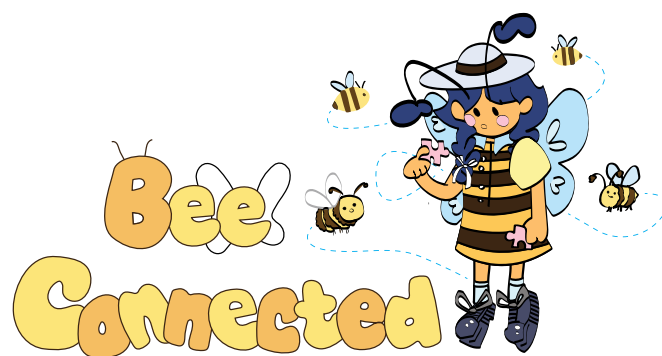


The Shuttle

Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.



‘Bee Connected’ – The wonderful benefits of ‘beeing’ educated at a girls’ school

Mrs Megan Krimmer
Headmistress

Semester 1 2025 has been nothing short of phenomenal. From day one, our girls threw themselves behind our Prefect theme ‘Bee Connected’ as well as the many celebrations we have had in honour of Abbotsleigh’s 140th birthday.

Our school certainly has a rich and vibrant history, beginning with the vision of Miss Marian Clarke, a woman of vision and courage – a trailblazer of her time – who wanted the same educational opportunities for girls that their brothers received. Taking a great risk, she started the fledgling school, Abbotsleigh, which boasted such non-traditional subjects (for girls that is) as geometry, woodwork and sport!

Over the last 140 years, Abbotsleigh has certainly grown and evolved into the great and highly regarded school that it is today. Yet, despite the many changes that have occurred in curriculum, school buildings, co-curricular opportunities, technology, teaching and learning, and even location, the School has never wavered from Miss Clarke’s vision – to provide an education and opportunities for girls equal to that of boys.

As Miss Archdale famously said – ‘With education girls can do or be anything’ and Abbotsleigh is indeed, very proudly, a girls’ school.

The debate about single sex education has waxed and waned over many years and, due to a number of circumstances, it is being debated again today. A typical refrain is ‘we live in a co-ed world, schools are supposed to prepare children to live in society, therefore, shouldn’t schools also be co-ed?’ At first glance, this sounds very reasonable and logical, until you have the opportunity of experiencing the unique and wonderful environment of being in a girls’ school.

At an APR meeting a few weeks ago, I had the opportunity of discussing the unique benefits of girls’ schools. As I shared with the APR, I was educated in a co-ed school – yes, I had a great and highly academic education, and I



did well. However, I didn’t know what I was missing until I had the fantastic opportunity to teach in a girls’ school – and the difference that unfolded before my very eyes was palpable; something I see and experience all day every day at Abbotsleigh.

Was this just the case at the girls’ school I happened to land in or at girls’ schools in general? This question formed a central part of the research I undertook for my master’s degree. And – the answer? A resounding finding that girls’ schools are unique and do provide the best educational environment, as they allow the vast majority of girls to develop in freedom, to be who they are and to flourish. My research is dated but my conclusion has not only stood the test of time, it has been reinforced by the research of others, in particular, the outstanding research undertaken by the International Coalition of Girls’ Schools (ICGS)* and researchers in girls’ schools and universities around the world.

As former girls’ school principal, Fran Reddan states: ‘The case for choosing a girls’ school is strong and evidence, both anecdotal and research-based, supports the idea that girls’ schools are better able to create the environment and opportunities needed for girls to succeed and develop intellectually, emotionally and physically.’





According to the ICGS, at girls' schools, 'girls take centre stage', and this is certainly the case at Abbotsleigh. Girls' schools provide a unique environment and wonderful opportunities to develop into confident, articulate young women who graduate, ready to lean in and take their seat at any table.

Here are some important features of Abbotsleigh and girls' schools in general:

- Learning is designed around how our girls learn best.
- Girls are encouraged to, and do take risks in the classroom and beyond – they are free to develop into the young women they wish to be, unfettered by distractions or wanting to please boys.
- As a result, our girls develop self-confidence and self-efficacy, unafraid to speak up and contribute.
- Our girls are encouraged to pursue their passions and study subjects at the highest levels – it is seen as the 'norm' to love learning and to do your best at Abbotsleigh and in girls' schools around the world.
- Subjects are seen as gender-neutral; girls happily study supposedly non-traditional STEM subjects – subjects where girls and women are very much in the minority at a number of schools, as well as in university courses such as engineering. Girls at Abbotsleigh have been doing this since the School's inception.
- Career goals are equally gender neutral – it is seen as perfectly natural for our girls to go into 'non-traditional' careers.
- All leadership positions go to girls; at Abbotsleigh in particular, we provide excellent leadership training for leadership roles that are both informal (the everyday leader) and formal.



- Our girls are involved; they participate in sport and other co-curricular activities in huge numbers; this is not always the case in co-ed schools.
- The culture of mutual support, vibrancy and enthusiasm means that House spirit and School spirit are quite extraordinary.
- This support for each other extends to all areas across the School – in the classroom, in assemblies where girls perform, at concerts, plays, dance, debating, robotics, and the list goes on.

This culture of vibrance, energy, involvement, participation and support has been captured by this year's Prefects with their theme for Abbotsleigh's 140th birthday year – 'Bee Connected'. Our girls are connected and involved; they support one another beautifully. This was seen loud and clear at the 'Night of a Thousand Stars' concert, and in so many community and student events this year. This incredible 'sisterhood' will stand our girls in great stead when they leave the gates of Abbotsleigh well-prepared to take on any challenge that may come their way.

It is an absolute privilege and delight to work with our staff and girls to ensure our girls are given every opportunity possible to flourish and develop into the best young women they can be and to take their equal seat at any table.

This is the last Shuttle edition for the term. I wish you and your family a wonderful break and look forward to seeing you when school resumes on Tuesday 22 July.

* This term has been bookended by two conferences run by ICGS – the first was held at Queenwood, Sydney, where I was a member of a principals' panel and a number of our staff (Mrs Cannon, Ms Royston, Mrs Moffatt, Dr Gates and I) presented. We also learned much from other Australasian girls' schools. The conclusion of the term will see Mrs Tori Rennie and me attend and present at the International Coalition Conference in Philadelphia. I know that we will also learn much from the research presented by well-renowned speakers and representatives of girls' schools from around the world.

If you would like to read more about the research undertaken by the ICGS – please [click here](#).



Chaplain

Light shine

Rev Sarah Hobba
Senior Chaplain and Head of Christian Studies

Lights shone in the darkness. Jellyfish and other sea creatures glowed through trees. Fairy lights wrapped around posters, and tea lights on tables illuminated student work. Voices and instruments rang out into the cold night air. Warmth came from the barbecue and food vans, or the air conditioning. GLOW was a wonderful evening that celebrated creativity, learning and community. The Transition students' theme, inspired by the song, *This Little Light of Mine*, reminded us that our good deeds of kindness, sharing and respect help God's light shine through us. The Chapel's stained-glass windows told stories of people whose Christian faith had led them to do wonderful acts for others. This included famous figures like C S Lewis, Mother Teresa, Corrie ten Boom and Martin

Luther King Jr, as well as those close to Abbotsleigh, such as Rev Helen Hoskins and Aunty Margaret Adams, a Kamilaroi woman from Moree.

In Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, he encourages us to let our light shine and not hide it. Our 'light' of good deeds reflects God's love and points others toward Him. Jesus' ultimate good deed, lifted high on the cross, reveals the depth of God's love and grace. Even when the world feels dark, may we continue to shine His light and never give up on doing good for others. May we keep glowing in the darkness.

Matthew 5:14-16

¹⁴You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Upcoming events

WHOLE SCHOOL

Young Curators exhibition	Wednesday 25 June to Saturday 12 July	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
Term 2 concludes	Thursday 26 June	
Lifeline Book Fair	Thursday 17 to Sunday 20 July	Knox Grammar School
Term 3 commences	Tuesday 22 July	
Online registration is now open for Year 7 2027 scholarships for girls currently in Year 5		Click here to apply
Wellbeing webinar – Navigating Friendships – Michelle Mitchell – free to all Abbotsleigh parents and staff	Available from 11 June until 23 July	Click here to register
Wellbeing webinar – Carrots and Sticks – Better ways to build Boundaries with Your Kids – Justin Coulson – Free to all Abbotsleigh parents and staff	Available from 11 June until 23 July	Click here to register
SchoolTV program – student wellbeing resources	Available to all parents on the Parent Portal	Click here to watch

JUNIOR SCHOOL

IPSHA Saturday sport	Saturday 21 June 8 am-12 noon	See team sheets for times and venues
Year 6 Fundraiser	Tuesday 24 June 12.45-2 pm	JS Oval
Years 3 and 4 Kaboom music incursion	Wednesday 25 June 9.30-10.30 am	Everett Hall
Years 5 and 6 Kaboom music incursion	Wednesday 25 June 10.50-11.50 am	Everett Hall
5G Nursing Home visit	Wednesday 25 June 2-3 pm	
JS House Cup	Thursday 26 June 1.40-2 pm	
ELC, T and Year 1 Act for Kids	Wednesday 23 July 9 am-3 pm	Classrooms
Primary athletics trials	Thursday 24 July 9 am-1 pm	Senior School
Competition chess	Friday 25 July 3-4.30 pm	

SENIOR SCHOOL

Saturday sport	Saturday 21 June 8 am-12 noon	Click here for times and venues
Frensham Rugby 7s Gala Day	Saturday 21 June 12-5 pm	Frensham, Mittagong
Year 12 Speaking German Day	Tuesday 24 June 8.25 am-3.20 pm	Goethe Institute, Edgecliff
Year 12 Latin Study Day	Tuesday 24 June 8.45 am-3 pm	Barker College
Year 8 Musical incursion	Tuesday 24 June 11.25 am-12.40 pm	PDCH
IGSA Archdale Debating vs Brigidine College	Tuesday 24 June 3.30-8 pm	Away
Young Curators exhibition opening	Wednesday 25 June 5.30-7 pm	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
NASA/NYC Tour parent meeting	Wednesday 25 June 6-8 pm	iHub
Women in Agriculture breakfast	Thursday 26 June 7-8 am	SS Dining Room
Year 9 VA excursion	Thursday 26 June 8.20 am-3.20 pm	Art Gallery of NSW
Year 11 (2026) subject selection evening	Thursday 26 June 6.30-8.30 pm	
Boarder travel day	Friday 27 June	



Year 12 Formal	Friday 27 June 6-11 pm	Doltone House, Pyrmont
NSW All School Cross Country Carnival	Wednesday 23 July 7 am-3 pm	Eastern Creek
Year 10 History excursion	Thursday 24 July 8.20 am-3.25 pm	Sydney Jewish Museum
Year 10 Burma/Myanmar talk – Dr Sasa	Friday 25 July 2.10-3.30 pm	Abbotsleigh Chapel
SDN Debating – Round 1	Friday 25 July 4-8 pm	