

# The Shuttle

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Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.



**DEPUTY HEAD AND HEAD OF SENIOR SCHOOL**

## Counting our blessings

Mrs Victoria Rennie  
*Deputy Head and Head of Senior School*

Welcome to Term 4. In true Abbotsleigh style, with orientation days for the Junior School and Year 7 2024 in the Senior School, a Year 7 2024 boarding sleepover, and the HSC examinations starting on Wednesday, it really has been an action-packed start to term.

We certainly wish our Year 12 girls every success in their HSC examinations. The girls have worked extremely hard and we know that each girl will be striving to do her personal best in all her exams. We are incredibly proud of each and every one of our Year 12 girls – they are resilient and confident young women who will take the challenge of the exams in their stride.

This week in assembly we recognised the International Day of the Girl Child, a day dedicated to recognising and promoting the rights and wellbeing of girls worldwide. Emphasising the importance of empowering girls through education, access to healthcare, and protection from violence and discrimination, this day also encourages girls to dream big, pursue their goals, and contribute to building a more equitable and just world. We recognised how fortunate we are to be at Abbotsleigh, a school that has been empowering young women since 1885 and the importance of looking outward and considering girls globally. In doing so it certainly highlights that we have so much to be grateful to God for in our lives. In her devotion, Lily Thornthwaite (Head Prefect 2023/24) reminded the girls of the importance to fill their minds with things that are

blessings, “whatever is good, praiseworthy, true, noble, right, pure, lovely, honourable” and give gratitude to God for them.

I spoke with the girls about the simple activity that I call “hunt the good stuff” focusing on these blessings. The benefits of this are enormous and research shows it has a positive impact on an individual’s wellbeing and builds optimism and resilience over time if done regularly. I challenged the girls to take time out in their day to record three good things each day (big or small) and with each reflect on:

- Why did this good thing happen?
- What does this good thing mean to me?
- What could I do to enable more of this good thing?
- How did I or others contributed to these good things?

I would encourage all families to spend just a few moments each evening ‘hunting the good stuff’. This can be done as the girls go to bed or shared with the family around the dinner table. Over time you will begin to notice a pattern and you may be surprised just how good you will feel.



ABBOTSLEIGH

Visit the **Parent Portal** to edit your profile, view the calendar and view parent notices.

### Welcomes in Term 4

It has been an absolute delight meeting our new girls and staff. In the Senior School we welcomed new staff:

- Ms Jennifer Allan – Teacher Librarian
- Mr James Flood – Christian Studies Teacher

Welcome back from long service leave to the following Senior School staff:

- Mrs Liz Cannon – Director of Wellbeing
- Mrs Marina Taylor – Science Teacher
- Mrs Belinda Robertson – PDHPE Teacher

### Celebrating our girls' great achievements

During the break, we have had some tremendous news from NESA for our 2023 HSC Performance Nominations – beginning with:

**Music Performances** – Nine students have been nominated for possible inclusion in ENCORE. Raina Han, Vera He, Amanda Kelly, Samuela Keum, Josephine Scott, Kotoko Takehara, Stephanie Wong, Enya Wu, Emma Yap.

**Group Performance** – Four students have been nominated for possible inclusion in OnSTAGE – Emma Fisher, Esther Lam, Ava Ward, Julia Wedgewood-Oppenheim.

**Individual Performance** – Eight students have been nominated for possible inclusion in Individual Performance OnSTAGE – Charlotte Fill, Emma Fischer, Mikayla Fung, Sophie James, Anastasia Kellahan, Sascha Kollar, Charisse Leung, Julia Wedgewood-Oppenheim.

**HSC Dance** – Sonia Walsh has been nominated for possible inclusion in CALLBACK, a selection of outstanding performances and projects from HSC dance students and will be held at the Seymour Centre in February 2024.

Additionally, please join me in congratulating:

- **Visual Arts** – Meera Nirmalendran (Year 10) has won first prize in the “Edge of the Future” competition – visual arts category. As a result of Meera’s achievement, Meera has been asked to speak to the Ku-ring-gai Mayor and councillors about her entry, and to participate in the Young People for the Environment stall at the Sustainable Futures Day run by Ku-ring-gai council.
- **Rugby League** – Amaya Sloan-Wood (Year 7), Montaya French (Year 7), Lorna Haines (Year 7), Jazaria Duncan (Year 8), Savannah French (Year 8), Lexie Wilson (Year 9) and Demi Green (Year 9) played in the Koori Knockout which is an annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander rugby league competition held in Tuggerah. The girls played for the Moree Boomerangs U15’s team against Bundjalung Connections in the first round but were unfortunately defeated. We are so proud of the girls involvement in this tournament.
- **Football** – Milly Bennett (Year 9) has been selected to represent Football NSW at the 2023 National Youth Championships for Girls (competition being held this week). She has also been selected to be a member of the Australian Schools National Football Team to participate on the Tour to the United States of America in March 2024.
- **What Matters? Writing Competition** – Neomi Verma (year 8) was a Runner Up in the 2023 writing competition.

- **Table Tennis** – Daisy Xie (Year 8) represented Australia in the World Table Tennis Youth Contender in Darwin and won silver in the under-13 girls’ singles category.

- **da Vinci Decathlon** – Our Year 10 da Vinci Decathlon team (Charlotte Cao, Helena Grice, Eloise Huyn, Chloe Lam, Cecilia Lung, Phoebe Peng, Sophie Wang, Saskia Beletich) had an exciting and challenging few days competing in the National da Vinci Decathlon. Completing tasks across 10 different disciplines, against 8 schools from around the country, the girls achieved some outstanding results.

- 3rd place – Engineering

- 3rd place – Art & Poetry

- 2nd place – Cartography

- **Gymnastics events** – The following Senior School students: Ishana Saha (Year 7), Joselyn Cheung (Year 7), Zoe Huang (Year 7), Claire Chavdarova (Year 7), Sabrina Lin (Year 8), Serena Chi (Year 8), Valerie Chung (Year 8), Vivian Chi (Year 9), Emily Callagher (Year 9), Catherine Scott (Year 10) competed in the following events:

- Gymnastic NSW Rhythmic Gymnastics Intermediate State Championships: 19-20 September

- Gymnastics NSW Rhythmic Gymnastics Multiples State Championships: 9-10 September

- Gymnastics Australia 2023 National Clubs Carnival: 17-22 September

We are extremely proud of them. The great results achieved are a testament to the dedication, hard work, and teamwork they all display. The most notable achievements are:

- Abbotsleigh Club – 5th Overall at National Clubs Carnival
- Abbotsleigh Club – 2nd Overall Junior Team at National Clubs Carnival

### Individually:

- Joselyn Cheung – 5th at Intermediate State and 4th at Nationals
- Emily Callagher – 6th at Senior State and 4th Nationals
- Claire Chavdarova – 6th at Nationals

### Multiples:

- Category 2 Quad – Hoop: Zoe Huang, Claire Chavdarova – 3rd State Multiples
- Category 2 Group – Freehand: Valerie Chung, Emily Callagher, Zoe Huang, Claire Chavdarova – 2nd State Multiples
- Category 4 Quad – Ball: Emily Callagher, Catherine Scott – 1st State Multiples
- Category 4 Group – Freehand: Emily Callagher, Zoe Huang, Claire Chavdarova, Catherine Scott – 2nd Nationals

Congratulations to each and every one of our gymnasts on their fantastic achievements. I also would like to add that four of the students, Joselyn, Zoe, Claire and Emily, will be competing internationally in Singapore in December. We wish them the best of luck!

# Chaplain

## Prayers for peace

Rev Sarah Hobba  
*Chaplain*

In Term 3, Senior Chapel focused on *shalom* (or peace). As we start this term, our news screens are filled with extreme tragedy and the need for peace.

There is a prayer for peace in the Anglican Prayer Book that we prayed each week in Senior School Chapel last term. May it be a prayer we continue to keep praying and hope that it is answered soon in the current conflicts.

God of the nations,  
whose sovereign rule brings justice and peace,  
have mercy on our broken and divided world.  
Establish your peace in the hearts of all  
and banish from them the spirit that makes for war,  
that all races and peoples may learn to live  
as members of one family  
and in obedience to your laws;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

# Community

## Old Girls vs Current Girls debate

Mrs Heidi Grout  
*Old Girls Relations Manager*

Abbotsleigh has an incredibly strong debating program, and the girls regularly bring home championship trophies in various debating competitions. Our fourth annual Old Girls versus Current Girls debate will be a great contest. Can the Current Girls make it two years in a row, or will the Old Girls reclaim the trophy?

This year, the Old Girls team made up of Sabreen Hussain, Chloe Le Couter (both 2017 leavers) and Megan Wang (2022) will go head-to-head with a team of Current Girls made up of Sara Shah, Chloe Davie, Imogen Beletich and Annelise McCormick (all Year 11 students).

The adjudicators will be Niki Nojournian (2017) as the Old Girls representative and Sophia Chi (Year 11) as the Current Girls representative. The Chair will be Laranya Kumar (Year 11).

We welcome everyone to attend the debate in person or via Zoom link for those from afar. The Zoom link will be emailed out before the debate.



**Tuesday 17 October**  
**6.30 pm**  
**Peter Duly Concert Hall (or via Zoom)**

RSVP [here](#) by Sunday 15 October.

Attendees also have the opportunity to contribute to the *Kathleen McCredie Award*, which provides funding to senior girls who would otherwise not be able to attend Abbotsleigh.

Enquiries to **Heidi Grout**, Old Girls Relations Manager or 9473 7740.

# Junior School

## Welcome back

Ms Sally Ruston  
*Head of Junior School*

I took delight on Tuesday in welcoming girls back to the final term of the year. It is exciting and a little daunting to realise that there are only just over eight weeks of learning left this year. How time does fly like a weaver's shuttle!

Our year will conclude for all girls from Kindergarten to Year 6, with Speech Day to be held in the Judith Poole Sports Hall from 2-3.30 pm on Wednesday 6 December. Light refreshments will be served after the ceremony.

This day will operate as a normal school day with girls arriving at school at the usual time. We welcome parents to join us for Speech Day that will see all girls performing, and the celebration of award presentations. Further details and a formal invitation will be issued shortly to attend this final Junior School event for 2023.

For a full listing of events and celebrations planned for Term 4, please refer to the school calendar on the [Parent Portal](#) or on the Abbotsleigh parent app. Please note these dates so that you can assist your daughter in being organised and prepared as the year moves quickly towards its conclusion.

## The challenge and excitement of all things new

Ms Sally Ruston  
*Head of Junior School*

This week we have been orientating more than 100 new students who are becoming Abbotsleigh Junior School girls in 2024. Additionally, we have our entire Year 6 cohort involved in 'O Week' up in the Senior School and out climbing high ropes and orienteering. New beginnings are exciting times. Yet for some of us, the thought and anticipation of 'new', can result in rising anxiety, stress and manifest as tears and sometimes tantrums. The challenge for the caring adults in this equation is how to ensure that experiences are challenging and exciting without being fear riddled.

Much of what is needed in creating a successful experience is the preparation that happens surrounding the event. When children and their parents are well informed as to what to expect throughout the process, through the sharing of positive social stories and exciting program details, we know that many anxious thoughts are able to be well managed.

For the child who is worried about whether or not she will make friends, I reassure in the meeting prior to orientation that the Abbotsleigh girls are remarkably friendly and very keen to make new friends. I also explain that if she has good friends at her current school, then she will surely bring these great friendship skills to Abbotsleigh. Such skills are not magic, but tangible and will stand her in great stead as she seeks to establish warm and supportive friendships here. Girls entering Primary readily agree that they won't forget how to read as they come to Abbotsleigh, so I encourage them to also believe that they won't forget how to make



friends either, especially, as these are predicated by evident social skills.

Equally important is that the experiences surrounding new beginnings are carefully scaffolded and timed to be developmentally appropriate. For our girls entering Transition and Kindergarten, visits to the School with parents initially, then for a half day of orientation with parents and then for a half day independently as a 'play morning', all set the scene for success. For older girls, a full day of orientation is feasible and manageable. For our Year 6 girls, the process is extended to exploring the much larger world of Senior School. The final day of orientation in Term 1 is designed to ensure that the parents are confident of routines. Relaxed and informed parents are well placed to support and alleviate any jitters their daughter may have as she commences.

The final piece in this equation is the role of the wise and experienced adults. This includes both educators and parents. With information, we can be well informed of processes and confident of our role in encouraging,

supporting and showing faith and optimism in each child's ability to navigate new settings. As the caring adults, we must acknowledge that it is fine to be a little anxious and have a few butterflies in the tummy prior to tackling something new. Adrenalin in such situations is actually healthy and useful to ensuring that we are well primed and focused to meet the new challenge. It is the act of conquering such perceived fears that gives us a reservoir of experience to meet the next more demanding challenge with confidence and anticipation of success.

Our role extends beyond simply preparing for the experience so that the greatest learning is possible. We are also often

needed after the event to assist the child to reflect on the experience to crystallise the learning that has taken place. Yet, during the learning we need to stand back with the mantra: '*never do for a child that which they can do for themselves*'. To do so sends the message that we see them as capable learners with the grit, persistence and problem-solving capabilities necessary to thrive.

Whatever the scenario, not knowing, living with ambiguity and managing the associated emotions is not easy. Yet these are essential life skills for our girls growing up in a world that is increasingly more complex and less predictable. Let's start this learning early so our girls excel in this domain too.

## Welcome to staff

Ms Sally Ruston  
*Head of Junior School*

We are most pleased to welcome back from maternity leave Amber Thomson as the Year 5G teacher as Kylie George takes long service leave. Mrs Thomson has taught this year group previously here at Abbotsleigh and brings a wealth of teaching experience and passion in seeing each girl thrive. Dani Salt will step in as the Year 5 Coordinator to ensure that the Year 5 team is well led and all girls are prepared for the exciting challenges ahead in 2024 as they enter their final year of Primary.

We also welcome Jiae Mun to the Innovation Team while David Knott takes long service leave. Miss Mun is also well known at Abbotsleigh having taught Year 2 in Term 2 and been a regular casual teacher in our midst.

## Year 1 Light Up Vanuatu build day

Mrs Peita van Bussel  
*Transition to Year 2 Coordinator*

Year 1 are keenly anticipating the building of solar lights for children in Vanuatu. After fundraising all year to purchase the kits, the girls will join the boys of Knox Preparatory School on Tuesday 17 October to put together the lights and write letters to the children who will benefit from access to a safe and renewable light source, enabling a way out of energy poverty.

The girls will walk to and from Knox Preparatory School with their class teachers and the Innovation team. Students should arrive at school at the usual time wearing their summer uniform including Panama hat. Girls should bring their morning tea and lunch to school on this day.

## Year 3 Muogamarra Nature Reserve excursion

Mrs Meg Lim  
*Year 3 Classroom Teacher*

On **Wednesday 25 October**, Year 3 students will be going on an excursion to Muogamarra Nature Reserve in the Ku-ring-gai National Park. The girls will take part in a range of hands-on activities run by the Muogamarra Nature Reserve educators. All activities on the day will serve to reinforce the Australian Geography unit we are studying.

We will leave **school by bus at 9 am and return by 3 pm**, allowing for normal school day travel times.

The girls will be involved in fieldwork experiences, including a bush walk. We ask that girls **wear their school PE uniform** and their sports hat and bring sunscreen. Girls may choose to also bring roll-on insect repellent (not spray or the wrist bands).

This experience will provide the girls with a wonderful opportunity to observe and record the unique characteristics of the park, including landforms, the flora and fauna, and discuss the Aboriginal people who used to inhabit the area.

## Year 3 Sydney Symphony Orchestra excursion

Mrs Hilary Luck  
*Head of JS Music*

On Wednesday 18 October, Year 3 will be going on an excursion to see the Sydney Symphony Orchestra at the City Recital Hall in Sydney. The repertoire performed will be based on an exciting theme titled 'Cultural Connections Through Music'. We will leave school and return to school during school hours and this will allow for normal school day travel times.

Girls must wear full school uniform including their Panama hat. Recess will be eaten at the venue, so girls are asked to pack this in their excursion bags along with a bottle of water.

We are very excited about this valuable opportunity.



## Year 6 AbbKart construction day

Mrs Brittany Carrington  
Year 6 Coordinator

On Wednesday 18 October, Year 6 girls will work in cross-grade teams to construct their very own AbbKart.

The girls will be supported by staff from across the Senior and Junior School, including members from the TAS Department.

In Week 4, the girls will race their AbbKarts in the annual Abbotsleigh AbbKart Derby.



## Kindergarten and Year 1 Football Development Program

Mr Paul Guirrerri  
Head of JS Sport and PDHPE

Our youngest Matildas hopefuls commenced their Football Development Program sessions this afternoon. This recent initiative has proven highly popular with a large number of girls enrolled to participate. All girls are required to wear their PE uniform to these sessions. Shin pads will be provided to girls who don't have a set. Parents are reminded that collection is via the lower car park from 4.05 pm following training. We are looking forward to developing the girls' skills and interest in football.



## Saturday Sport is on this weekend

Mr Paul Guirrerri  
Head of JS Sport and PDHPE

### Term 4 IPSHA Saturday Sport

IPSHA Saturday Sport basketball, cricket and tennis competitions all begin this Saturday 14 October. Please ensure that you carefully check team sheets for venue information and arrive 30 minutes prior to your daughter's game commencing. Just a reminder that if your daughter is playing basketball at Abbotsleigh venues, Courts 1-3 are located in the Senior School Judith Poole Sports Hall, Court 4 is located in the Senior School Gymnasium and Courts 5 and 6 are located outdoors in the Junior School.

### Year 2 Saturday Sport

Our Year 2 Saturday Sport program commences this Saturday 14 October. All girls are asked to arrive at 7.45 am for an 8 am start and the session will conclude at 9.30 am. All girls need to be in full PE uniform including their white sun hat. They should also have a large water bottle with them. The girls are required to wear shin pads to each session and bring both football boots (if they own a pair) and running shoes. We look forward to another exciting term of fun and skill development for our Year 2 girls.

## Sporting stars

Mr Paul Guirrerri  
Head of JS Sport and PDHPE

### JS Singles Tennis Competition

In the final week of Term 3, the JS Singles Tennis Competition was held with the preliminary rounds at our Senior School tennis courts and the final being played out at the Junior School. In front of a big group of peers and also our friends from the neighbouring nursing home, Stephanie Huang and Elaine Ha locked horns in what were extremely hot conditions. We witnessed a number of excellent rallies and superb ground stroke winners throughout the match. We congratulate Stephanie Huang who took out the match defending her Tennis Cup Singles title with an outstanding victory on the day.

We also wish Stephanie every success as she prepares to represent NSW as the number one seed at the upcoming SSA Nationals Tennis Competition which is being held in Brisbane this year. We are looking forward to sharing Stephanie's results with you in the coming weeks!

### CIS Athletics Carnival

At the end of Term 3, Claire Fisher, Olivia Johnson, Hannah Khoury and Amelia Scott represented IPSHA at the CIS Athletics Carnival at the Athletics Centre Competition Arena at Homebush. All girls put in an excellent effort on the day. We congratulate Olivia Johnson who won the 12/13yrs Girls Discus competition and progresses to the NSWPSA State Athletics Carnival to represent CIS. Olivia continues to perform at an extremely high standard and we look forward to another great performance at the upcoming State Carnival!



## Music maestra

Mrs Hilary Luck  
Head of JS Music

During the school holidays, Elizabeth Luiskandl (Year 5) and Neve Peters (Year 6) were accepted into the Young Musician's Workshop with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Neve was accepted as Flute 2 of only three flute players, and Elizabeth as Violin 1 - Associate Concertmaster.

Over three days (27-29 September) they performed a variety of orchestral works under Conductor Timothy Constable, including excerpts from *Carmen* by Bizet, *Peer Gynt Suite* by Grieg and other orchestral works. We warmly congratulate the wonderful achievement of both girls in being selected for such a prestigious program.



Elizabeth Luiskandl



Neve Peters

# Senior School

## Everett Scholarship applications open

Mrs Colleen Fenn  
*Registrar*

The Everett Scholarships were first offered in 2000 following a gift from Mrs Shirley Fong (AOG Shirley Lee, 1951) to honour Miss G Gordon Everett, a great Headmistress whose care and assistance inspired Shirley Fong and the many other young women who came under her guidance. Between 2000 and 2017, the scholarships were offered annually to two girls providing remission of one term's tuition fees in Year 10. From 2017, following an agreement with Mrs Fong, one scholarship is offered annually providing remission of two terms' fees in Year 10. The funds for this scholarship are managed by the Abbotsleigh Foundation.

One scholarship is available annually to a Year 9 Abbotsleigh student moving from Year 9 to Year 10. The scholarship gives special recognition to a student's sound academic progress,

contribution to Senior College activities and a positive influence within the Senior School.

The scholarship provides two terms' tuition fees for the first two terms of Year 10. The scholarship is not means tested. No student may hold two Abbotsleigh Scholarships concurrently.

### **Download the application kit.**

Please submit the Scholarship Application Declaration plus Student Statement **here**.

Closing date: Friday 27 October 2023.

Interviews will take place early in November.

Please **contact Mrs Colleen Fenn**, Registrar, or call 9473 7744 should you have any queries.

# Boarding

## Welcome to Term 4 in boarding

Mrs Chemane Fairleigh  
*Head of Boarding*

### **Year 7 2024 Sleepover**

The end of a school holiday can be quite a challenge, especially if it has been a lovely relaxing and energy restoring time. It is hard to imagine how one might get back into the school/work mindset! I know that I felt quite burdened by this, until Sunday 8 October rolled around – the night of the sleepover for Year 7, 2024!

It was a beautiful spring evening, although it felt more like summer, with warm sunshine on our backs and the school grounds looking immaculate.

Mrs Rennie, Mrs Hayman, Mrs Fenn and Ms Smith, who will be the new Boarding Coordinator, joined me in welcoming our new boarders, their parents and their families.

What made this occasion even more special was that the new boarder families were joined by their city family and siblings. It was the first meeting of what we hope will be long and fruitful relationships.

We all enjoyed a lovely barbecue dinner in the Dining Hall, with lots of chatter and laughter, before all our guests departed and the boarders proceeded to Read House for their first night in boarding.





After a tour of the boarding house and room assignments, Ms Smith organised some fun, ice-breaker games, including team Pictionary, before the girls had their showers and a their first of many Milos (with marshmallows) and hopped off to their rooms. The girls did well overnight; some were super excited, some a little worried about being away from home, but all got an excellent night of sleep, before attending the

Dining Hall for breakfast the next morning. Following this, the boarders joined their day school counterparts for the 2024 Year 7 Abbotsleigh Orientation Day.

This event was a wonderful success with our new Year 7s, super keen to join our wonderful community – and we are really looking forward to them joining us too!