Imagine…

Mrs Megan Krimmer | Headmistress

Imagine, written by John Lennon in 1971, was his plea to the world to eliminate the things that he believed caused division and war so that we could all ‘live as one’. ‘Imagine’ – not the song – is the theme of our National Day Against Bullying and Violence: ‘Imagine a world without bullying and violence’.

Perhaps a world like this would see people behaving in the way in which one of our School Bible verses exhorts us: ‘whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things…’ (Philippians 4: 8).

Imagine the media reporting on this sort of behaviour...

Imagine social media being full of high ideals and praise for what others are doing...

Imagine everyone being focused on what is good for others...

‘Pollyanna’ perhaps, but wouldn’t it be amazing?

We certainly encourage our girls to try to behave in this way. The girls want to do this – you can see it in the very fine Christian values they choose to underpin the way we behave and treat each other – respect, compassion, courage, perseverance, integrity.

Sometimes, though, they and we do not live up to these ideals, and sometimes a very few girls behave in a way that does not demonstrate the respect with which they should treat every other human being. This happens in every community, and when it happens we need to deal with it appropriately.

I actually dislike the term ‘bullying’. In the first instance, I dislike it because it is a very negative label that people bandy around about almost any form of disagreement or falling out. Secondly, the label seems to send people into a flurry over definitions – is this bullying, or isn’t it? If it is, this should happen; if it isn’t, then this should happen. On the other side of the coin is another negative label: ‘victim’. No one I know wants to be labelled, or treated as, a ‘victim’.

This is not to deny that bullies and victims do not exist. I just don’t think labels are helpful. Instead, I think all poor behaviour, either in person or online – treating someone with disrespect; ganging up on someone to ‘demand’ your own way or to put someone down; the list goes on – should be called out and dealt with. If someone is behaving in a negative way towards others, that person actually needs help. If someone is being treated poorly, they also need help. Appropriate consequences for poor behaviour are certainly needed, but I emphasise the word ‘appropriate’. I know that, as parents, when we see our sons or daughters upset, we often ‘want blood’; this is, of course, counter-productive.

That being said, there is a great video clip on the National Day Against Bullying and Violence website that does highlight what bullying is and isn’t and how we should respond to this very negative form of behaviour.

Abbotsleigh is supporting the 2018 National Day against Bullying and Violence. We are reinforcing in Junior and Senior School assemblies the importance of respectful relationships both in person and online. We are also reminding the girls of the steps that can be taken and the people, both at school at a home, who are there to support them if they feel they are being
bullied. We have National Day against Bullying wristbands for each girl to remind them of this year’s theme: ‘TAKE A STAND TOGETHER’.

Two weeks ago, I wrote about our guest speaker at our Senior College Breakfast, Heather Hawkins. In her autobiography, Heather writes about being bullied at high school:

‘Life has its light and shade and we had bullies at high school who’d tear confidence apart with their words … They called me ugly and uncool. I pretended to ignore them, and acted like it didn’t hurt, but it did. I felt powerless, humiliated …

Heather’s mother helped her through this and Heather acknowledges that the experience assisted her to become a better person – it made her ‘a whole lot more understanding and accepting of others, and mindful of [her] words. Words are powerful and they need to be used for good …’

Despite the positive outcome, Heather’s experiences at school were not OK, and should your daughter ever be treated in such a way here, I encourage you to contact the School. This takes courage on your and your daughter’s part, but it is the first step towards resolving issues positively.

I have had the great pleasure of spending a number of days with Year 10 girls in Canberra this week. The girls were positive, enthusiastic, they looked out for others and they were kind. I have had similar wonderful feedback about the girls’ behaviour from the other Senior School Challenge Week activities. I would love it if all our girls could behave like this all the time and, although I firmly believe our girls are amazing, I am not so naive as to believe they, or indeed any of us, are perfect.

Nevertheless, I can still dream and imagine what our School and our world would look like if everyone treated each other with deep and genuine respect and compassion, all day every day.

You may say I’m a dreamer
But I’m not the only one
I hope some day you’ll join us
And the world will be as one

John Lennon, 1971

**Chaplain**

**A Snapshot of Year 7 Camp**

Rev Jenni Stoddart | Chaplain

Can you spot challenges, joy and shenanigans? Can you spot Rev on a bike and Mrs Collins on a flying fox? Can you spot great food, great energy and great friendship? Can you spot the wonder of being in God’s beautiful creation?

Psalm 19: The heavens tell about the glory of God. The skies show that his hands created them. Day after day they speak about it. Night after night they make it known.
Parent Engagement and Informal Community Connections
Ms Sally Ruston | Head of Junior School

Research is clear in documenting that parent involvement in their children’s education from an early age has a significant effect on educational achievement. Such benefits are seen well beyond Junior School and continue into secondary school, university and adulthood. Research from the Department of Children, Schools and Families in the UK found the following:

- The quality and content of fathers’ involvement matters more for children’s outcomes than the quantity of time fathers spend with their children.
- Family learning can also provide a range of benefits for parents and children including improvements in reading, writing and numeracy as well as greater parent confidence in helping their child at home.
- The attitudes and aspirations of parents and of children themselves predict later educational achievement.

International evidence suggests that parents with high aspirations are also more involved in their children’s education. Thus, it has been most affirming to see our parents taking up the numerous opportunities to come to know each other and staff and to hear of the exciting programs being experienced by the girls. From the Headmistress’ welcome at the start of the year to our Year Group Morning Teas, which concluded with our Year 2 Morning Tea today, and the parent information sessions so well attended this term, we see your determination to be connected with the School community and involved in your daughter’s education. These events have been well attended and I thank our Class Parents for their great organisation and the welcoming spreads, which have facilitated such great opportunities for community to be built.

Parent support at the Swimming Carnival and again at the Cross Country Carnival is so very much appreciated by the girls and staff. This coming week we are looking forward to grandparents of girls in Kindergarten, Year 3 and Year 5 joining us for Senior Citizens Week. As Easter approaches, we would very much like parents and grandparents to join us in the School Chapel in the Senior School for our Easter Services, which will be held on Tuesday 27 March at the following times:

8.30–9.15 am Parents and girls in Years 4-6
9.30-10.15 am Parents and girls in Kindergarten–Year 3

Informal Community Connections

While the foregoing lists the numerous ways in which the School structures opportunities for families to engage, parents additionally look to connect much more informally through the Parent Representative organised functions, individually organised birthday parties and play dates. There is also a plethora of online mediums that families find useful in connecting and engaging.

I take this opportunity to remind parents that our children are wonderfully observant mimics. They see how we behave when we interact with each other and are quick to adopt these patterns, phases and stances in their own practice with their peers. When our behaviour is positive, supportive and empathic, our girls learn that this is what is expected. I therefore seek parent support in ensuring that language used promotes positive relationships and is respectful of the wonderful diversity of our unique girls. Negative labelling of children, directions to prohibit play or open discussions of children in public settings, such as birthday parties, are exceptionally unhealthy and damaging. If parents have concerns about their child and the interactions of others, such concerns need to be brought to the attention of the class coordinator or myself. The School is well placed to ensure all interactions are directed towards positive learning and growth. Let our actions and words be those we will admire when mimicked by our children.

Literacy and Numeracy
Ms Sally Ruston | Head of Junior School

We were delighted to have such an enthusiastic response from parents interested in learning more about Infant Literacy and Numeracy in our Information sessions, held on Tuesday 13 March and again this morning. These sessions were designed to introduce parents to strategies they can use at home to enhance and support their daughter’s reading and number skills.

Abbotsleigh girls enjoy a very rich Literacy program that features fiction and nonfiction texts equally. We also encourage the girls to borrow a wide range of books from the Palmer Library.

Parents are able to access the information booklet distributed at the sessions. My sincere thanks to our T-2 Coordinator, Peita van Bussel, and our Mathematics Specialist, Sally Southan, whose initiatives these were.

In addition to this, please be aware that our parent section in the Palmer Library continues to grow and parents are encouraged to take good advantage of this facility. The Library is open at 8 am and again from 3.15-4 pm, during which times we encourage parents to come along and borrow with their daughters. Titles particularly relevant to promoting a love of literature and mathematics in the home include:

- The Book With No Pictures by B.J. Novak; This is a Ball by Beck Stanton and Matt Stanton, Reading Magic by Mem Fox; Rocket into Reading by Jackie French; The Reading Bug and How You Can Help Your Child to Catch It by Paul Jennings; Reading Right from the Start by Toni S. Bickart and Diane Trister Dodge; Don’t Leave Childhood Without: a guide to the best books for children; A family of readers: The book lover’s guide to children’s and young adult literature by Roger Sutton and Martha V. Parravano; The Doorbell Rang by Pat Hutchins; Happy Birthday Sam by Pat Hutchins; The Very Busy Spider by Eric Carle; A Lion in the Night by Pamela Allen.
Click here and book now

AbbSchool
JUNIOR ACTIVITIES
SPECIAL STUDENT FREE DAY PROGRAM

Bookings are now open for the
Junior Activities student free day program

The holiday program provides fun and interesting activities for boys and girls from the local community.

Palmer Library book covering working bee

Wednesday 28 March 2018
Any time between 8.30 am and 2 pm
Lower Everett Space, Junior School
Please sign in at Junior School reception on arrival
Daughters dining with dads
Ms Sally Ruston | Head of Junior School

The Year 4 Father and Daughter Dinner was held on Thursday night. It was a true delight to see the joy taken by both the girls and dads as they shared a special evening in the impressive School Dining Room while the majority of boarders were out on Challenge Week Activities. Congratulations to Cecelia He, Nicole Gabonian and Cate Atkinson, who spoke most appropriately, and to all the girls, who made their dads very proud as they sang I've Lost My Homework and Not So Boring Minuet. Veronica Charteris’s self-composed piano solo and the Year 4 Quartet of Kaitlyn Au-Yeung, Kaitlyn Blair, Alisha Ly and Meanie Wong playing Can Can, were certainly highlights of the night. Thanks also to the following mums for their meticulous and creative organisation of this event: Susan Dimitropoulos, Katrina Emmett, Karthika Gunalingam, Margot Klockmann and Sandra Miranda-Clark.

The toast to the girls was presented by Dr Andre Kam, who shared the collective pride of all dads in their daughter’s growth and achievements.

I took time to point out some of the history associated with the wonderful space that is the School Dining Room, and which features the portraits of Miss Marian Clarke, painted by her friend and renowned artist Tom Roberts, as well as our newest portrait, that of our 10th Headmistress, Mrs Judith Poole.

National Ride2School Day
Ms Sally Ruston | Head of Junior School

What a wonderful motivation for the girls to ride to school on their bike or scooter on National Ride2School Day on Friday 23 March! This is a great way for girls to include physical activity as part of their daily routine. We encourage girls to ride or walk to school next Friday, and hope that the joy to be had in such an activity will ensure that it becomes a healthy habit.

Below are some tips for ensuring that your daughter is riding her bike safely.

- Always wear a correctly fitted, approved bike helmet
- Obey traffic lights and signs
- Ride on the left side of the footpath (if under 12 years of age)
- Give hand signals to turn left or right
- Give way to pedestrians and other vehicles when entering and crossing a road

When using a footpath or shared pedestrian/bicycle path, keep to the left and give way to pedestrians.

In NSW children up to 12 years of age and any accompanying adults may legally ride on the footpaths. Further information on the Ride2School program can be obtained from the following website: www.bicyclenetwork.com.au.

How the past shapes the present
Mrs Peita van Bussel | Transition-Year 2 Coordinator

As a component of the Year 2 History unit, The Past in the Present, the students in Year 2 have been learning about significant people, events, places and sites in the Abbotsleigh community. On Monday 19 March a visit has been arranged to enable the girls to meet with Senior School Archivist Julie Daly and School Chaplain Jenni Stoddart.

During this incursion, the girls will discover significant mementoes that have shaped Abbotsleigh’s rich history. They will learn about the Senior School Chapel and its significance in bringing a community together. Following their visit, the girls will develop a narrative on a chosen person, event or place within Abbotsleigh to showcase their understanding of how aspects from the past help to shape the present.

We look forward to this wonderful opportunity to expand the girls’ understanding of our history and how it influences contemporary events.
Cross Country Carnival
Mr Paul Guirreri | JS PDHPE Coordinators

Thursday was definitely the right day to run the Inter House Cross Country Carnival, after it was postponed from a very wet Tuesday. All girls ran well with some attaining improved personal bests. The top 10 girls in each age group have been selected to compete in the IPSHA Cross Country Carnival to be held at The King's School on Saturday 7 April 2018. The results are below:

8/9 years
1. Skye Pullen
2. Cate Atkinson
3. Grace Black
4. Margot Story
5. Scarlett Low
6. Imogen Robertson
7. Juliet Lim
8. Annabelle Wallich
9. Isabel Chan
10. Amelia Bassett

10 years
1. Elizabeth Bailey
2. Amber Johnson
3. Rachael Yoon
4. Aurora Caie
5. Mackenzie Luu
6. Margaritte McKeown
7. Sophia Bradford
8. Phoebe Peng
9. Selene Lee
10. Kaitlyn Blair

11 years
1. Keira Yerbury
2. Jacinta Mak
3. Estella Cameron
4. Sarah Wang
5. Alexandra Cuthell
6. Juliet Henderson
7. Millie Young
8. Harriet Kaan
9. Olivia Wood
10. Meera Nirmalendran

12/13 years
1. Charlotte Pullen
2. Veronica Wade
3. Gemma Leonardi
4. Iris Li
5. Hannah Angus
6. Sarah Hooper-Mitchell
7. Isabella Bradford
8. Katherine Ly
9. Xanthe Beletich
10. Jessica Gunning

We thank Ms Chen and Mr Wang for presenting the ribbons at the conclusion of the carnival after our Cross Country Captain, Sarah Wang, spoke with thanks and congratulations to all involved. The winning House was announced and much cheering was heard as we congratulated all Macquarie girls on a wonderful team achievement.

Senior School

The Foundation Scholarships are now open to new and current Abbotsleigh students in Year 9 2018
Mrs Colleen Fenn | Registrar

The Foundation Scholarships are needs-based academic scholarships that commence at Year 10 level and provide up to 50% remission of school tuition fees for the remainder of schooling. Consideration is given to academic attainment, general interest and ability, and participation in other activities, for example, service and community activities, music, drama and sport.

There are two scholarships awarded.
A completed student statement will need endorsement by the Year Coordinator or Head of Senior College Archdale.
The application kit is available on AbbNet > Student links > Scholarship applications, or download the application kit here.
Applications close on Friday 11 May 2018. Interviews will be held early in June.
Email the Registrar, Mrs Colleen Fenn for further information, or call Colleen on 9473 7744.

Empowering women
Mrs Marg Selby | Careers Advisor

In the shadow of International Women's Day last week, some very interesting data has come to light. It is a well known fact that women are significantly underrepresented in the board rooms of our big corporate businesses. However, this is not the case in the world of start-up businesses. Research undertaken by Margaret Maile Petty, the Executive Director of the UTS Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Creative Intelligence Unit, has shown that one in four start-up companies in Australia are established by women.

Down the line then, this suggests that 25% of start-up companies will be headed by a female CEO, compared to the 6% of female CEOs presently in ASX 200 listed companies.

Many of these new start-up companies are working in the area of social enterprise, endeavouring to find solutions for problems that government and big business are unable to solve.
By working in the area of their passions – for example, helping refugees and asylum seekers – and using the skills of empathy, an area where women are supposed to be more strongly endowed, females are being empowered to become future business leaders.
Thus, it makes sense that we encourage our own young women to be innovative, creative thinkers and to follow their passions. Who knows? One day the next Steve Jobs might be an Abbotsleigh girl.
For other careers news, please visit the Careers page on AbbNet.
Abbotsleigh’s production of

Disney The Little Mermaid

Thursday 10 to Saturday 12 May 2018

Tickets on sale SOON!

Based on Hans Christian Andersen story and the Disney film produced by Howard Ashman and John Musker and written and directed by John Musker and Ron Clements

Music by Alan Menken

Lyrics by Howard Ashman and Glenn Slater

Book by Doug Wright

Originally produced by Disney Theatrical Productions

A Day in the Life of Ursula
Scarlet Lindsay | Year 12

In the shadow of International Women’s Day last week, Scarlet Lindsay shares her thoughts on her role in The Little Mermaid. So, what is it like playing the sea witch?

‘Ursula is a larger-than life character who I am so excited to bring to life on stage next term! She is the opposite of most villains or villainesses, as she does not loathe herself. She actually completely loves herself. She can’t get enough of herself. I am really having to push myself to exude all that confidence with conviction as there is nowhere for doubts or hiding on stage. It has stretched me as an actor, to have complete confidence in myself, which is sometimes challenging.

I am so lucky to be working with a wonderful group of girls in the ‘Evil Weeds’ chorus. They are so willing to perform and take my complex choreography head on. They push me to give my all and support me on stage. It has been great to build this character, as there are so many strong women who have played the role. I am so excited to take Ursula on and become the sea witch everyone loves to hate!’

Why STEM matters
Abbotsleigh is thrilled to have the facilities and educators to ensure that the best of STEM learning is accessible to all our girls.

Welcome to AbbSchool
AbbSchool is made up of two important areas within the Abbotsleigh community: extended tuition and the Holiday Program.

Kindergarten, Years 3 and 5
Grandparents’ Day
All grandparents of students in Kindergarten, Years 3 and 5 are warmly invited to join their granddaughters on Grandparents’ Day. Tuesday 20 March, 10.45 am.

The Little Mermaid
Sing along to the adventures of Ariel, Sebastian and all the gang in Abbotsleigh’s production of Disney’s The Little Mermaid.