The
Shuttle

Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.



Joyful in Service

Mrs Victoria Rennie
Deputy Headmistress

Central to WiLA, Abbotsleigh's Women in Leadership Academy, is the belief that authentic leadership begins with character and finds expression through service to others. Service Immersion Week offers our Year 10 girls a powerful opportunity to develop empathy, broaden their perspectives and discover how they can make a meaningful difference in the world.

I warmly commend Ms Penny Chilton's (Head of Senior College) article to you and would like to thank Ms Chilton for the thought, preparation and care she has invested in creating these meaningful experiences. I also join her in thanking our wonderful teachers who so generously give their time to work alongside the girls. In doing so, they model the heart for service that lies at the heart of our School, showing our girls that leadership is lived through compassion, generosity and purposeful action.

Senior College students making a positive impact now and in the future

Ms Penny Chilton
Head of Senior College

This week our Year 10 students have been heavily involved in preparation for their Service Immersion Week. Immersion Week is a highlight for many Senior College students, with girls in Years 11 and 12 often referring to the learning undertaken, experiences lived and perspective gained from the experience as being formative in their Year 12 journey and beyond. A highlight of this year's planning for Immersion Week has been working with Abbotsleigh Old Girls who are using their skills to work with and support people in need. It is deep learning that impacts girls for years to come. This significant learning impact stems from the three key pillars that underpin Immersion Week:

1. **Immersive experience** – providing an opportunity for students to dive deeply into a cause or community.
2. **Deep learning** – fostering learning that 'sticks' beyond the actual experience, contributing to meaning and purpose and helping a person find their place in a complex world.
3. **Positive social impact** – providing an opportunity for making a positive social impact in response to real needs through collaboration and teamwork.

Students will be undertaking placements across Sydney, with groups spending time immersed with different community groups within the city; working alongside organisations that support people in aged care, refugees, children and adults with disabilities and people experiencing homelessness and food insecurity. Some of our students will be fortunate enough to spend the week learning on Country with Traditional Owners in eastern Cape York. As well as immersing themselves in a community or cause, an important part of the girls' experience is reflecting deeply on empathy, one of Abbotsleigh's key learning dispositions, as well as on what they have learned about themselves and others.





Immersion Week requires thoughtful preparation by students and staff. This week's Project Day focus asked students to consider both their capacity and reasons for being involved in Service. Project Day has been the starting point for some wonderfully insightful questions, conversation and planning for the program to come. Students spent time learning about needs in the world, the benefits that come for individuals and communities involved in service and care of others, and the practicalities of how to operate when they are immersed into different organisations and communities so that they are able to contribute positively and learn well.

We encourage all Senior College students to take up opportunities to be involved in service activities, with many students involved in clubs, volunteering time at aged care facilities in our area, supporting young people in need with their learning, and a large number of our newest Year 12 class preparing to work alongside students from Knox Grammar as part of the annual Abbox Sony Foundation Camp in December. Not only does service help support people and communities beyond our school, it also actively assists students in building the skills in creativity, collaboration, communication and empathy that are vital in our changing world. In strengthening relationships, working for a common cause and learning about complexity in the world, students are building their own resilience, empathy, teamwork and understanding.

Immersion Week would not be possible without the generosity and support of a large group of staff. Organising activities for 196 students across 13 different itineraries and many different organisations is a substantial challenge, and I am very grateful for the phenomenal work done by staff to ensure this is a wonderful experience for our Year 10 students. In particular, huge thanks are due to Mrs Libby Bennett (EA to Head of Senior College) for her work in support of the entire program; Dr Elizabeth Russell (Year 10 Coordinator) and Mr James Flood (Assistant Year 10 Coordinator) for their support and assistance with students. We are also very grateful to the following staff who are giving up their time in support of our girls and others both in the lead-up to, and during, Immersion Week:

Mrs Kim Allan, Mrs Lisa Andrawes, Mr Adam Antonio, Mrs Renee Black, Mrs Lia Camilleri, Mrs Sarah Dallen, Miss Paige Day, Miss Eliza Fitzgerald, Mr James Flood, Mr Jason Garrett, Dr Alison Gates, Ms Vivienne Gilkes, Mrs Shane Hamilton, Mrs Carole Helbert, Ms Alicia Highfield, Mr Ben Hunter, Mrs Sarah Israel, Mrs Sally Lucas, Mrs Saman Malik, Miss Alexis Masterton, Ms Nadia Merchant, Rev Rowena McMicking, Dr Michelle McVeigh, Mrs Donna Moffatt, Ms Martina Muehlenbernd, Ms Catherine Oliver, Ms Jessica Parker, Mrs Susannah Pinter, Mrs Julie Shannon, Miss Pei Siauw, Mrs Alyssa Squance, Mrs Victoria Staas, Mrs Angela Thomas and Mr Rob Winslow.

We are looking ahead to a joyful week of service and learning as our Year 10 students make a positive impact on the world now and build the skills required to keep doing this in the future.



Visit the **Parent Portal** to edit your profile, view the calendar and view parent notices.

Chaplain

Prepositions are important when it comes to serving others



Rev Sarah Hobba
Senior Chaplain and Head of Christian Studies

In Chaplaincy, conversations about service learning often return to getting the prepositions right. Throughout history, many people seeking to obey Jesus' command to '*love your neighbour as yourself*' (Mark 12:31) have entered communities wanting to do things for people, hoping to solve problems or improve situations. While often motivated by genuine compassion, such approaches have not always produced the desired outcomes and often caused unintended harm.

By contrast, service that is done ***with*** or ***alongside*** others begins with humility. It prioritises relationship over rescue, listening over assumptions and partnership over paternalism. Rather than arriving as experts with answers, we come as learners, seeking to understand the experiences, strengths and wisdom of those we meet.

This approach reflects the example of Jesus Himself (Philippians 2:5-8). Although He had the power to command, fix and direct, Jesus most often chose to walk alongside people. He ate with them, listened to them, asked questions of them, and entered into their lives and experiences. He did not simply do things for people; instead, He lived life ***with*** people.

The Christian understanding of service is therefore not primarily about solving problems but about loving people; just as love comes ***from*** God, we pass on that love demonstrated by Jesus. As 1 John reminds us, '*We love because he first loved us*' (1 John 4:19). Christian service flows ***from*** the love we receive through Jesus and ***from*** gratitude for all God has done for us. Having experienced God's love, we are called to extend that same love to others.

As our students prepare for service in Immersion Week, our great hope is that they will discover that meaningful service grows from genuine relationship, and that by walking alongside others they may both contribute and be transformed in the process.

Upcoming events

WHOLE SCHOOL

Parent Wellbeing Hive – parent wellbeing resources	Available to all parents on the Parent Portal	**Click here** to visit
After Namatjira Richard Dunn Exhibition	Saturday 31 October to Saturday 28 November	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
Abbotsleigh Dance Festival	Saturday 14 November 12.30-6.30 pm	Senior School Assembly Hall
Abbotsleigh Foundation 2026 Giving Day	Wednesday 18 November	Visit the Giving Day website **here**

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Year 6 AbbKart Derby	Tuesday 10 November 1.15-2 pm	
Year 1 Botanic Gardens excursion	Wednesday 11 November	
Year 4 French Breakfast and Kindness Day	Thursday 12 November	Year 4 classrooms
Infants Swimming Carnival	Friday 13 November 8.20 am-2.20 pm	Senior School Aquatic Centre
Transition visit to Sydney Tower	Tuesday 17 November 10 am-1 pm	Sydney Tower
Year 6 gingerbread house decorating	Friday 20 November 3.45-5.15 pm	Everett Hall

SENIOR SCHOOL

Saturday sport	Saturday 31 October	**Click here** for times and locations
Year 10 History excursion	Monday 9 November	Bondi Junction Synagogue
Years 9-11 Elective Drama Showcase	Tuesday 10 and Wednesday 11 November, 6-8 pm	Drama Studio
Remembrance Day Assembly	Wednesday 11 November 12.45-1.15 pm	Assembly Hall and PDCH
Year 7 Geography field trip	Thursday 12 November	Bondi Beach
Year 7 History excursion	Thursday 12 November	Chau Chak Wing Museum
Year 10 Red Earth immersion	Friday 13 to 20 November	Various regional locations
Year 10 Immersion Week	Monday 16 to 20 November	Various locations
Year 12 2027 assessments	Monday 16 to 20 November	
Year 7 zoo excursion	Wednesday 18 November	Taronga Zoo
Year 8 Wellbeing Day	Wednesday 18 November	
Year 7 Wellbeing Day	Thursday 19 November	
Year 8 Luna Park excursion	Thursday 19 November	Luna Park
Year 9 Wheeldon Cup performance	Friday 20 November 11 am-12.30 pm	Assembly Hall
Middle School color run	Friday 20 November 1-3.20 pm	Top Oval