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From the Headmistress

Abbotsleigh celebrates International Women’s Day
#PressforProgress and STEM
Mrs Megan Krimmer | Headmistress

It has been an incredible week at Abbotsleigh. In Senior School Assembly on Monday we celebrated International Women’s Day and welcomed Abbotsleigh Old Girl, Katie Rigg-Smith, (1996) the Australasian CEO of Mindshare who delivered an inspirational talk to our girls.

Olivia Taylor, Head Boarder Prefect, began the assembly with an excellent overview of the importance of International Women’s Day (IWD) and gender equity. As Olivia said, it is most fitting that this year’s theme for IWD is #PressforProgress. Much progress has certainly been made, but there is still a long way to go. ‘IWD is about taking risks, and being motivated to call for change and fronting up to our responsibility to shape a world where all women can have access to opportunity.’

Katie Rigg-Smith continued with the theme #PressforProgress with three very wise pieces of advice for our girls:

1. **Learn your craft.** Be the very best you can be at the job you are doing now – whether this be school work, learning at university or whatever position you hold – become the expert in that position.

2. **Work together with men to create gender equity.** Real progress can only be made if we all work together.

3. **Extend the ladder down.** Once you have reached a certain position, help other women to climb the ladder too. We all need to help each other as we #PressforProgress.

Our girls were certainly inspired by Katie and many have not stopped talking about her great message.

The timing of International Women’s Day was also our impetus to highlight the significant focus we have had on STEM at Abbotsleigh for many years.

On Monday evening, the Senior School celebrated our girls’ achievements in Mathematics and Science through the Ruth Sanger Awards evening. This year, not only were we impressed by the great achievements of our amazing girls, but we were also impressed
with the beautiful musical items and with the way in which a number of girls spoke so confidently about their experiences. A panel of Year 8 and 9 girls told us about the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) projects in which they were involved last year, then three Year 12 girls spoke most passionately about their experiences in, and love for, Mathematics and Science. Jacinta Lin fascinated the audience with her speech on ‘The Elegance of Mathematics’ and Hannah Loh and Elizabeth Luu inspired the girls with their tales about the National Science Youth Forum in Canberra held in January.

I would like to thank all the girls involved, and our excellent Mathematics and Science Departments for organising this very special annual event.

The pinnacle of our STEM celebrations, the official opening of our Junior School STEM Street and our Maker Space, was held yesterday. As Ms Ruston said, it was most fitting that this occurred on International Women’s Day, itself ‘because our opening ... makes demonstrably visible our commitment to seeing our Abbotsleigh Junior School girls as being confident learners, problem solvers, critical thinkers, ethic consumers and leaders in innovation in the domains of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.’

It is so important for our girls to tinker, to play, to be curious, to make, to problem solve and, indeed, to be fabulous young scientists, mathematicians, engineers and inventors from a very early age. The alarming statistics that I reported on Monday evening and yesterday morning highlight this. According to a report by Australia’s Chief Scientist, women comprise just 16% of the total STEM workforce, and, in Victoria, it seems that fewer than 3% of girls are considering a career in technology. As I am sure you are aware, the Federal Government is so concerned about this that they have created the new position of a ‘Women in Science Ambassador’ to encourage young women to pursue careers in STEM.

Thanks to our wonderful teachers, Old Girls and parents who are fantastic role models for our girls, many Abbotsleigh girls will pursue, and are pursuing, careers in these areas. Our magnificent STEM facilities, particularly STEM Street in the Junior School, will enhance this even further.

I would particularly like to thank Ms Sally Ruston and the Junior School staff, Mr Denis Pontin and the Abbotsleigh Property and Development Committee, Mr Simon Jarrett and his team, Mr Warwick Noble and his team, Mr Nathan McEvoy and his team, Mr John Doran, and Ms Kathy Campbell and all the members of the APA whose collective vision, hard work and determination helped make STEM Street possible. The girls and their teachers are very grateful indeed – thank you.

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The good book

Rev Jenni Stoddart | Chaplain

Franz Kafka wrote:

‘I think we ought to read only the kind of books that wound or stab us. If the book we’re reading doesn’t wake us up with a blow to the head, what are we reading for? So that it will make us happy, as you write? ... A book must be the axe for the frozen sea within us. That is my belief.’

On Thursday night, 300 people gathered in the Peter Duly Concert Hall to consider the good book – the Bible. Abbotsleigh partnered with the Bible Society in a series of lectures which mark the end of their 200th year celebrations. Greg Clarke, CEO of the Bible Society, alluded to the above quote reminding us that the Bible can be a difficult book, but it is difficult books that we seek to transform and change us. The good book has in fact been good for Australia. From its philosophical foundation we have built a judicial system which embraces both justice and mercy. Twenty-six of Australia’s largest charities are faith based and the first schools were established by those who valued the kind of education required to understand a God who reveals himself in a book.

The same day happened to be International Women’s Day. As a Chaplain of a school for girls, I can think of no better way to celebrate than to be listening to talks about the good book. It was women who first heard the good news that Jesus had risen from the dead. The good book is good news for all. It is good news for women and my personal testimony is that its message has been good for me and continues to be. I wonder when was the last time your read a book that stabbed at your heart and changed you. The Bible might stab at out heart, but only so that God can heal the wound and lead us to hope, beauty and transformation.
Abbotsleigh’s production of

Disney’s The Little Mermaid

Thursday 10 to Saturday 12 May 2018

Tickets on sale SOON!

Music by Alan Menken
Lyrics by Howard Ashman and Glenn Slater
Book by Doug Wright

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

Originally produced by Disney Theatrical Productions

Emerging Artists 2018 recital series
Ms Kimbali Harding | Director of Music

We are excited to announce that Madelie Joubert, 12F, will be performing in this year’s Emerging Artists recital series. Each concert features three or four pianists, two or three nominated from a high school and one from a tertiary institution. The series begins in March, with the final winner’s concert on 4 November 2018. Concerts begin at 2 pm.

Madelie will perform in the second concert on Sunday 3 June along with Kelly Chen from Kambala, Corinna Chen from Pymble Ladies’ College and Jennifer Hou from University of New South Wales.

The adjudicator will be Professor Michael Brimer.

The Emerging Artists series is an initiative from Theme & Variations Piano Services, which aims to give promising young pianists the exciting opportunity to prepare and perform a solo piano recital in front of a live audience. Solo performance opportunities outside of eisteddfods and examinations for young pianists are rare, especially for high school level students. The more a pianist can experience performing live, the better musicians they will become.

So come along and support Madelie and hear some truly inspiring performances.

Sunday 3 June 2018
451 Willoughby Road Willoughby
$15 for adults and free for children under 12

As seating is limited please book by phone on 02 9958 9888 or by email.

Money raised will go to the Theme & Variations Foundation.

Junior School

Camp week experiences
Ms Sally Ruston | Head of Junior School

Why did we take girls out of their known comfort zone into an outdoor environment that is vastly different from their usual experiences in the classroom and schoolyard for much of last week? This is a good question, particularly when one is aware of the extensive organisation that is required both at school and at home to ensure safe and enriching experiences, coupled with the disruption to staff and home life for all.

The answer is twofold. Firstly, our intent is to demonstrate that deep and profound learning happens when we go beyond our known environment into contexts that are unfamiliar and specifically chosen to provide unique and scaffolded learning experiences. For our Transition girls, their walking trip to explore the ACEE was their first ever foray beyond the school gate. When Kindergarten girls explored the farm environment, their curiosity was peaked, knowledge base expanded and tolerance for the unusual grown. Negotiating a train trip with changes of trains, followed by a ferry trip and day of exploring an isolated bush setting for Year 1 girls were first time experiences for many. Managing this range of experiences sets the girls up for all that is ahead in subsequent years when living with ambiguity and responding spontaneously are important attributes that will stand the girls in great stead. Spending the first night away from home for some girls in Years 2 and 3 is a challenge in the first
instance. But what a sense of independence and accomplishment is realised as a result! Tackling a high ropes course for the first time in Year 4 demands the implementation of problem solving skills in high adrenalin situations where fears need to be conquered to enable cognitive functioning to eventuate. How useful these skills and experiences will be back in the classroom and in everyday living.

For three days, our Year 5 girls lived in an environment that has challenged their ideas of personal hygiene and space. Managing to keep yourself dry, clean and organised in a two person tent in a remote bushland setting while abseiling and climbing through the wombat hole are very different experiences for most that require skills of persistence, audacity and courage.

Our Year 6 girls realised many firsts. They were away from family and familiar surroundings for a full week. A visit to the War Memorial where the girls laid a wreath and heard inspirational stories of courage, loss and personal sacrifice will all stay with them for a long time to come. So too will the achievement of climbing Australia’s highest mountain as a 10 or 11 year old. Conquering fears, exploring the unknown, coping with the challenges of different beds and unfamiliar food are all impressive feats.

Secondly, we are committed to growing the girls’ capacity to be resilient. While this is an attribute that I believe all parents and educators want for our girls, we live in an environment on the ‘leafy upper north shore of Sydney’ that mostly insulates us from the experiences described above. Persistence, organisation, social affability and confidence are the key tenets of the You Can Do It! program that we use with the girls to grow their resilience. These too are the very attributes the Outdoor Education program gives opportunity for and growth in, whilst learning beyond the classroom last week. While the experiences themselves are designed to be engaging, challenging and a great deal of fun, it is the success had in surmounting fears, overcoming obstacles, learning the art of collaboration and growing independence, that will ultimately stand the girls in great stead well beyond this week.

I encourage you to chat with your daughter about the camp experiences and help her realise that stepping out of one’s comfort zone and exploring beyond the known are worthwhile pursuits that are to be embraced.

This week in assembly the girls said a special ‘thank you’ to the teachers and assistants who supported them over this past week. The compassion, kindness, assistance and concern shown for each girl’s wellbeing was absolute and astounding. It is important for the girls to recognise the contribution and sacrifice made by these supporting adults. The ability to show gratitude and grace are also attributes that we know are so important for the girls’ ongoing wellbeing and to create a community that we are all proud to call our own.

Why walk with purpose
Ms Sally Ruston | Head of Junior School

Keeping safe and connected are two good reasons why walking with purpose is what I have commended to our girls this week in assembly. Our body language communicates so much about our levels of confidence and readiness to engage. Given that this phenomenon is well researched, let’s not keep this highly valuable information a secret. Rather, we should explain and model to our children how they too can make a positive first impression as assured and confident.

So what does ‘walking with purpose’ look like? When we walk with a confident stride and at pace, smile, engage with eye contact and step out as we have important tasks to complete, then we project an air of authority and engagement.
Such behaviour brings about two very positive outcomes. Firstly, we are seen as being warm, willing to engage and positive in demeanour. People who do this are much more likely to grow friendships and sustain relationships. We want to surround ourselves with positive, energised and upbeat people. Such behaviour is contagious and something we are naturally drawn to. Secondly, confident and purposeful behaviour insulates against negative targeting. This is especially important when out in public and travelling the world over. An outward looking gaze enables us to move away from possible threats well before they are upon us, as well as be considerate and compassionate towards those around us.

While we don’t always feel confident, and smiling is sometime difficult, the benefits of adopting such behaviours are so positive and immediate that we encourage all girls to give them a try.

We all want our girls to be happy, confident and successful learners who thrive in social contexts. This is possible when we share with the girls the behaviours that are most likely to see such success realised.

| Parent and teacher interviews – Monday 19 March |
| Ms Sally Ruston | Head of Junior School |

Parent and teacher interviews have been arranged to commence on Monday 19 March 2018. Specialist teachers will be available in the Lower Everett Space, from 3.30 to 5.30 pm on both Monday and Tuesday afternoons. This will be an ideal time to gain a clear insight into the progress your daughter has made this year and to have samples of her portfolio work explained. You will have received an email that gives you details as to how to book your meeting time with the teacher online through the Parent Portal. If you require additional assistance with this process, please contact the Junior School Administrative Coordinator, Mrs Danielle Sellars on 9473 7700 or via email.

We use ongoing assessment, across the year tests and external competitions and testing to develop a detailed and comprehensive picture of your daughter’s performance. While formal reports will be sent home at the conclusion of Term 2, please feel free to contact your daughter’s class or specialist teacher with your queries. A note in the diary, email or a phone call to the Junior School Reception is all that is needed to secure a meeting.

| Honey Pot buzzings |
| Mrs Marilyn Powell | Tuckshop Supervisor |

**Lunch specials next week**
The Honey Pot special lunch from Monday 12 to Friday 16 March is:
- Crumbed fish, potato wedges, salad plus a frozen juice cup

**Can you help?**
We need volunteers for the following days:
- 13, 15, 19, 20 and 26 March
- 5, 9, 11 and 12 April
If you can spare a few hours, please contact Kerrie at the Honey Pot on 9473 7621 or email Marilyn.

| K, 3 and 5 Grandparents’ Day and Book Fair |
| Ms Sally Ruston | Head of Junior School |

Grandparents are special to our girls and their attendance at our Grandparents’ Day in 2018 will enable them to demonstrate the interest they have in their granddaughters’ education. The Book Fair is a feature of our Grandparents’ Day and provides an opportunity for donating books and resources to the Junior School Palmer Library. The Lindfield Children’s Bookshop will be supplying the books, which have been carefully selected to supplement the collection for classroom studies, increase selection for the girls’ reading challenges and help meet the needs and interests of individual girls. The Book Fair will be accessible to all girls so that everyone can easily browse the books for donation during lunchtime. Your granddaughters will have the first option of borrowing the donated books.

| Chess competition reminder |
| Ms Sally Ruston | Head of Junior School |

Permission notes for the Friday afternoon Interschool Chess Competition in Term 2 and the one-day Interschool Chess Challenge on Wednesday 11 April are now due.

If any student would like to take part but has not returned the permission note, please email Mrs Williams so that their inclusion can be considered.

When the teams are formed and the competition draw is known for the Friday Chess Competition, parents will receive information so that they can nominate when they can assist with transport.

Students who expressed interest in the Chess Challenge on Wednesday 11 April, will be notified during Chess Club and parents contacted, if they indicated they could assist on the day, during the week beginning Monday 19 March.
Cross Country Carnival
Mr Paul Guirreri | JS PDHPE Coordinator

Next Tuesday 13 March sees the running of our JS Primary Interhouse Cross Country Carnival on our Senior School campus from 10.45 am-1.30 pm. The girls will depart for Senior School following morning tea. Girls turning 8, 9 and 10 years old in 2018 will run approximately 2 km. Girls turning 11 and 12 years old in 2018 will run approximately 3 km. The top 10 finishers in each event will progress to the IPSHA Cross Country Carnival on Saturday 7 April at The King’s School. Parents/carers are welcome as spectators on the day and are encouraged to join their daughters on the walk of the course. We also require lots of parent helpers to assist at our various checkpoints to ensure the safety of all of our girls at all times on the course. If you have a current WWCC and are available on the day, please complete this online form ASAP.

Year 6 camp experience
Mrs Kylie George | Year 6 Coordinator

Year 6 girls had an educational, stimulating and fun-filled trip to Canberra and Thredbo. The challenging climb to the summit of Mt Kosciuszko was enhanced by picture perfect weather and the expert botanical and geographical knowledge of our guides. On completion of the walk, the girls allowed their muscles to recover in the pool (and on the water slide) at the Thredbo Leisure Centre. Canberra provided much experiential learning, exploration and discovery. While in the nation’s capital, the girls visited the National Capital Exhibition Centre, Old and New Parliament Houses, the Australian War Memorial (at which they participated in a wreath laying ceremony), the Electoral Education Centre and Questacon – the National Science and Technology Centre. The girls also participated in a bicycle ride around Lake Burley Griffin and Sportex at the Australian Institute of Sport. This was an action packed and stimulating undertaking where much of what was experienced will be used for new learning and discussion in subsequent weeks and terms. We were very pleased that again this year a change in funding initiative has meant that the cost of this excursion has been slightly reduced due to Federal Government Parliament Civics Education Rebate. This rebate has already been taken into account in the Outdoor Education item on your school statement.

IPSHA swimming and diving
Mr Paul Guirreri | JS PDHPE Coordinator

Tuesday 6 March saw the annual IPSHA Swimming and Diving Carnival at the Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre. Our representative swimming team comprising 18 girls and our diving team of 10 girls all had a fabulous day of competition. Many girls in the swimming team improved their entry qualifying time at the carnival which was great to see.

Open girls platform
- Sophia Horbach 1st

10 years girls springboard
- Charlotte Horbach 1st
- Bonnie McInerney 2nd
- Rachael Yoon 16th

11 years girls springboard
- Harriet Kaan 1st
- Alexandra Moore 6th
- Alexandra Cuthell 7th

12 years girls springboard
- Sophia Horbach 1st
- Chloe Pearce 16th
- Sara Shah 19th
- Elsa Bowen 20th

Our diving team exceeded all expectations with Sophia Horbach winning both the 12/13 years springboard and open platform competitions, Harriet Kaan winning the 11 years springboard and Charlotte Horbach (1st) and Bonnie McInerney (2nd) bringing up an Abbotsleigh quinella in the 10 years springboard. We wish these girls every success as they progress to CIS on Thursday 22 March. A big thank you to Cameron Gledhill and Rebecca Manuel for all of the wonderful work they did with our team in the lead up to the carnival and on the day. Our girls are very lucky to be guided by two experts in their field.
Celebrating IWD with Asquith Girls High
Mrs Annette Ware | Dean of Senior College

The power of education for girls throughout the world was the focus of Asquith Girls High School’s celebration of International Women’s Day. Year 11 students Savannah Elias, Sophie Forsyth, Juliette Petro and Rebecca Read Allan represented Abbotsleigh at this annual event this morning.

It was encouraging to hear of the impact that Asquith Girls High is having on their sister school, Abdara Girls’ School in Panjshir Valley in Afghanistan. Afghani girls are completing their education to Year 12 and many are becoming nurses, doctors, teachers and lawyers; a first for this village. By remaining at school, many girls are avoiding teenage marriages and childbirth at a young age. Armed with an education, the girls are now seeking husbands who are also educated and often looking beyond their own village. Education has empowered them.

How to succeed in life and be satisfied
Mrs Marg Selby | Careers Advisor

Every year, we find that our top academic students are also very involved in other aspects of school and community life and that they do not concentrate on their studies alone. The art of learning to balance their activities seems to make them successful and therefore satisfied with their life.

Maintaining balance in our very busy lives can be a difficult art to achieve, but it is a goal worth pursuing. Research has shown that the most effective way to maintain balance in our lives, is to ensure that each day we make time for silence and reflection. The ability to do so seems to be essential if we are to perform to our full potential. Hence, at school we are placing emphasis this year on wellbeing and mindfulness, in the hope that this life skill will assist our students throughout their lifetime. Being able to be quiet, to take time out for yourself, for a rest, a walk or the like and to ensure that you have time for some peaceful reflection – all these things can boost brain function and allow you to create new energy for the next part of your busy day. Undoubtedly, it can be hard to remove ourselves from the noise of happy peers and to shun technology for a period, but it is essential for us all to try to do it. The benefits of practising mindfulness can include decreasing stress levels, improving memory and enhancing concentration. It can contribute to better health, both mental and physical. Thus, our wish for all our students is that they include time for themselves; to be alone and quiet every day, and in this way, they will be able to achieve much more than they otherwise would.

For other careers news, please visit the Careers page on AbbNet.

Debating workshop and ISDA results
Ms Jennie Kelly | Debating and Public Speaking Coordinator

Abbotsleigh debaters picked up some great pointers from a recent weekend workshop.

Our girls attended a two-day workshop over the weekend of Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 March. Teams watched a university demonstration debate with commentary and participated in several matter sessions before putting these tips into action through some practice debates.

ISDA round 2 was held at Abbotsleigh with teams facing off against Trinity in the topic area of Education. Congratulations to the Year 8, 9, 10, Senior B and Senior A teams for their wins, as well as Year 7 who spoke well in a close debate.
Beehive buzzings
Mrs Marilyn Powell | Tuckshop Supervisor

The Beehive will be closed 12 to 16 March due to Senior School camp week. We apologise for any inconvenience.

Can you help?
We need volunteers in the Senior School tuckshop on the following dates:
• 23 and 26 March
• 9, 10 and 12 April

Please email me if you can help on any of these days – even for just a few hours.

Boarding

Our first month in Lynton House
Lily Garnham, 7W and Holly Collins, 7T

So far, boarding has been very interesting, yet amazing. Even though we’ve been here for hardly a month, it’s already starting to feel like home, especially with our Boarding Coordinator, Mrs Clemenger, around. All of the older year groups have been very welcoming, and all of the other Year 7 boarders have been really nice. The Year 8s have been especially welcoming, sending us little welcome letters, organising ‘getting to know you’ activities, and even baking treats for us, while the Year 11s have taken us down to the shops.

The weekends have been fun and exciting. There is always something interesting happening, whether it be walking across the Harbour Bridge, going to the beach, staying in and making Easter hats (next fortnight!), or going to Luna Park. Most of the time we have been going on outings with older years, which we love.

Although it is not like having a massive sleepover with midnight snacks and pyjama parties with your BFFs every night (like many of the day girls have told me they had expected), we have been much less homesick than we expected and we wouldn’t trade it for anything.
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.

Read more

Abbotsleigh celebrates IWD, #PressforProgress and STEM

Old Girl, Katie Rigg-Smith, the Australasian CEO of Mindshare, helped us celebrate IWD and we opened STEM Street in the Junior School.

Read more

Commonwealth Games swimming trials

We’re very proud of our four girls who competed at last week’s Commonwealth Games Swimming Trials on the Gold Coast.

Read more

ART NORTH

The Grace Cossington Smith Gallery has launched ART NORTH, an exhibition of local students’ work developed for the 2017 HSC.

Read more

1 to 29 March 2018
An exhibition of HSC 2017 Visual Arts from schools in the Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai district.