

# The Shuttle

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Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.



### FROM THE HEADMISTRESS

## Abbotsleigh seizes many moments to make a positive social impact

Mrs Megan Krimmer  
Headmistress

*Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'* – Martin Luther King

The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was, "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" But... the good Samaritan reversed the question, "If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?" – The Good Samaritan, paraphrased by Martin Luther King

A fundamental part of who we are at Abbotsleigh is that we look out for others and consciously endeavour to make a very positive social impact. I am so proud of the way in which our girls and staff continually fulfil this aim, and live out our values of deep respect for, and compassion towards, others.

The following service projects across the whole school are a few among many that demonstrate these wonderful characteristics in spades.



### Anglicare Toys 'n' Tucker

The Junior and Senior Schools have been overflowing with gifts and food for others who are less fortunate than we are. We are very grateful to all our Abbotsleigh families who have been so generous this year. Your thoughtfulness will really make a huge and positive difference at Christmas time to many young people and their families in and around Sydney – thank you so much.

### Service for St Jude's-athon – Our Junior School supports St Jude's

The Junior School girls have generously supported St Jude's School in Tanzania for many years. As Ms Ruston has written in *The Shuttle* recently, this year we are taking a service approach to the girls' fundraising, whereby the girls have been asked 'to perform acts of service at home and in the local neighbourhood to raise money so that they can, in turn, enable St Jude's to continue to give service to the local Tanzanian community.'

This form of service is so meaningful for our girls, and it also raises much needed funds to enable girls in Tanzania to attend the School of St Jude. These highly intelligent Tanzanian girls would not have the opportunity of having an education such as that provided by St Jude's, if it weren't for the generosity of communities like ours. The girls, parents and staff at St Jude's are so grateful for the enthusiasm, hard work and generosity of our girls, parents and staff. I, too, am very grateful indeed. Thank you.



ABBOTSLEIGH

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

### St Lucy's – Year 3 Week Without Words

We are delighted that our Year 3 girls have resumed their program with St Lucy's this week. Our girls have been so kind and empathetic; they also have been very excited about the 'silent' morning tea they organised today to raise money for equipment the students at St Lucy's need to assist them with learning and communication. In their presentation to assembly last week, our Year 3 girls were most emphatic that 'even the teachers' were going to have a silent morning tea today! We are certainly very proud of our Year 3 girls. Thank you, girls and teachers, you are certainly making a great difference to the students at St Lucy's.

### Bunda Girls High School

Our Senior School Service Project partnership with Bunda Girls' High School in Tanzania has continued to develop and deepen. Our Year 7 girls have raised sufficient funds to continue to fund scholarships for two girls, Elizabeth and Agnes. These girls have done very well academically this year, and the relationship between Elizabeth and Agnes and our Year 7s has flourished.

The partnership with Bunda will be strengthened even further when Mrs Ware, Dr Gates and 15 Abbotsleigh girls will have the wonderful opportunity of visiting Bunda High School as well as the school of St Jude in Tanzania in July next year.

I commend to you our Vice-Head Prefect, **Sarah Hooper-Mitchell's speech** to the Senior School, which clearly demonstrates how our girls are making a transformational difference to girls at Bunda Girls High School.

### White Ribbon Day

Our girls are very attuned to significant social issues within our Australian community and, as such, it was very important to them that we acknowledged the scourge of violence against women by supporting White Ribbon Day last Friday 17 November.

I commend to you the girls' initiative and our Vice-Head Prefect, **Sarah Hooper-Mitchell's speech** about this very important issue.

### Senior School – Year 10 Immersion Week

This week, our Year 10 girls have participated in Immersion Week. This is a deep learning experience which has three key pillars:

#### 1. Immersive experience

It provides an opportunity for students to dive deeply into a cause or community.

#### 2. Deep learning

It fosters learning that 'sticks' beyond the actual experience, contributes to meaning and purpose and helps a person find their place in a complex world.

#### 3. Positive social impact

It provides an opportunity for making a positive social impact in response to real needs and through collaboration and teamwork.

As well as immersing themselves in a community or cause, an important part of the girls' experience is reflecting deeply on the process as well as on what they have learned about themselves and others.

Our girls and staff have been nothing short of sensational this week. It feels like we are finally back to normal, with groups of girls and staff travelling far and wide with the aim of making a positive social difference that has a real and lasting impact for everyone involved.

I would like to thank Mrs Annette Ware, Dean of Senior College, for her vision and incredible hard work in developing Immersion Week for our Year 10 girls. I also would like to thank Mrs Libby Bennett (Mrs Ware's EA), for the phenomenal work she has done for the girls. Mr Dylan Chalwell (Year 10 Coordinator) and the Year 10 tutors, as well as all the teachers listed below, who deserve our immense gratitude for their hard work and their willingness to give up their time for others.

Ms Kim Allan, Mr Adam Antonio, Mr Bill Beaumont, Miss Rebecca Bimson, Mrs Renee Black, Mr Steve Bultitude, Mrs Jessica Carlisle, Mr Brendan Colnan, Mr Jason Garrett, Dr Alison Gates, Mrs Shane Hamilton, Ms Alicia Highfield, Mr Ben Hunter, Ms Sarah Israel, Mr John Klimes, Ms Sophie Laing-Peach, Dr Michelle McVeigh, Ms Cathy Oliver, Ms Caitlin Oschadleus, Ms Jessica Parker, Dr Irini Savvides, Ms Jo Scalone, Ms Maddei Secker, Ms Vicky Staas, Mrs Alyssa Squance and Mr Rob Winslow.

To give you some idea of the depth and variety of the causes and communities in which the girls have been immersed this week, please see the list below.

- Bush to Bowl
- Cooking With Culture – Auburn Girls High School
- e-Safety Mentoring – for our elderly neighbours at UPA
- Eddies Concert – St Edmund's, Wahroonga
- Gabe's Gives Back – St Gabriel's School, Castle Hill
- Giant Steps – Gladesville
- Holroyd High School Cultural Exchange
- Ignite – Werrington Public School
- Life in the City (Our Big Kitchen, Bondi; St John's Community Services, Darlinghurst; Bill Crew's Foundation and more)
- Red Earth Indigenous Immersion Week in Far North Queensland
- Sport Legends – Werrington Public School
- Studio Artes – Hornsby
- Sydney Refugee Team
- Take Love – Anglicare: Gordon Quarter and Roden Cutler Lodge

### ABBOX of FUN Sony Camp

Our Year 11 girls, in partnership with Year 11 Knox Grammar boys, are again working with the Sony Foundation to provide much needed respite care for families who have children living with severe disabilities. Beginning on the day after Speech Day, our girls and staff, together with Knox boys and staff, will be giving up their time to give joy, laughter, fun and great experiences to these young children. The children's families will have this time to rest, restore and recuperate a little before Christmas.

The camp will culminate in a brilliant Christmas lunch for all the children, their families and those involved in the program.

I would like to thank Dr Alison Gates, Mrs Marg Selby and the huge team of Abbotsleigh staff and girls who are giving up their time to serve others in such an important and worthwhile way.

Thank you so much to all our Abbotsleigh girls, staff and parents who make it their life's mission to continually answer life's urgent question as posed by Martin Luther King, "What are you doing for others?"





# Community

## Highlights from the Abbotsleigh Band Festival

Mrs Lynette Clarke  
Head of SS Music

Congratulations to all the bands who dazzled the audience with their performances at the inaugural Abbotsleigh Band Festival last week. The Peter Duly Concert Hall came alive with the sounds of Bundarra Band, Junior School Concert Band, Senior School Concert Band and Symphonic Winds.

The festival celebrated musicians of all levels, from students who've been learning their instruments for just one or two years to more experienced players performing challenging band repertoire.





The grand finale featured the combined massed bands with upwards of 170 performers on stage, delivering a powerful rendition of Rossini's 'William Tell Overture.'

A heartfelt thank you goes to the band teaching team, conductors and Mrs Pinter for her organisation of the event.

For those interested in viewing and purchasing Anthony Khoury's photos from the festival, please [visit the website](#).

The password is weaver01



## AbbSchool Drama Trinity College London exam results

Mrs Pat Griffiths  
*AbbSchool Manager*

Congratulations to the 199 AbbSchool Drama students who recently completed their Trinity College London exams. The results were exceptional: out of 195 students, we received three Credits and 192 Distinctions.

Results for our four ATCL Diploma students are yet to arrive, but we are sure they will be just as amazing!

If you are interested in group or private AbbSchool Drama lessons for 2024, AbbSchool enrolments open early January.

# AbbSchool

## Wahroonga Village Fair

**Sunday 3rd Dec 2023**  
**9am-4pm**  
Railway Avenue & Carpark - Wahroonga

Australian made products, Art, Craft, Clothes, Jewellery, Food, Christmas gifts, French linen & bespoke items. Local shops open.  
Entertainment includes Knox Pipe Band, Music, singers, dancers, & more

## Uniform Shop holiday trading

Mrs Lorraine Boothby  
*Uniform Shop Manager*

Please note that the last day of trading for 2023 is Wednesday 6 December (9.30 am-4 pm)

### Holiday opening times for 2024

- Monday 8 to Thursday 25 January (weekdays only) 9.30 am-4 pm
- Closed 26 January 2024 (Public holiday)
- Monday 29 to Wednesday 31 January from 9.30 am-5 pm
- Normal trading hours resume on Thursday 1 February

Please call the Uniform Shop to make an appointment on 02 9473 7832.



# Junior School

## Monitoring the giggle index

Ms Sally Ruston  
Head of Junior School

As the **AbbSchool booklet** and the request for nominations for Years 3-6 music and sport for 2023 have just gone home, and the plethora of co-curricular choices for next year seems all too tempting, it is important that we work with the girls in helping them make sensible choices. The great challenge for us all is to define what 'sensible' looks like for each child. We seek a balanced diet, that supports passions being encouraged and curiosity explored. We are dedicated to ensuring that our girls leave school with a comprehensive kit bag of experiences, skills and knowledge that goes beyond the academic curriculum. Yet equally we understand that the research from Pasi Sahlberg in his book titled, *Let the Children Play: How More Play Will Save our Schools and Help Children Thrive*, argues convincingly of the need for children to have access to unstructured play time if they are to thrive.

Because we want both for our children, an article about after school activities in the *New York Times* titled 'Monitoring the Giggle Index' by Bruce Feiler, resonated well with me. This article articulates the struggle that parents engage in when trying to find the balance between enriching engagement in a range of very worthwhile co-curricular activities and over scheduling children to such an extent that they are robbed of their childhood. The article offers the following advice:

- Worry less about the time a child spends in activities and more about the message sent regarding engagement in the activities. Is your child's performance over scrutinised? Are we too interested in the lives of our children, hanging on every word, coddling every need and idolising each accomplishment? Where is the motivation coming from, you or your child?
- When viewing children's participation, are we as adults too focused on exemplary performance being the only goal that matters? For instance, is learning a musical instrument only valued if the next AMEB grade is achieved with distinction or the sports team attains an undefeated status, or the dance troupe is awarded gold at the



eisteddfod? Or can we, as adults, see and communicate merit in the act of contributing, learning and participating, irrespective of the outcome?

- Search ourselves to determine whether the lessons and classes are about parents competing with parents' determination for success. Is it our own anxieties or our children's genuine interest that drives us to enrol?
- Ensure that there is opportunity each week for children to have unscheduled time. Being bored can be viewed as a welcomed precursor to creative endeavour and invention.
- Children need time to lie around, play more freely and have periods when they are side-by-side with parents in the same room, being 'alone together'.
- Enrichment activities add much to a child's life when they are seen as fostering islands of expertise beyond the classroom.

Perhaps what I found most telling in this article was a unique measure to balance this somewhat conflicting advice: 'Are you hearing laughter? Is your child giggling when you drop them off or pick them up? Or are they solemn and dragging their feet?'

Our children have such minimal discretionary time each week after formal schooling, sleep, eating, ablutions and travel that amounts to only 1-2 hours each day. Thus, it is essential that we guide them to use this time wisely. Let us aim for such discretionary time to be consumed by laughter and activity that is intrinsically motivating and of our children's determination.



## Junior School Twilight Carol Service

Ms Sally Ruston  
Head of Junior School



This time of year is so special as we celebrate the birth of Christ together as a community. The Junior School Twilight Carol Service will again take place next week, on Thursday 30 November from 7-8 pm in the Infants Amphitheatre. Lots of planning and rehearsing has already taken place in readiness for this delightful event that will see all girls performing.

We are collecting toys and food to support the Anglicare Toys 'n' Tucker Christmas appeal and we encourage families to bring items to place under the Christmas tree in the Junior School Reception.

There will also be an offertory during the service for donations to Anglicare to support their work in our community.

Please [\*\*click here to donate now.\*\*](#)

We look forward to seeing **all** girls and families on Thursday 30 November to join in together in this joyful celebration.

## Year 2 Celebration and Soirée photos available

Ms Sally Ruston  
Head of Junior School

### Year 2 Celebration and Soirée



The Year 2 Celebration and Soirée photos are now available for viewing and purchasing from the [\*\*Anthony Khoury Photography website.\*\*](#)

The password is: weaver01

## Primary School Leaders' Morning Tea at Parliament House

Saskia McDonald and Savannah Tan  
Junior School Captain and Vice School Captain

On 7 September, we had the privilege attending the Primary School Leaders' Morning Tea at New South Wales Parliament House with Mrs Gaspersic. We were invited by our local Wahroonga MP, Mr Alister Henskens SC, who was also the host of the event. It was a great honour to participate, and we both found it extremely interesting to learn about the NSW Government. Along with other school leaders from our electorate, we were given a behind the scenes tour of the NSW Parliament House. During the tour, we saw the State Senate and House of Representatives, where we learnt about how the parliament operates and how each chamber is used to benefit NSW residents. We found it intriguing to discover the similarities and differences between the NSW Government and the Australian Government, which we had studied earlier this year. After this insightful tour, we were greeted with a huge spread of fruit, pastries and our personal favourite, sushi.

While we were munching away on all the delicious food, Mr Henskens ran a question session, which allowed us to quiz him on any questions that were buzzing around in our minds. We asked him about how he got into politics, his career and what characteristics are required by great leaders. We found it very inspiring, and it enhanced our leadership skills for our return to Abbotsleigh. We were both grateful to be awarded with certificates to recognise our contribution to the Abbotsleigh community. Overall, we are so honoured to have had the opportunity to attend this spectacular morning, meet Mr Henskens and represent Abbotsleigh.





## Year 4 immersive, memory-making event

Mrs Sarah Vincent  
Year 4 Coordinator

This term, the Year 4 girls have delved into texts that explore the complex themes of aging and memory loss. Drawing inspiration from *The Web* and *Layla Queen of Hearts*, the girls enjoyed lamingtons, pancakes with golden syrup, and Milo – all inspired by the texts. They watched the story of *Wilfred Gordon MacDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox and engaged in conversation discussing the significance of memories and sharing reminiscences of their own from the past year.

Dr Susie Tomlinson, a neurologist and Abbotsleigh Old Girl, enlightened the girls about the physical changes that occur in the brain due to dementia, along with providing insights into maintaining healthy and active brains. This event served as a delightful celebration of our collective learning and a fabulous connection across the grade. As we wrap up this insightful journey, the Year 4 girls are excited to treasure every moment and build a community that celebrates memories.



## A taste of France for Year 4

On Wednesday 22 November, Year 4 had an amazingly yummy French breakfast. Directed by Madame Jacobs and helped by some Year 6 girls, it was a fabulous feast. We had fun speaking real French to the Year 6 girls, who by the way, had great moustaches! It was an awesome morning, as we had fresh croissants and baguettes, accompanied by jam and Nutella, delicious juices and hot chocolate.

– Emily Asher and Jacqueline O'Connell, 4G

This was the first time Year 4 has done this wonderful activity. *Le petit déjeuner* translates to little lunch, which means breakfast. As we sat down to eat, we all exclaimed *Bon appétit!*

– Melany Chan and Stephanie Zheng, 4G

*Le petit déjeuner* was a great way to practise our French while getting to have fun with our friends. In France, breakfast is a time to get together. We enjoyed making new memories and celebrating our French learning in the Junior School.

– Elsa Huang and Penelope Mackun, 4G





# Senior School

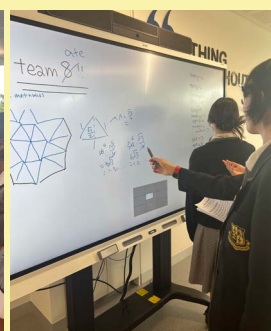
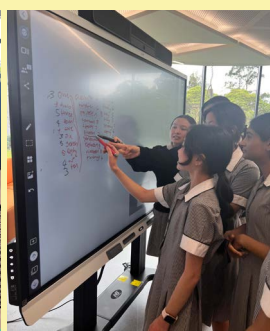
## Epic maths!

Neave Bailey  
Year 8

During the maths lessons on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, Year 8 Maths 1 and 2 combined in an epic two periods of problem solving and teamwork. We began by splitting off into groups of four or five and were given a booklet with 10 problems which we were tasked to solve. Everyone had a different approach, and my group began by flicking through the booklet and working out which problems we thought would be most interesting to break down and decipher. Together, we discussed those problems, bouncing ideas off each other throughout the session.

Every so often, one of us would jump up suddenly, believing we'd reached the right answer after rigorous trial and error or different attempts at patterns and algebra. The iHub was an amazing new space to work in, and towards the end of the lesson, my group finally cracked a difficult problem

labelled Dividing Dice to do with probability. We were the first group to get it and were thrilled! We continued to work on other problems the following lesson and revisited Dividing Dice to create a coherent solution that we couldn't wait to explain to the rest of the class! It was also very interesting to listen to the explanations presented by the other groups and to hear the many different ways they had considered and solved each question. Overall, it was a very concentrated, exciting few hours. It was such an enjoyable new way of learning outside the normal classroom environment, and a wonderful way to end the year!



## Duke of Edinburgh Gold residential project – Peru medical internship

Abigail Lewis  
Year 11

During the September holidays, I had the privilege to study abroad in Cuzco, Peru, on a medical internship where I got to watch surgeries, visit Machu Picchu, learn how to cook Peruvian cuisine and more.

My journey started at 9 am on Friday 15 September at the Sydney International Airport, where I was dropped off and left to check myself in for the first time ever. Once I was through security, I realised I was leaving the country for the other side of the world all by myself. It took three flights to get me there: Sydney to Santiago, Santiago to Lima, and finally, Lima to Cuzco. Having never been on a plane by myself before, there were bound to

be a few mishaps. I encountered my first obstacle in Lima, where I had to communicate with Spanish-speaking airport staff after immigration for directions to the domestic airport. Thankfully, I had my three weeks of 'intensive' Duolingo knowledge in my back pocket to help understand what they were saying (I was looking at which direction they were pointing in and hoping for the best). When I arrived in Cuzco on the Saturday night, after getting lost twice in the Lima airport, I had officially been travelling for more than 24 hours.





The internship officially started on the Monday, giving me time to adjust to the 15-hour jetlag I was experiencing, alongside a headache due to the high altitude (3,200 meters). Also staying with me were the four other girls on the medical internship, whom I had not yet met, and who all attend the same school. Our first day at the hospital was on the Tuesday, where we took the vitals of patients and helped the nurses with some of their tasks. Another obstacle was that the hospital staff and patients only spoke Spanish, and if you couldn't tell, I don't speak Spanish.

#### *Why did I choose Peru then?*

The itinerary. I initially found out about a similar program but in Nepal during the December holidays, which clashed with commitments I already had. But in mid-August, Ms Selby forwarded an email on from Projects Abroad, which had a number attached. I initially called as an expression of interest and asked if there were any upcoming projects in the September break that I could join. They sent me the itinerary of the Peru medical internship that four girls had organised, and that sold me: visiting Machu Picchu, the Sacred Valley, salsa lessons and cooking classes, just some of the amazing experiences that were unique to Peru. On my time away, I watched several surgeries, including an appendectomy, a distal radius fracture surgery, where I assisted in disinfecting the patient's arm, and a caesarean. Aside from the hospital, I was involved in workshops, which included learning how to do a suture stitch, a neurology workshop where I held a human brain, as well as going to a school outside of Cuzco to help test children for anaemia.

Coming back from the project, I have reflected on my experience in Peru, and realised it has given me insight into my passions for my future; I am interested in a medical field career. I have gained confidence in myself as a 16-year-old girl who travelled by herself for the first time halfway across the world, as well as having to overcome a language barrier for two weeks, on top of doing it all with complete strangers. This trip has given me not only memorable experiences, but extensive insight into the beauty of helping people and how important it is to give back to the community. I also made friendships that I will cherish for years to come. I am so grateful for the opportunity to experience this, and because of what I have

learnt, I have reached out to my local paramedics to work part-time as a first aid medic for local events in my area as a way of giving back. I am so thankful for the experience and cannot wait for what is to come.

If you would like further information about the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, please **contact Miss Bimson.**



## Interview skills

Mrs Marg Selby  
Careers Adviser and Exchange Coordinator

Our current Year 9 students are already excitedly planning for their work experience week next year. They are giving thought to the types of work they might like to try, and considering what skills would make them suitable for this. Some will be asked to undergo an interview to assess their suitability for the role and the thought of being interviewed often makes students nervous.

There are some questions that are generally common to most interviews, like, "Tell me a bit about yourself." One of the most common questions of course, is to ask the candidate about their strengths and weaknesses. That seems straightforward, and easy enough to answer. However, for the strengths question, it is important not to just to give a glib answer that you cannot justify. Instead, think about the sort of things that might be considered a strength in the type of work that is of interest to you and then measure up how you can best illustrate that you have this strength. Maybe they want

someone with good communication skills, and you have done lots of debating, so you can use this as an example. Maybe they want someone who is resilient, and you can talk about how you overcame a problem with which you were faced, maybe on a camp or an overseas exchange program.

With a question about your weaknesses, again you need to have given this some thought in the context of where you are seeking to work. It is easy to say something like, "I am a chocoholic!" However, you can guarantee that they will have heard that response before and not be amused. Instead, you might talk about where you have been 'challenged' previously and how you overcame this challenge and what you have learned for the future from it. Employers are also keen to see that you are willing to take advantage of opportunities and are keen to grow from taking new experiences. For other tips and potential questions, please **download this document.**

For current Careers news, visit the **Careers Information page** on AbbNet.