have you met our Bodie?!

School Support Dog Bodie was doing a great job this week providing comfort to our Year 7 students during their vaccinations. Skilled at sensing anxiety, Bodie helps to create a calm environment and offers reassurance when it's needed most. 🐕



KHS Out and About

Debating Challenge

Stage 6 Premiers Debating team competed in the first round of the debates against Plumpton High School. Our Year 12 students argued for the affirmative in the topic of "High Schools should be divided into Junior and Senior campuses".

The results were close as they argued about leadership opportunities for the junior school, among other compelling arguments. Unfortunately, they were pipped at the post and narrowly lost the first round. Our debaters were Oliver Gray, Miette Hoekstra, Lu-Anne Angwin and Robbie Corlett.

Musical Theatre Masterclass Selection

We are excited to share a fantastic opportunity for two of our senior Drama students!... Tess Rogan and Malaika Bickford have been selected for an invitation only musical theatre masterclass with Dean Driberg, the Resident Director of Hamilton for a day workshop to be held at Q Theatre in Penrith. This is a rare opportunity to learn from one of the best in the business. Well done Tess and Malaika!



OnStage Excursion

On Monday 10th February, students from Year 10 to HSC travelled to the Seymour Centre in Sydney to attend OnStage, a prestigious showcase of exemplary HSC Drama projects and performances. This event provided students with the opportunity to witness Band 6 drama works from the previous year 1s NSW HSC cohort, offering inspiration and insight into the high standards expected in the subject.



For many students, the excursion was an invaluable experience, allowing them to see first-hand the creativity, talent, and effort required to achieve excellence in Drama. Watching top-tier performances helped them develop a deeper understanding of different theatrical styles, techniques, and storytelling methods. It also gave them practical ideas to apply to their own Individual Performances/Projects and Group Performances. Beyond its academic benefits, the trip was a chance for students to

immerse themselves in Sydney's vibrant theatre scene. The experience was not only educational but also deeply motivating, reinforcing the importance of dedication and originality in drama. Overall, the OnStage excursion was an enriching and inspiring day for Katoomba High's drama students.

Ms Williams, Drama Teacher

KHS Teachers Running for a Great Cause

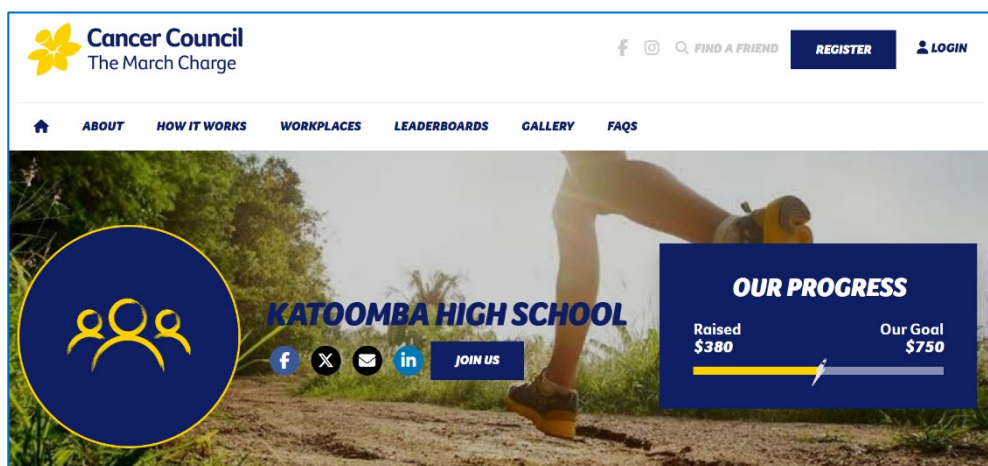
The NSW Cancer Council are running their 'The March Charge' campaign again in 2025 and our very own Mr Liu, Mr Cane and Ms Flint have signed up KHS for the challenge!

They'd like to encourage KHS staff, students, family and community to help by running, walking or swimming 85km (around 3km a day) over March, or help them fundraise, or both, or set your own targets altogether!

This is a great thing for our own personal wellbeing, while raising money for cancer research.

You can sponsor or join the KHS team [here](#)

Or you can register yourself [here](#)



Cancer Council
The March Charge

ABOUT HOW IT WORKS WORKPLACES LEADERBOARDS GALLERY FAQs

KATOOMBA HIGH SCHOOL

OUR PROGRESS

Raised \$380	Our Goal \$750
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JOIN US

The Sports Page

Basketball Domination!

The Katoomba High School Open Basketball teams played against Winmalee High School in a double header at Winmalee. Our girls team took the court first and dominated from the tip off. Lauren and Yanna were pressuring in defence and coming up with lots of steals and easy points. Edie and Taylah were blocking shots and getting rebounds making sure that Winmalee couldn't get points on the board. Final score 49 to 27.

Congratulations on the win girls!

The boys played off next and after a shaky start, took control of the game to coast to a strong victory. Lucas controlled our attack setting up good scoring opportunities for his teammates. John was splashing threes and getting to the rim at will. Isaac and Noah were out defensive base and kept Winmalee out of the paint. Final score 64 to 29. Congratulations on the win boys!

Mr McDonell

Coach



Impressive Volleyball Win!

On the 24th Feb, the boys open volleyball team played a home game against local rivals, Springwood High School. The boys got off to a strong start, leading the first set 13 to 3 when the Springwood team dug deep and scored 9 unanswered points. With cool heads, KHS played calm, measured volleyball to secure the set. The second set saw our boys lock in and play some very strong and strategic volleyball, taking out the game against a gallant SHS. All players participated with great sportsmanship, and it was a pleasure to host Springwood High School. Congratulations on your first-round win and good luck for the next game.

Mr Boothroyd



Up and Coming AFL Talent

Felix Craye in Year 9 (pictured below left) has been playing AFL since 2019 and has been invited back to the AFL Giants Academy for the 3rd year this year.

His regular team is the Greater Western Sydney Alliance, which was originally called the Mountain Lions. Felix celebrated his 50th AFL game last season and participated in the Stephen Corniglio Indigenous and Multicultural program with GWS Giants due to his South African heritage.

Frank Toohey in Year 8 (below right) also played on Felix's team last season. Frank started playing AFL for the first time last year. He loved the experience as is signing up for the Giants team again this year.



Careers Corner

REMINDER: Careers Market

Students in Years 10 and 12 are invited to attend the Careers Market Excursion on Friday 30 May. There are only 30 more places left.

Students wanting to go need to collect a yellow permission note from Mrs Tully and return it with payment to the front office ASAP. To pay online, students must return the note first and then notification for payment will be sent through Sentral. Notes and payments must both be received to secure a place.

Defence Force Talks

Members of the Australia Defence force visited Katoomba High School on Friday 14 February and gave a seminar about the opportunities with the ADF. A big thank you to the personnel who came to speak to us. It was a very valuable and information session.

Mrs Tully
Careers Adviser.



Mrs Tully with ADF Personnel

Alumni Adventures

From KHS to the World Championships!

From a weekly run around at Katoomba Falls Reserve to being selected to represent Australia at the World Championships in Spain, Ultimate Frisbee has taken 21-year-old KHS Alumni and Duke of Ed Gold Award Recipient Kieran

Stodart a long way in just 9 and a half years.



Mr Huxley and Keiren with his Duke of Ed Gold Award.

Ultimate Frisbee is played by about 7 million people in more than 80 countries, with the first World Championship held in 1985. What started as fun as a 12-year-old has turned into a real passion for Kieran who loves both the physicality and ethos of the sport, one he believes has a real "Mountain's feel", as it emphasises inclusion, harmony and community.

In 2022 Kieran began a Teaching Degree at Uni of Wollongong and found great new friends through playing Ultimate Frisbee with local teams winning the "Spirit Award" at Frisbee Championships in 2023. After winning Silver at both the Uni Nationals and Australian Ultimate Frisbee Championships, he was chosen for the U24s Australian Bluebottles to play the 2025 World Championships in Spain in June.

Keiren is currently balancing and an intense training program and team camps with studying, working as a support teacher and tutoring to raise money to get to the World Champs. If you would like to help Kieran along on his journey to Spain, he has just set up a [Go Fund Me page](#) and would be grateful for any support from his Mountain's community. Best of luck Keiran!



The Study Space

New Year, New Study Habits

The start of the new academic year is the perfect time to establish study routines to help build a study habit. Small consistent actions, taken on a daily or weekly basis, will help consolidate learning and lead to greater confidence and success.



Here's some ideas:

- Complete any homework
- Finish any incomplete work
- Catch-up on work missed due to absence
- Create flashcards for self-testing purposes and to promote recall
- Complete a brain dump to see what you can remember from your classwork. Check your brain dump against your work book to identify any gaps in your learning
- Write brief summary notes or a summary sentence
- Create a vocabulary list of key words for each subject/topic

HSC Talks

In week 4, Emmagen and Amy from our 2024 Year 12 cohort gave a talk about their experiences of Year 11 and 12 to interested senior students. The girls offered their best study tips, spoke about how they managed their time – especially around the busy period of the Trial examinations – and answered questions from the students present.

The key takeaways from this for students were about the importance of working consistently, making study notes as you go rather than leaving it to just before the exams, regularly self-testing and using study strategies that rely on active recall.

KHS Study Hub

Students, parents/caregivers can find a small selection of helpful videos on the KHS Study Hub part of our Katoomba high School webpage. Navigate to 'Supporting Our Students' where you will be able to locate the [Study Hub hyperlink](#).

Here you will find short videos on effective study methods, advice on how to create and use flashcards and how a simple 'brain dump' can be a useful study strategy. Senior

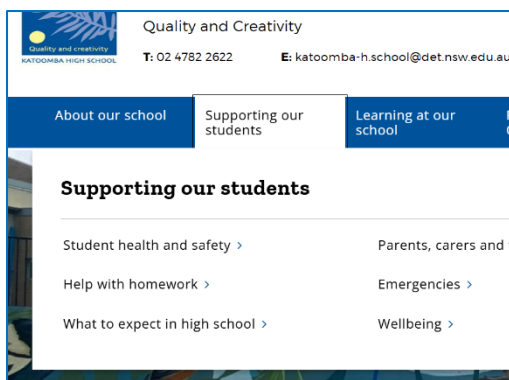
students, and their parents/caregivers, may find the PDF 'Learning how to Learn' a helpful resource which is full to the brim with study advice. Be sure to check back regularly as this site is updated.

After-School Study Centre

We're pleased to announce our new after-school study for any students who would like a quiet, supportive space to complete homework, assignments, or study.

The after-school study centre in the upstairs area of the library will run until 4pm Tuesdays to Thursdays. Students may like to attend regularly or pop in as needed.

The study centre will be supervised by Katoomba High School teachers. Students of all year groups are welcome and encouraged to use the space for completing homework and assignments or to engage in some quiet, independent study.



What's On at School

Call all Women-Kind!

All KHS women-kind students, parents, carers, staff, and community members, including those who identify as women-kind are invited to join is for breakfast on Friday 7 March from 7:30-9:00am for KHS WomenKIND 2025.

The morning will include an inspiring discussion with some amazing women from our community and beyond, including Michelle Lee, former National Geographic 'Adventurer of the Year' and the first woman to row solo, non-stop and unassisted across the Pacific Ocean.

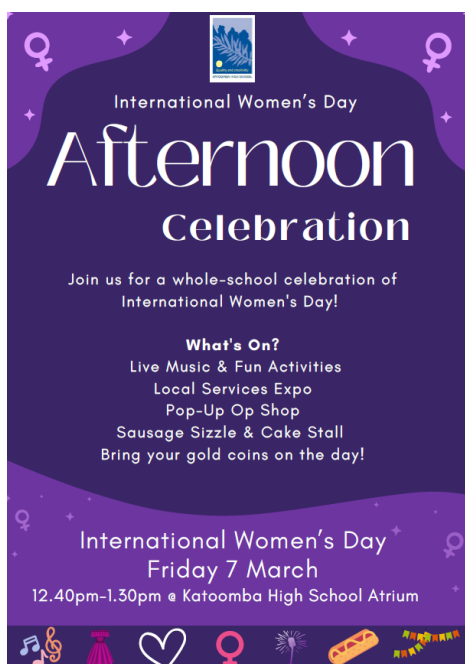
Please RSVP online now at <https://bit.ly/KHSWomenKIND2025> or by calling the school.

We're looking forward to another great KHS community event!



International Women's Day Celebrations!

This Friday, 7 March, we're celebrating International Women's Day with extended lunchtime fund for all students. We will have a short Period 4 and all students are invited to enjoy lunch from 12.40 with a services expo, live music, a pop-up op-shop, fun activities, a sausage sizzle and a cake stall. All proceeds will be donated to DV West support services. Remember to bring your gold coins or card!



Sneak Peek & Open Night

Our Year 6 sneak peek and family open night for all new and prospective students will be held on Tuesday 11 March.

Year 6 students are invited to have a 'sneak peek' around Katoomba High School on Tuesday 11 March from 10am to 1pm. Travel by bus will be organised with local primary schools and a BBQ lunch will be provided by our Student

Leadership Team. Students who are not currently attending a local primary school are also welcome to join us on the day. Please contact us before the day to make arrangements for your visit.

Then all new, future and prospective students are invited to come along to our Family Open Night with parents, carers, family and friends on Tuesday 11 March 6:30pm to 8pm. Meet our Principal, Executive Team, Teachers and Student Leaders and learn all about our school. You can also enjoy a guided tour of the school with our Student Leaders.

We look forward to welcoming everyone to our school!



IT'S NO SECRET THAT WE LIVE IN TROUBLED TIMES. WHAT BETTER ANTIDOTE THAN A BIT OF POSITIVITY? STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO REFLECT ON THE VALUE OF HARMONY AND TO BRAINSTORM HOW THEY CAN CREATE CHANGE IN THE WORLD AROUND THEM.

HARMONY DAY POSTER COMPETITION!

ENTRIES CLOSE 10 MARCH

SPECIFICATIONS: A3 DRAWING, PAINTING OR MIXED MEDIA

PRIZES: \$50 VISA PREPAID GIFT CARD AND A CHANCE TO EXHIBIT WORK IN KATOOMBA LIBRARY

WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY SEE VIKTORIA IN THE LIBRARY. LET YOUR CREATIVITY INSPIRE CHANGE!



ARTWORK BY: YEAR 9 STUDENT – SUHAS WIJESEKARA FROM ST MARGARET'S BERWICK GRAMMAR

Harmony Day Poster Comp

This Harmony Day, we're inviting students to reflect on the value of harmony and brainstorm how they can create change in the world around them.

Celebrated on March 21, Harmony Day is all about inclusivity, respect, and belonging—reminding us that we all have a role to play in building a kinder, more accepting world.

How to Enter: Create an A3-sized artwork (drawing, painting, or mixed media) inspired by the theme "We All Have a Role to Play".

Prizes include a \$50 Visa prepaid gift card, certificate, house points, and a chance to exhibit your poster at Katoomba Library,

Entries close: March 10.

Submit your artwork to Viktoria in the Library.

What Matters? Writing Competition

Some of our KHS English classes will be submitting their work for this excellent writing competition. It's open to all students and a great opportunity to share your writing talents! There are some great prizes to be won too! Find out more [here](#)



WHAT MATTERS? WRITING COMPETITION

Tell us, in up to 500 words, what you think is important or needs to change and why and you could win a great range of prizes, including \$1,500

Open to students from Years 5 - 12

ENTRIES OPEN 7 FEB 2024
ENTRIES CLOSE 17 MAY 2024

More details:
whitlam.org/whatmatters

It's time to raise your voice. Whitlam Institute
WITH A HISTORY OF LEADERSHIP

School Photo Ordering

Any students who missed School Photo Day on 28 Feb can have their photo taken on the catch-up day Friday 7 March. You can still order photos online by going to at www.advancedlife.com.au and entering our school's order code:

1KX K27 R2J

order your school photos now

to order visit: www.advancedlife.com.au
enter code: 1KX K27 R2J



scan to order

or collect a cash order envelope from your school office



advancedlife
SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO

Meet our Team for 2025...

We are pleased to introduce some of our wonderful teaching and support staff for 2025! (We'll feature the rest of our team in the next newsletter)...

Our savvy Senior Executive team...



From Left: Melinda Mungai (DP for Yr 8 & Inclusive Ed), Bradley McLeod (DP for Yrs 9, 11 & 12), Tess Devine (Principal), Brigid Gibson (DP for Yr 7 & 10).

Our super Science team...



Front from Left: Rylan Simone, Julie Polson.

Back from Left: Sean Catterson, Amy Kiah (Yr7 YA) Taara Wilson (Head Teacher), Nadia Prazak, Elizabeth Glasscock (Yr9 YA), James Taylor, Josphine Crimmins

Our terrific TAS team...

TAS: Technology & Applied Sciences



Front from Left: Louise Hanrahan (HT), Hamish Moulder, Marianne Harper, Jock McLaurin, KerryAnn Cawthorne.

Back from Left: Peter Murray, Christian Meadth, Michele Draper, Nikolai Liu (Yr10 YA), Jane Allen

Our marvellous Maths team...



From Left: Alicia Hopkins, Sue Stevenson, Carolyn Jeffrey (HT), Elizabeth Daley, Michael Jones, Steven West, Justin Zeltzer, Sharon McCarthy.

Our exemplary English team...



From Left: Erin Cummings, Belinda Bower, Colleen Fliegner, Anneliese Hoffmann, Jane Hillsley, Renae Bystrzynski (HT), Matthew Defina

Our incredible ILC team...

ILC: Independent Learning Centre



From Left: Marina Brown, Amanda Ward, Janice Mason, Matthew Payne, Lindsey Pachini, Carlo Formosa

Our heroic HSIE team...

HSIE: Human Society and Its Environment



Back from Left: Andrew Finlay (HT), Sam Hewett, Amber Mah, Thomas Hoekstra, Jarrod Regan

Front from Left: Lorna Maher, Emma Coco, Tracie McMahon, John Tognolini

In HSIE we help students understand the world they live in by investigating the past and analysing current affairs. We are focused on explicitly teaching written expression and critical thinking, and we love a historical 'fun fact'! Did you know...

Australia once declared war on emus and lost! In 1932, Western Australia sought assistance from the federal government to eradicate tens of thousands of emus that were destroying crops in the Wheatbelt region. Despite the deployment of soldiers armed with machine guns, the birds outsmarted the military by running in small groups to reduce the size of the target. The emus were also capable of outrunning the army vehicles and their thick feathers were even capable of deflecting some of the bullets. After weeks of attempting to eliminate the birds, they abandoned the plan and suggested the farmers build fences. Shame they didn't think of that in the first place!

Our lovely Library specialist team...



From Left: Viktoria Gulabovski (Student Support Officer), Belinda Bower (HT Secondary Studies), Charmaine Tully (Careers Advisor), Janelle van Capelle (Librarian, Yr12 YA), Elizabeth Wilcox (Library SASS).

Not Pictured: Kim Quirk.

Our charismatic Counsellors...



From Left: Julia O'Brien, Rebecca Patterson, Michael Vidler.

Our sensational SALT team...



From Left: Anna Snelling, Bodhi, Ashlynn Abrahams.

SALT is a Wellbeing & Learning Space. In SALT, our intention is to support students with their learning, as well as their social & emotional needs.

SALT is Built Around Developing Resilience in Students.

Resilience supports you through tough & challenging situations. Resilience can motivate you to persevere & break through difficult times.

SALT is a safe space for students to come & engage with learning & assessments, as well as personal development to support students to reengage with school & prepare for life beyond school.

Our shared values in SALT are respect, honesty & safety. We also agree to commit to a willingness to learn & challenge beliefs about ourselves.

One of the benefits of SALT is the highly student-centred approach that caters for individual student needs on a case-by-case basis.



Newsletter

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2025
Term 1
Week 6

Educational Insights...

The Explicit Teaching of Sentence-Level Writing Skills

The explicit teaching of writing is vital to improving student learning outcomes. In the HSC, it is not simply a matter of what a student knows, but what a student can 'demonstrate' they know. For most subjects, this demonstration of knowledge and understanding is through written expression.

The explicit teaching of writing must begin at the sentence level because vocabulary and grammar are critical building blocks for improving students' overall writing skills. At Katoomba High School we are focused on systematic and structured direct instruction in sentence construction before moving on to more complex writing tasks like paragraphs and essays.

The explicit teaching of sentence-level writing skills ensures clarity, coherence and logical expression of ideas. Student often struggle with run-on sentences, sentence fragments and poor syntax, which require explicit instruction in sentence boundaries, subject-verb agreement and proper punctuation to overcome. These are not things that are simply absorbed, they must be explicitly taught and retaught.

The explicit teaching of sentence-level writing skills involves a step-by-step approach that moves through basic to more advanced sentence structures; simple sentences to expanded sentences to compound and complex sentences. This approach helps students develop analytical and argumentative writing skills that are crucial for academic success.

The explicit teaching of sentence-level writing skills helps improve comprehension and critical thinking skills because writing and reading are interconnected. When students learn to construct strong sentences, they are better able to understand and summarise complex texts, as well as infer meaning.

Below are two examples of sentence-level writing activities to explicitly teach students how to write effective sentences.

Because – But – So

This strategy helps students extend their thinking by completing sentences using different conjunctions (because, but, so). Each conjunction serves a different purpose:

Because: Explains a reason

But: Introduces a contrast

So: Shows a result

The teacher begins by providing a simple sentence:
The Industrial Revolution changed society.

Students are then asked to expand on the simple sentence using 'because', 'but' and 'so'.

*The Industrial Revolution changed society **because** new technology improved production speed.*

*The Industrial Revolution changed society, **but** it also led to harsh working conditions in factories.*

*The Industrial Revolution changed society, **so** many people moved to cities for jobs.*

Expansion Sentence

This strategy helps students expand their thinking by adding detail and complexity to their writing.

The teacher begins by providing a simple sentence:
The scientist made a discovery.

Students are then asked to expand on the simple sentence by using question words (who, what, when, where, why, and how).

Who? - A famous scientist

What? - Made an important medical discovery

When? - In the 19th century

Where? - In a laboratory in London

Why? - To find a cure for a disease

How? - By conducting experiments for years

Students then use the answers to these question words to write an expanded sentence.

A famous scientist made an important medical discovery in a London laboratory in the 19th century by conducting experiments for years to find a cure for a disease.

From the Principal

Dear parents, carers, students & staff,

It's already halfway through Term 1 and I can't believe how quickly the year is progressing! I wanted to take this opportunity to remind everyone of our recent achievements and share our vision for the year ahead. Last year, our students told us in the Tell Them from Me survey and follow-up focus groups that, for the most part, they love the opportunities available to them at Katoomba High, they like that their teachers go the extra mile for them and believe that this is a great school. But they feel that the broader community does not recognise how fantastic we are. So, I want to make sure that we are getting the message out about the great things that happen here at KHS! We are by no means perfect, but we are committed to doing **our best** to ensure our students can **do their best!**

With that in mind, I am going to make sure we share our successes loudly and proudly! In 2024, our students achieved **outstanding results in the Higher School Certificate (HSC)**. 67% of results were in the highest three Bands (4, 5 and 6), smashing our planned targets and increasing by 18% from previous years. We also reduced the number of Band 1 results to only a handful. These results are the product of dedicated students supported by extraordinary staff. The work that has been done over the past few years has improved students' capability academically through the introduction of Study Skills lessons, a focus on subject selection and career trajectories and explicit teaching of writing skills. This has given rise to results that stand out not only within our school but also in comparison to all other schools in the Blue Mountains.

In addition to our HSC successes, our **Reading results** have been particularly noteworthy. We recognise the importance of literacy as a foundation for lifelong learning, and I am thrilled to report that our students' reading levels in Year 7 and 8 are better than state averages. This is an encouraging sign that our focus on literacy, including providing targeted literacy lessons and support, is yielding positive outcomes.

As we look forward to the year ahead, we remain committed to building on these successes. We have four key areas we are working on as part of our **School Excellence Plan**: Improving Reading, Numeracy, HSC results and Attendance. Studies have shown that improvements in these areas directly link to improvement in life outcomes for our students. I want every student to have choices when they leave school, because we have prepared them well.

You can help us achieve this! **Attendance is critical for learning.** When students miss lessons, even one day a fortnight, they miss critical information or skills and have to work hard to regain what they have lost. Everyone gets sick now and then, and we want students to stay home until they are well! But your support in setting the expectation that daily attendance is not optional, avoiding family holidays and trips during term time, particularly in the older years, and prioritising school, helps us all.

Collaboration in other ways is also key to success. Supporting the school's uniform policy helps build pride and improves the way the external community perceive the school. In addition, parent and carer involvement in a child's education can make a significant difference in our collective journey towards excellence. We hope to run sessions in Term 2 to share some ideas about how to support students in their schoolwork as part of our **ParentKind** initiative.

I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead and look forward to what we can achieve together.

Kind Regards,

Tess Devine



Community Noticeboard

OUTDOOR EXPLORE

Youth development program

What's involved:

- Time in nature
- Adventurous challenges
- Positive team dynamics
- Goal-oriented, reflective & creative activities

Benefits:

- Greater physical & mental wellbeing
- Social & team-work skills
- Greater self-efficacy
- Positive view of self
- Management of emotions & more control over behaviour

Why choose us:

- Evidence shows that time in nature with us builds wellbeing
- Our well-rounded professionals can meet a diversity of needs
- Every program is individualised & unique

"They met students where they were at and celebrated each one with kindness and warmth."

REGISTER NOW

1300 00 MYST (6978) | outdoorexplore@myst.com.au | www.myst.com.au

Youth Week 2025 | Creative Arts Competition

To celebrate Youth Week, ACYP are running a creative arts competition for NSW young people aged 12-24. You can submit any type of visual or written piece that represents or speaks to this year's theme, which is about:

- Celebrating every young person's unique strengths
- Recognising your individual and collective power as our current and future influencers, leaders and decision makers

There are three age categories: 12-15 years, 16-19 years and 20-24 years. First, second and third prizes are available for each age category.

1st Place: iPad 10 | 2nd Place: \$300 voucher | 3rd Place: \$200 voucher (vouchers may be for Eckerley's or Officeworks)

All winners will receive a 6 month membership to Skill Share. Upload your entry here.

Submissions close Sunday 6 April at 11:59pm.

acyp.nsw.gov.au/youth-week-art-competition-2025

ACYP NSW

Applications open now!

Young Aboriginal Leaders Program
Parliament of New South Wales

Applications are now open for NSW Parliament's Young Aboriginal Leaders Program! In this residential leadership program, participants will develop leadership and communication skills, learn about parliamentary processes, engage with Aboriginal leaders, and even get the chance to deliver a speech in the Legislative Council Chamber. Find out more: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/yalp

Blue Mountains Safe Space for Suicide Prevention Inc.

2 Station Street - Katoomba

Safe Space is a FREE walk-in, non-clinical service, for people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis. No appointments necessary.

We provide a space where you can safely be heard.

All our volunteers have lived experience of suicide and are trained to provide support to those who may be experiencing emotional distress or suicidal crisis.

WE ARE OPEN

6pm - 9pm
1st, 2nd, and 4th Friday Every Month

Volunteer with us

If you would like to use your experiences to support others, please scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/30PMizz>

All training is provided FREE of charge.

Safe space invites people to apply who have experiences of thoughts of suicide, suicidal crisis, caring for somebody through a suicidal crisis, and having lost someone who has died by suicide.

"As one person I can not change the world, but I can change the world of one person."

Support our efforts

Blue Mountains Safe Space is a charity organisation and relies on your generous donations to continue offering our services locally.

To donate money scan the QR code to the right, or to sponsor us by giving other kinds of gifts and donations contact us via email. All gifts and donations above \$2 are fully tax deductible.

If you do not have a lived experience of suicide but would like to volunteer your time, please contact us via email. We'd love your help behind the scenes supporting our cause.

Email: secretary@bluemountainsaforespace.com.au
Website: bluemountainsaforespace.com.au
Postal Address: PO BOX 17 HAZELBROOK NSW 2779

Blue Mountains Safe Space for Suicide Prevention Inc. is a registered charity and is supported by Roses in the Ocean Ltd.

VIP AUDITIONS

CAN YOU SING?

WE ARE LOOKING FOR ABORIGINAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO LIKE TO SING AND WANT TO PERFORM

DATE: 3RD MARCH 2025
LOCATION: CASULA POWERHOUSE

SCAN QR TO AUDITION TO BE A PART OF VIP & GET THE CHANCE TO DEVELOP YOUR SKILL AS A PERFORMER

KARI Foundation
PO BOX 25
Sydney Markets 2129

#CultureDrivingChange kari.org.au

NSW Education | KARI FOUNDATION

BLUE MOUNTAINS YOUTH EXPO

Do you have a young person starting high school? Find out what's on offer for people aged 12 - 18 years.

UPPER MOUNTAINS EXPO
Tuesday 18 March
5:30 - 7:30pm
Civic Arcade
81-83 Katoomba St, Katoomba

LOWER MOUNTAINS EXPO
Wednesday 26 March
5:30 - 7:30pm
Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub
106 Macquarie Rd, Springwood

STALLS | POP-UP PERFORMANCES | BBQ

Find out about:

- sporting and recreational groups
- free youth services and drop in spaces
- free and confidential wellbeing support

The Expo is free, younger siblings are welcome, and there's no need to register.

blue mountains City Council