

# The Shuttle

Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.

## 'Beeing Connected' to others through empathy

Mrs Megan Krimmer  
Headmistress

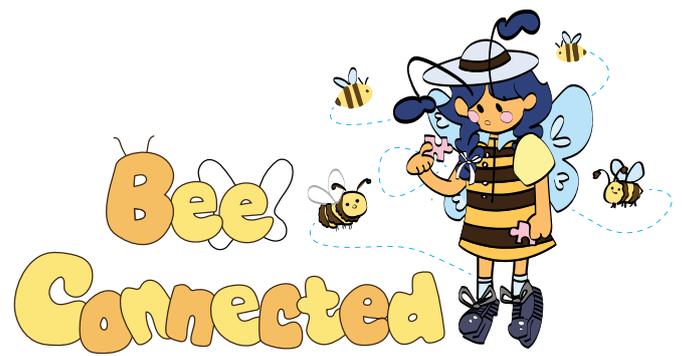
It is completely understandable that many parents, especially parents of younger children, choose not to allow their daughters to watch the news or engage with media covering current global issues. It is hard enough as adults to witness the dreadful atrocities occurring in so many places compressed into horrifying snippets for viewers to access on media platforms. Understandably, so many feel powerless and helpless in the face of such misery and destruction.

In his Chapel address to our Years 10 and 11 girls two weeks ago, DJ Begbie from the Crossroads Foundation, claimed that the world is certainly broken – however, we do not have to remain helpless or powerless – there are things each girl, adult, indeed each member of our community can do to make the world in which we live a better place – it starts with us, here in Wahroonga; it might be small and local; it might be something much bigger, but we can and must do something.

In our quest to do something, we must develop empathy, understanding and the ability to see things from different perspectives. We certainly aim for this for all our girls and, as such, empathy forms an important part of both our Learning and Wellbeing Frameworks.

Assisting our girls in this quest was the life-changing simulation experience DJ and Liz Begbie delivered to Years 8 and 9 earlier this term. Equally life-changing were the addresses both Liz and DJ delivered to all our girls in Chapel.

Although things are hard to watch and come to terms with, it is important that our girls, in an age-appropriate way, become aware of the issues our world is facing. This is how they can make a well-researched, informed, empathetic and positive impact. Making a positive difference in our world has been a key aim for Abbotsleigh since its inception 140 years ago. I encourage you all to



discuss the issues with your daughters – especially if they are in the Senior School.

Our Director of Learning Innovation, Mrs Donna Moffatt, has written an excellent article about the life-changing experiences DJ and Liz Begbie delivered to Years 8 and 9. I know that this experience has inspired our girls to make a real and positive difference in the world. I commend Mrs Moffatt's article to you:

### Empathy in action: Helping our students make the real world better

Mrs Donna Moffatt  
Director of Learning Innovation

*'Instead of always asking how we can prepare our students for the real world, we should be asking: How can we help our students make the real world better?'*

– George Couros (accessed 4 August 2025)

This powerful question guided our Senior School students last week as they engaged with DJ and Liz Begbie (Watson, 1994) from the Crossroads Foundation – a Hong Kong-based non-profit organisation serving global need. Founded by Malcolm and Sally Begbie (Marr, 1968), Crossroads has a long-standing relationship with Abbotsleigh. For 17 years, up until 2019, our students volunteered at Crossroads during school trips, gaining firsthand experience in global service.

### Struggle for survival simulation

During the week, Years 8 and 9 students participated in a simulation called *Struggle for Survival*. Working in 'family groups' on a two-metre square sheet of plastic – representing their home – they tried to earn enough to survive by making

paper bags from newspaper and homemade glue. They had to budget for rent, food, sanitation, medical needs and if fortunate, education. Those unable to meet basic needs faced the harsh reality of turning to a loan shark.

The simulation immersed our girls in the daily struggles faced by millions worldwide, sparking deep reflection and a desire to find solutions to the complex web of poverty.

## Empathy as a learning disposition

Through the simulations for Years 8 and 9, and presentations to Years 7, 10 and 11, we encouraged our girls to develop empathy and a heart for service.

Increasingly, research shows that empathy is a positive predictor of literacy, numeracy and critical thinking. At Abbotsleigh, empathy is a core learning disposition embedded in our Learning Framework. It is nurtured from the ELC to Year 12, helping our girls act

with courage, compassion, integrity and respect in an increasingly connected global society.

## Reflections and next steps

The most powerful messages from the week were framed by two questions:

- **Does our world need to change?**
- **What can we do to help make that change?**

Too often, we feel we are not big or powerful enough to make a difference. Yet by the end of the week, many of our girls and staff were asking: *What can we do next?*

Feedback was filled with inspiration, a passion to help others and a readiness to take action. Through the empathy simulations, our girls saw that leadership – both individual and collective – can drive meaningful change in communities, locally and globally.

As Baroness Caroline Cox, founder of HART (Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust) says:

*'We cannot do everything, but we must not do nothing.'*



# Chaplain

Polly Butterworth  
Chaplain

On Tuesday 12 August, 13 Year 10 students, along with two staff, attended a Masterclass in Castle Hill hosted by the Bible Society. They gathered with schools from all over NSW to play games, sing and hear three talks from the Bible. The first talk was titled 'Jesus Foretold: How does all of scripture point to Jesus?' by Dan Paterson, which focused on the prophecies of the Old Testament. Natasha Moore spoke on how to disagree well in a divided world, and Max Jaganathan prompted us to consider true freedom. After lunch, the speakers responded to questions from the students about each of the focus topics. A highlight for the students was the worship music, led by Afrobeats, who encouraged students to joyfully express their praise through singing and dancing.



## Upcoming events

### WHOLE SCHOOL

<b>Gala Dinner - Bee Connected: An Evening of Celebration</b>	Saturday 16 August 6.30-11 pm	Doltone House Darling Island, Pyrmont
<b>Hayden Wood exhibition</b>	Thursday 14 to Thursday 21 August	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
<b>SchoolTV program – student wellbeing resources</b>	Available to all parents on the Parent Portal	<a href="#">Click here to watch</a>
<b>State Interschool Snowsport Championships</b>	Monday 18 to Friday 22 August	Perisher

### JUNIOR SCHOOL

<b>IPSHA Saturday sport</b>	Saturday 16 and Saturday 23 August	See team sheets for times and venues
<b>Year 5 Bathurst Camp</b>	Wednesday 20 to Friday 22 August	Bathurst, NSW
<b>3L St Lucy's visit</b>	Monday 21 August 9.10-11.20 am	St Lucy's School, Wahroonga

<b>Circle of Security parent sessions</b>	Friday 22 August 8.30-10.30 am	
<b>ELC and Transition excursion to the ACEE</b>	Tuesday 26 August 8.30 am-2.30 pm	ACEE, Senior Campus
<b>Year 5 CruFit Excursion (selected students)</b>	Wednesday 27 August 11.45 am-3.30 pm	Roseville College
<b>3L St Lucy's visit</b>	Thursday 28 August 9.10-11.20 am	St Lucy's School, Wahroonga

## SENIOR SCHOOL

<b>Saturday sport</b>	Saturday 16 and Saturday 23 August	<a href="#">Click here for times and venues</a>
<b>IGSA Archdale Debating Quarter Finals</b>	Tuesday 19 August 3.30-8 pm	
<b>Year 9 Write a Book in a Day (WABIAD)</b>	Wednesday 20 August 8 am-6 pm	Senior School Library rooms
<b>IPSHA Cricket Gala Day</b>	Wednesday 20 August 8.20 am-3.25 pm	Top Oval and Synthetic
<b>Year 9-11 Elective Drama Workshop</b>	Thursday 21 August 10 am-12.30 pm	
<b>Year 12 Geography Tea Farm tour</b>	Thursday 21 August 12.45-4 pm	Green Tea Estate, Mangrove Mountain
<b>IGSA Athletics Carnival (Year 7 attending)</b>	Friday 22 August 8 am-4 pm	Sydney Olympic Park Athletics Centre
<b>SDN Debating - Round 5</b>	Friday 22 August 4-8 pm	
<b>IGSA Chess competition</b>	Friday 22 August 3.30-5 pm	iHub, Room i204
<b>HSC Showcase exhibition</b>	Tuesday 26 to Saturday 30 August	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
<b>Ku-ring-gai Philharmonic rehearsal</b>	Thursday 28 August 7-10.30 pm	PDCH
<b>HSC Drama exams</b>	Friday 29 August	Drama Studio
<b>SRC International Day Fair</b>	Friday 29 August 12.45-2 pm	Top Oval
<b>IGSA Chess competition</b>	Friday 29 August 3.30-5 pm	iHub, Room i204
<b>SDN Debating - Round 6</b>	Friday 29 August 4-8 pm	
<b>Catch a Rising Star Gala Concert</b>	Friday 29 August 6.30-8 pm	PDCH