

The Shuttle



Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.



Outdoor Education – an essential component of holistic learning

Mrs Clare Haymen
Dean of Middle School



The benefits of Outdoor Education have been well documented. Studies show spending time in nature supports improved physical, cognitive and mental health. Specifically, it can reduce anxiety, increase overall sense of wellbeing and self-esteem, and it has the potential to improve learning retention. With this in mind, it is imperative that we provide outdoor learning opportunities for our students to thrive.

As Sally Ruston, Head of Junior School, explains, '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 the week.' Students are provided with opportunities to reflect on transferable skills so vital for their future beyond the school gates, including group cohesion, communication competencies, creating a better social climate and overcoming life's challenges.

As you are aware, our Junior School girls spent Week 5 on various camps designed to challenge the girls just at an age-appropriate level. The girls had a wonderful time, and we are very grateful to all of our Junior School staff who gave up so much of their time to ensure that the camps were fantastic learning experiences – socially, emotionally and intellectually.

Our Middle School Outdoor Education program builds on skills developed through Junior School camps and is inextricably linked to Abbotsleigh's Deep Learning and Wellbeing Frameworks, where students further develop the skills of interdependence, resilience and self-regulation outside the classroom. It enables students in Years 7, 8 and 9 to strengthen existing relationships and create new connections, while challenging themselves through participation in experiential learning activities.

Abbotsleigh has traditionally held Middle School camps during Senior School Challenge Week in Week 7 of Term 1. However, due to the change in NAPLAN scheduling,



Year 7 will go on their camp next week, and Year 9 will enjoy their 'challenge by choice' camp next term.

In Week 7, our Year 8 girls had a wonderful time away together at Cataract Scout Park, Appin. They engaged in a range of activities, including mountain biking, rock climbing, bush/coastal walks, and team building tasks. They developed important skills in the preparation and cooking of their own meals each night and worked together to problem solve in a variety of team challenges. All groups benefited from an Indigenous presentation from NSW Parks and Wildlife, which was an immersive experience where students gained an understanding of the land on which they camped, as well as learning to weave and use ochre as face paint.

An important component of the Outdoor Education program is personal reflection, and our Year 8 girls were given time daily to consider their challenges and accomplishments. The break from their digital realm promoted mindfulness and an appreciation of nature. This year's Prefect theme 'Brave the Waves' was also beautifully incorporated



throughout the week. The girls were reminded that in overcoming challenges, true character and resilience are formed.

Our sincere thanks go to our staff for their organisation of the camp, and to all the teachers who attended. The care and support they showed the girls was exemplary and contributed to the positive and rewarding experience had by so many. Just as is the case in our Junior School, our students created thank you cards for their



accompanying teachers as a way of expressing gratitude and appreciation for their efforts. No doubt many special memories and lasting connections were formed throughout the week.

We look forward to our Year 7 and Year 9 cohorts experiencing camp in the coming weeks, and hope that they can 'Brave the Waves' of Outdoor Education to contribute to their overall personal growth and flourishing.

References

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- Mutz, M., & Müller, J. (2016). Mental health benefits of outdoor adventures: Results from two pilot studies. *Journal of adolescence*, 49, 105-114.

Chaplain

CRU and Jesus' ascension

Mrs Alison Soper
Junior School Chaplain and Christian Studies Teacher

Each year, CRU (an organisation that supports voluntary Christian groups in schools) conducts leadership training days. These events, called FIT (Followers in Training) are for student leaders who are keen to lead within these groups. Earlier this term,

seven Year 6 girls attended FIT. They learnt about Peter's mission and how he met Jesus, followed him, and then started gathering believers together. The girls met students from other CRU groups in local schools and joined with them to solve puzzles and challenges. It was a terrific opportunity to grow in understanding God's Word and encourage each other. Our Year 3-6

CRU girls meet on Wednesday at lunchtime and Mini-CRU for girls in K-2 meets on Tuesday lunchtime.

This week in Junior School Chapel the focus was on what happened after Jesus came back alive. More than 500 people are reported to have seen the risen Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:6) and after 40 days he returned to heaven. This is the account in Acts just after Jesus is asked when he will bring a final restoration.

⁷ He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.

¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." **Acts 1:7-11**



Upcoming events

WHOLE SCHOOL

Landscape, Existence – Julien Playoust	4 to 27 April	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery, Senior School
Term 1 concludes	Thursday 11 April	
Term 2 commences	Tuesday 30 April	

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Year 6 netball and minkey trials	Monday 8 April 3.20-4.30 pm	Junior School
Transition excursion to ACEE	Tuesday 9 April 8.30 am-2.30 pm	Abbotsleigh Centre for Environmental Education
Year 6 Public Speaking Competition	Tuesday 9 April 2-3 pm	Everett Hall
Year 5 netball and minkey trials	Wednesday 10 April 3.20-4.30 pm	Junior School
PSSA Swimming and Diving Carnival	Thursday 11 April 8 am-3 pm	SOPAC
JS House Cup, Picnic and Colour Run	Thursday 11 April 12.45-3 pm	Infants Amphitheatre
Abbotsleigh Kids Club Vacation Care	Friday 12 to Monday 29 April 7.15 am-6 pm	Click here for the program

Jump Rope for Heart	Tuesday 30 April to Friday 7 June	Junior School
Year 5 netball and minkey training	Wednesday 1 May 3.20-4.30 pm	Junior School
Years 3 and 4 netball and minkey training	Thursday 2 May 3.20-4.30 pm	Junior School
Year 6 netball and minkey training	Friday 3 May 3.20-4.30 pm	Junior School
JS Production rehearsal	Friday 3 May 3.30-5.30 pm	Everett Hall
ISDA Debating – make up Abbotsleigh vs Newington	Friday 3 May 5-8 pm	Online
IPSHA Saturday Sport Indigenous Reconciliation round	Saturday 4 May 8 am-12 noon	See Parent app for team sheets and venues
JS Production rehearsal	Saturday 4 May 2-4.30 pm	Everett Hall

SENIOR SCHOOL

Sporting fixtures	Saturday 6 April	Click here for venues and times
Year 7 Challenge Week	Monday 8 to Thursday 11 April	Lake Macquarie
Years 8-12 portrait and group photos	Monday 8 April 8.20 am-2 pm	
Lipman Abbotsleigh Women in Construction Breakfast	Tuesday 9 April 7-8.15 am	Senior School Dining Hall
Year 11 Elective Music Soirée	Wednesday 10 April 6.30-8 pm	PDCH
Year 9 Drama excursion to Medea	Thursday 11 April 8.30 am-3.25 pm	Riverside Theatre
Boarder Travel Day	Friday 12 April	
Boarder Travel Day	Monday 29 April	
ANZAC Chapel	Tuesday 30 April 8.20-9 am	Assembly Hall
Years 11 and 12 Lunchtime Futures (Macquarie University)	Wednesday 1 May	U5
Year 11 Art incursion	Thursday 2 May	GCSG
House Cross Country Carnival	Friday 3 May 12.30-3.20 pm	SS Synthetic Field and surrounds