



GEELONG GRAMMAR SCHOOL®
EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION

Tuesday 25 February 2020

Dear Families and Friends of Geelong Grammar School,

I am writing to update you on the School community's response and recovery from the tragic incident that resulted in the death of a Year 12 student in Cuthbertson House last Thursday morning.

The love and kindness of our community has been a guiding force for students, staff and families. Over the weekend we continued to grieve, reflect and support each other. Students were provided an opportunity to light a remembrance candle at one of two Chapel Service's on Sunday. An age appropriate Middle School Chapel Service was also held on Saturday evening. It was meaningful to be part of every service across the weekend. It has also been strengthening to look eyes knowingly with so many of our young people; their smiles and embraces are extraordinarily moving. So too are your generous messages of care; thank you for reaching out. Your compassion is restorative.

A voluntary Senior School assembly was held on Monday morning to remind students of our love, pastoral care and specific strategies of support, including academic adjustments. We also discussed the family's decision to hold a private funeral in and plans for a Memorial Service.

As informed by numerous specialists, our focus has now turned to reinstating routine at the School. Following discussions with the boys in Cuthbertson House on Sunday, tomorrow's House Music competition will go ahead as planned. Academic classes have continued as timetabled and our Academic Office is providing additional academic support and delaying internal assessments as required. We are reassured that regular structure is providing certainty and comfort for our learners.

As ever, the health and welfare of our students, staff and their families is our priority. We are identifying, monitoring and assessing those most in need, whilst actively encouraging help-seeking behaviours across our entire community; such behaviours may be best framed as an opportunity to "debrief". Our team of GGS psychologists has been joined by our Chaplains, as well as external counselling expertise to guide students and staff. We are additionally supported by the Barwon Health ACCESS team's 24-hour service and priority referral to a private psychology practice in Geelong. Appointments and referrals are being managed through our [Kennedy Medical Centre](#).

Please continue to visit the [Recent Statements page](#) of the School website for updates and resources to assist you and your families. Specifically, I anticipate the next update will outline plans for a service celebrating Will's life.

The courage of our School family to hold one another with empathy and care is truly remarkable. I thank our connected community for recognising and acknowledging vulnerabilities calmly, carefully and sensitively. So many people have asked me how they can help. My humble suggestion has been to write to the family, who continue to welcome messages from our community. Please address your correspondence as follows:

C/- Rebecca Cody
Geelong Grammar School

Most importantly, we need to live wholeheartedly with an abundance of loving kindness for each other.

With blessings,



Rebecca Cody
Principal



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