

The Shuttle

IN THIS ISSUE

[Headmistress](#)
[Chaplain](#)
[Community](#)
[Junior School](#)
[Senior School](#)

Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.



FROM THE HEADMISTRESS

2021 A year of connection

The Prefects launch their theme: Heart to Heart

Mrs Megan Krimmer
Headmistress

This week our Prefects launched their theme: 'Heart to Heart'. After a year of disconnection, it is so important that we are able to reconnect across the School, albeit being mindful of the ever-changing landscape of COVID-19 restrictions. In her speech to the Senior School, Head Girl, Emma Thornthwaite explained the girls' vision:



"Our theme, Heart to Heart, encapsulates our core vision for Abbotsleigh. Through our theme, we aim to establish genuine connections with our peers by being courageous.

What we love about this phrase, is the way that it highlights the foundations of connection: having honest and open conversations, known as a 'heart to heart'. Furthermore, when we speak from 'the heart', we are speaking deeply not superficially; we are sharing things that really matter to us. 'Heart to heart' conversations rarely 'just happen'; we are often good at sharing superficially, but it takes courage and often a preparedness to be vulnerable, to share deeply.

The phrase 'Heart to Heart' speaks to what we believe are the pillars of genuine connection, courage and vulnerability. Having a 'heart to heart' is the integral middle step in establishing connections and this middle step is so valuable and often overlooked when achieving a goal, hence we wanted to emphasise this in our theme.

Our logo, designed by Athena Zhang, represents our theme through the use of paper planes that are in the shape of hearts. The paper planes symbolise communication and a passage for us to begin to establish genuine connections with one another. Each paper plane in Athena's design is in one of the eight house colours.

As we head into Term 1, I want to encourage you all to think about how you can connect, not only with those in your immediate friendship group, but with those across your entire year group. But let's go further and make an effort to connect with girls in other grades. Currently, year groups are largely siloed, so we tend to stick to our own friendship groups. Why?



ABBOTSLEIGH

Visit the [Parent Portal](#) to edit your profile, view the calendar and view parent notices.

Because we get into habits and it can sometimes be scary and challenging to do otherwise.

Last year, we couldn't connect with others across the School for COVID-safe reasons. We still need to be COVID-safe, but this year is a year for reconnecting with others and strengthening relationships after a year of being disconnected.

However, we want to go even further than just regaining the connections that we had pre-COVID. We want to encourage strong connections across our school – connections of a kind that have not been part of Abbotsleigh yet, and that is where courage is needed. Abbotsleigh is built upon many friendships and connections, and we have the power to take that even further.

I'm confident that as we make connections with each other, we will experience a lot more joy and our lives will be enriched both collectively as a school community and also individually. As the

year unfolds, we will be sharing with you some initiatives that will help us to connect. I want to ask you, what is it that you will do to play your part, starting today?

Imagine if every person sitting in this hall smiled and said "hi" to another student or staff member we that we didn't know, every single day. I challenge you all, both staff and students, to seek an opportunity to build a genuine connection using courage, because together, all of us can make something really beautiful happen here at Abbotsleigh!"

I am sure the girls' vision resonates with everyone in our School community. Our girls want to connect and reconnect with each other, as do our parents.

It was a delight to see our Junior School parents online at the Junior School Information Evening on Tuesday, and we are looking forward to many opportunities to connect with all parents across the School, both online and in person this year.

Our school will **start the chat** about online safety to celebrate Safer Internet Day on Tuesday 9 February 2021.

Safer Internet Day is an opportunity to raise awareness about the safe and positive use of digital technology. It's also a good time to explore the role we can all play in creating a better online community.

This global campaign is celebrated by millions of people in 170 countries across the world.

Help us make every day a Safer Internet Day!

- Join our parent webinar [eSafety's guide to cyberbullying and online drama](#).
- Visit esafety.gov.au/SID for tips to start the chat at school, at home and in your community.



about online safety

Chaplain

Forgotten joys – smashed meringue and oranges

Rev Jenni Stoddart
Chaplain

Many years ago I was working in a community where one of the members was a pastry chef at a top notch Sydney restaurant. One Sunday morning at church she spontaneously invited my husband and me for lunch. I remember thinking, we are in for a treat! And it was. Nearly 20 years later I remember it with great fondness.

We arrived at a house with toys scattered on the floor and children playing. We sat on a back deck together as her top notch knife skills chopped vegetables for salad and her husband chucked a steak on the barbecue. We laughed and talked and it was good. As it came time for dessert, I wondered if the pastry chef would show off a little. I had heard others talk of her extraordinary talents.

After lunch she came back to back to the deck with some oranges, a paring knife and a bowl of what looked

like collapsed meringues – because they were collapsed meringues! She explained that she had had a cooking fail the day before, but that with sweet oranges and a layer of cream they would be delicious. They were.

I had a great lunch that day, but I also learnt the joy of true hospitality. Hospitality is not a perfect home or a perfect meal, but the invitation to be and belong in comfort with another. The Bible has a straightforward verse which says, “Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.” (1 Peter 4:9) My friend showed me how to do it. Keep the focus on the other person and don’t worry too much about showing off your skills or your home. We are all in different circumstances, but I am looking forward to more and more sharing my home with others. We have much to thank God for.

Community

Welcome to the Abbotsleigh Parents’ Association

Dr Ambereen Qureshi
APA President

On behalf of the Abbotsleigh Parents’ Association (APA), I’d like to welcome everyone back to school and especially the new families joining the Abbotsleigh community.

You are automatically members of the APA on commencement of your daughter’s enrolment. It is a diverse, vibrant and supportive community, of which I am deeply honoured to be the President.

The purpose of the APA is to promote friendship within the Abbotsleigh community and to support and assist the School spiritually, practically and financially for the benefit and educational growth of our daughters.

We strive to be inclusive and informative and encourage you to share any ideas or opinions you may have.

The APA, aided by the Year Representatives in each year and Heidi Grout (Community Relations Manager), organise events, such as morning teas, lunches and park playdates for parents to meet on a casual basis and build friendships. Some events are of a larger scale and generate valuable funds that are directed back to the School for projects to benefit students, parents and teachers. You will hear more about these events in the coming weeks so please keep reading *The Shuttle* and emails that you receive from the School.

I would like to take the opportunity to introduce the APA Executive Committee and General Committee for 2021:

APA Executive Committee

President: Ambereen Qureshi
president.abbotsleighapa@gmail.com

Vice President: Deepa Pillay
vicepresident.abbotsleighapa@gmail.com

Secretary: vacant

Treasurer: Qian Zhuang
treasurer.abbotsleighapa@gmail.com

Assistant Treasurer: Greg Fox
foxynet@gmail.com

APR Coordinator: Fan Bai
apr.abbotsleighapa@gmail.com

General Committee members:

Peter Allott
 Allison Hansen
 Caroline Hu
 Nelly Maroon-Yacoub
 Christine McDonell
 Jenny Nathan
 Shining Chen
 Jade Pham
 Katrina Emmett
 Jenny Nathan
 Sue Meldrum

In addition, we have some wonderful parents who have volunteered to be in Liaison Roles taking responsibility for a variety of events or functions.

A heartfelt thank you to Jenny Callagher, Kathy Campbell, Nina Elias, Gaby Fontanot, Michael Lin, Michele Tjeuw, members of the General Committee and all Parent Representatives. The entire Abbotsleigh community is grateful for your time and commitment.

You will be able to find out more about the APA in the [Abbotsleigh Parent Handbook 2021](#). This is easily accessible via the Abbotsleigh app which you can download to your phone.

We aim to make 2021 a year in which we can get together. Although events may be different to those from previous years, they can still be enjoyable and importantly, allow us to spend time together.

We will be complying with COVID-19 restrictions to ensure the ongoing safety of the Abbotsleigh community.

Please keep an eye out for communications about events from the School and/or from your Year Representatives.

A date for your diary

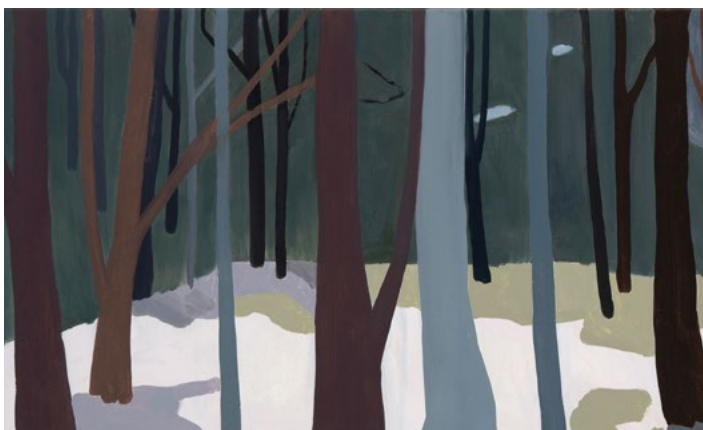
Monday 15 February 2021: APA General Committee Meeting

All parents are welcome to attend (via Zoom). Invitation to follow.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or anyone on the Executive Committee if you have any questions. I will be in touch again in the next couple of weeks with an email giving you more details about the APA and the year ahead.

I hope that 2021 is a great year for one and all.

Forested



Forested

23 January to 20 February 2021



Artwork: Melinda Marshman *Forest Panorama*, Oil on polyester, 61 x 132 cm

23 January to 20 February 2021

A suite of new works by Sydney based artists
Jan Handel, Melinda Marshman and Lisa Woolfe

In response to the practice of *Shinrin-yoku* or Forest Bathing; of being in nature and connecting with it through all our senses.

Please note – Gallery closed Mondays in 2021

Gallery hours: Tue to Sat, 10 am-5 pm FREE ENTRY | Gate 7,
 1666 Pacific Highway, Wahroonga 2076 | 02 9473 7878

gcsgallery@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au | www.gcsgallery.com.au

Visitors to the gallery are asked to abide by social distancing recommendations and are encouraged to wear a mask.



Junior School Week 3 Parent Morning Teas

Kindergarten	Monday 8 February
3G	Tuesday 9 February
3O	Wednesday 10 February
3L	Thursday 11 February
Transition	Friday 12 February

Junior School

Reimagining our Learning Environment: Junior School Centre for Information, Research and Innovation (CIRI)

Ms Sally Ruston
Head of Junior School

It is a wonderful problem to have when our girls are such curious learners and voracious readers that the current library space has become totally inadequate to their needs. Pre COVID times, it was not unusual to have upwards of 60-80 girls cramming into the Palmer Library to access an ever-growing stream of books and resources and to connect with peers to learn and engage. While the library is open again, mandated physical distancing restrictions have become hugely frustrating and limiting as the space is so small and access confined.

As shared at the Parent Information Evening, the new Junior School Centre for Information, Research and Innovation (CIRI) has been meticulously planned to dominate the centre of the Junior School as a statement to the importance we place in growing critical, creative thinkers who are curious about their world and ever willing to enquire, explore and grow.

This space will allow access to all; something that is currently not possible in the current library, which is stepped over three levels. Providing access to each space to all girls, staff and parents, irrespective of their mobility needs, is an ethical issue in a community that considers itself to be just and modelling integrity. Equally this space will allow our book collection to be housed in one accessible location. Currently, tucked away satellite libraries proliferate in the Junior School as the library space just won't hold the collection in a single location.

This build opens up so many possibilities for our girls and community. Aesthetically inviting indoor and outdoor learning spaces are architecturally designed to capture the imaginations of the young. These spaces are technology and resource rich, including an immersive dome enabling augmented reality experiences to be routinely integrated. Rooms are flexible and can expand in size to seat from one



in an inviting nook to 300 in the auditorium. Bookshelves, desks and furniture are moveable to enable optimal flexibility that is responsive to changes in learning needs. We are creating an interconnected space; one where girls will congregate, engage and collaborate. Equally we are building a transparent space where learning and innovation are visible inside and out, generating brilliant environments for our girls.

We are intent on future proofing our students so that today, tomorrow and as they become the thought leaders in our world in the future, they are best placed to thrive and make a difference.

As discussed at the Parent Information Evening, for families wishing to contribute to the building of this most remarkable project, please [click here](#).

Anxiety burners to resilience builders

Ms Sally Ruston
Head of Junior School

We understand implicitly that deep, sustained learning is only possible when a child believes they are in a safe, nurturing space where their wellbeing needs are met. Children who are fearful, upset, anxious and worried have their cognitive brain capacity consumed by such concerns. They do not have space to focus in class to new learning demands or the ability to cope with minor setbacks. Everything appears 'too hard' and unachievable. This is especially so when events outside our control limit our autonomy and activity such as we have experienced with COVID-19. While much work was done last year in supporting girls and their families through these challenging times, this work is not finished and will continue unabated. Please take time to read the Wellbeing Booklet sent home with your daughter on Wednesday after our Wellbeing presentation on Tuesday evening at the Parent Information Evening.

Again this year, we need to focus our teaching and parenting on how to support our girls in building skills of resilience, positive self-talk and the ability to self-regulate their emotions. Of particular concern is the recent emerging trend of an increase in anxiety across primary schools in Australia. School psychologists are reporting that more than 70% of their time is being occupied by students presenting with anxiety. Such limiting behaviours can be generated through real time as well as online engagement. I commend to parents the [Pre K-12 Wellbeing Matters document](#) as well as the year group specific wellbeing booklets distributed earlier this week to each family.

We are committed to 'taking this anxiety bull by the horns' by being proactive in helping our girls build skills of resilience

and the ability to engage in positive self-talk and adopt known strategies to combat this negative trend.

To support the girls in building resilient behaviours we continue to deliver the well-researched and successful *You Can Do It!* Program from Early Learning to Year 6. The program has been revised and we are now also delivering the program for high school students to our Senior School girls as well. In assembly this week I charged Infants girls with being vigilant and reporting to me peer behaviours that modelled the wellbeing keys of:

- getting along
- persistence
- organisation
- confidence
- resilience

In Primary assembly, I focused on our School Values of:

- Integrity – *we do what's right, not what's easy*
- Respect – *We value everyone for who they are*
- Courage – *We dare to take risks*
- Compassion – *We lift each other up*
- Perseverance – *We get up, we don't give up*

We have bookmarks to be presented in assembly to highlight the behaviours we are seeking to 'call out' and reinforce.

As a resource to parents, we commend to you the work of Prof Carol Dweck who researches, speaks and presents extensively on the topic of 'growth mindsets'. In relation to intelligence verses effort she comments:

"Emphasising effort gives a child a variable that they can control. They come to see themselves as in control of their success, emphasising natural intelligence takes it out of the child's control, and it provides no good recipe for responding to failure."



She goes on to state:

"When you praise kids' intelligence and then they fail, they think they're not smart anymore, and they lose interest in their work. In contrast, kids praised for effort show no impairment and often are energised in the face of difficulty."

I commend [this article](#) to you titled, *The Secret to Raising Smart Kids*, where Prof Dweck's research on this topic is accessibly presented. Additionally, I share here research from the Alliance of Girls Schools on the importance of parenting that builds

independence, self-efficacy and resilience. [This article](#) speaks loudly to the limiting paradigm created by 'helicopter parenting' in particular.

I conclude by sharing a quote of grounded advice from Ellyn Satter who writes:

"Your job as a parent is not to make your child's way smooth, but rather to help her develop her inner resources so she can cope." And I would add 'thrive'.

Engaged parents = engaged girls

Ms Sally Ruston
Head of Junior School

I warmly encourage you to make note of the following upcoming events we would love to see you at this year. Invitations to follow:

- **Class Morning Teas** from 7.45 am
- **Kindergarten to Year 2 Literacy and Numeracy Parent Information sessions** – Tuesday 2 March 7-8 pm or Friday 5 March 9.30-10.30 am
- **Year 4 Father and Daughter Dinner** – Thursday 18 March, 6-8 pm
- **Year 4-6 Easter Chapel Service** – Tuesday 30 March 8.30-9.15 am
- **Kindergarten to Year 3 Easter Chapel Service** – Tuesday 30 March 9.30-10.15 am
- **Visiting our Grace Cossington Smith Gallery** – 10 am-5 pm Tuesday to Saturday
- **Transition and Years 2, 4 and 6 Pink Mother and Daughter Breakfast** – Term 2
- **Kindergarten and Years 3 and 5 Grandparents Day** – Term 3

I very much look forward to sharing this year with you. We are committed to engaging virtually with you when COVID restrictions preclude face to face interactions. As we collaborate, we are able to see the best of outcomes for your daughters.

Keeping our girls safe

Ms Sally Ruston
Head of Junior School

To ensure that our campus is safe for our girls and staff, we have multiple measures, procedures and protocols in place. Please note the following carefully as there have been changes due to COVID-19 restrictions, so that we can work together to create the respectful, inclusive and nurturing environment that we know is essential to our girls' thriving:

- Health Department mandates preclude parents from visiting the school campus during the day. The exception to this when you have a prearranged appointment with a member of our staff. On such occasions, it is essential that you report to Reception to complete our COVID sign in protocol. We then know who is on campus and whom we need to account for in the case of an emergency, including for contact tracing purposes.
- We ask parents *not to bring in forgotten items*. We do this to provide opportunities for girls to find solutions to the problem created, learn from the experience and realise that they are resilient, resourceful and independent learners.
- At dismissal time, girls are brought to collection points in both the Lower and Upper Car Parks.
- Parents collecting their daughter from after school activities are to meet their daughter at the designated collection point

within 10 minutes of the session concluding. Please read all communication for each activity carefully as collection locations differ.

- Girls arriving before 7.50 am are gathered and signed into Before School Care to ensure their duty of care is maintained. Similarly, girls not collected by 3.40 pm or 10 minutes after a co-curricular activity concludes are also signed into After School Care to ensure supervision is maintained until parents arrive.
- When dropping your daughter at school, please ensure that you only use the undercover drop off and car park facility located adjacent to the roundabout at the end of Woonona Avenue.
- We are thrilled that we have had a large proportion of families who have completed the volunteer Working With Children Check and registered their details with us. You must complete this process in order to be able to assist in class, on excursions and in the Tuckshop. Please [click here](#) to complete this process.

With parents and educators being alert, considerate and responsive, we are well placed to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all.

Positions of responsibility

Ms Sally Ruston
Head of Junior School

We warmly congratulate the following students in Kindergarten to Year 2 who have been appointed as SRC Representatives and students in Years 3-5 who have been appointed to Class Captain and Vice Class Captain roles for this Term.

Term 1 Responsibilities 2021

SRC Representatives

- KG** – Charlotte Comanos, Scarlett Wong
KO – Dinuli Wijesiriwardena, Adaline Lu
1G – Jordana Curry, Finty Lan
1O – Caitlyn Wong, Olivia Liang
2G – Emily Du, Ava Yoganathan
2O – Hannah Hong, Jacqueline O'Connell

Class Responsibility

- 3G**
Class Captain – Heidi Chan
Vice Captain – Georgia Whyburn

- 3O**
Class Captain – Anika Aggarwal
Vice Captain – Amara Khiroya

- 3L**
Class Captain – Enya Zhang
Vice Captain – Caroline Si

- 4G**
Class Captain – Siena Yang
Vice Captain – Annabel van der Vlies

- 4O**
Class Captain – Saskia McDonald
Vice Captain – Stephanie Huang

- 4L**
Class Captain – Savannah Tan
Vice Captain – Eliza Gibb

- 5G**
Class Captain – Mia Micallef
Vice Captain – Amelia Whelan

- 5O**
Class Captain – Millie Morrison
Vice Captain – Alma Zentner-Pitman

- 5L**
Class Captain – Ishana Saha
Vice Captain – Mia Perrin

- 5D**
Class Captain – Isabel Wood
Class Vice Captain – Ria Kim

Pick up after AbbSchool activities

Ms Cass Chan
AbbSchool Supervisor

It has been a busy week for girls before school, at lunchtime and after school as AbbSchool activities kicked off this week. Just a reminder to all parents, that girls participating in AbbSchool activities after school must be collected from the activity venue itself. This was outlined in the AbbSchool Conditions on the enrolment forms:

All Junior School students attending AbbSchool activities must be collected from the activity venue within 10 minutes of its completion. After this time students will be escorted to Before and After School Care to ensure appropriate supervision and care is provided. Parents will be charged accordingly for the use of BASC.

Junior School Music

Mrs Hilary Luck
Head of Junior School Music

Ensembles 2021

It has been lovely to hear the Poole House corridors full of music this week as girls from Years 3-6 have been auditioning for ensembles. Notification of ensemble allocations will be communicated early next week and will also be available on the Music notice board outside Mrs Luck's office. Please note that ensembles in Week 3.

Year 5 Hand Bells 2021

Please ask all interested Year 5 girls to meet Mrs Luck in the upper Music Room on Tuesday at lunchtime. This ensemble will rehearse on Thursday mornings.

Year 2 and 3 Instrumental Programs

Allocation information and permission forms will be distributed in Week 3. Please ensure that these are returned as soon as possible as girls will not be able to take their instruments home until slips have been returned.

Getting sporty in the Junior School

Mr Paul Guirrerri
Head of JS Sport and PDHPE



IPSHA Saturday Sport

We have a huge number of girls participating across Years 3-6 this term with 21 soccer teams and eight water polo/flippa ball teams entered! The girls all did a fabulous job at last Saturday's trials and again at training this

week. Team sheets will be sent home early next week and will include the team list, draw, wet weather and venue information. These will also be placed on the Parent Portal and uploaded to the Abbotsleigh parent app. Just a reminder that we have our Years 3-6 soccer session this Saturday morning, 8-9 am on the Senior School Synthetic Field, Year 4 flippa ball from 10-11 am in the JS Pool and flippa ball/water polo from 10-11 am for Year 5 and 11 am-12 noon for Year 6 at the Abbotsleigh Aquatic Centre.

A reminder that to ensure we can comply with our COVID safety protocols, we are unable to have parents/spectators at these sessions in the Senior School (Synthetic and Aquatic Centre) this Saturday. We will be back to having spectators at our soccer

venue when the IPSHA competition kicks off next Saturday 13 February (Week 3).

Primary swimming and diving trials and carnivals

It was wonderful to see such an enthusiastic approach to the swimming and diving trials this week. These trials help to prepare the girls for the Primary Swimming Carnival, which will be held on Friday 12 February at the Senior School Aquatic Centre. Thank you to all the parents who assisted at the trials. It was wonderful to be able to have a limited number of parents help us at this event.

The Junior School Diving Carnival will be held this coming week on Thursday 11 February from 2.30-3.30 pm. If your daughter has been selected to attend this carnival she will have received a detailed note after the trials this week. These girls have a training session at the Abbotsleigh Aquatic Centre this Saturday 6 February from 12-2 pm to help prepare them for the carnival. We are looking forward to seeing some spectacular dives in our fabulous Aquatic Centre venue.

Girls selected from our school swimming and diving carnivals will go on to represent Abbotsleigh at the IPSHA Swimming and Diving Carnival on Tuesday 2 March at Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre.

Cross country training

Cross country training will be held in the Junior School on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 7.15-8 am commencing next week. All girls in Years 2-6 have been invited to attend one of these sessions weekly to develop fitness ahead of the Junior School Cross Country Carnival on Tuesday 9 March. Notes have been emailed to all Years 2-6 parents and sign ups should have already been completed.

Transition to Year 2 Intensive Swimming Week

Notes were distributed earlier this week for our Transition to Year 2 Intensive Swimming Week, 15-19 February. Parents need to ensure that they have read all of the information and completed the online survey form as soon as possible.

Click on the links below to fill out the forms.

- [Transition survey form](#)
- [Kindergarten to Year 2 survey form](#)

Student success

Mrs Carmen Gaspersic
Deputy Head of Junior School

Congratulations to Isha Bose (6G), whose Rainwater Filtration System invention made the shortlist for the Aussie Students that Changed the World competition.

Hundreds of amazing entries were received and only 11 entries made the Primary shortlist. The winners will be announced shortly.

Senior School

Year 12 Conference

Eleanor Wheatley
Vice Head Prefect Houses

Last week Year 12 travelled to Galston Gorge for the Year 12 Conference. Our two days at the CRU campsite were filled with outdoor activities such as rock climbing and abseiling, while also looking at study skills and routines to carry with us into the year ahead.

We heard from three past HSC students who shared their wisdom and recommendations for a balanced HSC year, and from Dr Prue Salter, who gave the year group some constructive tips and techniques, such as spaced repetition and learning in alpha state, to build our repertoire of strong study habits.

Over the two days, our year group also engaged in discussions with the CRU staff about big picture questions, asking about ideas such as life beyond school and Christianity. The conference was a time for strengthening bonds before being launched back into the weekly routine of school. Team building activities and a movie night were a great way to spend time with our friends and peers, strengthening those meaningful connections which will support us as we take on Year 12.



An interview with our new Head of Boarding

Questions compiled by the boarders

Answers bravely supplied by Mrs Fairleigh



As we settle into 2021, we are pleased to welcome Mrs Chemane Fairleigh as our new Head of Boarding. The girls were keen to get to know her, and so conducted the following interview.

1. Where did you grow up?

I was born and raised in a large town called Watford in Hertfordshire, which sits just outside the Greater London circle.

2. What schools have you worked at previously?

I have been very lucky to work at some amazing schools! My first job was at a girls' independent boarding school called St Helen's in Middlesex, Greater London.

I have worked in two schools in Hong Kong, The South Island School and Harrow International School of Hong Kong and most recently I worked at the SCOTS PGC College in Warwick, Queensland.

3. Other than Australia, what country was your favourite to work in?

I have spent 11 years in Hong Kong so I would have to say it was my favourite place to live and work.

4. What attracted you to a career in boarding?

In my first job, the boarding community was made up just of international students and there really wasn't much of a social program for them in those days. I remember spending time with the girls and being amazed by their bravery to be educated overseas away from their family. I enjoyed supporting them and the joy I was able to get from being a part of their world. That experience inspired me to one day run my own house and I was able to achieve that when I worked in Hong Kong.

5. What are you most passionate about?

I am most passionate about my family and ensuring that they are happy and grow up to be people of great character. I guess you can say that it's the same when I think of my role here in Abbotsleigh boarding.

6. What is your favourite sport to play?

Once upon a time I was a useful netballer. I still love to watch it and will be supporting the GWS Giants this season.

7. Who do you live with?

I live with my husband and our three children, Samuel (9), and Ashley and Ben (5).

8. Do you have family in Sydney?

My husband was born and raised on the NSW Central Coast and his family are mainly based there. I have family in Sydney also, so it is great to be living in such a central place to visit them.

9. What drew you to Abbotsleigh?

It has been a long time since I worked in a girls' school and when I reflected on that time, I remembered how amazing and special that experience was. When I saw the opportunity at Abbotsleigh and read about the School, I was drawn to the school's commitment to empower each individual and encourage every girl to achieve her own personal best. Black and gold are also my favourite colours, so it was meant to be!

10. What's your favourite food/what is your signature dish that you make at home?

I absolutely love Italian food – pasta dishes are my favourite and I make a mean spaghetti carbonara. However, I also love the tastes of Asia and will eat Thai food all day long if I could. My kids really love my spaghetti bolognese and lasagne.

11. What's your favourite place?

My favourite place in the whole world ... hmm. I love the beach and the ocean so would have to say Thailand or Bali or the Caribbean, where my parents are from. For me, standing on the sand looking out of the waves brings me inner peace.

12. What inspires you?

People inspire me!

13. If you won Lotto, what would you do or buy?

I'd buy my UK-based family a home out here so they could live without the constant fear of COVID-19.

14. What are your goals for boarding?

This is a great question! I have some ideas and goals, but ultimately, I want to collaborate with boarding staff and the boarders to set out our plan for this year. Your Boarding Coordinators will let you know how you can be involved shortly.

Our goal will be to have happy, confident, healthy girls of great character leave us in Year 12 and make a positive impact on the world outside of the Abbotsleigh gates.

15. What is your favourite thing about boarding?

I love the noise, laughter and drama a boarding house brings. It comes to life during term time – it is exciting and vibrant and challenging and busy and emotional and fun! Without the boarders – it is just a plain old house.

What a weekend!

Annie Duff and friends

Boarders

The boarding community from Years 7 to 12 enjoyed a fun packed first weekend back at school together after a relaxing and rejuvenating holiday. We kicked off on Friday with a movie night spent within our houses, getting to know the new girls and enjoying being back together.

On Saturday morning, the kitchen staff provided us with a lovely brunch in the boarding houses which was appreciated by all. After brunch about 120 girls and 20 staff, filled with excitement, loaded onto two buses and headed west for Raging Waters. Upon arrival, we dropped our gear in our designated area and got straight to the water slides. Every girl had an absolute splash in the water, and some were even brave enough to have a go on the 360 rush!

Sunday was an action-packed day of activities, which was tremendous fun for all. Our bright and cheery Year 7 boarders were lucky enough to spend a day off campus getting to know their day girl buddies and new city families. Our Abbotsleigh Year 7 city families did an amazing job welcoming the new boarders to Sydney. Their generosity is all about strengthening connections within the day school and their boarding group.

For the Sunday Funday, Years 8, 9, 10 and 12 were designated a colour and an animal for their theme for the day, with the Pink Flamingos winning best dressed. We had a variety of COVID-safe activities such as theatresports performances and slam poetry, which provided great entertainment and lots of laughs. The winners received some edible prizes, so there was certainly some healthy competition between year groups. To finish off the day, Years 8 through 10 headed down to the Aquatic Centre for some water-based games, including a boarding crowd favourite, synchronised swimming!

The weekend was enjoyed by all. It certainly helped bring the boarding community closer together in spirit after all the social distancing of 2020.

We have begun the year by strengthening friendships within and we look forward to more fun to come!



COVID-19 update for the boarding houses

Mrs Chemane Fairleigh
Head of Boarding

Face masks

The wearing of face masks is compulsory for all persons over the age of 12 on public transport, in indoor shopping centres, cinemas and restaurants. It is now school practice that all students will need to wear a face mask when visiting the local village and on school provided transportation.

Social distancing

Boarders need to continue to adhere to social distancing rules in the houses. For this reason, boarders will remain in their 'boarding bubble' for most recreational boarding activities. Mealtimes will continue to be served in each house to minimise the interaction between year groups in accordance with the Department of Health guidelines.

Gym access

Boarding staff are currently working with the School to provide week day access to the gym for boarders after school. This program is still in its developmental stages and should be available to boarders from next week.

Weekend outings

We are now able to engage in outings for Years 7 and 8. Mrs Clemenger and her team will be planning activities for the girls to enjoy which will fall predominately on Sunday afternoons/evenings.

Boarding staff are currently examining the provisions for Shopping Leave and this will be communicated shortly.

Abbotsleigh music ensembles rehearsal schedule 2021

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Before school	Symphony Orchestra: PDCH, 7 am (From Term 2)	String Ensemble: PDCH, 7 am Sinfonietta:Lecture Theatre, 7 am	Camerata: PDCH, 7 am	JazzEnsemble: PDCH, 7 am	
Recess				Vocal Groups extra Rehearsal time: C5	
Tutor		Assembly	Annabelle Lo Ext Ensemble: PDCH		Choir: Aud (From Term 2)
Lunch	Year 12 concert prac: PDCH Brass Ensemble: Lecture Theatre	Choir: PDCH Year 12 Ext Ensemble Percussion EnsembleForum TEK Piano Trio: C1	Vocal Ensemble: C1 Cl/Sax Ensemble: Forum Chamber Music: Lecture Theatre	CRU	Flute Ensemble: Lecture Theatre Chamber Choir: C1 Year 12 Ext: Ensembles:
After school		Musical Rehearsal	Musical Rehearsal Symphony Orchestra: PDCH, 3.45-5.10 pm (From Term 2)	Year 9/10 Band: Forum 3.40- 4.25 pm	Year 11/12 Band Forum 4.30- 5.15 pm

