

The Shuttle

Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.

A 'Journey With Joy' Year 12 2026

Mrs Megan Krimmer
Headmistress

'I wish Year 12 every happiness, success and fulfilment in the exciting journey ahead.'

'Year 12 should feel incredibly proud of the young women they have become.'

'It will be exciting to see where the road beyond Abbotsleigh takes them. Certainly, the world is their oyster.'

It is the final week of school for our Class of 2026, and the quotes above are but a few of the many comments about our amazing girls that I have had the privilege of hearing this week and indeed, throughout the year.

It has been a week of very mixed emotions for our Year 12 girls and staff. One minute I have seen the girls excited about the future and laughing uproariously; the next, I have seen them crying (weeping, really) about the prospect of leaving the school they love and missing their friends and teachers.

The girls' teachers and all our staff have experienced the same mix of emotions – we are all desperately sad to see these wonderful young women leave; yet we are also excited for the girls and the endless possibilities their journeys into the future will bring.

The Class of 2026 has made a significant impact on Abbotsleigh. With their superb theme – 'Journey With Joy', they have inspired the girls through assembly interviews, performances and messages, service initiatives and their 'Journey With Joy' Festival; they have also been excellent role models for the whole student body. In addition, Year 12 has challenged us to think about what the concept of 'Joy' really means – a deep emotion that can mean happiness or elation; it can often mean incredible inner peace as well. They have also helped us to understand what joy is not. As Anna, Vice Head Prefect – Duties, said two weeks ago:

'... Joy doesn't mean pretending that every part of our journey is easy. There will be days when we feel stressed, overwhelmed or simply not okay, and that's completely human.'

Year 12 2026 are incredible young women – strong, courageous, intelligent, resilient, compassionate and kind, ready to take their equal seat at any table and, as I said in



my speech to the girls at their Valedictory Assembly – the world certainly needs young women like them to make a really positive difference – they are most definitely the leaders of our future.

Our Head Prefect, Laura, delivered a superb speech at the Valedictory Assembly, reflecting on Year 12's 'Journey With Joy' at Abbotsleigh. I warmly commend Laura's excellent speech to you.

Year 12 2026 have left a strong and indelible legacy, and we could not be more proud of them. We wish each Year 12 girl God's richest blessings as she prepares for her final examinations and embarks on the exciting journey of life beyond the gates of Abbotsleigh.

I wish all our girls and their families a wonderful holiday break. I will be on a sabbatical until Week 5 next term and look forward to seeing everyone at school when I return. In the meantime, the School will be in the very capable hands of Mrs Victoria Rennie, who will be Acting Headmistress in my absence.



Valedictory Assembly speech

Laura, Head Prefect

Well, here we are, Year 12, at the end of an incredible journey. On the first day of Kindy, we walked into school with our backpacks bigger than us, barely able to lift them. Over the years, we have learned how to carry that load with more confidence and strength. Now, after 13 years, we officially retire our backpacks, but although they may now remain empty, we carry with us heads full of memories and hearts full of gratitude for the journey we have taken together.

It is truly an honour to be speaking on behalf of Year 12 as we farewell our time at Abbotsleigh. It's impossible to encapsulate years of memories in one speech, but remember back to our first day of Year 7, excitedly waiting in the PDCH to be assigned, Harry Potter-like, into houses; being warned in Year 8 to avoid the 'crush' in the F corridor; by Year 10, discovering the far-away land of the Science and Art Building; and in Year 11, exploring the unfamiliar terrain of the Sydney CBD on Urban Challenge. Over the years we have found our voices, as we certainly showed in Year 12 tutor time concerts, with more acapella and girl groups than a *Pitch Perfect* movie. We have also found our groove, as we proved at our Formal where we were all so hot, we set the fire alarm off!

But even more than the 'big' moments, it's all the small ones that have meant the world to me. Year 12, I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of you for all the times a smile or passing conversation has brightened my day, and so often when I needed it most. I feel so grateful to be a part of a truly special year group, one that celebrates everyone for who they are, is prepared to take on challenges together and is always there for each other – even if it's just to lie on the Common Room floor and meditate together. There is family that we are blessed with, but I would choose you guys as my school family every time.



The journey we have been on has been different for every one of us, but at the end of it all, it is a truly joyful journey because we have all been empowered by an Abbotsleigh education. Education has always been very important to me. I often think back over my family's history, particularly the four generations of women before me, starting with my great-great-grandmother arriving as a young immigrant from China during the Gold Rushes. I often think of the progress made from her never having any formal education; to her daughter leaving school at 12 to work in our family's general store; to my grandmother finishing school and even attaining a university degree; to my mother, an Abbotsleigh Old Girl, who never forgets that the greatest privilege of all was her education.

I am so grateful to Abbotsleigh for giving us an education that goes beyond the classroom, one that prepares us as strong and independent women to journey out into the world.

In some ways, graduating feels like a leap of faith, but we all know that we can have faith in who we have become thanks to our incredible teachers. Year 12, please take a moment to look around the hall at all the teachers here with us. As much as 'ATQ' or ' $y = mx + b$ ' have been ingrained in us, so too have the teachers taught us the Abbotsleigh values of integrity, respect, compassion, courage and perseverance.



Now, Year 12, look around at all your parents and loved ones. These are the people who have walked every step of the winding road, not for themselves but simply to support you and to be here proudly celebrating this special day with you. I know that I'm beyond grateful for my parents and everything they have done for me... and don't worry, Mum and Dad, my younger brother will finish his HSC in four years, and then you can graduate from high school too!

In the spirit of giving thanks, it now gives me great pleasure to announce the Year 12 gift to the School – a house competition leaderboard! Throughout our school journey, countless memories and immeasurable joy have been shared at house events. We hope this gift of a leaderboard, which may be updated live throughout the year, will continue the spirit of teamwork, perseverance and joy.

Year 12, we have seen each other through every high and every low, and every emotion in between. Now as we finally graduate, it's hard not to be overwhelmed with emotion: I am so happy that I get to share this moment with all of you, but so sad to be saying goodbye to a place that has become a home and, to be totally honest, even

a little upset with myself for ever forgetting to savour the time we shared here. So, to all of you younger girls, don't let any day here go unappreciated, because now we Year 12 girls are not just days, not even hours, but minutes away from walking out of this Assembly Hall and the School gates for the very last time ... apart from when we return for our HSC exams, but let's not spoil the fairytale ending!

As we look forward to where our journeys might lead us from here, I can imagine a year from now we might be across the country or across the world pursuing our dreams; 10 years from now we might be together at our reunion and wondering how that time flew by faster than a weaver's shuttle; and perhaps 60 years from now we will have rekindled our love for knitting, which we discovered this year!

So, in that case, this is not 'farewell' but rather 'see you later'. Year 12 2026, I wish you all the best for wherever life takes you next. No matter what happens, always remember to enjoy the journey!



Chaplain

Unexpected journeys

Rev Sarah Hobba
Senior Chaplain and Head of Christian Studies

As the Class of 2026 gathered for their Valedictory Service, a collection of bags served as a reminder of different experiences that shape every journey. Some journeys take us to places we never expected, teach lessons we could not learn any other way, and lead us down paths very different from those we had carefully planned. We can be filled with wonder and gratitude, while other times bring disappointments and challenges, as life unfolds differently from what we may have planned.

Psalm 23 reminds us that God is like a shepherd who leads, guides and cares for his people through every terrain of life. The psalm speaks not only of green pastures and still waters but also of valleys and difficult seasons. Christians take comfort in knowing that God does not abandon us in those moments but walks beside us, offering strength, protection and hope. Jesus describes himself as the Good Shepherd. The journey of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection can shape each of our own journeys and make it possible to share an eternal destination with God.



As our Year 12 students leave Abbotsleigh and embark on new adventures, our prayer is that they go with confidence, knowing they are deeply loved, richly blessed and accompanied by God's goodness and faithfulness wherever their journeys may lead.

Upcoming events

Parent Wellbeing Hive – parent wellbeing resources	Available to all parents on the Parent Portal	Click here to visit
Follow You Home exhibition	Friday 4 to Saturday 26 September	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
Last day of Term 3	Thursday 24 September	
Boarder travel day	Friday 25 September	
First day of Term 4	Tuesday 13 October	

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Years 1, 2, 4 and 6 (2027) orientation day	Tuesday 13 October	Various JS locations
Kindergarten 2027 orientation morning	Wednesday 14 October 8.50 am-12 noon	Kindy classrooms
Transition 2027 orientation morning	Wednesday 14 October 9.50 am-12 noon	Transition classrooms
Year 6 movie screening	Wednesday 14 October 1.30-3.15 pm	Auditorium
Year 3 2027 orientation day	Thursday 15 October	Year 3 classrooms
Year 5 2027 orientation day	Thursday 15 October	Year 5 classrooms
Year 5 claymation incursion	Thursday 15 October	
Year 6 jumpstart day	Friday 16 October Various session times	Various JS locations

SENIOR SCHOOL

Japan Concert Band rehearsal	Friday 25 September 8.30 am-3.30 pm	PDCH
Japan Jazz Ensemble rehearsal	Friday 25 September 9-11 am	To be determined
CRU Leadership training session	Friday 25 September 10 am-1 pm	GLC
Year 12 (2027) Cconference	Tuesday 13 to Wednesday 14 October	CRU Lake Macquarie

