

The Shuttle

Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.

'Journey with Joy': Celebrating milestones and new beginnings

Mrs Victoria Rennie
Deputy Headmistress

Welcome to Term 4 2026.

I hope you and your daughter(s) enjoyed a restful holiday break and found some time to relax, reconnect and enjoy the beautiful spring weather. For those who remained in Sydney, it was hard not to appreciate the magnificent sunshine and clear days that seemed to provide a perfect backdrop to the end of the holidays.

There is always something special about the beginning of Term 4. It is a term that holds both excitement and anticipation as one school year begins to come to an end, and another starts to take shape. Across the campus this week, there has been a wonderful sense of energy and optimism as girls have returned to school, reconnected with friends and embraced the opportunities that lie ahead.

One of the great joys of this first week has been welcoming so many new girls and families to Abbotsleigh through our Orientation programs. Whether joining our Junior School, preparing to begin Year 7 or taking their first steps into boarding life, these girls have brought with them a wonderful sense of enthusiasm and possibility. It has been heartwarming to see friendships forming, familiar faces offering reassurance and our current girls extending the kindness and inclusivity to those around them.

At the same time, we have marked significant milestones for our senior students. Our Year 12 Class of 2026 commenced their HSC examinations this week, and we have been immensely proud of the calm confidence, resilience and support they have shown one another. As they begin this important chapter, we hold them in our prayers and wish them every success. We also acknowledge the dedication of their teachers and families who have supported them throughout their journey to this point.



This week has also marked the beginning of a new chapter for our Year 12 Class of 2027. Following a highly successful conference at Lake Macquarie, the girls have returned to school ready to embrace the opportunities and responsibilities that accompany leadership. We thank the graduating Class of 2026 for the example they have set and look forward to seeing how our newest student leaders will contribute to the life of our community in the year ahead.

As you read the articles that follow, you will notice a common theme: the power of new beginnings. Whether it is a young boarder spending her first night away from home, a new student stepping through our gates for the first time, or a senior student beginning her leadership journey, each story reminds us that confidence grows through connection, belonging and the support of a caring community.

I commend to you the following reflections from Mrs Katie White, Head of Boarding and Ms Larissa Cameron, Head of Junior School, which beautifully capture the warmth, excitement and promise that have characterised the start of Term 4.



Year 7 2027 boarders welcome

Mrs Katie White
Head of Boarding

On Sunday, we welcomed our Year 7 2027 boarders for a sleepover, marking the beginning of their boarding journey.

The evening started with the girls meeting their City Families, and it was wonderful to see the connections form so quickly. There was an immediate sense of warmth and belonging as the girls met their City Sisters and began getting to know one another. Friendships seemed to develop almost instantly, which was lovely to witness.

After dinner, the girls headed to Read House for their very first night in boarding. The evening was relaxed and full

of laughter, with the girls spending time together making keyrings using colourful beads and creative designs. A boarding Q&A gave them the chance to ask questions and settle any nerves before everyone enjoyed a hot Milo before bed. While there was definitely some sleep, we also heard reports of a few sneaky midnight snacks!

Monday's Orientation Day was a busy one. The girls were reunited with their City Sisters and spent the day experiencing life in the day school, meeting new people and becoming familiar with their future surroundings. It was a big day, and by the end there were certainly some tired faces, but also plenty of excitement for the year ahead.

This weekend was all about new beginnings, new friendships and taking those first important steps into our boarding community. We look forward to watching these girls grow in confidence and make Read House their home away from home over the coming years.



New beginnings in Junior School

Ms Larissa Cameron
Head of Junior School

There is something very special about a new beginning. It brings excitement and anticipation, perhaps a few butterflies and the possibility of friendships, experiences and opportunities that are yet to unfold.

In our Junior School, Term 4 is a wonderful reminder of this as we prepare to welcome our newest Abbotsleigh girls through our Orientation Days. For these girls, stepping through the gates of a new school is a significant moment. There are new faces to meet, new routines to discover and a whole new community to become part of.

Our current Junior School girls look forward to these days with great anticipation too. They understand they have an important role to play in helping our newest girls feel that Abbotsleigh is a place where they belong. New students are buddied with current girls who help them navigate their day, introduce them to others and, most importantly, offer the reassurance of a friendly face.

It is lovely to see how naturally our girls embrace this responsibility. A smile, an invitation to join a game, someone to sit beside or a simple 'come with me' can make an enormous difference when everything feels new. These moments also remind us that belonging is something we create together. It grows through small acts of kindness, inclusion and friendship, and through noticing when someone might need a little extra encouragement.

As we look towards a new term and welcome new members of our community, we are reminded that every new beginning holds possibility. We hope that our newest girls quickly discover what our current girls already know, that Junior School is a place where they are known, valued and encouraged to flourish.

And for those of us welcoming them, new beginnings offer something equally valuable: the opportunity to extend a hand, make room for someone new and help another person feel that they belong.



Chaplain

Finding our tune

Rev Sarah Hobba
Senior Chaplain and Head of Christian Studies

Have you ever had a song stuck in your head? Maybe it's the soundtrack to a favourite memory, a song on repeat, or a playlist that seems to capture exactly how you're feeling. Music has a unique way of shaping our thoughts and tapping into our emotions. In the middle of the Bible, we find a whole compilation of songs. The Psalms are the playlist of lyrics (without tunes) filled with joy and sorrow, celebration and doubt, praise and prayer.

As we begin Term 4, Psalm 1 invites us to consider what our thoughts meditate on. The Psalm presents two paths. One path leads towards life and wisdom, describing the person who delights in God's word as being like a tree planted by a stream, strong, flourishing and able to endure every season. The other path leaves us unanchored and adrift, described as chaff blowing in the wind.

As the first song in the collection, or the first track in a playlist, Psalm 1 describes the truly blessed life. It is a description seen perfectly in Jesus, who delighted in His Father's will and whose death and resurrection make it possible for us to know God and walk in His ways.

As we commence a new term, may the songs of the Psalms help us pause amid the busyness, lift our eyes beyond immediate pressures and plans, and discover again the deep joy and hope found in Christ.



Psalm 1:1-3

*¹ Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
² but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither –
whatever they do prospers.*

Upcoming events

WHOLE SCHOOL

Parent Wellbeing Hive – parent wellbeing resources	Available to all parents on the Parent Portal	Click here to visit
The Event of a Thread exhibition	Saturday 3 to Saturday 24 October	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
World Teachers' Day 2026	Friday 30 October	

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Year 6 jumpstart day	Friday 16 October Various session times	Various JS locations
Year 5 leadership day	Tuesday 20 October	Year 5 classrooms
Infants music concert	Thursday 22 October 6.30-7.30 pm	PDCH (Senior campus)
Year 3 wellbeing day	Friday 23 October 8.30 am-12.45 pm	Year 3 classrooms/Library annex
Year 2 circus immersion	Friday 23 October 8.30-10.45 am	Library
IPSHA Debating gala day	Monday 26 October	Various locations
Year 2 Gibberagong excursion	Monday 26 October	Gibberagong
Year 2 Celebration of Learning	Wednesday 28 October 8.30-10.45 am	Year 2 classrooms

SENIOR SCHOOL

Saturday sport	Saturday 17 October	Click here
HSC examinations	Thursday 13 October to Friday 6 November	
Year 10 Science of Learning	Monday 19 October 12.45-1.15 pm	PDCH
Year 12 2027 information session and barbecue	Monday 19 October 6-8 pm	PDCH and Marian Clarke Plaza
Year 9 Science of Learning	Wednesday 21 October 12.45-1.15 pm	PDCH
House badminton competition	Wednesday 21 October 1.20-2 pm	Sports Hall
Year 9 assessment week	Monday 26 to Friday 30 October	Various locations
Year 10 assessment week	Monday 26 October to Tuesday 3 November	Various locations
Science of Learning parent evening	Tuesday 27 October 6-7.30 pm	PDCH

