

The Shuttle

Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.

'Journey With Joy' through Abbotsleigh's extensive and enriching co-curricular program

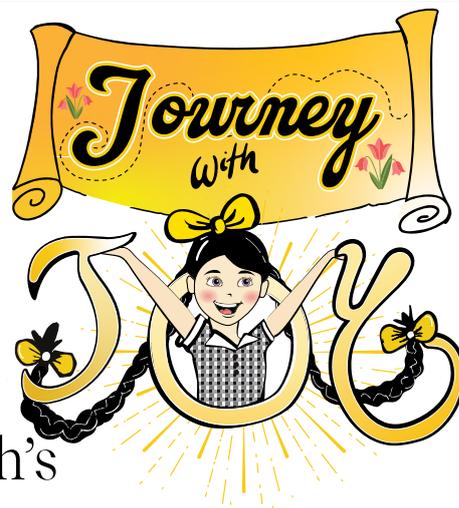
Mrs Megan Krimmer
Headmistress

Our girls have the opportunity to do more so that they have the ability to 'be' more

As you are aware, Abbotsleigh is renowned for fostering the academic, physical, spiritual, social and emotional development of each girl, and, as such, in conjunction with our fine academic program, we provide an equally important extensive range of rich and diverse opportunities for our girls 'to do more so that they have the ability to **be** more'. Indeed, we educate the whole girl Pre K-12, so that each girl may develop her passions, broaden her horizons and develop into the best young woman she can be.

To see the joy on our girls' faces as they signed up for and engaged in so many activities in both the Junior and Senior Schools this term has been magic. Last Friday, the Senior School was buzzing with delight and excitement as our girls launched their Co-curricular Fair. Music blared, girls encouraged their fellow students to join clubs, competitions were held, and much yummy food was consumed as the leaders of myriad service clubs and activities spruiked the great benefits of enhancing the girls 'joyful Abbotsleigh journeys'.

I warmly commend to you the following research-based and insightful article by Mrs Jasmine Palmer, our Director of Co-curricular and AbbSchool, about the significant benefits that involvement in our highly developed co-curricular program brings to each of our girls, Pre K-12.



'Journey With Joy' through Co-curricular involvement

Mrs Jasmine Palmer
Director of Co-Curricular

Life beyond the school gates is fast-paced, and the importance of fostering a sense of community, connection, and belonging among girls cannot be overstated. Building meaningful relationships, developing a strong sense of identity, and feeling more connected to their school community provides your daughters with great support during challenging times, and helps them to navigate the complexities of growing and developing in Junior School and adolescence in both the Junior and Senior Schools.

In today's climate, where changes to social media access and restrictions on certain platforms are increasingly recognised as beneficial for young people, the need for authentic, real-world connection has never been more important. While these changes help protect our teenagers, limit exposure to harmful content, and promote healthier habits, they also highlight the necessity of offering constructive and fulfilling alternatives. One of the most powerful avenues for finding these rich and meaningful connections is through involvement in co-curricular activities – experiences that are genuine, inspiring, and deeply supportive of the development of interpersonal skills.

Co-curricular activities in schools play a vital role in achieving the above by providing students with opportunities to engage in diverse interests outside of the classroom. At Abbotsleigh we are focused on creating these opportunities for learning beyond

the curriculum, knowing that there is an important balance to be struck between academic work and co-curricular involvement, both of which have a very important role to play in developing young people.

Our girls are living in a progressive era, where earning a high ATAR score or a bachelor's or master's degree is no longer sufficient on its own. To best prepare them for the future and ensure greater success in their professional lives, our girls must possess additional skills such as communication, leadership, interpersonal skills, management skills, and teamwork.

Our co-curricular programs help our girls develop essential 'soft skills', such as adaptability, problem-solving, and collaboration, which are highly sought after by employers in today's rapidly changing job market. Universities and industry leaders, particularly in STEAM and engineering fields, are calling for students who are creative thinkers; who have had authentic experiences collaborating with others; who are able to engage with technical concepts; and who have developed strong nontechnical skills in problem solving. All of these experiences can be found and nurtured in our co-curricular environments.

The many great benefits of being involved in co-curricular activities are well documented and widely acknowledged, and the research is confirmed by our own observations at Abbotsleigh. However, some girls and their parents still think that engaging in such activities may negatively affect academic achievement. As a result, some students remain unsure about whether to participate in co-curricular activities. The staff at Abbotsleigh want to dispel that ambiguity and encourage students to participate in at least one co-curricular activity per term, and we ask for the support of our parents to guide your daughters through this exploration.

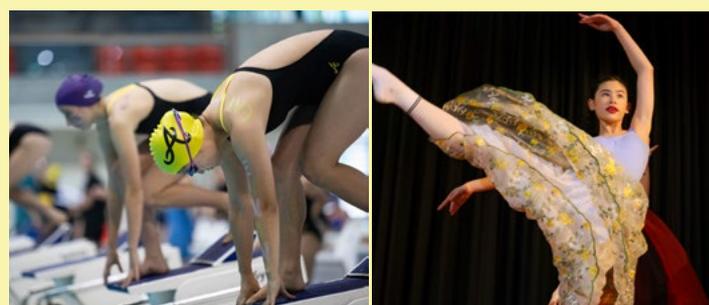
Students who engage in co-curricular activities often experience better academic outcomes. Involvement in co-curricular activities can ignite a student's passion for learning and foster a more positive attitude towards school, resulting in stronger learning outcomes, higher educational aspirations, and overall academic achievement.

At Abbotsleigh, we can proudly say that our co-curricular program is one of our great strengths. Not only do we offer a breadth of opportunities across sport, music, debating and public speaking, performing arts, creative arts, environmental groups, social justice groups and enrichment activities, but our program continues to evolve. Recent expansions in Sport and STEM reflect our commitment to staying dynamic and responsive as the interests of our girls change. Remaining relevant to our students and to society, is essential in ensuring Abbotsleigh continues to be one of the best independent girls' schools in the country.

Our girls are so fortunate, and our staff are so generous, that we can provide a co-curricular experience for every girl. Whether through passion, curiosity, or the desire to belong, each girl can find her place. These connections matter, because when we belong to something greater, we are never alone – and together, we are always stronger.

As educators and parents, we are responsible for encouraging and supporting our girls' involvement in co-curricular activities, helping them unlock their full potential and setting the stage for a bright and rich future.

I look forward to every girl across the school 'Journey With Joy' through her participation in our rich and varied co-curricular program.



Chaplain

Journey ups and downs

Rev Sarah Hobba
Senior Chaplain and Head of Christian Studies

Joseph’s journey (described in Genesis 37-50) reminds us that life’s path is rarely a straight line. As a young man of 17, Joseph went on a journey he didn’t choose when his brothers betrayed him and sold him into slavery in Egypt. Joseph faced a rollercoaster of ups and downs. He rose multiple times to positions overseeing others, but then suffered false accusations, imprisonment and long periods of uncertainty. Yet throughout these challenges, the Bible repeats key phrases including ‘*The Lord was with him*’ and ‘*God granted him favour in the eyes of the...*’ Joseph continued to act with integrity and perseverance, and each time, he found himself entrusted with responsibility, even in the most difficult places.

At the end of the journey, Joseph’s brothers and their families are saved from a severe famine because Joseph was placed in charge of the distribution of food. In Genesis 50:20, he is able to reflect to his brothers, ‘*You intended to harm me, but God meant*

it for good.’ His journey also echoed in Jesus’ journey: betrayed, falsely accused and dying on the cross, God brings about good through Jesus’ resurrection, saving those who trust in him to walk with them on their life’s journey.

As each of us navigates our own journey, with ups and downs, may Joseph offer a powerful example of staying faithful, steady and hopeful, trusting that good can grow even from challenging moments.

Genesis 50:20-21

But Joseph told his brothers, ‘You tried to harm me, but God made it turn out for the best, so that he could save all these people, as he is now doing. Don’t be afraid! I will take care of you and your children.’ And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

Upcoming events

WHOLE SCHOOL

lines and lines and lines exhibition	Friday 30 January to Saturday 28 February	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
SchoolTV program – student wellbeing resources	Available to all parents on the Parent Portal	Click here to watch
Old Girls information and tour morning	Friday 27 February 9.30-11 am	Level 2, Betty Archdale Library

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Year 4 Cuppa and Connections	Monday 16 February 8-9.30 am	Bundarra Lawn
Kindergarten eyesight testing	Monday 16 February 8-9.30 am	
ELC Lunar New Year morning tea	Tuesday 17 February 8-9.30 am	ELC
Year 3 Cuppa and Connections	Wednesday 18 February 8-9.30 am	Bundarra Lawn

Lunar New Year parent morning tea	Thursday 19 February 8.30-10 am	Library Plaza
Year 3 Friendship Day	Friday 20 February	
Junior School Camp Week	Monday 23 to Friday 27 February	Various locations
Year 6 Canberra and Jindabyne	Monday 23 to Friday 27 February	Canberra and Jindabyne
Year 2 School House Museum visit	Monday 23 February	
Year 1 Cuppa and Connections	Monday 23 February 8-9.30 am	Bundarra Lawn
Kindergarten Maritime Museum visit	Wednesday 25 February	Australian National Maritime Museum
Year 1 Fairytale Day	Wednesday 25 February	JS Locations
Year 3 Milson Island Camp	Wednesday 25 to Friday 27 February	Milson Island
Year 4 Sydney Academy of Sport	Wednesday 25 to Friday 27 February	Sydney Academy of Sport
Year 5 Colo River	Wednesday 25 to Friday 27 February	Colo River
Year 2 Outdoor Education Camp	Thursday 26 to Friday 27 February	CCC Hawkesbury
Kindergarten Colour Day	Thursday 26 February	JS Locations
Transition Grow Your Friendship Day	Thursday 26 February	JS Locations
Year 1 Reptile Park visit	Thursday 26 February	
Year 1 Broken Bay outdoor education	Friday 27 February	Broken Bay
Kindergarten Calmsley Farm visit	Friday 27 February	

SENIOR SCHOOL

Saturday sport	Saturday 14 and Saturday 21 February	Click here for times and venues
Year 11 Science excursion	Wednesday 18 February	Australian Museum
ISDA Debating	Friday 20 February 4-9 pm	Various Senior School locations
Senior School Swimming Carnival	Tuesday 24 February	Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre
Year 12 Parent Teacher interviews	Thursday 26 February 3.30-8.30 pm	Online
Student directed play: The Virtuous Burglar	Friday 27 February 6.30-7.30 pm	Senior School Drama Studio